

Mountain Sentinel.

"WE GO WHERE DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES POINT THE WAY;—WHEN THEY CEASE TO LEAD, WE CEASE TO FOLLOW."

BY JOHN G. GIVEN.]

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MISCELLANEOUS.

LYDIA LITTLE'S LOVERS. Or, The Rivals in a "Fix."

BY PAUL CLAYTON.

One of the prettiest lasses that ever graced a country dance, or turned the head of a lover, was Lydia Little, the subject of the following sketch.

Nobody could deny it; she was very pretty. Even her rivals allowed that she was quite fascinating, and her bitterest enemies declared that after all she was a beauty.

Although Lydia was really handsome, it was a very unfortunate circumstance that she was conscious of the fact. It is no injury to be a pretty girl, if she doesn't know it; but Lydia had quite as perfect a knowledge of her charms as even her warmest admirers, and the consequence was, she became one of the most vain, shrewd, and heartless coquettes that ever made a bon-fire of true hearts in order to laugh at the flame.

Lydia had ardent admirers, far and near, for her beauty was famous in all the villages within twenty miles of the town in which her father, a rich old farmer, resided.

Although Lydia smiled on all, there were only two who were known to possess very great importance in her eyes, and who seemed to cast all other lovers in the shade.

One of these young men was named White and the other Brown. These, it was said, were Lydia's favorite colors, and it only remained for her to choose between them. Indeed it was a matter of debate in the village, whether it would be better to become a little white or a little brown.

Messrs White and Brown both lived at a distance from the town, but White had the advantage over his rival, for he lived the nearest. These two young gentlemen had heard of each other, although they had not the pleasure of personal acquaintance. White was afraid of Brown, and Brown was afraid of White, so that Lydia out of pure kindness, was very careful that they should never meet at her house.

If the rivals feared each other, they feared Lydia's father still more. He had tried to put a stop to her innocent flirtations, and had repeatedly threatened to shoot her suitors if they didn't keep aloof. Besides that his name was LITTLE, and he was a little man; but little as he was, he was a little fierce and the beaux were not a little afraid of his resentment.

One day when Lydia's father was gone from home and was not expected back until late at night, she determined to send for one of her suitors to come and keep her company during the evening. But which should she choose? Here was a dilemma, indeed. She reflected that Brown was with her last, and feeling that it would be unjust not to allow White to come in his turn, she resolved that White should be the man. So she dropped a line to White, and had everything prepared for his reception in the evening.

Lydia felt so confident that her dear White would fly to meet her, that she would have been willing to stake her life that he would be there at the appointed hour. White was very punctual, and she felt that he loved her too well to allow anything whatever to interfere with the interview.

However, as the time passed, and he did not arrive at the moment, she began to change her mind, and to wonder how she ever permitted White to occupy her heart with such a noble fellow as Brown.

"Brown wouldn't have failed—he would not, I know."

Such thoughts were running in her mind, when there was a rap at the door. She knew White was there, and forgetting her resentment, flew to admit him. What was her surprise on finding that it was not White but Brown.

"Don't be surprised," panted the delighted lover, "I shouldn't have dared to come—'fraid of the old man—but I saw him—middle of the afternoon—he told me—(I'm so out of breath I cannot hardly speak)—he wasn't coming home till midnight."

"So you took an opportunity of visiting me during his absence, eh?"

Lydia smiled on him at first, but then she looked thoughtful and finally appeared quite perplexed. She was considering what a fix she would be in if White should be coming along about that time.

"You mustn't stop," said she nervously. "Father will be home—I expect him every minute—and if he should find you—"

"Pshaw! there's no danger," said Brown. "He won't be home yet awhile. And if he comes, I can slip into the kitchen and get out at the back door."

Finding she could not send her lover away, Lydia resolved to make the most of him while he staid.

"Oh," said Brown, "I've a rich joke to tell you—"

"Do let me hear it."

"As I was coming this way to-night, who do you think I met?"

"Who?"

"Your particular friend—Mr. White."

"My particular friend!" sneered pretty Lydia.

"Yes—but never mind that—I ain't afraid of him—"

"But how did you know him?"

"Oh, I had caught a glimpse of him before. But he didn't know me, and that's the cream of the joke."

"How so?"

"Why, you see we fell in with each other, and as he was coming this way, we got to talking about the folks in these diggings; says I, 'old squire Little lives somewhere here, don't he?'"

