Democrat and Sentinel.

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The Cobbler's Temptation.

Jareb Gropp sat in his little shop, upon his low bench, and he pegged and tapped away merrily upon his well-worn knees. He was a jolly fellow, was Jareb. Poor, 'tis true, but just poor enough to be free of care. He owned the roofed box in which he worked, and so he owned the little thatched cot that joined it. In the cot were two rooms and the shop was one. In the cot he lived, with his wife and seven children, and in the shop he worked cheerfully all the day long. He was not afraid of robbers, for he had nothing worth carrying off; and he feared no man, for he never did man a wrong.

A merry fellow was Jareb Gropp. He sang as he pegged, and his joyous notes lacked only musicial sound to make them attractive. He was built after the same pattern as were his cot and shop. He was short and dumpy, with a round, shiny good-natured face, and with a bald pate, though he was only five and forty.

"Troll-de-rol lol de-lol-lardy!" sang Jareb.

"Foll-de roll-de-riddle de-rol de-rinctum!" rounded a voice from the inner odor.

Jareb looked up and saw his wife.

Just a match for Jareb, for all the world. Short, fat, clean, good-natured, and happy, as a happy queen. She was dressed neatly for all her poverty, and the flush of health glowed upon her plump cheeks.

"Duck," said Jareb, "the likes 'o this never happened afore."

"What is it, my own sugar plum?" asked Hepsebeth.

Hepsebeth was her name, though she hadn't heard it pronounced in full for years.

"D'ye see this shoe, delight?"

"Yes, my love."

"This the last work in the castle. Not another place to put a peg have I got by me. We'll shut the gates, lower the drawbridge, put the warden on guard, and call up our coach, eh?"

"Ye mean we'll go and walk, peppermint?"

I do, treasure."

"Shall I put on my silk, or satin? or my new velvet?"

"Put on all on 'em my dear. We'll make an appearance. Hi fol de-rol-lol-de-rol-ladi! There (tap) that's the last peg, and old Smith's shoes are done. *Smith—Smith*—didn't you ever feel thankful your name warn't Smith, eh? There was a Smith put in jail only last week for robbin' somebody. But ye never heard tell of a Gropp's bein' put in jail, never.

"Now, my maple sugar, we'll be off. Rig up the little Groppses."

"Hardly had Hedpy departed, when a man made his appearance at the shop door.

He was an old man, very well dressed, in black throughout, carrying a gold headed cane, and wearing a watch chain of the same precious metal

"Are you a cobbler?" he asked, as he entered.

"I was two minutes ago, sir; but I am an old feudal baron now, sir! Lady Gropy is going to ride out, sir, and I'm to attend her."

"Eh—are you not the man who does mending?—mending of boots and shoes?" asked the visitor, moving back a pace, as though he feared the strange fellow before him was crazy.

"Yes, sir," answered Jareb, "I'm the man. But, ye see, my wife hasn't walked out for more'n a month. I just tossed off the last bit of work I had in the shop. I'd hurried it amazingly, and was just agoin' to take a run down by the river with her and the little ones."

"Aha—I see," said the old gentleman, smiling "Now you just run and tell your lady to wait for you half an hour, and I'll satisfy her for it. I am in a hurry. The stage leaves in an hour, and my boot has given out. Come, you won't refuse to assist me under such circumstances?"

"Hi dum-de-fol-lol! Well I s'pose I must stick to my buisness."

Thus speaking, Jareb left the shop, and when he returned he put on his apron again, and settled into his low seat. The old man took off his cloak and sat down, and the cobbler pulled off the fractured boot. It was ripped badly. Jareb made him a stout waxed-end, singing merrily the while, and when 'twas ready he took up the boot.

"You seem to be a happy fellow," remarked the visitor, after he had watched Jareb's good-natured face awhile.

"Why shouldn't I be? I owe no man anything—I have my health—and love to do my work. Tol-de-rol lol de-rol-lardo."

"Youve laid by something, I suppose, for a rainy day?" pursued the stranger.

"Aye, thousands upon thousands of dollars, sir! cried Jareb, giving his awl a furious punch.

"What?—so much as that?"

"Hi! I'd like to show 'em to ye, sir, only they might have dirty faces. Seven of 'em, sir! Seven of the best natured children ye ever saw, sir, and stout and ragged too."

"Ah! I meant to ask you if you had not managed to lay by a little money, my good man. You seem steady and industrious."

