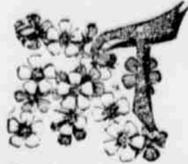


BY THE WAVES.

Crisp and curling, soft unfurling
Caps of silvery foam,
Haste the breakers, frolic makers,

ASTREA.

BY HELEN FORREST GRAVES.



HE big clock in the City Hall cupola pointed to the hour of twelve, the chimes of Old Trinity had just ceas-

Old Jethro Black sat patiently, with his hands on his pepper-and-salt knees, and the sultry wind lifting the few straggly hairs from his bald head, his eyes fixed dreamily on the floor.

"If Keturah Jones were here, then boards would be scoured whiter'n they are now, I guess," he thought.

Astrea, his grand-daughter, was coiled up in a big leather office-chair, her seared eyes flitting restlessly from one object to another, while the rows of musty law books kept an unwinking watch from their shelves above and the little office boy played marbles in the hall beyond.

"Grandfather," murmured Astrea, "I—I think I'm just a little hungry. Is there one of those chicken sandwiches left?"

The old man slowly unfolded a thrifty brown paper package that reposed in one of his coat pockets.

"Just one," said he, "and cherries, but they're sort of crushed up."

"But, grandfather, what will you eat?"

"Me? I ain't hungry, child. I ate lots o' breakfast."

Are there not some pious fictions which the recording angel will stir up when he makes up the debit and credit accounts of the departed?

Curious, she whispered, "New York's an awful big place. I'm almost sorry we came here. I—I'm afraid of New York, ain't you?"

Just then the sound of brisk footsteps echoed on the stairs, the door flew open, and a tall, well-dressed man entered.

"Hallo!" he ejaculated. "Why, with a penetrating glance, 'tis Cousin Jethro Black, isn't it? And little Star Eyes, grown into a big girl! The office-boy told me some one had been waiting here for me; but I never thought of you!"

"We went to your house on Madison avenue," explained Mr. Black, in a subdued way, "but there wa'n't no one to home but a clean'n' woman, with her head tied up in a red handkercher, and she said the folks was gone to Bar-Bar—some barbarous place or other. I can't rightly recall the name."

The gentleman laughed. "Oh, Bar Harbor!" said he, "Well, she spoke truth. They are gone!"—for in Cousin Jethro's wrinkled face he traced some lineaments of doubt.

"I've only come back to town for a day or two myself. Going back this afternoon. Well, what can I do for you?" sitting down with a genial smile.

"It's about Astrea," said the old man. "A tress, she's seventeen now, and there don't seem to be nothin' for her to do in Kidd's Valley. She's a smart, handy gal, and I that year your little Barbara had the whoopin' cough, and the hull family came out to stay the summer, your wife took considerable notice of Astrea."

"Yes, I remember that year," said Mr. Eldon. "You were very kind to us. You refused to accept any compensation, and Mrs. Black nursed little Barbe back to health very tenderly."

"Betsey's dead and gone now," said the old man, swallowing a lump in his throat. "And we never expected to charge our relations nothin' for breathin' in God's fresh air and eatin' the berries that grew on every bush. But about Astrea. I've got to go West to live with my sister's husband—a poor paralytic creature. I dunno's I've explained to you that things have sort o' ran down in Kidd's Valley. We've had to part with the farm, and now that Hezekiah Hall needs care, it makes a sort of home for me. But they hain't no room for Astrea, so I've brought her here. I thought maybe your wife could think up some way for her to earn a living. She's a tall, strong gal, you see, and nice-lookin', too—As-trea hung down her head and blushed—"

"And she might help your gals with the housework, or mebbe get a place somewhere where she'd be treated well and not put to too hard work."

Mr. Eldon screwed his mouth into a whistling shape.

Help his girls—Elaine and Barbara—with the housework!

As he thought of those radiant young belles at Bar Harbor, he had difficulty in repressing a laugh.

Then, with the recollection of the numerous peculiarities of his lady wife, a look of perplexity overspread his face as Cousin Jethro Black mandered on:

"So I guess I'll leave Astrea with you, Cousin Wallace, for my train leaves at 2 o'clock."

