

Select Tale.

From Chambers' Journal.

THE OLD LADY'S WORK BOX.

Our relations, the gay, prosperous Passymounts, did not think it worth while to trouble themselves about an old spinster cousin of theirs and ours, generally known as Dame Nodlekens, though her visiting cards designated the owner as "Miss Deborah S. M. Nodlekens." The Passymounts were aware of the fact, that our cousin's comfortable annuity was only a little one; it therefore seemed highly improbable that Dame Nodlekens would have sought to bequeath on her decease, save personalties, which were of small comparative value, as she was a liberal almsgiver, and, in a moderate way, enjoyed every luxury. The garniture of Dame Nodlekens' house, indeed, was faded and antique; the spinnet was cracked; the linen was well darned; the plate scanty, and worn thin with use and fur-bishing; and the books torn and dusty, might easily be counted on a couple of shelves. Dame Nodlekens had neither diamonds nor pearls, nor trinkets of any description; her days were passed in a dreamy state of tranquillity: stitching, stitching forever, with her beloved huge work-box at her elbow. That wanted no polishing; that was abundantly fitted up with worsted, cotton tape, buttons, bodkins, needles and such a multiplicity of reels and balls, that to enumerate them would be a tedious task. Dame Nodlekens particularly excelled and prided herself on her darning: carpets, house linens, stockings, all bore unimpeachable testimony to this branch of industry. Holes and thin places were hailed with delight by Dame Nodlekens; and it was whispered—but that might be a mere matter of scandal—that she even went so far as to cut holes in her best table cloths, for the purpose of exercising her skill and ingenuity in repairing the fractures. Be that as it may, the work-box, was as much a companion to her as dogs or cats to many other single ladies; she was lost without it; her conversation always turned on the subject of thread-papers and needle-cases; and never was darning-cotton more scientifically rolled into neat balls, than by Dame Nodlekens.

The contents of that wonderful work-box would have furnished a small shop. As a child I always regarded it with a species of awe and veneration; and, without daring to lay a finger on the treasures it contained, my prying eyes greedily devoured its mysteries, when the raised edge revealed its mountains of cotton, and forests of pins and needles. There was the three Misses Passymount, and one Master Passymount; the young ladies cultivated various accomplishments, such as drawing, dancing, playing on the harp and piano, and talking, dressing, and flirting; but as to the accomplishment—the one accomplishment needful for women, as Dame Nodlekens called it—they, the dashing, rich Misses Passymount, knew nothing of it. Nay, Miss Laura Passymount blushed, and Miss Arabella tittered, when Dame Nodlekens asked them if they could darn a stocking, and even offered to give them a lesson, on hearing their disdainful confession of utter ignorance. "Our stockings do not require darning, cousin Nodlekens," said Miss Passymount, tossing her head; "we are not accustomed to the thing at all—we have been differently brought up;" and Miss Passymount looked to my mother and myself—as much as to say, "We leave darned stockings and table-cloths to such poor folks as you."

Dame Nodlekens took no notice of the rebuff, but went on with her work, and continued to scold me, at intervals, for idleness and skipping stitches—though on the whole, she was proud of me as her pupil; and, between us it is impossible to say how many pairs of stockings we made whole in the course of the year. We resided near our cousin Deborah, and midway between her house and ours was the fine mansion inhabited by the Passymounts, and many an evening when I was invited to take tea at Dame Nodlekens', and to bring my work bag in my hand as a matter of course, and to sit with her for long hours without speaking, intent on our needles, the silence unbroken save by the ticking of the eight day clock, I confess the sounds of music and the lighted rooms, as I passed by the Passymounts' house filled my young heart with something like regret—not envy; no, I hope I never indulged that. The Passymounts did not ask any of us to their festive gatherings, save at rare intervals; and then we did not often go; for we were proud in our humble way, and had enough to do to procure stuff-socks for the little ones, without spending money on finery for the Passymounts' parties. But I had danced there once or twice in a white muslin frock, which my dear mother had ironed with her own hands, and Dame Nodlekens had delightedly darned; when I met with an accident running after the children; and I loved that dear old white muslin frock ever since, and I have it now laid up in lavender, because I passed such happy bright evenings when I