"Yes," says he, grinning—

"—for the moon shone, and I could see him grin—do you know his daughter?"

"I've heard of her," said I; "she's pretty, they say."

"Well, she isn't anything else," says White; and he looked at me just as if he was pulling the wool over my eyes completely.

"She has plenty of beaux, I hear," says I.

"Yes," says he, laughing, "there's a fellow by the name of Brown trying to come in there. I suppose you know."

"Oh yes," says I, "but he can't."

"I looked very closely at him, and saw he didn't mistrust that I was Brown, and could hardly keep from laughing right out."

"He can't come in," says I. "There's a fellow by the name of White that's going to cut him out I hear."

"Yes," says he, "White stands a pretty good chance, I know White."

"Do you think?" says I.

"Can't you introduce me some time?" In return, I'd do you the favor to introduce you to Brown, whom I am intimately acquainted with.

Brown's a pretty nice kind of a fellow, although he may be unfortunate in love affairs. He's a good natured fellow; and I presume if he were in my place now, and you were White himself, he'd sooner joke with you than quarrel with you."

"That's just the way with White," says he. "He wouldn't quarrel with you if you were Brown."

"I talked with the fellow in this way for some time, and kept my countenance so well that he'll be surprised, I reckon, when he learns I'm Brown myself. Wasn't it a rich joke, Lydia?"

"Ah, very," replied the girl, laughing heartily. "But what noise is that?"

"O, it is father!" exclaimed Lydia, not a little flustered. "Quick—quick—you must be gone."

"Brown did not wait for ceremony, but dodged into the kitchen in hot haste. He would have hastened from the house in an instant, but he heard a voice which sounded so strangely that he had a curiosity to know if it was indeed Mr. Little that had just come."

He crept softly back to the door by which he had made his exit, dropped on his knees and applied his ear to the key-hole.

At that moment he heard a noise that sounded so much like a hearty kiss that it made his heart come up into his mouth as large as a pumpkin.

He looked—and O, the faithfulness and fickleness of woman!—there was Lydia, blushing and smiling in the arms of his rival—of his new acquaintance—White.

Brown's first impulse was to break through the door and eat up his rival, but he soon thought better of it, and determined to give him a few minutes' reprieve before he demolished him entirely.

"There, stop," cried Lydia. "You shan't kiss me again to-night."

"Why not?" asked White.

"Because you didn't come to see me at the time I appointed. It's all of twenty minutes later. That's why."

"You don't imagine what a good excuse I've got," said White laughing.

"What is it?"

"I met a chap who bothered me."

"That was me," thought Brown still looking through the key-hole. "I did bother him, and bluffed him off nicely too. I wish I had wrung his neck for him."

"You can't guess who it was, Lydia," said White, laughing.

"Do you know?"

"To be sure I do—though he didn't mistrust I knew him. It was my redoubtable rival, Mr. Brown."

"The plague!" muttered the listener, biting his lips in perplexity.

"Did you see that fellow?" said Lydia.

"O, I wish you knew how much fun I've had with him! Why, the great fool flatters himself that I am ninnies enough to love him."

"Highly complimentary," thought Brown, grinding his teeth and looking harmless daggers through the key-hole.

"You'd been amused, to have heard me talk with him, and lay on the soft soldier."

I got the wool over his eyes nicely. He did not know me, and I chatted with him about you, and myself and *h.m.*, and it went down like a pill taken in apple sauce."

Lydia laughed heartily to think how the rivals had fooled each other, each believing all the time, that the game was all on his own side, and White laughed too at the thought of having played such a game on Brown.

Brown was the only one that did not laugh. The thought of having been made such a fool of, didn't, by any means, inspire him into a merry mood.

"I can't stand this," thought he, scowling at the key-hole. "I must have my turn now. White may take my place here in the dark if he likes, and I will step into the sitting room."

He stole cautiously out to the back door, and proceeded around the house.

A moment after, Lydia and her dear White, who were having a fine time of it heard the sound of footsteps approaching towards the door.

"It's father!" cried Lydia, believing the old gentleman had really come. You mustn't be seen, White. Run in there and get out of the house as soon as possible!"

She pushed White into the kitchen, and hastened to the front door.

Having made up her mind to give her dear father a sweet kiss as soon as he entered, she stood ready to throw her arms around his neck—when, to her astonishment, who should appear but Brown.

I need scarcely inform the reader that White impelled by the same laudible curiosity which led Brown to make the discovery we have seen already, had his eye at the key-hole.