"Money?" repeated Jareb, with a comical leer. "Does a man lay by money when he's buildin' himself houses and gardens? No, sir. Nor does a man lay by money when he makes half a crown a day, and rears seven children. Them little 'uns 'll take care 'o me when I am old, never fear. No, no,

Money of gold, in hoarded store—
I have none of it—I have none;
I live and breath—I do no more—
To-day it's a crust, to-morrow a bone,
Fol-de-rol-lol-lol-de-lido."

"Then you live contented upon your scanty store?" said the old man, regarding the cobbler rather envious.

"Just as contented as the day is long, sir. And why shouldn't I. I won't starve while there's a crust in the house, or a ripped shoe in the village. I should like money if I could have it; but I wouldn't pass one day and night of discontent for all the world."

"And if you had money what would you do with it?"

For the first time Jareb looked sober.—His awl was stopped in the puncture it had made, and his eye rested vacantly upon the floor. When he spoke all his lightness of manner was gone, and his voice was almost tremulous.

"Well, I'll tell ye," he said, while a twitching of the neither lip told that he felt deeply. "I cant help thinkin' that my little ones aren't a coming' up as some folks' little ones are. They are good and honest, and happy; but if they *could* have a chance to get a leetle more larnin' than their poor old father's got, I shouldn't mind. I can't help thinkin' as how't there might be a bright mind or two amongst 'em, that might make a doctor, or a lawyer, or may be a minister. But never mind—they're in God's hands. I don't complain. *Complain?*" repeated Jareb, thrusting his awl through, and then pulling it out—'why should I? How many, and many a rich father would give all he's worth if his children could only be different from what they are?—sickly and weekly, maybe, or, perhaps bad and wicked. Hi!—

There's no such word as complain,
For by it we nothing can gain,
Save trouble and all mental pain
With a—fol-de-rol-lol de-dido!—

'No, No, sir. I've got enough, and that's more'n every body's got.'

The boot was finished, and the old man took out a golden guinea.

'I've no change for such a piece, sir,' said Jareb.

'I don't want any change. Take it all. A shilling is to pay you for mending my boot: and the rest is for your wife and children; to pay them for the loss of their walk. Come, don't disappoint me.'

Jareb took the coin, and though his thankfulness was deep, yet its expression was simple and polite.

The old man put on his boot and went away. The wife came in, and Jareb showed his treasure. They were rich as monarch's now. They danced and sang, and then each called the other a fool.

However, after this they went and took their walk—they and their children. The oldest child was only twelve, and the youngest one was two. Tommy and Johnny were twins. They were a jolly looking family.

When Jareb returned and entered his shop, the first thing he saw was a green silk purse. He picked it up, and found it full of gold. Quick as thought he put on his hat again and ran from the shop. He reached the hotel, but the stage had gone, and the old gentleman had gone in it. So the cobbler returned to his cot, and there sat down with the purse in his hand.

'What shall we do with it?', he said, uneasily.

The wife pondered a long while, and fially she replied,—

'Let's take it down in the cellar and hide it. Then we sha'n't be robbed of it, nor we sha'n't lose it; and when he comes we shall have it for him.'

'But supposin' he should never come, Hepp?'

"Then we'll leave it with our children and they may use it.'

'Heppy, my delight, you are right."

So they went down into their narrow cellar, and having looked all around, they finally removed a stone from the wall, put the purse in—having first rolled it up in many thicknesses of stout paper—and then put the stone back as it was before.

On the following day the cobbler watched for the stage, and when it came he went up to the tavern to see if the old gentleman had come back. This he did every day for two months, and no old man came.

At the end of that time Jareb was taken sick He was very sick; and for a long while the doctor despaired of his life. And Jareb was very poor too. Many a night the children went supperless to bed.

'Jareb,' whispered Heppy with a frightened look, '*there's gold in the cellar!*'

'Don't don't! Oh! never speak of it again!' gasped Jareb, in agony. 'I've thought of it! Aye—there's gold there; but tisn't ours, tisn't ours Heppy!'

'I didn't mean we'd take it, Jareb, I didn't mean we'd take it!' cried his wife, 'I only thought you musn't die!'

'I shan't die, soul's delight. But I should die, if we took *that*! Tisn't our's, Heppy!

After many days Jareb Gropp was able to walk out. One plesant autumn day, as he hobbled slowly along upon a crutch and a staff, he saw the stage-coach coming. It passed him, and he saw that same white haired old man upon the box with the driver. The poor cobbler hurried on, and when he reached the tavern he found the old man standing in the hall.

'Ah, is this my merry cobbler?' cried the stranger.

'I am the cobbler who mended your boot last spring, sir,' replied Jareb.

'Yes, I know,' added the old man, 'and the stage driver tells me you have been very sick.'