wore it; and I did not feel a bit that I looked shabby, when my partner, Harry Lloyd, picked up a fresh rose I had worn in my hair, and would not restore it to me, saying something very foolish, of course, as young men will do to foolish young girls who like to hear flattery. And when I went by the Passymounts' house, my way to drink tea with Dame Nodlekens, and to sit poring over needle work in silence, it was only natural, I think, to look at their windows with a sigh; for I knew there would be dancing and merry-making within, and Harry Lloyd would be there. People said that Harry Lloyd was courting Arabella Passymount; but I knew that was false; because Harry had wished to marry me, and his father would not consent that his son should marry a portionless girl; and my father would not listen to Harry, but went off in such a rage as I never saw him in before, at the bare idea of his daughter entering any family unwished for—as, truth to tell, Harry had been silly enough to press me to marry him without asking anybody's consent. Old Mr. Lloyd and my father were very civil towards each other, but when Harry found that I would neither see him in private, nor receive any of his letters, he chose to behave himself like an injured person, as if we had all deeply offended him. Yet I did not believe he was courting Miss Arabella Passymount, though I could fancy Harry dancing and laughing within, as leaning on my father's arm, we walked homewards down the dark street, across which a ray of light gleamed, streaming from the windows of our rich but unkind relatives.

Harry's mother was a cousin of Dame Nodlekens; so she, of course, knew all about the tale of true love never running smooth. But Miss Deborah, like a prudent spinster, made no comment. She had eschewed matrimony herself; but being naturally of a taciturn, uncommunicative temperment, no one knew whether it was from choice or necessity. Her work-box was to Dame Nodlekens as a dear friend; I do not believe she loved any human being so well—her whole heart was in it; and the attachment she evinced towards me as time progressed, was fostered and encouraged by our mutual zeal in performing tasks of needle work. Not that I shared in her devotion; I was actuated by a sense of duty alone, and would far rather, could I have done so conscientiously, have been dancing and laughing with companions of my own age. But ply the needle I did, and so did Dame Nodlekens; and we two became, with the huge old work-box between us, quite a pair of loving friends; and at least two evenings in every week I went to sit with the lone woman. She would have had me to do so every evening; but though there were so many of us at home, our parents could not bear to spare any of us out of their sight oftener than they deemed indispensable.

At length Harry Lloyd came to any good-bye; he was going abroad at his father's wish. My parents shook hands kindly with him, and he said pleasant and affectionate words to all. But when he came to me—ah! he did not speak; but I flung myself into my dear mother's arms, and wept, and I heard my father say, "God bless you!" and Harry was gone. So I went on darning stockings, and the Passymounts went on dancing, and Dame Nodlekens went on the even tenor of her way; until at length her summons came, and, after several warnings, she shut up her work-box, locked it and put the key in a sealed packet; these preparations completed, Dame Nodlekens turned her face to the wall, and fell asleep.

My gentle mother had a heart so tender and benevolent, that although Dame Nodlekens and herself had had so few sympathies in common, she shed tears on hearing the closing scene was over; and I remember her turning to my father with a sigh, and saying, "Ah! she was a wonderfully industrious woman, and such a help to me in the darning-way. Poor old soul! I doubt not that she has left us all she had to leave; and every little is a windfall, with a large family to provide for."