A sudden burst of tears from Astrea—a feeble wail of "Grandfather! grandfather!"—a whispered "Good-by!"—and the old man was gone, leaving Astrea looking piteously into Mr. Eldon's face.

"What will Mrs. Eldon say?" thought the lawyer.

But there seemed to be no alternative but to obey the pointing finger of fate, and the evening train bore Astrea Black toward the haven of fashion on the far Maine coast, with the distant relative by her side.

She was only seventeen, and she had never been out of Kidd's Valley in her life, so that all the surrounding world was full of the indescribable flavor of freshness.

She exclaimed aloud with delight at sight of the scenery.

She was not at all seasick on the boat, but bought peanuts and munched apples, ate green peas with her knife and questioned Mr. Eldon in a very audible whisper as to the use of the finger bowls at the steamer dinner table.

"What a wild girl of the woods!" said the New York lawyer to himself; and again he thought of his wife's probable verdict. "But she has got eyes like a young deer, and those straying curls make me think of a wild grapevine, and I do not like to hear her laugh!"

John Eldon was at the pier to meet the Portland boat on which his father was expected.

Astrea ran up the gang-plank like a kitten and stood on tip-toe to kiss him.

"It's Jack!" she cried, breathlessly; "and Jack don't know me! Oh, Jack, don't you remember that awful day when me and you threw eggs at the old minister's chaise? Don't you remember?"

And Jack, an elegant young gentleman in a white duck suit and eye-glasses, stood appalled. But he immediately recovered himself.

"Why it's little Astrea!" said he. "Of course I remember you—only you've grown so tall."

Mr. Eldon, with a queer shrug of the shoulders.

"Mother will be surprised," said Mr. Eldon, with a queer shrug of the shoulders.

"Yes," said Jack, hurriedly, "I think she will."

Mrs. Eldon viewed the new arrival with consternation. Barbara, a graceful girl of nineteen, dressed in the extreme of æsthetic fashion, stared at Astrea's pink gingham frock and country boots.

Elaine kissed her cordially.

"What red cheeks you've got!" said she. "And, oh, what do you put on your eyelashes to make them grow so thick?"

Wallace said Mrs. Eldon, "what we do to do with this human pantheress who jumps over the lower half of the colonial door instead of opening it, and laughs so loud, and chews gum like a cash-gir!"

"The boys've can," Mr. Eldon promptly answered. "She's an orphan, Cleo, and she's alone in the world."

"But couldn't we get her some sort of a place?"

"An untamed creature like this? Why, it would be as cruel as caging a thrush! What could she do in a—place?"

"Mamma," whispered Barbara, "it's dreadful! With our garden party to-night, and Mr. De Ravelle coming, and the Biltverns, and all those people, Astrea's determined to betwixt. It's impossible to put her off!"

"But she has nothing to wear!" gasped Mrs. Eldon.

"Elaine's maid is fixing her first old heliotrope tulle with the crystal bead trimming," said Barbara. "Elaine is so very peculiar about it. She declares that Astrea is our cousin, and should have everything just the same as ourselves."

"Elaine is a goose!" petulantly uttered the matron. "She don't know that business is getting worse and worse every year, and that our only hope is in this summer's campaign. I wish to goodness this girl had stayed in the country, raising turkeys and straining buttermilk—if that's the way they do it! But your father is different from any one else, and when he once gets his head set in any one direction, sixteen yoke of oxen wouldn't turn it!"

So Astrea stayed at Bar Harbor, peeted by one and all, when once the shock was over. Elaine and her maid improvised toilettes for her, and she began to feel at home.

Some people called her original; others scorned her as a mere dairy-maid. But she was happy, in a wild, spirit-like sort of way, until one day suddenly changed the aspect of everything.

"I can't help it," said Jack—"I love her! And I must have her for my wife!"

"John," remonstrated his mother, "you ought to know—"

"I only know one thing," persisted Jack, the impetuous—"I love Astrea!"

The girl herself looked piteously up in Mrs. Eldon's face.

"I'll go away from here," said she, "if Jack will really be ruined by marrying me. I—I don't want to ruin Jack—not if I drown myself first!"

