The Middleburgh Post.

T. H. HARTER. | He that will not reason is a bigot; he that cannot is a fool; he that dare not is a slave. | EDITOR AND PROP'R

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Co. Commissioners

JUST US TWO.

How happy, happy were the days
When we together strayed
Along the meadows, by the brook,
And through the leafy glade;
And many a labyrinth of shade
We slowly wandered through
By pathways only wide enough
For just us two.

What charming walks, what precious talks,
What silences profound,
Were ours, as closely linked we went
O'er this enchanted ground!
The birds sang sweetly overhead,
The skies above were blue,
And all the world seemed freshly made
For just us two.

The other lads and lasses went
By dozens and by scores,
To have their fun and play their games
Together out of doors;
While we apart from such a crowd
Contentedly withdrew,
And favored vehicels with room
For just us two.

And now in cosy fashon we
Have settled down in life;
A husband proud and lover like,
A most devoted wife;
And should you go from pole to pole,
And search the wide world throtgh,
You'll never meet a happier pair
Than just us two.

HIS STEPMOTHER.

'Hush, Dorcas! is that rain? It sounds as if some genii were dashing pails of water against the casement.'

'It rains' Guy. The equinoctial storm, you know.'

'And that dreary moaning down the chimney—is it wind?'

The boy shivered a little, and drew the bedclothes up around his chin. The red flames from the blazing log on the hearth danced up and down like a magic lantern, the shaded lamp burned steadly on the table. Dorcas Wynter stitched quietly away at her sewing without looking up.

'It must be a awful tempest, Dorcas,' uttered the lad, as a fresh gust of wind seemed to shake the old octagonal tower to its very foundations.

'It is, Guy. I heard old Captain Lake say that the tide had not been so high since the year the Royal Victoria was wrecked off Paine Point.'

'It's better to be here, even with a broken leg,' said Guy Paley, slightly lifting his eyebrows, 'than out at sea in such a blow as this!'

'A great deal better, Guy.'

'Not that I'm a coward, Dorcas!' cried the boy. 'There are worse things than a storm at sea, and I have an instinct that I shall be a sailer yet. But this sickness has taught me—this sickness and you, Dorcas,—that it's better to go for a thing in an honest straight forward way than to try to reach it by sneaking. But I always supposed it was a fine thing to run away to sea or else I should't have tried the get-out-of-the-window-by-midnight dodge, and broken my leg. I'm wiser now!'

Dorcas smiled at him with melting hazel eyes and rose red lips, revealing a line of pearls.

'Poor Guy!' said she. 'It was a hard lesson, wasn't it?'

'I think I needed it, Dorcas. If ever there was a ruffian, it was I!' groaned the boy. 'But, you see, nobody ever talked to me. Scoldings without end I got, I grant you, but no one talked common sense to me before. You are the only one who seemed to think me worth reasoning with; and you shall see, Dorcas that I'm worth the trouble. Once I'm up from this scrape, I'll tackle my lessons in real earnest, and try to do something better. And I say, Dorcas—'

'Yes, Guy?'

'You're the prettiest girl I ever saw.'

'Nonsese, Guy.'

'Oh, but you are! as well represented. What [illegible] is desiring to attend can receive [illegible] for excursion rates from J. [illegible]cher Sickel, Germantown, Pa.

It is noticable that where there are [illegible]od roads the farmers are more [illegible]osperous and the farms are more [illegible]luable than where the roads are [illegible]glected. Good road horses and [illegible]od carriages are found where the [illegible]ds are good, and the people ap[illegible] to be more contented. It is [illegible]tain that money invested in roads [illegible]

was alone here and friendless, and I was glad to accept a vacant position under the house-keeper to mend linen, care for the infirmary and make myself generally useful.'

'I knew you were a lady!' exultantly cried the boy; 'I could see it in your face.'

'I would rather you would call me a true woman, Guy, than a lady,' said Dorcas, moving the lamp a few inches further back, so that the light should not shine in Guy's eyes.

'But I say, Dorcas how old are you?'

'Rather young, I am afraid, Guy, only nineteen.'

'And I am fourteen, Dorcas. Will you wait seven years for me?'

'Guy!'

'I shall be twenty-one then, and my own master,' eagerly added the boy; 'and I'll work like a slave to get a good profession, and if you will marry me, Dorcas, I'll make the best husband that ever was to you, for I'm desperately in love with you, that I am.'