'I have been sick sir. Ah, I was made nervous first; and then I caught a cold. Yes, I've been very sick.'

'The driver tells me your family suffered much during your illness.'

'Some, some, sir. But that isn't the thing now. Dinn't you lose something the day you came to my shop?'

'Lose?' repeated the old man, starting.

'Did you find anything?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Was it a purse?'

'Yes, sir-?'

'Of green silk?'

'Yes, sir?'

'With fifty gold guineas in it?'

'I don't know what was in it. I found it; and if you will go down with me you shall have it.'

The stranger regarded the cobbler for some moments in silence, and finally said he would go. So Jareb led the way to his little cot.

'Here, my love,' said the cobbler addressing his wife, 'let us have a candle. The gentleman has come for his purse.'

'We hav't got a candle, Jareb; but I have something that will answer.'

And thus speaking, Heppy went out, and when she returned she brought a pine knot, which she lighted by the fire. Jareb took this and turned towards the cellar, and the stranger followed him.

'I can get it sir.'

'Go on—I'll follow you.'

The cobbler said no more, but hobbled down the narrow steps, and when he came to that part of the wall where the purse had been concealed, he asked his companion to hold the torch. The latter did so, and then Jareb removed the stone, and drew forth a paper parcel damp and mildewed. They returned to the upper room, where Jareb unfolded the stout papers, and produced the purse uninjured.

'Here, sir; here is your purse, just as I found it.'

The old man emptied out the broad gold pieces and counted them—just fifty of them. He returned them to the purse, and then looked in Jareb's face.

'Have you suffered for want of money during your sickness?' he asked.

'Much, much,' was the answer.

'And you had this gold by you all the while?'

'It wasn't ours, sir. O, I may have suffered, but not as I should have suffered had I taken that. It wasn't mine, it was yours. Take it, sir; and when you remember poor Jareb Gropp and his seven children, and his own wife, you'll say they weren't very larned, but you'll say they were honest!'

'Gropp?—*Gropp?*—GROPP?' repeated the old man, fixing his gaze, not upon Jareb, but upon his wife. "You are not from England, are you?' turning to Jareb.

'Yes, sir,' answered the cobbler.

'From what part?'

'From Daventry, among the hills of Northampton.'

'And what was your name before you was married?' the old man asked of the good wife.

'My maiden name was Hepsebeth Munson, sir.'

'Were you from Daventry?'

'No, sir. I was from Kibwarth, in Leicester. I went to Daventry to live when I was sixteen.'

'You never had a brother?'

'Yes, sir. I had one—George—he went off to India, and there he died! Poor George! He was a good boy—he was very good to me. He was a smart young man when he went away.'

'How do you know he is dead?'

'Because we never heard from him sir.'

'Hepsebeth!' cried the old man, starting to his feet 'Look at me! Look at me, I say! See if you can't tell me who I am. I remember now of hearing that you had married a man named Gropp; but I couldn't find where you had moved. I was negligent—very. But say, do ye know me?'

'It ain't George Munson!' gasped Heppy, starting from her chair, and trembling like an aspen.

'Look at that purse. Didn't ye see that name?' And as the old man spoke he showed her a name worked in golden thread, but which she had not detected.—But she read it now—GEORGE MUNSON.

Then she looked into his time-worn face, and gradually the features of one she had loved in years long agone were revealed to her. It was her brother—her own brother George.

Presently Jareb Gropp saw his wife in the old man's arms, and with one bound he reached the middle of the floor.

'*There!*' he cried. 'Now see! Suppose'n I'd taken that gold? If I had, we'd never have known George Munson! I tell ye, there's always a sunbeam sure to fall upon a good action. It'll come some time, ye may depend. George, how d'e do! Ain't I glad now that we didn't touch your gold. How could I ever have looked my delight's brother in the face after it; How d'e do?—How d'e do?'

The latter half of his speech had been made with the old man's hand in his grasp; for even then the thought had not worked its way through Jareb's honest mink that any pecuniary good was to grow out of this.

But it was indeed Heppy's own brother; and one of the chief objects he had in view when he first set out on his travels was to find his sister if possible. He had forgotten her husband's name, having heard it but once in India, and then only casually in conversation with a man who had just come out. But the old man was rich; and new that he had found the only living relative he had on earth, he resolved to settle down with her.

A large house, on a beautiful eminence, the wealthy owner of which had died, was for sale, and Uncle George bought it; and thither he took his sister's family. And in after times there was some great doings in that large house. The little Groppses had a competent teacher, and they became prodigies of learning. Jareb was utterly astounded at the wonderous intellect they displayed.

