

# The Democrat.

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## A HUNDRED YEARS FROM NOW.

BY MRS. MARY A. FORD. ("UNA.")

The surging sea of human life forever onward rolls,  
And bears to the eternal shore its daily freight of souls,  
Though bravely sails our bark to-day, pale death sits at the prow,  
And few shall know we ever lived a hundred years from now.

O mighty human brotherhood! why fiercely war and strive,  
While God's great world has ample space for everything alive?  
Broad fields, uncultured and unclaimed, are waiting for the plow  
Of progress that shall make them bloom a hundred years from now!

Why prize so much the world's applause? Why dread so much its blame?  
A fleeting echo is its voice of censure or of fame;  
The praise that thrills the heart, the scorn that dyes with shame the brow,  
Will be as long forgotten dreams a hundred years from now.

O patient hearts, that meekly bear your weary load of wrong!  
O earnest hearts, that bravely dare, and strive to grow more strong!  
Press on till perfect peace is won; you'll never dream of now  
You struggled o'er life's thorny road a hundred years from now.

Grand, lofty souls, who live and toil that freedom, right and truth  
Alone may rule the universe, for you are endless youth;  
When laid the blest, with God you rest, the greatest lands shall bow  
Above your clay in reverent love a hundred years from now.

Earth's empires rise and fall, O Time! like breakers on thy shore;  
They rush upon thy rocks of doom, go down, and are no more;  
The starry wilderness of worlds that gem night's radiant brow  
Will light the skies for other eyes a hundred years from now.

Our Father, to whose sleepless eyes the past and future stand  
An open page, like babes we cling to Thy protecting hand;  
Change, sorrow, death are naught to us if we may safely bow  
Beneath the shadow of Thy throne a hundred years from now.

## NOT A KNICKERBOCKER.

THE DINNER had reached that point at which it is considered incumbent upon the ladies to retire.

Little Mrs. George Vanderburgh, sole representative of her sex at the table, looks doubtful across to her husband, and obedient to the glance of approval she sees in his eyes rises to depart. Jack Raymond, their guest, who completes the small party of three also starts to his feet, anticipating the ponderous movements of the venerable family retainer, and flings wide open the heavy mahogany doors through which the little lady must make her way into the hall. Mrs. George smiles at him; then blushes as her small feet entangle themselves in her train, and finally passes through the lofty arch, dragging foaming billows of Valenciennes lace and azure silk in her wake. Mr. Raymond gazed after her with a stare of admiration for which he would never forgive himself if it had fallen upon his hostess' fair face instead of her back hair.

"Jack, my boy," draws George Vanderburgh from his seat at the table, in the softest and laziest of voices, "you couldn't look at another man's wife with that sort of expression in your countenance. It is strictly forbidden in the tenth commandment."

Jack Raymond resumed his position at the other's right hand.

"I saw, George, where did you find her? Who is she?"

"M. wife."

"Obviously; but I don't understand. When I went to Europe two years ago, I let you lying in an attitude of prostrate adoration at the feet of the imperial Judith Delmar, belle of the Avenue and queen at Saratoga, with every prospect of an immediate wedding—"

"My dear fellow, I got up."

"And now I come back and find you married to an angel. How on earth did it happen? Who is she?"

Jack's enthusiasm is checked by a warning glance from his host. He looks up, and his eyes meet the sable countenance of the servant of the Vanderburgh family, and discover there an eager curiosity that even exceeds his own. Poor Jacob! He has lived with the family, man and boy, for nearly eight years; his reverence for the knickerbocker blood is as strong as his faith in the New Testament, and now in his old age he is compelled to serve a mistress whose name he does not know. Now perhaps there is a chance that the secret may be disclosed.

Alas! no. George Vanderburgh glances his African with a glance.

"Jacob, attend to your business. Put the cigars on the table, and go."

"I beg your pardon," begins Mr. Raymond as soon as they are alone.

