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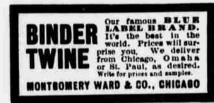


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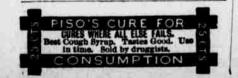
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ARS, ROEBUCK & CO.(INC.) CHICAGO, I

ARBUTUS.

There's a gleam of spring in my dark old

room
And a breath of spring in the air,
I cannot write and I cannot think,
So I fling down my pen in despair.
For my truant heart is out in the woods
Still damp from the melted snows,
Where the sweet wild things of the shadow

And the trailing arbutus grows. I lay my head down on my folded arms

And drowsily shut my eyes.

My dark old room whirls lightly away
And the din of the city dies;
The long hard years of struggle and fret,
Of hope and despair and pain,
Silp from me silently one by one
And Lam a child egain. And I am a child again.

"The enring in the country, and on the bills In the secret places of gloom, Where the thick brown mosses cover th earth.

The arbutus is all a-bloom; The children eager from school let out, Are off and away on its quest, Laden with baskets, sun-bonneted, tanned And laughing with childish sest.

Dear little flowers in the cracked blue jar, We are homesick, you and I; We fain would be back in the dear old spo

If but long enough to die. Children we are of the woods and fields, Comrades of the wild and the free. And the city with all its confusion and

glare, Was never for such as we. -Etta J. Webb, in Ladies' World.

THE ROMANCE OF MUTBY WORKHOUSE

By Mrs. Isabel Smith

THE guardians of the Mutby work house had just finished their ordinary meeting, when the master, with rather a sheepish expression of countenance, observed:

"I think, gentlemen, I ought to lay before you a letter I received yesterday. First one of that sort I ever had."

"Dear me, Tripp, what's that?" exclaimed the chaplain, otherwise the rector of Mutby, commonly called Parson Weaver, a round, rosy-faced man, who more resembled a farmer than a

The other members of the board ceased their various conversations and looked expectant, all except Dr. Evesham, the medical officer. For the last half-hour he had heard every impatient thud of his handsome chestnut's hoofs on the gravel outside, and felt that what might be an agreeable method of passing a little spare time to his confreres was a waste of precious moments to a busy man like himself. The whole business might be settled so much more quickly had they been coneise instead of rambling and disputative. He had just been wondering how it could ever have been accepted as a popular fact that his sex were behindhand in the matter of speech, when this new delay occurred. He was a man of about 35, quiet and reserved, living by himself, and accustomed to long, lonely drives about the Suffolk country on his professional errands.

"Well, Tripp, what is it?" repeated Parson Weaver, rather impatiently. He had been interrupted in an interesting discussion with his neighbor, the squire, about the trotting backney and "gate post" mangolds that he had got first prize for at the recent agricultural

The master cleared his throat, and read, somewhat nervously, the following epistle:

To the Master of Mutby Workhouse: Sir: I am a native of Thorpe St. Barna bas, and left this country 40 years ago fo Australia, where I made a comfortable fortune. I am now returned to my native land but find nearly all my friends are gone and but find nearly all my friends are gone and scattered. I am is years of age, strong and hearty, and want a wife to help spend my savings. Can you recommend me a nice, respectable young woman among your inmates? I should prefer a single woman, not a widow, and would make her a good husband. Please write by return to Stephen Yaxley, Bell Inn, Thorpe St. Barnabas, Suffolk.

A smile appeared on most of the faces round the baize-covered table as the master finished.

"Dear me, Tripp," said the parson, "are you to be turned into a matrimonial agent in your old age?"

The master half laughed. "It would seem so, sir. Curious letter, isn't,it, gentlemen? But I thought it my duty to show it to you."

"Certainly, certainly," echoed all Dr. Evesham was gazing absently out of the big window at a distant view of stained wherry-sails gliding up the

"What is your opinion, Evesham?" asked the squire, rather pettishly. He thought the medical officer might take a little interest in the subject, so that he could get back the sooner to the more interesting one of agriculture, and convince Parson Weaver that the prize for mangolds had been unfairly bestowed.

"My opinion? I have hardly had time to form one," answered the doctor, coolly. "But I don't know that I should take any notice of the letter."

The master coughed deprecatingly Well, sir, if I may be so bold as to suggest, I just mentioned the matter to my wife, and she says she thinks he might do for Susannah West."