But the balance was kept up. As the little ones became more and more advanced, and threw off childish things, Jareb and Uncle George put them on, and became children themselves.

One day the two old men were caught in the act of jumping leap frog over each other's shoulpers; and had not Heppy come out and stopped them, there is no knowing how many necks might have been broken. It was fortunate for them that the good dame retained all her strong sense, for there were many seasons when, in the hight of their childish joy, they might have done much mischief, had not she been ever near to watch over and protect them; and once, (I have it from authority,) when she caught them wrestling at 'side hug,' she took them by the ears and led them into the house.

But they had to indulge in rough sports sometimes; for as Uncle George had suddenly become thawed out from the ice of misanthropy and lonesomeness; and as Jareb had full as suddenly been lifted up from the dark depths of poverty and want, they found themselves moved by a spirit of joy and gratitude that wouldn't be curbed. So Heppy had to watch them until some of the children became old enough to reason with them; and then she played with the girls in the house, and let the boys take care of the boys out of doors.

Seven-up For a Wife:
Or, Good as Wheat.

In the State of Illinois there is a certain villiage boasting of a tavern, three stores, four groceries, where from morning till night and from night till dawn, a person entering the town may find in the tavern, stores, and groceries aforesaid one or more groops of persons playing cards—gambling here is reduced to a science—the history of the four kings is thoroughly studied, and from the school boy to the gray headed veteran, from the miss in her teens to the mother of a large family, they are initiated into the mysteries of high, low, jack, game, right and left bowers, the honors and the odd tricks. One of the best players in the villiage was Major Smith, the tavern keeper; or, as he expressed it, the proprietor of the hotel—a widower who like

——"Jeptha, Judge of Israel,
Had a daughter, passing fair."

Fanny, the daughter, was one of the prettiest girls in the villiage. The lover of Fanny was a young farmer, residing in the neighborhood, whom we shall designate by the name of Bob.

It happened that one day before harvest, the young man was detained in the villiage, and night found him as usual at the hotel, seated betwen the Major and his daughter. After a desultory conversation betwheen the two gentlemen on the state of the weather, the prospects of the approaching harvest, important staples of conversation, the Major asked Bob how his wheat crop promised to yield. In reply he was told that the young farmer expected to have at least five hundred bushels. The Major appeared to study for a moment, then abruptly proposed a game of "old sledge," or seven-up, the stake to be his daughter Fanny against the crop of wheat. This, of course the young man indignantly refused, because he could not bear the idea that the hand of her he loved should be made the subject of a bet; or that he should win a wife by gambling for her; and perhaps because he knew the old man was hard to beat, and there was a strong probability of losing both wheat and wife.

It was not until the Major, with his usual obstancy, had sworn that unless he won her he should never have her, that the young man was forced reluctantly to consent to play.

The table was placed, candles lit, the cards produced, and the players took their seats, with Fanny between them, to watch the progress of the game. The cards were regularly shuffled and cut, and it fell to the Major's lot to deal. The first hand was played, and bob made gift to his opponent's high, low, game. Bob dealt: the Major again made three to his opponent's one.

'Six to two,' said Miss Fanny, with a sigh.

The Major as he dealt the cards, winked knowingly and said:

'I'm good for the wheat, Master Bob.'

The old man turned up a trump—it was a spade. Fanny glanced at her father's hand—her heart sank; he held the tray, eight-spot, and the king. She then looked at Robert's hand, and lo, he had the ace, queen, duce and jack, or knave. She whispered to Bob to beg—he did so.

'Take it,' said the Major.

Robert led the duce, which the old man took with his three spot; and he then followed by playing the king. Bob putting his queen upon it. The Major, supposing it to be the young man's last trump, leaning over the table, and tapping the last trick with his finger, said:

'That's good as wheat.'

'Is it?' asked Bob, as he displayed to the astonished Major the ace and jack yet in his hands.

'High, low, jack, gift, and game,' shouted Bob.

'Out,' ejaculated Fanny.

'Good as wheat,' added Bob, as he flung his arms around her, neck and kissed her.

In due time they were married, and ever after that, when anything occurred of a pleasent nature to the happy couple they would express their emphatic approbation of it by the phrase, 'Good as wheat!'

☞ A precocious young man, blessed with the name of Isaac, says that 'if he is drafted, Abraham will be offering up Isaac as a sacrifice.'

☞ 'I am like Balaam,' said a dandy, on meeting a pretty girl in a narrow passage, 'stopped by an angle.' 'So am I,' said she, 'for I am accosted by an ass.'

☞ As long as men smell of whiskey and tobacco, the women have a right to defend themselves with musk.