Dorcas burst out into laughter.

'Guy,' she said, 'what a child you are?'

'But you do love me, don't you?'

'Yes, of course I love you; but not a bit more than I do Cecil Parker or little Frankie Gaines.'

'Dorcas!'

'Well a trifle more perhaps, because I've had all the care of you these four weeks, and you're really behaved very decently, but—'

'Promise me, Dorcas.'

'I won't Guy.'

'We're engaged, all the same,' said Guy with a deep sigh or relief; 'it's a bargain. And now you may get me my bowl of gruel.'

* * * * * *

'Yes, Mr. Paley,' said Dr. Delfer, with a nod of his spectacled brow 'that wild boy of yours is a diferent creature. And the infirmary nurse has done it all. Not to mention the credit that the doctor gives her for keeping down the fever and [illegible]

[illegible] He was the worst boy in school. I don't mind admitting to you now that he was contemplating expelling him from our members.'

'Guy always was a wild sort of chap,' admitted Mr. Paley. 'But his aunts spoiled him. He never had any bringing up to speak of.'

'But his illness seems to have exerted a wonderful influence over his moral nature,' added Dr. Delfer. 'And I really think Dorcas has done it all. Her influence has been wonderful.'

'She deserves a great deal of credit, I am sure,' said Mr. Paley, 'I should like to see her, and thank her. I've brought a few presents for her—a warm shawl, a silver snuff-box, and a black stuff gown.'

Dr. Delfer gasped a little.

'She—I don't think she takes snuff!' said he feebly.

'All these nurses do.'

'Yes—but there she is now!'

The door opened and Dorcas Wynter came in carying a student-lamp, which she had just filled and trimmed anew.

Mr. Paley dropped the silver snuff-box in astonishment.

'I beg your pardon, I am sure!' stammered he.

And when the doctor suggested that the nurse had better accompany young Guy on the journey home, she assented without a remonstrance.

'Nurse, indeed!' said Miss Sophronia Paley, a gaunt high-featured damsel of fifty. 'As if a pretty, simpering chit of a thing like that could understand anything about nursing!'

'She does, though,' said Guy. 'She's a brick. Aunt Soph. And I don't believe I should be alive now if it wasn't for her.'

'You are quite well enough by this time to dispense with her services,' said Miss Sophronia. 'A boy that eats [illegible] wood pile, picked up an ax, and gave himself a terrible blow on the forehead with the broad side of the implement. The blow felled him as though he had been shot. While he remained thus unconscious, a clothes line was procured, and he was seculely bound. He was then persuaded to get into the wagon and take a ride. By much persuasion and trial of patience, he was brought to town and placed in our jail, when it proved necessary to handcuff him for his own safety and that of those thrown in his company. He has been subject [illegible]

'I shall be twenty-one and she will be twenty-six. Not enough difference to signify. And' she uttered with a grin as his aunt flounced wrathfully out of the room 'you'll get your walking ticket, old lady when I'm married!

I'd as soon have a death's head and bones around the place any time.'

He was sitting curled up in the easiest chair in the library reading a book, half an hour afterwards, when the door opened, and his father come in.

Something in the paternal glance and movement struck the boy.

'I never saw father look so young and bright before;' he thought. Perhaps aunt Soph is going to marry some old fogy or other, and the coast will be clear.'

'So you knew all about it, Guy?' said Mr. Paley laughing.

'About what, sir?'

'About my engagement.''

The book fell with a crash to the floor.

'Your what, father.

'At least you told Aunt Sophronia about it. Well Im glad you are pleased, my boy, and Dorcas says she will always love you as if you were her own son. As a general thing I don't approve of stepmothers, but you and Dorcas love each other so dearly that——Why, Guy, what is the matter;' for the boy had rushed out of the room with an odd suffocating sensation in his throat.

He met Dorcas coming up the garden path with a bunch of holly berries in her [illegible] nd.

'Dorcas,' he cried—'you are as false as the seapent-woman! You beau——'

She comprehended him in an instant, though his voice was choked into silence.

She flung away the scarlet cluster and put her arms tenderly about him.

'Dear Guy,' she whispered, 'I love him but if you are unwilling—if it [illegible] or you it only remains for you to say so, and—'

Her voice died away, her head drooped on his shoulder.

