

THE COLUMBIA DEMOCRAT.

"I have sworn upon the Altar of God, eternal hostility to every form of Tyranny over the Mind of Man."—Thomas Jefferson.

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MISCELLANEOUS.

From the Lady's Book.

ELISSA; OR, THE PRESENTIMENT AT THE WELL.

BY E. HOLDREN.

It has been often enough said to have been tested, that 'truth is stranger than fiction.' The brief story we are now to relate, is a true incident of American life, without the least coloring of incident; and not a few among the readers of the Lady's Book will recognize its original, at once.

Elissa Waldron was the only daughter of an honest and intelligent farmer, who resided a few miles from one of our largest cities. Their humble but neat cottage stood a little distance from the principle avenue leading out of the metropolis; and though the small farm of Mr Waldron did not indicate wealth, it was admired by all who rode out to partake of the sweetness of the country, for the universal indication of thrift and industry that every where prevailed.—

Mr. Waldron was marked by the excellent qualities which form a good and admired citizen, and the partner of his life was equally the pride of the rural neighborhood in which they dwelt. They had, by a life of industry and economy, placed themselves above want, though they never could be called rich. It was their constant care to inculcate correct principles in their only daughter. 'If said Mr. Waldron one day to Elissa, 'you learn to be above the world, by knowing how to provide for yourself with your own hands, independence, my girl, will be your inheritance.' It was in pursuance of this early implanted principle of self-reliance, we suppose, that induced Elissa to go to the city, when in her teens, in the capacity of domestic service. She lived in the family of an old friend of her father's for about two years, more like a daughter than a servant for Mrs. Underwood was a good lady, and Elissa filled a large place in her heart. She was ever so attentive, intelligent and affectionate in the relation in which she occupied.

The estate of Mr. Underwood was situated a little distance from the dense portion of the city. In a large garden which was the pleasure of his home hours, he had a well for the double purpose of supplying the family with water, and sprinkling nutriment to the rare exotics of his hot-houses. Elissa went out one day, as she often did, to draw a pail of water. Mrs. Underwood was passing in a distant part of the garden, and saw that Elissa was stading gazing in the well for some time, with an almost vacant stare. Her curiosity was excited, and talking towards the well, in a gentle tone she asked, 'why, Elissa, what do you see in the well?'

'Nothing, madam, only I am never going to draw any more water in this garden.'

'What do you mean, Elissa, have I not treated you kindly?'

'Most tenderly, like a sister, madam, but I have had a presentiment since I looked into this well, and I am to see better days.'

'Elissa, if I did not know you well, I should think you crazy.'

'Oh, no, I'm not crazy, but I am to see better days—I've had a presentiment.'

And nothing could persuade her to the

contrary. That very day she had her trunk packed accompanied by many a little present from the Underwoods, and took the stage for the rural home of her childhood. Not a word, however, did she utter to her parents of her strange presentiment, for she well knew that they would laugh much at her for indulging such a fancy. She kept it to herself; but so strong an impression had it made upon her feelings that she never abandoned the thought, scarcely in her walking or sleeping moments.

CHAPTER II.

The reader will recollect we have mentioned that the cottage of Mr. Waldron was situated but a little distance from the great avenue leading from the metropolis. Multitudes of carriages in the sweet scented season of summer drove out that way that their inmates might inhale the flowers and the fields. It was not long after the return of Elissa, that one day a gentleman's carriage was literally broken to atoms, by his horses taking fright, and he was thrown out opposite the cottage of Mr. Waldron, having one of his hips dislocated, his left arm broken, and being otherwise so badly injured as to remain for a long time in a state of insensibility, after he had been conveyed into the cottage of Mr. Waldron. The physician positively forbade his removal to his own home in the city; and Elissa and her kind hearted mother struggled to outdo each other in attentive nursing of their accidental patient. By this unremitting kindness, and the best skill of the surgeon, he was restored after a month or two so far as to be in a condition to remove in his carriage without risk to his life; but before leaving the place where his very existence had been preserved, he made a very liberal present to the worthy mother, to reward the constant toils of herself and Elissa towards him.

The gentlemanly learned the name of the gentleman, and that he was very rich; and as they had done their duty to him, and he had begged to be permitted most liberally to reward Mrs. Waldron, they expected in parting with him on the morning of his removal that he would never again be seen by them.

CHAPTER III.

It was well nigh one year from the time we have recorded the departure of the gentleman, that a carriage drove up to the Waldron cottage, and a footman announced the name of him who had been detained there by his wounds.

The family were glad to receive him, that is, Mr. and Mrs. Waldron gave him a most cordial welcome, so gratified were they to find he had almost entirely been restored to health, Elissa had run to her room to adjust her toilet, when she heard a carriage approaching the court yard.

'Where is Elissa,' asked Mr. Middleton for that was the name of the gentleman.

'She will be here soon,' quickly replied Mrs. Waldron.

'I trust she is well,' added Mr. Middleton.

