



BY JAS. CLARK.

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LYDIA LITTLE'S LOVERS, Or the Rival's if a fix.

BY PAUL CREYTON.

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

One of these young men were 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 their mistress, 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 a 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 bears 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 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 every thing prepared for his reception in the evening.

Lydia felt 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 would'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 should'n'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 can't hardly speak)—he was'n't coming home till midnight."

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

Lydia smiled on him 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 must not stop," said she, nervously. "Father'll 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 stayed.

"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 did not know me, and that's the cream of the joke."

"How so?"

"Why, you see we fell in with each other, and 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, he, grinning—for the moon shone, and I could see him—do you know his daughter?"

"I've heard of her," said I; 'she's pretty they say.' 'Well, she isn't any thing 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 guess. I know White.' 'Do you though?' says I. 'Can't you introduce me some time? In return, I'll 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 would'n'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 that I'm Brown himself. Wasn't it a rich joke, Lydia?"

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

"There are footsteps—"

"Oh, it is father!" exclaimed Lydia not a little frustrated. "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 slowly 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 in his mouth as large as a pumpkin.

He looked—and Oh, the faithlessness and fickleness of women!—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 keyhole. '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 did'n't mistrust I knew him. It was my respectable rival, Mr. Brown."

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

"Did you see that fellow?" said Lydia. "Oh, I wish you knew how much fun I've had with him! Why the great fool flatters himself that I am niddy enough to love him."

"Highly complimentary," tho't 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 solder. I got the wool over his eyes nicely. He did not know me, and I chatted with him about you, and myself and him 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 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 must'n'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 mouth 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 laudable curiosity which led Brown to make the discovery we have seen already, had his eye at the key-hole.

"What! 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 was 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 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 a 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 parting 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! ha! 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 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 acquaint-

ance," said White, feeling much consoled by his rival's philosophical 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 unheard 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 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 your natural color 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.

The moral Character of Pigs.

Some folks accuse pigs of being filthy in their habits, and negligent in their personal appearance. But whether food is best eaten off the ground or from China plates, is, it seems to us, merely a matter of taste and convenience, about which pigs and men may honestly differ. They ought, then, to be judged charitably. At any rate, pigs are not filthy enough to chew tobacco, nor to poison their breath by drinking whiskey. And as to their personal appearance you don't catch a pig playing the dandy, nor picking their way up the muddy streets, in kid slippers.

Pigs have some excellent traits of character.—If one chances to wallow a little deeper in some mire hole than his fellows, and so carries off and comes in possession of more of the earth than his brethren, he never assumes an extra importance on that account; neither are his brethren stupid enough to worship him for it. Their only question seems to be, is he still a hog? If he is they treat him as such.

And when a hog has no merits of his own, he never puts on aristocratic airs, nor claims any particular respect on account of his family connections. They understand, full well, the common sense maxim, "every tub must stand upon its own bottom."—*Extract.*

☞ If you have contracted an injudicious friendship, let it sink gently and gradually.

Living and Means

BY HORACE GREELEY.

One of the most mischievous phrases in which a rotten Morality, a radically false and vicious Public Sentiment, disguise themselves, is that which characterizes certain individuals as destitute of financial capacity. A "kind, amiable, generous, good sort of a man," (so runs the varnish) "but utterly unqualified for the management of his own finances"—"a mere child in everything relating to money," &c., &c.;—meaning that with an income of \$500 a year, he persisted in spending 1,000; or with an income of \$2,000 to 3,000; he regularly spent \$5,000 to \$8,000, according to his ability to run in debt or the credulity of others in trusting him.

The victims of this immorality—debtors as well as creditors—are entitled to more faithful dealing at the hands of those not directly affected by the misdemeanors of the former. It is the duty of the community to rebuke and repress these pernicious glosses, making the truth heard and felt that inordinate expenditure is knavery and crime. No man has a moral right thus to lavish on his own appetites money which he has not earned and does not really need. If Public Opinion were sound on this subject—if a man living beyond his means when his means were commensurate with his real needs, were subjected to the reprehension he deserves—the evil would be instantly checked and ultimately eradicated.

The world is full of people who can't imagine why they don't prosper like their neighbors, when the real obstacle is not in banks and tariffs, in bad public policy and hard times, but in their own extravagance and heedless ostentation. The young mechanic or clerk marries and takes a house, which he proceeds to furnish twice as expensively as he can afford, and then his wife, instead of taking hold to help him earn a livelihood by doing her own work, must have a hired servant to help her spend her limited earnings. Ten years afterward you will find him struggling on under a load of double debts and children, wondering why the luck was always against him, while his friends regret his unhappy destitution of financial ability. Had they from the first been frank and honest, he need not have been so unlucky.

Through every grade of society this vice of inordinate expenditure insinuates itself. The single man "hired out" in the country at ten to fifteen dollars per month, who contrives to dissolve his year's earnings in frolics and fine clothes; the clerk who has three to five hundred dollars a year and melts down twenty to fifty of it in liquor and cigars, are paralleled by the young merchant who fills a spacious house with costly furniture, gives dinners and drives a fast horse on the strength of the profits he expects to realize when his goods are all sold and his notes all paid. Let a man have a genius for spending, and whether his income is a dollar a day or a dollar a minute, it is equally certain to prove inadequate. If dining, wining and party-giving won't help him through with it, building, gaming and speculating will be sure to. The bottomless pocket will never fill, no matter how bounteous the stream pouring into it.