There was an instant's silence, and then Guy said bravely:

'Well, so let it be. My father is a tramp, and you are the only woman alive who is worthy of him. And I suppose people would say six years was too much difference in our ages—although how they're to get over the fifteen years between you and father I don't know' he added with rather a forced laugh.

And then and there Guy Paley learned his first lesson in self abnegation.

Dorcas picked up her holly berries and went into the library, where her promised husband stood.

'I have seen Guy,' she said.

'Isn't he pleased?'

'Yes, I think he is,' hesitated Dorcas. 'Guy is a strange boy—a noble nature. I am not sure, Horace,' she added with a dimness in her eyes, 'that I would have married you if I could not always have had Guy with me.'

'And my true wife will be Guy's true mother!' said Mr. Paley drawing Dorcas tenderly to his side.

His Sweetheart's Skull.

A young doctor who has his office in a building on State street said "come in" to a rap at his door yesterday afternoon. He was in negligent attire and was smoking a cigarrette.

He threw it away, for the villainy at which he was caught he knew could never be put into execution. There was a skull on his desk, which from its position seemed to be taking the place of a paper weight. By some process of dentistry the mouth was filled with teeth, most of them shining with gold. The young physician confessed. "It is the skull," he said, "of a woman whom I once loved. Our love wasn't any different from that of most couples. She died, and I was one of her pall-bearers. She knew I was studying medicine before [illegible] and when she knew she [illegible] said she was sorry she [illegible] story of [illegible] ploys two [illegible]

George Walker having, except a rigid spell of sickness. [illegible]

Mrs. Ner W. W. Smith, of Newton, Kansas, has come to this place to attend the funeral of her sister Mrs. Jerome Beaver, and is now visiting among her friends. She intends to stay till fall.

Our townsman James H. Bingaman has sold his farm in Spring township to Alexander Hommel for $2,300.

Rev. A. H. Spangler preached in the Lutheran church on the morning [illegible]

A Desperate Duel.

On the 12th day of June, 1863, I witnessed a duel between Capt. Jones, commanding a Federal scout, and Capt. Fry, commanding a Confederate scout in Green county, Tennessee. These two men had been fighting each other for six months, with the fortunes of battle in favor of one and then the other. Their commands were camped on either side of Lick creek, a large and sluggish stream too deep to ford, and too shallow for a ferry boat; but there a bridge spanned the stream for the convenience of the traveling public. Each of them guarded this bridge that communication should not go either north or south, as the railroad track had been broken up months before. After fighting each other savagely and testing the point as to which should hold the bridge they agreed to fight a duel, the conqueror to hold the bridge undisputed for the time being. Jones gave the challenge, and Fry accepted. The terms were that they should fight with navy revolvers at twenty yards apart, deliberately walking toward each other, and firing until the last chamber of their pistols were discharged, unless one or the other fell before all the discharges were made. They chose their seconds, and agreed upon a Confederate surgeon (as he was the only one in their command) to attend them in case of danger.

Jones was certainly a fine-looking fellow, with light hair and blue eyes five feet ten inches in height, looking every inch of the military chieftain. He was a man the soldiers would admire, and the ladies regarded with admiration. I never saw a man more cool, determined, and heroic under the circumstance. I have read of deeds of chivalry and knight-errantry in the middle ages, and brave men enbalmed in modern poesy; but when I saw Jones co[illegible] to the duelists' scratch fightin[illegible] or real or supposed wrongs [illegible] he honestly thought, for [illegible] and the glory of the flag, I could not help admiring the man, notwithstanding he fought for the freedom of the negro, which I was opposed to.

Fry was a man full six feet high, slender, with long, wavy, curly hair, jet black eyes, wearing a slouched hat and gray suit, and looked rather the demon than the man.

There was nothing ferocious about the man; but he had that self-sufficient nonchalance that said, 'I will kill you." Without a doubt he was brave, cool, and collected, and although suffering from a terrible wound in his left arm, received a week before, he manifested no symptoms of distress, but seemed ready for the fight.

The ground was stopped off by the seconds, pistols loaded and exchanged, and the principals brought face to face. I shall never forget that meeting. Jones in his military boyish mood, as they shook hands remarked that—

A soldier braves death for a fanciful wrath,
When in glory's romantic career,

Fry caught up the rest of the sentence, and answered by saying:

Yet he bends o'er the foe when in battle laid low,
And bathes every wound with a tear.