But my dear mother for once had misapprehended, for Dame Nodlekens had not left us all she had to leave. To the surprise of the Passymounts, no less than to the surprise of ourselves, Miss Deborah's testamentary disposition of her property was as follows:—To Miss Passymount, the cracked spinnet was bequeathed, she being "musical" (so the will was worded); to Miss Laura, the books were left, she being "literary"; to Miss Arabella, the gimcracks, chimneys, ornaments and paper screens, and so on, she being a "lover of art"; to Master Passymount, the only son of this rich aspiring family, Dame Nodlekens left the few ounces of silver, denominated her plate—Master John being "thrifty"; to Mrs. Passymount was bequeathed the household linen, and to Mr. Passymount the household furniture, because "they had exhibited so fine a taste in adorning their own fine mansion;" to Ada Denwell—that was myself—the huge old work-box, along with all its contents, was left, "in token of the high esteem and affection with which she was regarded" by the deceased. I was to inherit the well-stored work-box, only on condition that it was to be daily used by me in preference to all others; "every ball of darning cotton, as it diminish-

es, shall bring its blessing," said Dame Nodlekens; "for Ada Denwell is a good girl, and has darned more holes in the stockings of her little brothers and sisters than any other girl of her age. Therefore I particularly commend the balls of darning cotton to her notice; and I particularly recommend her to use them up as soon as she can, and she will meet with her reward in due season."

"My poor Ada," sobbed my mother, rather pettishly, "it is rather hard. I must confess, only to have a few balls of darning cotton, and needles, and tapes; when the Passymounts, who want nothing, and will turn up their noses at such trumpery as Dame Nodlekens could leave them, have all."

"But, my dear," interposed my father, smiling, "if it is such trumpery, why covet it for our Ada?"

"It may bring one or two hundred pounds," Joseph, replied my mother, meekly; "for there's furniture, and plate, and linen, and books, you know. And, of course, we should have sold everything off, which, no doubt, the Passymounts will do; and only think of the dame leaving Ada nothing but her work-box."

"But, mamma," I ventured to remark, "we must not forget that poor Miss Deborah placed more value on this work-box than on anything else she possessed in the world. And it is a great proof of her affection for me, and, besides, how very useful it will be; I shall love it, I am sure, quite as much as she did. And here is the key, all sealed up and directed to me."

"Well, well, my dear child, we must be content, of course. I am sure I do not wish to be grasping or covetous, or to foster such unworthy feelings in any of our dear children," replied my mother, with an air of resignation; "and I am thankful that the poor old lady found comfort in your companionship, Ada, my dear, which she evidently did; and also that she does you justice, my dear child, by naming you so handsomely. But dear me! how the Passymounts must laugh at their legacies! Only fancy Miss Passymount, with her brilliant harp and grand piano, turning to Dame Nodlekens' spinnet, by the way of change, being 'musical'; or Miss Laura quitting her silken bound volumes, lettered in gold, for the torn, dusty, dirty books on the two shelves in the dame's dining room; and then that riddled old linen for Mrs. Passymount—why, they haven't a darned duster in the house, I warrant."

"Never mind, my dear—never mind," said my father; "let them laugh—it's better than crying. Dame Nodlekens meant to be just—she was an honest, just meaning woman; the Passymounts and ourselves are the only relatives she had, and she wished to leave us all alike, if possible, quite irrelevant of our circumstances. And, as Ada remarks, the work-box being left to her, proves the old lady loved her the best."

"Then she might have shown it," muttered my mother, "by giving the silver instead of darning cotton."

But a mild reproving look from my father made the speaker blush, as she quickly came to his side, kissed him, and left the room. From that day we never discussed the subject again of Dame Nodlekens' testamentary arrangements; the work-box was in constant requisition at my side, and the balls of darning cotton rapidly diminished. The Passymounts made much fun, amongst themselves and their neighbors, about the grand legacies which had fallen to their share. Nothing was removed from Dame Nodlekens' house, but a well attended sale cleared the premises speedily. Mrs. Passymount laughingly declared that the proceeds had actually bought an India shawl for one of the girls, and a gold bracelet for another; and Master Passymount handed out a small gold snuff-box—"his share," he was wont to boast, "of the old girls' rubbish." I saw the brokers carrying away the tables and chairs which I knew so well, and which for so many years had rested securely in Dame Nodlekens' peaceful house. I could not help sighing sadly as one relic after another was rudely flung into the street; and I rejoiced that the dear old work-box at least was safe in my keeping. Painters and paperers were soon busy in the dingy house; a new family became the tenants; and nothing was left to remind us of Dame Nodlekens, save the huge work-box. That, however, never was idle; and, as I have said the balls of darning cotton grew gradually smaller and smaller, until at length one day, as I was sitting beside my mother, busy with our needles, she remarked, "You have followed poor Dame Nodlekens' injunctions, my Ada. She particularly recommended you to use up the balls of darning cotton as soon as possible; and look, there is one just done."