"You need not, Jack. Mrs. Vanderburgh is Mrs. George Vanderburgh, and for the quid nuncs of society and that is enough. But you, old friend, companion of my boyhood, and truest-hearted of men, shall hear the story if you would like."

"Not unless you like."

"But I do."

Then the cigars are lighted, and the two young men settle themselves comfortably in their chairs, the one to hear and the other to tell a story.

"Now Jack, if you have an imagination, fancy how the bones of all my Dutch ancestors must shake when I announce that the last of their line has married a woman whose name was Smith."

"Smith?"

"Either that or none. Do you know anything of New England, Jack?"

"Have heard of the place—a land of wooden nutmegs. There is a small settlement on the coast called Boston, where the people eat Greek roots instead of bread and butter, and where they manufacture a transcendental theology quite as remarkable in its way as the Calvinism it replaces."

"Exactly. But New Hampshire is the scene of my small love story. It was at the foot of one of those granite monuments I picked up my daisy, my Margaret my pearl. You remember the summer you sailed for Europe. The same week I received a command from the imperial Judith to follow her to Saratoga, or rather she insinuated that my presence there would give her pleasure. I took the hint and followed, and after the manner of other devotees before the altar of fashion we changed the monotonous weariness of fashionable life in New York for a second edition of the same thing at a watering place. We danced, rode and walked. I was the imperial Judith's devoted cavalier. I had quite made up my mind to lay my hand and fortune at the lady's feet; and although I felt it would not do to encounter her with my heart, as she had never displayed the smallest interest in that part of my personality, it nevertheless pleased my fancy to think of the queen-like grace with which she would preside over the hospitality of the Vanderburgh mansion, and I concluded to be satisfied. But one morning as we were walking toward Congress Spring, the fair hand of royal Judith lying on my arm, a sense of the importance of the step I was about to take began to oppress me. I felt a longing for a few weeks of perfect peace and quiet before I undertook the manifold responsibilities of a married man."

"Business became my excuse, and in the afternoon I fled toward the east, only a couple of hundred miles, and found myself in a little New England town lying at the base of a great peaceful mountain. The landlord of the cozy little hotel, a small building all white paint and green blinds, received me very graciously; and I liked the old man immensely, in spite of the fact that his hair stood out end when I asked him for a sherry cobbler. I spent the night there, and in the morning the old gentleman offered me his horse and his fishing rods to help me pass away the time, and then suggested that perhaps I would like to visit the mills."

By the end of the first day I had exhausted the horse and fish, and bored myself pretty thoroughly, and on the next morning I determined to try the mills. "Did you ever see a cotton mill, Jack, one of those enormous red brick structures reeking with steam, heat, dampness and horrible noises? I saw the proprietor, he took me through the building."

I looked at the great looms, the whizzing spindles and all the ingenious machinery which man has devised to supply the necessity for clothing brought about by the transgressions of Eve; but what most attracted my attention was the pale faces of the operatives standing about those horrible machines, the children, prematurely old and sweltered in that awful heat.

Ah, Jack, New England has freed the slaves in the cotton fields; now let her look to the slaves in the cotton mill."

I passed through the files of languid children and weary women on my way to the office, where the proprietor offered me a chair. As I sat down I saw in one corner of the room a small figure bending over a pile of heavy business-like books. She turned her head as her employer spoke, and I saw another pale face—so pale, so gentle, with great violet eyes that seemed to ask everything they rested on, "Why am I so unhappy?"

The same eyes, my boy, that smiled at you so brightly over your dinner half an hour ago!"

"Not a factory girl?"

"Not exactly; one of those girls you find so often in New England, finely educated and lady-like, but impelled by necessity to work. She was employed as assistant book-keeper by the great firm of Watson & Co., that owned the mills. All at once, Jack, I became interested in cotton."

I used to haunt that great shrieking Bedlam of a mill."

I investigated all the processes the plant went through from the time it enters the mill in great puffy bales until it goes out in smooth white muslin. I think the proprietors took me for a dry-goods clerk or a politician."