"Susannah West!" exclaimed the doctor, bringing the legs of his chair to the ground so violently as to make the others start.

"Is that the girl with the reddish hair?" asked the squire, screwing up his eyes meditatively.

"And violent eyes," said the parson; "very much like some of the old masters' portraits of the Madonna."

"The young woman's father was small farmer at Cutton All Saints," said the master, "and failed. She was ill for a long while after she got here It seemed to prey upon her mind."

"Yes, yes, we all remember," said the medical officer. "She had a low fever; it was a tough job to pull her through." "You ordered port wine for her, sir, said the butcher, cheerfully. He did not object to what some members called extravagance in the sick-dieting,

ply of beef-tea.

"A sad case, a sad case," said the squire. "But I don't see why the young woman can't go out to service."

"Not strong enough," replied the doc-tor, "nor brought up to that sort of work. She has the instincts of a lady, but unfortunately not enough education to fit her for teaching.'

"Then, from what I can see of it," said the squire, "she will be here for the rest of her days-like old Molly Mobbs, that was reckoned to have cost the ratepayers over £ 1,000 altogether." "Unless she accepts this offer," said

the chaplain. "Eh! gentlemen?" All looked a little doubtful, as if not quite certain whether to treat the suggestion seriously.

At that moment a troop of little workhouse children filed past the window, followed by a young woman, clad in the lilac-check union gown and hideous black straw union bonnet with its pur ple ribbon.

"There goes Susannah West!" exclaimed the master; "she's just bringing the little ones home from a walk. A rare hand with them she is, too."

The sun was shining straight upon the young woman in question, and the cer. board caught a glimpse of a dazzling wild-rose complexion and bands of redgold waving hair.

"A very respectable girl, indeed," said the parson; "and I for one suggest that we follow this offer up. We ought to make inquiries; and, though I have plenty to do in the parish" (the others exchanged quietly amused glances at this assertion, for it was well known that the parson took his parochial duties very lightly), "I will go over to Thorpe St. Barnabas myself and find out all that I can of Mr. Stephen Yaxley. But in the meantime, Tripp, say nothing to the girl."

A special board meeting was held a few days later. The parson's inquiries proved satisfactory, and it now only remained to inform the young woman of the proposal.

"I suppose you've quite settled it shall be Susannah West, gentlemen?" said the master, a little diffidently.

"I suppose so, Tripp. Why?" asked the squire. "Well, sir, for the matter of getting rid of one of the women, I'd sooner it

was Mary Pott. She's such a grumbling creature—never satisfied." "So she is, Tripp; but then she's a widow, and that is against Mr. Yaxley's specifications."

Tripp scratched his head. "Not a bad-looking woman, sir," he observed. "No, no. But a stipulation is a stipulation; and I, for my part, consider that Providence has sent this special offer on purpose for Susannah West.'

A murmur of approval followed this assertion; only the butcher ventured to demur. "Seems a bit oldish for the girl, don't he, gentlemen?"

"Old? Pshaw! What's 58?" cried one and all. "Better able to take care of a wife. Got a position," etc. "Yes, yes; to be sure. Of course that

makes up," said the butcher. "Very well," said the parson; "then let it be settled once for all that he have Susannah West."

"Yes, gentlemen; that is all very well as far as it goes," observed the medical officer, who had not yet spoken. "But the question still remains: Will Susannah West have him?"

though this side of the argument had not struck them. "That we can soon find out," said

Parson Weaver, irritably. fetch the girl here."

In a few minutes the girl stood be fore them; she looked shy and halffrightened, wondering what the board could want of her.

"Ha! Susannah, my dear," began the parson-he had called her Miss West in the days of her prosperity, but one cannot expect complimentary titles in the workhouse-"we have sent for you -because-in short-well, we have a rery advantageous offer, which we

think will just suit you." Before Susannah could make any re ply, the squire, determined that the chaplain should not have it all his own way, exclaimed in his hearty voice: "What would you say to a good home

and a kind husband, my girl?" The color flooded Susannah's face; she gave one startled glance, then stood, with her eyes on the floor, nervously

plaiting a corner of her checked apron "Perhaps it would be as well if I read the letter we have received," said the parson, gloring disapproval at his neighbor for having forced his hand.