As my mother spoke, I unrolled a long needleful, and came to the end of that ball. A piece of paper fell to the ground, which had been the nucleus on which the ball was formed. I stooped to pick it up, and was just about throwing it into the fire, when it caught my mother's eye, and she stretched out her hand and seized it. In a moment, she unfolded it before our astonished gaze; it was a bank note of fifty pounds!

"O, dear, misjudged Dame Nodlekens!" she exclaimed; "there is our Ada's reward in due season. It's just like her—kind, queer old soul!"

We were not long of using up all the other balls of darning cotton in that marvellous work-box; and such a reward as I found for my industry, sure was never met with before or since. Truly it was a fairy box, and my needle the fairy's wand.

No less than ten fifty pound notes were thus brought to light; and my father laughingly declared I had wrought my own dower with my needle. No persuasion could induce him to appropriate the treasure; he said it was my "reward;" nor would he allow me to expend a farthing of it in the way I would best have loved—namely, in educating my little brothers and sisters, and adding to the frugal comforts of our dear home. The story of the treasure found in the work-box soon got noised abroad; and, among other curious visitors, old Mrs. Lloyd, Harry's mother, called to satisfy herself as to the truth of the report. She was very pleasant and gossiping, and soon afterwards, a formal but courteous invitation arrived—in which I was particularly included with my father and mother—to a dinner party at the Lloyd's, three weeks from the date of the note being the day specified for the feast. To my surprise, the invitation was quickly accepted by my parents; nor was my surprise much greater, on entering Mr. Lloyd's drawing room, to see Harry there looking well and supremely happy. A mist gathered over my eyes when Harry's father took my hand, and placed it in his son's. Ah, that was a bright dinner party for us all! and in three months after, I became Harry's wife. The dear old work-box stands in our house, in a place of honor; and at festive seasons, when happy family reunions take place, never was a work-box so much admired and caressed; and my own blooming children, and many nephews and nieces, gather around it, and tell their fairy tales, until I believe they almost expect some day to see a little old fairy in green, representing good old Dame Nodlekens herself, jump out when the lid is opened, with a darning needle for a wand, and a ball of cotton for a stool.

Furniture.

CABINET—The undersigned has always on hand a large stock of superior Cabinet Ware, in all the different styles, which he is prepared to sell at the lowest prices. He writes attention particularly to the **PARLOR, BEDROOM, BREAKFAST, and DINING ROOM**, which entirely obviates all objections. The bottom can be attached to all beds. They have given entire satisfaction to all who have seen in use. **COFFINS** made to order at the shortest notice. **JACOB FETTER.**

ROBERT B. SMILEY, CABINET—The undersigned has always on hand a large stock of superior Cabinet Ware, in all the different styles, which he is prepared to sell at the lowest prices. He writes attention particularly to the **PARLOR, BEDROOM, BREAKFAST, and DINING ROOM**, which entirely obviates all objections. The bottom can be attached to all beds. They have given entire satisfaction to all who have seen in use. **COFFINS** made to order at the shortest notice. **JACOB FETTER.**