And she burst out sobbing.

"You're the sweetest little darling in the world," said Jack, "and I'd like no better fun than to go out West with you and settle on a ranch."

"But ranches cost money," said Barbara.

"Then I'd hire out as a hand," said Jack, rebelliously. "I'm good at breaking horses."

"And I'd make the butter and feed the chickens," said Astrea, joyfully.

"You are two silly children," said Mrs. Eldon.

Yet all of a sudden something seemed to bring back to her the lost sweetness of departed youth, and her eyes were momentarily dimmed with tears.

"Mamma," pleaded Elaine, "it will hurt Jack if you oppose this thing—"

"And Astrea loves him so dearly!"

"But there's Gwendoline Ballersby, with that great East Indian fortune!" sobbed Mrs. Eldon, torn by conflicting emotions.

"What's a fortune," cried Elaine, "if love don't go with it."

"Well," said Mr. Eldon, "then the matter is settled. If Jack goes West, we all go West together. For since Jennifer & Goldie's banking house has failed, we're all equally penniless."

"Hurrah!" said Jack, flinging up his polo cap. "Then it don't make any difference whether I marry an heiress or not?"

"Please, my lady," said the solemn footman, "there's a gentleman below; and when I asked him for his card, he said he never had one in his house—his principles was ag'in it."

"Oh," shrieked Astrea, who had unconventionally peeped over the balustrade, "it's grandfather! It's grandfather, come back from the West!"

"Another pauper to maintain!" sighed Mrs. Eldon.

Old Jethro Black came smiling into the group, leaning on a gold-headed cane and wearing a suit of black clothes in which he seemed to feel excessively uncomfortable.

"Yes," said he, "I've come back. My brother, he's been took away at last, and he's left me enough to keep me in comfort the rest of my days. He was a savin' creature, Hezekiah was, and there'll be a nice little sum for Astrea. It won't be necessary for Astrea to take no situation now. Don't squeeze me so tight round the neck, child; don't you s'pose a fellow's got to hev breathin' room? You've been very good to Astrea, Wallace Eldon, and—What! goin' to be married to Jack? Why, twa'nt but yesterday Jack was robbin' Deacon Peck's melon patch an' gittin' me into trouble chasin' Squire Olney's young colts round the meadows!"

"We're glad to see you, Mr. Black," said Jack, cordially wringing his hand. "Have you got a farm out West for Astrea and me to run?"

The old man smiled.

"I shouldn't a bit wonder," said he. "Meanwhile there was a buzz of gossip all through the Bar Harbor circles. Out on the decks of white-winged yachts, in the gay streets and on the rocky slopes of Green Mountain, people were asking one another:

"Have you seen the Western millionaire?"

"Have you heard how many gold mines he owns and what those new city lots are selling for?"

Everywhere people stopped to gaze at him, and he, in answer to the great question his son was about to make. The very Biltverns themselves condescended to inquire as to the mine shares. Claude de Ravelle bemoaned his ill-luck in that he had not "made eyes" at fair Astrea Black. And Mrs. Eldon declared that she could not believe her ears.

"Little Astrea an heiress!" said she. "It's like a dream?"

Again old Jethro smiled.

"Astrea is a fortune in herself," said he. "All the same, that's no reason there shouldn't go a fortune with her, too. I kind o' suspected this when first Hezekiah sent for me. But I wa'n't goin' to let on. I wanted to see how she'd be treated here. An' I'm suited, down to the ground."

While Astrea's soft eyes sparkled.

"Money is all very well," said she. "But what I think most of is that Jack loves me."—Saturday Night.

The Largest Churches.

We find a list of the largest churches in Europe with figures representing their seating capacity, but we have an idea that the figures given indicate the capacity for the standing multitude, as in few cases are there seats provided. We give the list, however, as we find it:

St. Peter's Church, Rome..... 54,240

Milton Cathedral..... 37,000

St. Paul's, London..... 35,000

St. Paul's, London..... 35,000

St. Peter's, Bologna..... 24,400

Florence Cathedral..... 24,300

Antwerp Cathedral..... 24,000

St. Sophia, Constantinople..... 24,000

St. John's, Liverpool..... 22,000

Notre Dame, Paris..... 21,000

Pisa Cathedral..... 19,000

St. Stephen's, Vienna..... 18,000

St. Dominic's, Bologna..... 12,000

St. Peter's, Bologna..... 11,000

Cathedral of Vienna..... 11,000

St. Mark's, Venice..... 7,000

Spurgeon's Tabernacle, London..... 7,000

The figures opposite Spurgeon's Tabernacle mean the seating capacity.