The man who (being single) does not save money on six dollars per week, will not be apt to on sixty, and he who does not lay up something in his first year of independent exertion, will be pretty likely to wear a poor titan's hair in his grave.

No man who has a natural use of his faculties and his muscles has any right to tax others with the cost of his support, as this class of non-financial gentlemen habitually do. It is their common mistake to fancy that if a debt only paid at last the obligation of the debtor is fulfilled, but the fact is not so. A man who sells property for another's promise to pay next week or next month, and is compelled to wear out a pair of boots in running after his due, which he finally gets in a year or two, is never really paid. Very often, he has lost half the face of his demand by not having the money when he needed it, beside the cost and vexation of running after it. There is just one way to pay an obligation in full, and that is to pay it when due. He who keeps up a running fight with bills and loans through life, is continually living on other men's means, is a serious burden and a detriment to those who deal with him, altho' his estate should finally pay every dollar of his legal obligations.

Inordinate expenditure is the cause of a great share of the crime and consequent misery which devastate the world. The Clerk who spends more than he earns is fast qualifying himself for a gambler and a thief; the trader or mechanic who over runs his income is very certain to become in time a trickster and a

cheat. Whenever you see a man spending faster than he earns, there look out for villainy to be developed, though it be the farthest thing possible from his present thought.

When the world shall have become wiser and its standard of morality more lofty, it will perceive and affirm that profuse expenditure, even by one who can pecuniarily afford it, is pernicious and unjustifiable—that a man, however wealthy, has no right to lavish on his own appetites, his tastes or his ostentation that which might have raised hundreds from destitution and despair to comfort and usefulness. But that is an improvement in public sentiment which must be waited for, while the other is more ready and obvious.

The meanness, the dishonesty, the indignity, of squandering thousands unlearned and keeping others out of money that is justly theirs, have rarely been urged and enforced as the should be. They need but be considered and understood to be universally loathed and detested.

Female Temper.

SENSIBLE REMARKS.—The Boston Olive Branch thus sensibly discourses of female temper:

We like to see a woman of spirit and life; for a dull, supine, prosy woman is a poor affair indeed. And we have no particular objection to seeing "the sparks fly occasionally," when something really stirring occurs. We like to see her joyful and lively; and if she has a spirit of waggery, we can put up with it very well; nay, we like it all the better. But a cross, sour temper, we have no good opinion of, for a woman who can never look pleasant, but is always fretting and scolding, will make an unhappy home for all within her house. And we had as lief undertake to live in a barrel of vinegar in a thunderstorm as to live in the house with such a woman. Solomon was right when he said, "It is better to live in the corner of a house top than to dwell in a wide spread house with a brawling woman."

Let a woman wear sunshine on her countenance; and it will drive the dark clouds from her husband's face, and joy will thrill through the hearts of her children. Let a woman's words be soothing and kind, and every thing is happy around her. Her influence will be powerful. Others will catch her sweet temper, and all will strive to see who can be most like her. Sweetness of temper in a woman is more valuable than gold, and more to be prized than beauty. But may Heaven keep us from an untamed shrew whose looks are wormwood, and whose words are gall! We had rather take Daniel's place with the lions, than think of living within gun-shot of such a termagant. If women knew their power and how to exert it, they would always show sweetness of temper, for then they are irresistible.

RELIGION is a cheerful thing; so far from being always at cuffs with good humor, it is inseparably united to it.—Nothing unpleasant belongs to it. A wise epicure would be religious for the sake of pleasure; good sense is the foundation of both, and he is a bungler who aimeth at true luxury, but where they are joined.—*Saville.*

GIVE NOW.—Defer not thy deeds till the mantle of death has covered thy form. Ten dollars given to-day are better than fifty left in thy will. It is not benevolence to give away what thou hast no further need of; and no legacies will purchase future felicity for the mean and avaricious heart.

ERROR.—Error is the cause of man's misery, the corrupt principal that has produced evil in the world; 'tis this which begets and cherishes in our souls all the evils that afflict us, and we can never expect a true and solid happiness, but by a serious endeavor to avoid it.—*Malbranche.*

☞ A single stroke of an axe is of little consequence, yet by the continual application of that small power, properly directed, what amazing effects are produced! The sturdy oak and lofty pine do not simply own its power, but whole forests lie before it, and the wilderness becomes a garden.

Industry well directed, will give a man competency in a few years. The greatest industry misapplied is useless.

☞ "Seest thou a man diligent in his business?" says Solomon, "he shall stand before kings." We have a striking illustration of this aphorism in the life of Dr. Franklin, who quoting the sentence himself, adds:—"This is true; I have stood in the presence of five kings and once had the honor of dining with one." All in consequence of his having been "diligent in business" from his earliest years. What a lesson is this for youth, and for us all!