The North Branch Democrat.

HARVEY SICKLER, Proprietor.] "TO SPEAK HIS THOUGHTS IS EVERY FREEMAN'S RIGHT."—Thomas Jefferson. [TERMS: $1.50 PER ANNUM

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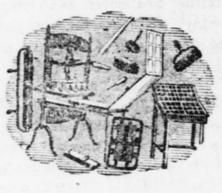
North Branch Democrat.



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BY HARVEY SICKLER.

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Poet's Corner.

The War, who Pays the Cost?

Who pays the cost? Ask the sister,
Sorrowful she sits and sighs—
Mourning for an only brother,
"*The cost is mine,*" the maiden cries.

Who pays the cost? Ask the father,
Grieved, but silent, quelling grief,
That swells his bosom for his boy,
"*I've dearly paid,*" his answer brief.

Who pays the cost? Ask the mother,
Bent with sorrow as with tears;
She weeps a son, in battle fallen—
"*The cost is mine, I pay with tears.*"

Who pays the cost? Ask the orphan,
Sad and friendless now his life;
His father in the conflict fell—
"'*Tis mine, the cost of this fell strife.*"

Who pays the cost? Ask the widow,
Broken hearted, lone and poor—
Her husband slain, she doth bewail,
"*I've paid my all, I have no more.*"

What is the cost? Bank bills and gold!
The dross that misers hoard and hide?
Those tears of grief, a thousand fold,
Outweigh all other cost beside.

[*Columbus (O.) Crisis.*

Select Story.

From the San Francisco Golden Era.

A Truthful Story of to-day.

Mrs. Smith!—of course you know her.—Her husband, Mr. Smith, is a wholesale dealer in codfish, gimlets, molasses, cotton goods and patent medicines. Mr. and Mrs. Smith are of the real *bon ton*, the *recherche* of society, *beau monde* considered Mrs. Smith the belle of their peculiar element. You meet Mrs. Smith upon the street and politely raise your hat, or more properly duck your head in a bow, in token of, "I would cut it off if it would render you any pleasure." Now you would hardly believe Mrs. Smith, that richly dressed and fashionable lady, with proud step and a continuous curl at servant girls upon her beautiful and haughty lip, was once a servant—ah, twice—once a servant and factory hand, in the Yankee land of Lowell. That's to her honor; for have not kings married commoners. and dukes made duchesses of peasant girls? She was haughty a few months ago, but those who thought her all arrogance now find in her amiability, and those who thought her haughty, now love her for her sympathy and kindness. Thereby begins our story.

Mrs. Smith was the most unpleasant mistress servant girls ever tried to please, and if by dint of perseverance any one of them remained in her employ two weeks Mr. Smith's astonishment was plainly visible.

Well, Smith puts on airs, as well as Mrs. Smith.—It was by a lucky accident he got started and followed up his fortunes until he obtained his present importance. Tell Smith he worked at common labor a few years ago, or how he learned the art of buying or selling for profit by graduating from boarding house stewardship, and there learned his first idea of 'trade,' he will probably reply—"Ah, them was old times." Old times, true enough! Just a decade gone since 'them old, old times.'

The man at the intelligence office had sent five different girls to Mrs. Smith's employ in two weeks, and on this particular morning Mrs. Smith wanted a new servant.

"Mrs. Smith," said the lady, addressing her senior partner, in a tone that said plainer than her words—"I have an order for you this morning." Mr. Smith, the steamer has arrived. I see by this morning's paper, there were three hundred women on board, and I should think that you might get me a real good servant woman. I want no more girls about this house. I believe that if I have as much trouble another six months, with servant girls, as I have within the past six, I shall go distracted, die, or be obliged to do my own house work."

"Well, dear," Smith replied, in a bantering tone of voice—(bantering with Mrs. Smith was like little boys venturing upon thin ice;)—"well, dear, if you do the first act, I shall take good care of you—in the asylum; if the second, I will see you decently entombed; if you do your own housework, I will pay you servant's wages. There!"