—Brooklyn Eagle.

The Morgue Push Carts.

The Paris morgue is all surrounded at the sides and back by a high and rusty iron grating. There is a gate at each side of the building large enough to give entrance to the police station push carts, which bear so glibly a resemblance to the Paris bakers' vehicles. The push carts rattle over the stone paving of a melancholy little garden where flocks of pigeons belonging to the employees feed. The push cart rattles through the garden and into the reception hall, and here the body is dumped down and sledged forward on a board by a mechanical device. Here also the servant of the push cart—a humble functionary of the Government attached to each police station—delivers up the dead man's ticket to the registrar. No corpse can be received without its ticket, which is a commitment drawn up in form.—Washington Star.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

THIS IS THEIR DEPARTMENT OF THE PAPER.

Quaint Sayings and Cute Doings of the Little Folks Everywhere, Gathered and Printed Here for All Other Little Ones to Read.

Why He Was Silent.

"Pray tell me why you keep so still," inquired the Jansares; "You speak so low I'd like to know what can the reason be."

"Oh, hush," the Wazze answered; "my tail's asleep, you see, and if I made a noise I'd surely wake it up," said he.

In the Homestead Barn.

"Mid billows of blossomed hay, in a barn we knew, where the light stole through, a fresco of roof-chinks gray!"

The shadowy distances, magnified, to our wondering eyes seemed vast; there we loved to hide from the world outside.

When our sunny plays were past, half lost in the hay, we would laugh and leap.

Then weary still we would lie, and lazily keep a sweet truce with sleep.

While the afternoon went by, 'Twas cool and quiet and deep as a thought unguessed in the mind of a child.

With rich hues wrought and rare odors caught from clover and lilies wild.

There the pigeons murmured in tender strain, and carpeted the floor with their feet.

The barn-swallow strayed not farther from care than we in those far-off days.

Or he beured there by such peerless fare mistaken for meadow ways.

No traveler will find such a resting-place, though the quest be summer-long.

No such dreaming-place can a poet trace, wherein to fashion a song!—Farm and Home.

The Cow Did the Work.

In a little Mexican town on the south bank of the Rio Grande there is a good-sized church with a flat roof. A large number of cactus seed had lodged in the dirt on the roof, and in the course of time there was quite a crop of cactus up there. Now it is the custom in Mexico when they want to destroy cactus to first burn off the thorns, and then the cattle will eat the plant. The people became tired of seeing the plants on the church roof and he'd a town meeting to deliberate. Finally a man climbed up to the roof and in two days had burned off all the thorns from the stalks. Next a cow was hoisted to the roof, and in less than a week the cactus was all eaten and the cow was lowered to the earth again. The people were delighted with the result and now point with pride to their church.

Facts as to Curve Pitching.

There are some people still left who refuse to believe that a baseball can travel out of the straight line between the pitcher's box and the home plate on its way to the catcher. It has been proved again and again that a ball can be "curved" by a now well-known experiment.

Two stakes are set up so that the pitcher standing behind one cannot hit a mark on the left side of the other in a straight line, the ball passing to the right of the first. Indeed, a short while ago a noted college pitcher was offered \$1,000 by an old gentleman of his acquaintance if he could prove to his satisfaction that a baseball could be pitched in a curve.

The pitcher at once set up two stakes in his back yard and curved the ball around them in fine style. But the old gentleman insisted that the whole thing was an optical delusion, and is no more convinced than ever.

Every boy knows how hard it is to bat an "out-curve" or a "drop," and after he has struck out a few times wants no one to prove to him there is such a thing as curve pitching.

There is little use in trying to explain the theory of this performance here, as many scientific papers have

HUMOR OF THE WEEK.