I became so learned that I knew all

the grades from paper cambric to sheeting, and I discoursed upon the tariff and the necessity of protecting American manufactures like a member of Congress. I even made researches into the art of book-keeping. And all, Jack, for the sake of a pale faced factory girl with blue eyes—I, the last of Vanderburghs!

How I used to lean over that great gawky ink-stained desk and watch the small figure in the shabby alpaca frock! How I used to intercept the little girl on her way back and forth to the great mill, and watch her blush when her great blue eyes met mine!"

"Had you made up your mind to marry her?"

"God forgive me, I had not thought about it."

"You scoundrel!"

"Ask Pearl if I am a scoundrel, Jack?"

"I have no doubt that she worships you, you most unworthy wretch. She looks just like such a sweet, foolish little darling."

"Don't force me to call your attention to the tenth commandment again, if you please, Jack."

"Go on."

"I am ashamed to confess it, Jack, but for two hours in my life I was a villain—only two, though, and I am 35 years old; the proposition isn't bad, is it? One morning it dawned upon me all at once the mischief I had been doing. And that very hour I told little Pearl I was going away and bade her good bye."

"What did she say?"

"Not a word; only put her little hand in mine for a moment, and turned back to her great ledger; with a brave look, like the true New England girl she is. Then, Jack, I knew myself to be a scoundrel. But there was the imperial Judith waiting at Saratoga, worthy mate for the heir of all the Vanderburghs."

"At four o'clock that afternoon I jumped aboard the train westward. The mills were two miles below the station and we must pass them on our way. My heart ached terribly when I thought of the sweet little girl I was leaving behind me, and I chose my seat in the car so that I could see the great building when we passed it, and perhaps catch a glimpse of her. As we neared it there was a great bustle and confusion—people running hither and thither, women screaming, and the clouds of steam and smoke that usually floated around the building increased a hundred fold. A curve in the road brought us full in front of the mills, and in a moment I saw that the largest of them, the one where my little Pearl spent her weary days, was on fire. Dense clouds of smoke, mingled with tiny tongues of flame, were issuing from the windows. Frightened operatives were rushing from the burning building, trampling each other under foot in their mad haste and the whole scene was one of unutterable horror and dismay. The train was stopped. In a moment we were on our way to the burning mill, I was among the first. Ah, Jack, think how I felt when I heard a horror-stricken group of men crying out: 'Where is Miss Smith? She is nowhere to be found!' She was known to be in the office when the alarm of fire was given, and had not been seen since. One prayer from the lips all too unaccustomed to such exercises, and I was in the midst of the burning building. Up the stairs I rushed like a madman, burst through the door of the office, and there, with her hands clasped and her head lying on the open page of her ledger, lay the girl I loved. In a moment I had my coat off, wrapped it over her head, and clasped her closely as I could, lest those demoniac darting tongues of flames and falling cinders should touch her. I carried her down the burning, crackling staircase safe into the fresh air. What a cheer they gave us, Jack! Then there was a dull, rumbling sound, a crash, and myriads of sparks went shooting up like stars into the smoke-clouded air. But I do not remember anything further until I woke up and found myself in bed, with a little blue-eyed nurse bending over me with tender hands, one of which I captured and kissed and never lost sight of until I had decorated it with a wedding ring. One day, Jack, when we were first engaged, I asked her why she made no attempt to get out of the building when she heard the cry of fire. What do you think she told me? That I had gone away, and she thought it would be easier to die there in the fire than to live her life without me. Think of it, Jack! Just fancy the fair Judith allowing herself to be burned to death because her lover had left her! Ah, my little wife, my country daisy! I wish you could have seen her when I brought her home, so frightened at my magnificence, so overawed by the grim-visaged Dutchmen looking down from their perches on the drawing-room walls. I was obliged to re-assure her that if she persisted in being so frightened, I would have to dispose of my ancestors as Charles Surface did. Fancy the first settlers knocked down at auction at so much per head."