"What do you again!" said Lydia, bestowing upon Brown the kiss she had reserved for her venerable parent. "How glad I am you came back. But it is rash in you—"

"Love makes the heart bold," said Brown, giving Lydia an extra hug, for the express benefit of White, who he expected to be at the key-hole. "I began to think the old man hadn't come after all; so I came back to bid you good bye more deliberately."

"Ah! you are a good fellow," said Lydia; "but I can't let you stop now. I really expect father home every minute."

"Well, I'll go pretty soon, but I must finish telling you how I bluffed off your dear friend White—"

"My dear friend!" echoed Lydia, contemptuously. "I wish you to know how I detect that fellow—"

"I thought so; and for that reason when I had the talk with him on the road, as I was telling you, out of consideration for your feelings, I determined he shouldn't visit you to-night. So I followed him until he didn't dare to come any farther, for fear I would mistrust he was coming to see you. Didn't I bluff him off, and wouldn't I laugh to see him enter now?"

"What a fool I have been making of myself," thought White, glaring through the key-hole. "Brown is the man Lydia loves after all; and instead of fooling him so completely as I thought I was doing, when we met, he was all the time playing off a contemptible trick on me! I'll rush in and demolish him, and tell that laughing saucy jade just what I think of her."

White was on the point of carrying this savage resolution into effect, when an unusual bustle in the parlor caused him to delay. He heard Lydia whisper "father is coming," he heard the paring kiss, the front door opening—and the next moment Brown was thrust unceremoniously into the kitchen, where he, himself was concealed.

If the reader imagines that the rivals, on being shut up in the dark room together, flew at each other like two wild beasts, I would beg to inform him that he is very much in error. The rivals did nothing of the sort, as we shall see.

Brown heard a light footstep, and knew White was in the room.

"My dear fellow," he whispered.

"What the deuce do you want?" growled the irritated White.

"What a rich joke! hal ha!" laughed Brown. "Lydia thinks she has been making fools of us, but I believe we both understand her now perfectly."

"Little doubt about that," said White, bitterly.

"There is no use in feeling sorry about the matter," observed the philosophical Brown. "Our acquaintance has commenced under peculiar circumstances, and I think it is our duty to cultivate it. I overheard your conversation with Lydia, looking through the key-hole, and as you witnessed my interview with her just now, we are even on that score. Give me your hand and let us be sworn friends in future."

"I am proud to make your acquaintance," said White, feeling much consoled

by his rival's philosophic harangue. "We are quits as far as the joke is concerned; and as for that girl—that heartless coquette—"

"We needn't quarrel about her," observed Brown, "for she is not worth a thought. I wonder a man of your penetration never saw what she was before."

"If so shrewd a man as you were deceived," replied White, "what would be expected of me?—But we both know her better now, and we can whistle her off without a pang."

"What a sensible fellow you are!" exclaimed Brown, "and what a pity it is I never made your acquaintance before."

The rivals shook hands, and became sworn friends on the spot.

Hearing Lydia's father talking very loud to her in the parlor, they thought it a good time to make their escape, and glided out of the house unheeded by either the old gentlemen or daughter. On the following day, as Lydia was laughing heartily at her adventure on the preceding night, a small neatly folded billet was brought her by the postman.

"It's Brown's hand-writing," she said to herself, as she broke open the letter with a smile of satisfied vanity. "Let's see what he says."

She reads as follows:—

"TO OUR DEAR LYDIA:

As you are now, in all probability, laboring under the erroneous impression that you have played a most admirable trick off on us, we have formed ourselves into a joint committee of two, in order to devise means to set your mind at rest on the subject. The truth is, dear Lydia, we the undersigned, understand ourselves and each other perfectly and see through your entire course of conduct better than you imagine. However, we have formed the wise resolution to allow you to retain our natural colors through life, before we so far forget ourselves in this respect as to think of inducing you to become either White or Brown."

"Trusting that this official document contains such an explanation of our views as you will readily understand, we hereby bid you an affectionate adieu, hoping you may have better success in your attempts on others."

Signed

TIMOTHY BROWN.

OLIVER WHITE.

"P. S.—[Not official.]—Messrs Brown and White beg leave mildly to suggest to their dear Lydia that in future, when she is in want of victims, she will stand a better chance of meeting with success, if, instead of attempting such sterling colors as White and Brown, she should try something more nearly approaching Green."