EXTENSIVE FURNITURE ROOM—The undersigned has always on hand a large stock of superior Furniture, in all the different styles, which he is prepared to sell at the lowest prices. He writes attention particularly to the **PARLOR, BEDROOM, BREAKFAST, and DINING ROOM**, which entirely obviates all objections. The bottom can be attached to all beds. They have given entire satisfaction to all who have seen in use. **COFFINS** made to order at the shortest notice. **JACOB FETTER.**

SPAIN'S ATMOSPHERIC CHURNS—A full supply of the above celebrated Churns, now on hand of the first premium at the late Pennsylvania State Fair, the first premium at the Franklin Institute and Delaware and Maryland State Fairs, and various others at different places. It will make more and better butter from a given quantity of cream, and in less time than any churn in the market. For sale wholesale and retail by **PASCHALL MORRIS & CO.** Agricultural Warehouse and Seed Store, corner of 7th and Market, Philadelphia. Dec. 6, 1854.

SADDLERY AND HARNESS MAKING—The undersigned continues to carry on the above business, in all the various branches, in North Hanover street, Carlisle, two doors North of Leonard's corner, where he intends keeping on hand a general assortment of all kinds of SADDLERY, Bridles, Martingales, Girths, Trunks, and Harness, and all the various articles in their respective branches. He also manufactures Saddles, Harness, and Whips in all their various branches, and confidently believes from the general approbation of his customers, that he makes the neatest and best goods in all their variety of breadth, that is made in the country. He also makes all kinds of Mattresses to order, viz: Straw, Hunk, Curled Hair and Spring Mattresses. All the above articles will be made of the best material and workmanship, and with the utmost despatch. **WM. OSBORN.**

REMOVING—Shaving and Hair Dressing—The undersigned having removed to North Hanover street, adjoining Sipe's Furniture Warehouse, invites attention to his saloon, where all persons can receive a clean and easy shave and have their hair cut and dressed in the most fashionable and exquisite manner. There is something soothing in a good shave, if any are disposed to doubt it, let them try me, and I will fully demonstrate the fact. **April 6, 1855. WILLIAM BURGESS.**

Stores and Shops.

WATCHES! CLOCKS!

FANCY JEWELRY, &c.—I have now on hand and for sale my old stand on Main Street, opposite Marion Hall, entirely new and elegant stock of **WATCHES, JEWELRY, MEDALLIONS, &c.** Gold Lever Watches, hunting and open case, Silver Silver Lever and Quarter Watches, a large variety of Gold Anchors for Ladies and Gentlemen. Medallions, a splendid assortment for ladies and gentlemen. Bracelets, Pins of every pattern, and all prices. Gold Chains for vest and shirt, gold curb chains, Finger Rings, Cuff-links, Studs, Sleeve Buttons, Crosses, Drop and Hoop Ear-Rings, a large variety. Silver and Plated Forks, Table and Tea Spoons, Butter Knives, &c. of various styles and prices. Gold and Silver Trunkets, Gold, Silver and Common Spectacles, a large assortment to suit all ages, and to which we invite particular attention. Particular attention paid to the **REPAIRING** of Watches, Jewellery, and all work warranted. Returning to my old friends and customers for former patronage, I respectfully solicit a continuance of their favors. **June 20. THOMAS CONLY.**

GROCERIES! NEW GROCERIES!

THE SUBSCRIBER has just returned from New York with a large and varied assortment of **GROCERIES, GLASS, and QUEEN'S-WARE, FISH, &c.** which he offers for sale on the most reasonable terms, at his new store, the corner of North Hanover street and the Public Square, directly opposite the Carlisle Post Office. His stock embraces everything useful in a Grocery and Variety store. The public are invited to call and examine his stock before purchasing elsewhere, as he feels confident he will sell the best goods at the lowest prices. **J. D. HALBER.**

GROCERIES! TEAS, COFFEES!

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CHINA, GLASS, AND QUEEN'S-WARE!

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SPRING AND SUMMER GOODS

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Gas Fitting and Machinery.

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CARLISLE FOUNDRY

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