'She is, sir, and she has often said she would be most happy to hear how you were after leaving our house.'

'I am glad of that, madam, for I this day visit you under very different feelings from those which I was thrown on your kindness and hospitality. I have come to ask the hand of your Elissa in marriage if her love is not pledged to another.'

'Sir,' said Mr. Waldron indignantly, 'would you insult us after we did all we could to save your life?'

'Not for the world, Mr. Waldron I am a gentleman of honor and fortune. I am somewhat older than your daughter, but if she can forego that disparity, if you will but give me your permission, I will at once offer her my hand and my heart.'

'I know not what to think or what to say,' replied Mr. Waldron; 'but Elissa is of humble birth; and, and though she is a dear child to us, for a rich man's lady, and I dare not think you serious. If you are not honorable in your'

'Pray Mr. Waldron give yourself no uneasiness on that account. I have not ventured to visit you to-day without preparation; and here, sir, is a letter from your old and intimate friend Granville, which I trust will satisfy you as to what right I have as a man of honor to make proposals of marriage to Elissa.'

We need only add that the testimony was satisfactory; and that in a few weeks afterwards, Elissa was Mrs. Middleton, fulfilling, as she will have it, (though it always raises a smile on her husband's lips,) the presentiment which she experienced when she was drawing water from the well, in the garden of the Underwoods.

In a little over a year and a half from that incident, she drove to the residence of Mrs. Underwood. The servants rang at the door, but as she alighted from her carriage her girlish feelings came over her, and she walked into the back parlour without ceremony. Mrs. Underwood soon entered and passed the compliments of the morning with much embarrassment, not being able to recollect the face of the lady who had honored her with a call, which she finally had to confess. 'Why, not remember Elissa—well, I suppose I am in disguise, for the presentiment has been fulfilled, and my husband awaits in the carriage to be introduced to my former mistress.'

Mrs. Underwood is now one of the most intimate visitants at the Middleton's, and the latter form one of the most wealthy, respectable and deservedly esteemed families in the London of America.

From the Poughkeepsie Casket.

DISTINCTIONS.

To the man of sense, who views society as a necessary compact of intelligent beings, met for mutual benefit on the broad ground of equality, the distinctions of wealth, or other extraneous appendages of character appear ridiculous and amusing. In this country where the great boast of equality is upon every lip, their are more distinctions in society than in any other country in the world; and they are grades of aristocracy, in each of which there is more exclusiveness manifested than among the nobility and gentry of any kingdom in Europe. There are distinctions in society which should always exist, on the perpetuity of which sound morals greatly depends. They consist in the various phases exhibited by virtue and vice; and the more vicious a member of the compact becomes, broad and more decided should never be passed except on an errand of mercy by the latter, to reclaim the former. This is a distinction of character, depending upon the violation of each, not on any fortuitous circumstances, and consequently is a legitimate distinction. But to see men building their structure of superiority upon the sandy and uncertain foundation of riches, upon the fame of some distinguished progenitor, or upon the more foolish and ridiculous idea that one employment is more genteel than another, excites the smile of mingled pity and contempt upon the lips of the sensible. Yet we daily meet with those who assume superiority on these grounds, and it is this practice, arising from the error of the judgement, or to the absolute want of common sense, that we may ascribe nine tenths of the evils with which the harmony of society is disturbed.

Several years since, we made a journey to a thriving village in neighboring county and while tarrying at the house of a friend saw a practical illustration of the above remarks. A social party had gathered on the occasion of the return of another birth-day of one of our friend's daughters, and it was really a congregation of pretty and cheerful faces. During the evening a cotillion was proposed, and couples immediately formed upon the floor. From a retired corner came a neatly dressed youngman, with an intelligent countenance and pleasing address, and invited a gay butterfly girl, who seemed disposed to flirt with every body to join in the dance. She scarcely deign-

ed a recognition; and coldly refused. The man bit his lips, while the flush of offended pider mounted to his cheek, and passing to the opposite side of the room, found his hand acceptable to a pretty, modest miss, and in a moment more they were moving in the dance.

'Who was that young man?' asked a merchant's clerk, addressing the coquette first mentioned.

'He is an imprudent puppy,' responded the fair one, curling her pretty lip haughtily, 'he is nothing but a mechanic, and I wonder at his presumption in asking me to dance.'

'Twas presumption indeed, and extraordinarily and shockingly imperlite,' responded the clerk, tucking in the ruffles of his dickey, and throwing one leg over the other in an important attitude. 'I wonder that Mr.—— was not more select in choosing the members of this 'ere party. But so it is; society here is gidin' as Boasting and other indursecous places, where gentlemen are continually perlocated with these 'ere infernal mechanics. You done right, miss, awfully right, in scorning to accept such like company.'

'So says Miss Ann—don't you Ann?' said the indignant coquette, addressing her butterfly companion.

'Yes, you did, Hetty—and I'll be hanged if I'd dance with one of them are mechanics, if I never did But do look! as sure as eggs, the impertinent fellow is dancing with Judge B——'s Phillippina. I think she ought to be ashamed of herself, for such a disgrace in open company.'