Lydia read this important document twice before she fully understood its import; then in a fit of vexation and rage, she threw it on the floor and stamped upon it with her pretty little foot.

When the first burst of rage had passed she reflected that she was no more than justly punished for her foolish, heartless flirtations.

The event proved a salutary lesson to the pretty Lydia, for from that time she gave over practising anything like coquetry, and became a very sensible sort of a girl.

A year after, Lydia married a respectable young farmer, and sent to her old friends, Brown and White, a polite and pressing invitation to attend the wedding.

BYRON.

His dominion over the darker passions is one of the most obvious features in his poetic character. He rode in a chariot drawn, if we may use the figure, by those horses described in the visions of the Apocalypse, whose heads were as the heads of lions, and out of their mouths issued fire, smoke, and brimstone. And supreme in his management of these dreadful couriers. Wherever human nature is fiercest and gloomiest—wherever furnace-bores have been heated seven times hotter by the unrestrained passions and the torrid suns of the east and the south—wherever man verges toward the animal or the fiend—wherever misanthropes have folded their arms, and taken their desperate attitude—wherever stands 'the bed of sin, delicious with its dread'—wherever devours 'the worm that cannot sleep, and never dies'—there the melancholy muse of Byron finds its subjects and its haunts. Driven from a home in his country, he seeks in the mansions of all unhappy hearts, which open gloomily, and admit him as their tenant and their bard.

To escape from one's self is the desire of many, of all the miserable—the desire of the drunkard, of the opium eater, of those who plunge into the vortex of any dissipation, who indulge in any delicious dream; but it is the singularity of Byron that he uniformly escapes from himself into something worse and more miserable. His being transmigrates into a darker and

more demonic shape; he becomes an epicure even in wretchedness; he has supped full of common miseries, and must create and exhaust imaginary horrors.

MACAULAY.

Before proceeding to consider his separate claims upon public admiration, we will sum up in a few sentences, our impressions of his general character. He is gifted, but not a great man. He is a rhetorician, without being an orator. He is endowed with great powers of perception and acquisition, but with no power of origination. He has deep sympathies with genius, without possessing genius of a high order himself. He is strong and broad, but not subtle or profound. He is not more destitute of original genius than he is of high principle and purpose. He has all common faculties developed in a large measure, and cultivated to an intense degree. What he wants is the gift that cannot be given—the power that cannot be counterfeited—the wind that bloweth where it listeth—the vision, the joy, and the sorrow with which no stranger intermeddeth—the light which never was on sea or shore, the consecration and the poet's dream. To such gifts, indeed, he does not pretend, and never has pretended. To roll the raptures of poetry, without emulating its *speciosa nitacula*—to write worthily of heroes, without aspiring to the heroic—to write history without enacting it—to furnish to the utmost degree his own mind, without leading the minds of others one point farther than to the admiration of himself and of his idols, seems, after all, to have been the main object of his ambition, and has already been nearly satisfied. He has played the finite game of talent, and not the infinite game of genius. His goal has been the top of the mountain, and not the blue profound beyond; and on the point he has sought he may speedily be seen, relieved against the heights which he cannot reach—a marble fixture, exalted and motionless.

THOMAS HOOD.

But the best of all in Hood is that warm humanity which beats in all his writings. His is no ostentatious or systematic philanthropy; it is a mild, cheerful, irrepressible feeling, as tender and innocent as the embrace of a child. It cannot found soup-kitchens; it can only slide in a few rhymes and sonnets to make its species a little happier. Hospitals it is unable to erect, or subscriptions to give; silver and gold it has none; but in the orisons of its genius it never fails to remember the cause of the poor; and if it cannot any more than the kindred spirit of Burns, make for its country 'some useful plan or book,' it can 'sing a song at least.' Hood's poetry is often a pleading for those who cannot plead for themselves, or who plead only like the beggar, who, reproached for his silence, showed his sores, and replied, 'Isn't it begging I am with a hundred tongues?' This advocacy of his has not been utterly thrown away; it has been heard on earth and it has been heard in heaven.

BULWER.