"But the imperial Judith?"

"The fire had burned all recollection

of her out of my head. The pride of the Knickerbocker had also disappeared in the flames, and when I had learned my little Pearl's sad and simple history, I think I loved her all the better for her humble nameless birth. Her mother was a farmer's daughter, who married a strolling vagabond by the name of Smith. She afterwards had reason to think the name was assumed, but she clung to him faithfully until he was found drowned under the mill one day; and then she died herself in giving birth to Pearl, or Margaret, as they called her. Judith, friend Jack, retains her maiden estate, though she replaced me in two weeks by a French count. Now if you are looking out for a wife—"

"Don't, my boy. Are there no more burning mills in New England? Those blue eyes haunt me. I want to see them again."

"I don't know whether I'll let you or not."

"Hark! isn't that a baby's cry?"

"Of course it is; a bouncing youngster, the honor of whose paternity I claim."

"Let's go and take a look at him."

"All right. I don't mind your admiring the child."

Arm in arm they go up the stairs, where a little woman who is not a Knickerbocker kneels in maternal adoration before the cradle of a young tyrant who is.

## JUDITH'S TEMPTATION.

HOW bright and cheerful the kitchen of the old Stedhurst farm house looked to Judith Black on the dreary September evening she came there to live. How merrily the fire flickered on the walls with red fantastic reflections. How the tins sparkled against the wall, and what a song of welcome the teakettle sang upon the hearth. And Mrs. Stedhurst's geraniums in the windows, with their great velvet leaves and spikes of vivid scarlet blossoms—to Judith they seemed fairer than any conservatory, crowded full of fan palms and camelias, and trailing jessamine.

Judith Black had been very poor. She had been a dressmaker's assistant, but times were hard, and Mrs. Needle-ham had discharged two-thirds of her force. Judith had striven to get work, but situations were few and applicants many, and the cup of starvation had been perilously close to her lips when she crept into the intelligence office where Edmund Stedhurst saw her and engaged her to help his mother about the housework.

"I shan't like her, Ned," said Mrs. Stedhurst, when the "new girl" had gone up to her room for the night, and mother and son were together before the kitchen fire.

"Why not, mother?"

"She is too pretty; and she has such a haughty, queenly sort of way. I should as soon think of asking the President's lady to scrub the floor and feed the pigs."

"That's nonsense, mother," said Edmund, half vexed, half laughing. "She can't help her face, can she? It is some of the scraggy faced, small pox marked ones, who were so exacting as to the wages they should receive and the duties they were to perform, that I wouldn't have them in the house on any terms."

Judith was the only one who was willing to come for any sort of work, and was willing to accept moderate wages."

"She'll suit you," said Mr. Stedhurst, who had come in while the discussion was going on. "Take my word for it, mother, she'll suit you."

Judith Black stayed a month, and then Mrs. Stedhurst engaged her for another month.

"She is neat," said the farmer's wife, "and she is quick to learn, and I believe her to be thoroughly trustworthy."

"If only Ned don't fall in love with her," humorously suggested Mr. Stedhurst.

"Why shouldn't he fall in love with her if he wants to?" said Mrs. Stedhurst valiantly.

"My dear, my dear," remonstrated Mr. Stedhurst, "what do you know about her?"

"What do we know about any girl, for that matter?" said Mrs. Stedhurst. "She is certainly very pretty, and very faithful, and very honest."

"Honest," put in Mr. Stedhurst dryly, because she has no temptation to be otherwise."

"Now Phineas, you are too bad," said Mrs. Stedhurst, impatiently. "The currant jelly has never been touched in the closet, and I've left the sugar bowl twice on the dresser with thirty-three lumps of sugar in it; and thirty-three there were, when I counted 'em, after she had gone to bed."

"No very great temptation there," said Mr. Stedhurst.

"No, but straws show which way the wind blows," said she.

About a month subsequently to this conversation Edmund came to his father.