'She's astoundingly foolish,' said the clerk, shifting his legs importantly.—'But come, Miss Hetty, will you dance?'

'With all my heart,' said Miss Hetty.

We listened to this colloquy with superlative contempt for the utterers, and having formed an opinion of their characters, from the index just given, resolved to discover that of the young man. We ascertained that he was a coach maker respectably connected, and of industrious habits, possessed a mind far above the ordinary standard, and withal well cultivated. He viewed society as a man of sense ought, and presumed that equality should or ought to exist within the circle of a social party. Courtesy prompted him to offer his hand to the haughty coquette, and the refusal wounded his fine feelings. But they were healed by the frank and courteous address of the daughter of Judge B. and in truth, a motive more exalted than mere courtesy actuated them. They were betrothed, but the gossips had not yet heard the secret. While leading in the modest Emma to the cotillion ring, he looked with proper contempt upon the haughty Hester M——, the misguided daughter of a broken merchant. She drew a line of distinction between herself and the honest mechanic, while he also traced a demarkation. Hers was drawn by an erroneous judgement, his by correct principles. The sequel is brief. The mechanic became soon the son-in-law of Judge B., emigrated to Indiana, and at the last election in the state, was chosen a member of popular branch of its legislature.

After seasons of flirtation and coquetry, Hester M—— became the wife of the 'engaging' young clerk, who, carrying his business relations, and endeavoring to ape his wealthy neighbors, was soon numbered with a list of bankrupts, and new gains but a scanty pittance in the metropolis as a third rate clerk. There are distinctions in society, but they are too often drawn by ignorance, or erring judgement.

Extract of a letter to the Editor of the American Sentinel.

AMERICAN SILK CULTURE.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 15, 1839.

The silk business is making its way through the country in all directions. It strikes upon two cords of great considera-

tion with every American, I men his patriotism and his individual interest. Since the appearance of the Journal of the Silk Convention of the United States, published under the direction of the National Society in which the experience of some of the best silk growers is spread before the people, a new impulse has been given to the subject. The immense amount of twenty two millions of dollars sent abroad for silk, ought to be kept at home. To effect this praiseworthy result every farmer and gentleman of leisure should plant trees and propagate the silk worm. The multicaulis has such a large leaf and is so readily produced, that it should be carried all over the States. The trees and silk that can be produced on the lands in the West, will, in a few years, be very great. Indeed, no farmer should be considered a wise one, who has not an acre of trees and worms enough to work up their leaves into silk. The poor lands, too, such as have been exhausted by tobacco, can be reclaimed, and made to produce the multicaulis. I speak here altogether of the multicaulis, as it has, you will perceive, the united testimonials of all the gentlemen whome recently at the Silk Convention in Baltimore. Some beautiful trees have been raised in this country. From Florida and Mobile, I have seen a few four years old, and full of buds. Each bud will produce a tree. A tree of the usual size will cost 70 or 75 cents, and produce twenty five or thirty buds. But if only twenty to each tree, this will, if properly attended, yield twenty trees. The impression of some, who have not considered the subject, is there will be too many trees grown this year to render them an object worthy of consideration.

It however, requires a little reflection to settle this question. We see here the amount of trees raised last year. Perhaps, by a fair calculation, growing out of this management, and accidents, the whole multicaulis family now in this country, cannot produce more than 20 to each tree. Besides, thousands will start the trees for silk and not for sale. Some of these latter may partially be added to the general stock for sale over the country, but not many of them. Indeed, it would seem to require some years before the states and territories can be fully treed. Ten thousand trees can be reared on an acre, but it will take a great many acres of leaves to furnish the silk that will be consumed in America. The trees appropriated to the immediate manufacture of silk, cannot well be spared for sale.

There is now fixed a determination to go into the silk business, that no one can doubt of its success. The country must, however, be well supplied with trees, before the great experiment can be put fully into operation. At the end of the coming fall, upon the estimate of an increase of 20 times the number of the trees now in the country, we shall not have a tithe of the requisite quantity of trees to make us a silk manufacturing people. Trees sell a 2 and 2½ cents per bud. This, if well attended to, will yield, I suppose, 25 20 good buds, for the next year. Some may fall in the hands of inexperienced planters, but in general, the buds all succeed. I take it that every bud raised last year, will certainly be set out this year. None of them should be lost to the country, as there are whole counties, eye, nearly whole states without a multicaulis tree growing in it at this time.

Spunk.—'Marm, mayn't I go and play horse to-day?'

'No child, you must stay in the house.'
'Now, look here, marm, if you don't let me, I'll go and catch the measles—I know a big boy what's got'em prime!'

A Boy in a Band box.—A man of business advertised in a Philadelphia paper, 'A Boy Wanted.' The next morning he found at his door a beautiful and smiling specimen of the article desired snugly deposited in a BAND BOX.