Then he put on his spectacles, and read in slow and ponderous tones Mr. Stephen Yaxley's epistle, pausing every now and then to see the effect. If he expected rapturous gratitude when he finished he was disappointed. Susan nah never raised her eyes. Her color came and went, and her lips trembled; but she said not a word.

"Well, my girl," cried the squire, unable to restrain his impatience, "what do you say to this? Isn't it a fine chance? I wouldn't think twice about it ff I were you. Just look at your position. Here you are in the workhouse at your age, and, like a rat, without a friend in the world. Not any fault of yours, of course," he added, as a pained expression flitted across the

girl's face. "Perhaps she would like a little time to think it over," suggested the butcher, in his thick, husky voice.

"Have you got nothing to say, Susannah?" inquired the parson, rather sternly.

The girl's fingers interlaced nervous-"You are very kind, gentlemen; but

I—I—don't know what to say."

She looked around appealingly, desperately. "Come, come, be quick to settle it.

girl. We don't want another special meeting called," cried the squire.

The medical officer rose: "I think, gentlemen, perhaps if I saw Miss West

which generally included a good sup- alone for a minute she might give me an answer. She feels embarrassed, I

can see." "Quite right, Evesham," said the parson. "They can go into your room, Tripp, can't they?"

Tripp, jumping up with alacrity, led the way to his tobacco-scented little sanctum.

"Sit down, Susannah," said the doctor, kindly. "Now don't be flurried. You have heard this offer; it seems a good one for you. But don't say 'Yes' if you'd rather not. Just think it over a little."

He turned his back on her, and, going over to the mantelpiece, examined a quaint old china group of an Englishman, Scotchman and Irishman, seated together, entitled "Auld Lang Syne." A long silence followed; then Susannah spoke. She had a remarkably sweet, soft voice, and the doctor looked round quickly.

"If I do say 'Yes,' Dr. Evesham," she said, tremblingly, "it will be because -you-wish me to; for no other rea-

She raised her eyes to him as she spoke. They were beautiful eyes, and sent a thrill through the medical offi-

"I wish you to say 'Yes?" he exclaimed, coming towards her.

"You have been so good to me; you saved my life when I first came here. I should never have recovered but for your care and attention. I always feel" she clasped her hands tightly together -"you are the only friend I have, and there is nothing I would not do for your sake."

The passionate warmth of her tone startled Dr. Evesham. He caught both the hands with which, ashamed of her freedom, she was about to cover her face, and said, tenderly: "My poor girl! Then you shall never say 'Yes' to this offer!"

The board was waxing impatient, and the squire and parson had almost broken their long friendship over the prize "gate-post" mangolds, when Dr. Evesham returned with Susannah West.

"Well, doctor, I hope you have brought the young woman to see reason," said the former.

"I hope so," replied the doctor, dryly.
"Has she said 'Yes,' then?" asked the squire and the butcher in a breath. "She has to me, gentlemen," said Dr. Evesham, reddening. "I am going to marry her myself!"—Chambers' Jour-

FRENCHMEN DON'T TRAVEL

Because They Have an Innate Horre of Anything Like "Roughing It."

M. Bonvalto, the distinguished explorer, is constantly exhorting his fellow-countrymen to travel, and his appeals are once more leading to a review of the reasons which render the average Gaul so averse to adventure beyond his own frontier, says the London Telegraph. How does it happen, it is asked, that so few, even of the younger generation of Frenchmen, display any inclination to see the world, although at their age, many Angloslthough at their age, many Anglo-Bogar & Bingaman, grain. 14 Saxous have already been round it? J.G. Snyder, hardware and furniture, 14

Two main explanations for these stay-at-home propensities are volunteered. One is that people in France rarely trouble themselves to learn forgn languages, so that they are like fish out of water when they go abroad. Another is that they are absolutely ignorant of the practical side of travel and have little idea of the articles that they require or of the best mode of fitting themselves out for a long journey. In short, they are not handy or enterprising and have a horror of any-thing in the shape of "roughing it," as the saying goes.

Wished He Was a Heathen. Little John (after casting his penny into the fund for the Bamalam island-

ers)-I wish I was a heathen! Subbath School Teacher-Oh, Johnny! Why do you wish such an awful

thing as that? "The heathen don't never have to give nothin'-they are always gettin' somethin'."-St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

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