If in Bulwer's writings we weary less than in others, it is owing to the artistic skill with which he intermingles his points of humor with those of scientific reflection or vivid narrative. All is point, but the point perpetually varies from gay to grave, from lively to severe; including in it railery and reasoning, light dialogue and earnest discussion, bursts of political feeling and raptures of poetical description; here a sarcasm almost worthy of Voltaire, and there a passage of pensive grandeur, which Rosseau might have written in his tears. To keep up this perpetual play of varied excellence, requires at once great vigor and great versatility of talents for Bulwer never walks through his part, never prosés, is never tame, and seldom indeed substitutes sound for sense, or mere flummery for force and fire. He generally writes his best, and one great fault, indeed with him is, that he is too uniformly erect in stirrups, too conscious of himself, of his exquisite management, of his complete equipment, of the speed with which he devours the dust; and seldom exhibits the careless grandeur of one who is riding at the pace of the whirlwind, with perfect self-oblivion, and with perfect security.

A man who had a scolding wife, being willing to excuse her failings, when called upon to give some account of her habits and character, said she was pretty well in general, only subject at times to a breaking out of the subject.

Many men lose much by being too communicative in their matters of business. The great laconic philosopher, Shirkie, says:—Keep shady—and if you see a quarter on the ground put your foot on it."

An Interesting Scene.

Signing of the Constitution of California.—The following scene is described by Bayard Taylor:—The signing of the new Constitution whose protecting aegis covers so mightily an empire on the Pacific, was an occasion of the most impressive interest. The land of gold almost seems like the land of magic, in the rapidity of changes in the brief lapse of two months. Two years ago, how little was California thought of—now it is the promised land of the world. Its Constitution, fortunately, too, is worthy of its mighty destiny, and California is clearly destined to exercise not less influence on Asia, than the Atlantic States of our Union have on Europe.

The members proceeded to affix their names to the completed Constitution. At this moment a signal was given—the American colors ran up the flag staff in front of the government buildings, streaming out on the air. A second afterwards the first gun boomed from the fort, and its stirring echoes came back from one hill after another, till they were lost in the distance.

All the native enthusiasm of Capt. Sutter's Swiss blood was aroused—he was the soldier again. He sprang from his seat, and waving his hand around his head, as if swinging a sword, exclaimed: "Gentlemen, this is the happiest day of my life. It makes me glad to hear those cannon; this is a great day for California!" Then recollecting himself he sat down, the tears streaming from his eyes. The members with one accord, gave three tumultuous cheers, which were heard from one end of the town to the other. As the signing went on, gun followed gun from the fort, the echoes reverberating gradually around the Bay, till finally, as the loud ring of the thirty-first was heard, there was a shout—"That's for California!" and every one joined in giving three times three for the new and glorious star added to our Confederation.

Labor and Capital.

The question begins to be asked on every hand, and in every quarter, why should capitalists reap all the benefits of labor and revel in luxury while the producers are actually suffering from want? Sooner or later this problem must be solved, and then was to the tyrannical oppressors who have fattened by trafficking on the labor of their fellow-men.—At present capital and labor regard each other with jealous looks. The proprietor of the former characterizes the other as belonging to a dangerous, discontented, and turbulent class that must be put down; while, on the other hand, the working man justly regards with a dissatisfied mind the product of his own toil swelling the revenues of a task-master, who scarcely grants the originators of wealth sufficient for the decencies and necessities of life. Yes, this state of things must be speedily altered, or what would now be considered a concession, will, ere long, be converted into compulsion. Social reforms are daily becoming the most pressing of all reforms. Labor is the only legitimate capital any people can have. All wealth must ever come of labor. It is in sooth, the only capital upon which society can calculate for its prosperity and endurance. It is alone the capital that must ever remain supreme and independent. Who possesses this only solid and legitimate capital? The children of toil—the husbandman, the mechanic, artisan and workman. Are they to be crushed to the earth by poverty and misery, while they have iron in their blood and thews and muscles to create wealth and assert the majesty and glory of their Divine origin?—*Andrew's Life in New York.*

Wealth of California.

Hon. Thomas Butler King's official report of his mission at California, unavoidably delayed by Mr. King's indisposition, has now been communicated to the President, though not yet made public. It is, we learn a highly interesting and important document. Mr. King estimates the value of the gold obtained in California, up to this time, at forty millions of dollars. The product of the current year he also estimates at forty millions; and the aggregate of the two succeeding years, '51 and '52, at one hundred millions.

He recommends to the United States Government not to sell the gold lands, but to grant leases or permits, for digging and washing gold on them, at a rent of one ounce for every pound obtained. He proposes that leases for regulating mining operations be granted at a fixed contingent rent. He advises that no permits or leases be issued to any but citizens of the United States, or persons who declare their purpose of becoming U. S. citizens.

A young girl of fifteen has been arrested in Boston for picking pockets.