"Father, I was twenty-two years old in October," he said.

"Yes," said Mr. Stedhurst, looking

hard at the end of theawl with which he was mending his Sunday harness.

"And you were a year younger than that when you were married?"

"I believe so, Ned."

"Have you any objections to my taking a wife?"

"None in the world—if it proves that she is the right sort of a wife!" answered the old gentleman.

"Father, I have fallen in love with Judith Black!"

"Just exactly what I have feared all along," cried his father with a shrug of his shoulders.

"Why do you use that word 'feared,' father?" questioned Edmund.

"Because, my lad, she is almost a stranger to us."

"Father, I would stake my life on her truth and honesty," cried the young man.

"Because you are in love with her, my son. Edmund look here. Have you spoken to her yet?"

"Not yet."

"Will you do me a favor?"

Edmund smiled a little: "That depends upon what it is."

"Will you wait one week before you ask her to be your wife? Will you wait one week without asking her any questions?"

"If you desire it, sir."

"At the end of that time I will tell you what I think upon the matter."

And he went on with the repairs on his Sunday harness.

The next day he brought down an armful of old coats, vests and pants from the carpet.

"Judith, these things are getting moth eaten. They belonged to an old uncle of mine who died ten years ago—an odd, miserly old fellow, who hoarded everything up, and died in a cellar at last. I want them cut up into carper rags."

"Yes, sir," answered Judith, in the soft low voice which was habitual to her. And when her day's routine of duty was done she went to work diligently with Mrs. Stedhurst's big shining shears.

She was alone in the kitchen the next afternoon just as the clock was striking three. Edmund was in the barn sorting winter apples. Mr. Stedhurst was hammering away in the tool house at a new set of shelves for the milk room, and Mrs. Stedhurst had gone to her neighbor's with her knitting work. And as Judith worked she sang softly to herself an old Scotch ballad "Bonnie Dundee."

Picking up an old waistcoat of ginger-colored cloth, she trimmed off the buttons and turned inside out the pockets to cut them away. There was a piece of folded brownish paper in one of them, Judith took it out without thinking and unfolded it.

To her surprise, she perceived that it was a fifty dollar treasury note.

In her first astonishment she uttered a little cry, all alone though she was, and then she remembered what Mr. Stedhurst had said about the miserly old uncle who had "hoarded up his last gains and died in a cellar at last." This doubtless was one of the old man's hiding places—and he had died and made no sign.

And this precious bit of paper! was it not her's by right of discovery? Her eyes gleamed and her fingers trembled convulsively as they tightened their grasp upon it. She was so poor—so pinched for money. And these Stedhursts, to whom it would naturally revert, were rich and did not need it. They would never know. Nobody would know.

For a minute the temptation battled fiercely with her better nature. For a minute only! And then Judith rose up and went straight to the door of the store room—went with drooping eyelids and a scarlet stain on either cheek.

"Come in," said Mr. Stedhurst, as Judith knocked at the door, and she entered.

"Mr. Stedhurst," said she, in a voice that would falter a little, in spite of her resolution to control it, "here is some money, a fifty dollar bill. I have found it in one of the pockets of those old waistcoats."

"Ah!" said Mr. Stedhurst putting down his plane and taking the crumpled bit of paper. "And why didn't you keep it? Did it not occur to you that I would never know anything about it?"

"Yes," said Judith, "it did occur to me, sir."

"Then why didn't you keep it?"

"It was not mine," Judith answered.

"Judith," said old Phineas Stedhurst "come here and kiss me, my girl. I put that money there!"

"Did you?"

"I did. To test you. To make sure that the girl to whom my boy had given his heart was worthy of him."

Judith's face glowed a deep scarlet.

"I—I don't understand you, sir."

"No, I suppose not, but you will in a few days."

And she did when Edmund asked her to be his wife.

"My own love," said he, "the farm house has been like a different place since you came to it. Will you promise me to stay here always?"

And Judith's answer was "Yes."