They turned around and walked back to the point designated. Jones' second had the word "Fire" and as he slowly said, 'One—two—three—fire!" they simultaneously turned at the word 'One' and instantly fired. Neither was hurt. They cocked their pistols, and deliberately walked toward each other firing as the went. At the fifth shot Jones threw up his right hand, and firing his pistol in the air, sank down. Fry was in the act of firing his last shot; but, seeing Jones, silently lowered his pistol, dropped it on the ground, and sprang to Jones' side, taking his head in his lap as he sat down, and asked him if he was hurt.

I discovered that Jones was shot through the region of the stomach, the bullet glancing around the organ and coming out to the left of the spinal column, besides he had received three other frightful flesh [illegible] in other portions of the body. [illegible] wounds and gave him [illegible] as I had. He afterfor drill[illegible] wounds—one [illegible], one in the [illegible] right side. [illegible] he got [illegible]

A Sermon to One Man.

The smallest congregation that ever listened to a sermon is one among the many interesting reminiscences now published in the career of Dr. Lyman Beecher. The results of Dr. Beecher's serman to a single listener deserves publication. If only as an encouragement to preachers who are depressed by the paucity of their hearers. In the early part of his career Dr. Lyman Beecher once engaged to preach for a brother minister, whose church was in a remote district, people by a sparse and scattered population. It was in midwinter; the day was unusually stormy and cold, and the snow lay so deep in some places that he could scarcely proceed. On his arrival, although he saw no one, he took his seat in the pulpit. Presently one man came in and sat down, and at the appointed hour the preacher began. The service was closed with the benediction, when the solitary hearer departed and left the preacher alone. Twenty years after, Dr. Beecher was traveling in Ohio when a stranger accosted him by name. 'Do you remember preaching,' said he, twenty years ago to one man?' 'Yes, yes,' said the doctor, grasping his hand, 'that I do; and if you are the man, I have been wishing to see you ever since.' 'I am the man,' was the reply, 'and that sermon saved my soul and made a minister of me, and yonder is my church! The converts of that sermon, sir, are all over Ohio!'

A Kiss In the Dark

I have just heard a story about a Dutchman, a pretty young married woman and a kiss, which is amusing at least. It came near breaking up a boarding-house, too. The affair occurred in a fashionable Cass street boarding-house—one of those imposing structures that look like private residences, but are not. There are sojourning in this particular caravansary, among the guests married [illegible] tage. Somewhere in the back region rooms a pretty servant girl, who is a favorite with the boarders. One night our German friend met a lady on the stairs, and, promptly embracing her, pressed a passionate—no, a baby bunting—kiss upon her lips. There was a shriek and a struggle. The landlady hastened to the spot. Lights were struck and the gentleman of German extraction was found holding fast to the pretty young wife. When the lights were struck he let go and put in a plea that he thought he had hold of the servant girl of engaging ways. There was a sensation, and it took the good landlady half an hour to explain and peacify all parties. At last accounts all was serene—the husband content the wife mollified and the kisser quiet. The only one not satisfied is the servant girl, who lost her place. The landlady said the evidence was against her.

Lord of Creation.

"The trouble with women," said Smitherimpkins, "is that they want us to have fun their own way. They want us to sit in the house and talk about the weather, sir; to discuss the eternal mysteries of dressmaking and cooking, sir; and read novels, sir; and worship babies. They can't see why a man should want to go to a club or a public dinner, sir; or take in a baseball game or a horse race. They want us to do as they do and enjoy ourselves in their way, sir. But did you ever hear a man wanting a woman to have fun in his way? No, sir; not much, sir. You never heard of any man trying to persuade his wife to go around the corner, sir, to a nice quiet place, sir, where some elegant gentlemen were engaged in a rubber of cards; and to smoke cigars and drink beer with the party, sir, and sit up till the cock had made himself hoarse with crowing, sir, and then start home singing.

Did you ever hear of any man's trying to have fun in that way—his way? No, sir; not by a jugful, sir."

Tramp (piteously) Please help a poor cripple.

Kind old Gent (handing him some money) Bless me, why, of course [illegible] are you crippled my poor fel.

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