STORIES TOLD BY FUNNY MEN OF THE PRESS.

Many Odd, Curious, and Laughable Portraits of Human Nature Graphically Portrayed by Eminent Word Artists of Our Own Day.—A Budget of Fun.

Sprinkles of Satire.

A KANSAS farmer refers to a blooded goat as his bread and butter.

For a book agent to sell his own autobiography is "taking his life in his own hands."—Richmond Dispatch.

"TRULY," said Witticus, when he saw ox-tail soup and tongue on the free-lunch counter, "extremes meet."—Life.

The boy who eats all the melons he sees, whether they are green or old, is what we call a painstaking urchin.—Galveston News.

"Is CHINCHER making any money out of politics?" "Not a cent. He is perfectly satisfied with what makes in it."—Buffalo Courier.

He heard them kissing on the sly and peeked in through the door. And then he cried in accents high, "Wahy, sister, what's the score?"—Detroit Free Press.

The fellow who kicks an' squirts a tew git a front seat at a circus is one who takes a back seat in a peer-meeting.—"Ol' Nutmeg's" sayings.

"Oh, Mr. Longhead, I just saw Charley Greene eloping with his wife." "Good! Now I'm even with him. He sold me a horse last week."—Life.

AFTER a man passes fifty he should watch himself with great care. Nearly every man does something ruinous after he is fifty.—Atlantic Globe.

"HAVE you ever been around world?" "No, but my arm is." "What do you mean?" "Well, I'm all the world to me."—Harper's Life.

Judge—"How old are you, my Elderly female?" "I am—I am—Judge—"Better hurry up; every moment makes it worse."—Elgin Bletcher.

He—Do you usually take a walk with you when you go climbing the mountains? She—Oh, yes; you like to go along to-day.—York Statesman.

BACON—"Does Penman make anything out of his writings?" Egbert—"I don't know. I never could see anything out of them."—York Statesman.

FATHER (visiting at college)—son, these are better cigars than can afford." Son—"That's all right, father; take all you want; this is my money."—Yale Record.

TOMMY—"Say, paw," Mr. F.—"Now, what do you want?" F.—"What is the difference between the sea horse and the navy pig?" Indianapolis Journal.

FAT—"Be jabbers, yez shot me away from this!" Mike—"How could I, when I report av' ye frightened both av' thim av' Frank Leslie's Weekly."

"DID the new cook bring satisfactory recommendations?" Mr. Style—"N-no-cr-yes, she is just what I want; she is too large to wear dress.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

ANGELINA (to her new bet)—"Oh, Edwin, there's such a looking girl just behind you look!" Edwin—"Ah, I've got good looks now, darling!"—New Ledger.

SHE—Bixby appears to be a bright young man. I hear he has enough money by writing to his education at college. He is writing home to his parents.—Saw Traveler.

He would have confessed, waved him in silence. "No," I prefer to be kept in the dark. After a moment's thought and turned the gas yet low. trot Tribune.

GWENDOLINE—I'm at a account for the fact that Moll has more enemies than I know. Seward—I think go through life acting the candid friend.—Vogue.

CHAPTIE—"What is the art they are talking so much about?" Sappie—"I haven't given the much study, but I presume the plate they serve the art the soldiers, don't you know?"

DOCTOR—"Don't be alarmed sicker than you are a year with the same trouble. To well and hearty. Patient"—O. Doctor, tell me who physician.—Browning's Illu.

"AND what's your reason for increasing the servants' wages?" friend asked. "Because band complained that my millinery bills equaled the expenses, and I want to they do not."—Flegende.

MISTRESS—"What in the matter with the twins?"—"Sure, I don't know; but way they've been frettin' all day, it's my opinion the mixed themselves up and which is which."—Good N.

"Dog days, says an excuse so called because they fall time of the "heliacal red dog star," Sirius or Caniculus word meaning "little of the heliacal hot weather that makes the dog days able."—Pleasure.

"I NEVER saw any sign of great meanness in Hobbs don't know him. Why, wife a life insurance policy in her favor as a Christmas year, and ever since I been practicing a regimen to longevity."—Chicago I.

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