For a moment Mrs. Smith held her breath, then came low murmurings. Smith began to move. Then the first sharp drops from between her pearl-like teeth and rosy lips—Smith was in the hall. Then, with the thundering majesty of Zantippe Junior she spoke—and Smith was making for the street.

A boy and a girl came running towards the breakfast room while yet the clouds hung over the atmosphere of that cozy place. Mrs. Smith smiles—and the sunshine breaks thro'. "Not yet dressed, my darlings?"—and the full tide of the noonday brightness shines resplendent all through, mellowed by the tone of a mother's voice.

"I would like a situation," said a mild face at the intelligence office. The face was not actually what is called pretty, but there was a charm about the whole person that was rather prepossessing. The intelligencer looked at the woman—as only men in that station can—to see if the women would suit the place, and the place suit the woman.

"I have only one place," he replied, "Mrs. Smith's and she is the hardest women to suit with help in this city. But if you have a mind to, you can try the place, and if you stay with her a month I'll charge you the usual fee; if not I'll get you another place."

The woman was satisfied to try, and a boy was sent to show her the lady's residence.

"Mrs. Smith," soliloquized the woman as she walked up towards the mountain. "Mrs. Smith." A paleness overspread her face as she caught a glimpse of the features of Mrs. Smith through the window when she turned into the basement of the house, but with an effort she gathered courage; and her cheek grew red with the returning flush.

"Mr.—— sent this woman," said the boy to Mrs. Smith as they entered the large breakfast room, where the children were making boats out of egg shells and floating them in ponds of coffee.

"Another woman," cried Ed, running up to her and catching hold of her gown, "another wom'n,' lisped little Kate as she followed her brother's example.

"Woman, never mind them," said Mrs, Smith. "Ed and Kate go and be dressed—go this instant, or I'll whip you."

The children did not heed the mother, and the woman was hardly conscious of either.—She seemed all attention to other thoughts—perhaps about her own children or those she loved and left behind. The office boy, the while, was saying, "And Mr.—— says he hopes she will suit you—and since there has been so much said about girl's wages in the papers they are all going off in the country—and this one came on the steamer, yesterday, from the States."

The boy's errand done, he left the mistress with the woman. Mrs. Smith seated herself upon the lounge, while the woman stood gazing with apparent astonishment around her.

"What countrywoman are you?" Mrs. Smith inquired, as she began the formula of her accustomed *chat*-echism.

"American," the woman articulated, in reply, as if half afraid to speak.

"How old are you?"

"Twenty-two."

"Maid or widow?"

"Widow."

"Can you take good care of children. Ed and Kate are two dear sweet children, and if you are any ways cross, I fear you will not suit me."

"I am very fond of children, madam," and the woman fairly shuddered as she spoke the word "Madam."

"Can you wash for the family; there are only four of us."

"I can try."

"Can you cook a good dinner if our servant man helps you—for sometimes we have company, at other times we are not particular?"

"I believe I can. My sister used to praise me for being a good cook."

"Your sister! Poor soul, perhaps she was not a judge." The woman bit her lips until the blood fairly started from their trembling veins. "Well I want you to do chamber work besides, and make yourself generally useful about the house. Now what wages do you expect?"

"Thirty-five dollars a month, I was told was the usual wages."

"Thirty five dollars," and Mrs. Smith raised her eyes in surprise. "Why you must mean twenty-five dollars—that is the highest wages I ever paid," she exclaimed. And Mrs. Smith smiled for she had heard the boy say that the woman had just arrived, and she was one of those women opposed to high wages for servants.

"I suppose it must be twenty-five," said the woman timidly. "I do not know what wages are paid here for help—I only arrived yesterday."

"I can assure you, Bridget, that twenty-five dollars a month is very good wages, and if that will do you, why—I will try you."

Bridget, Mr. Smith had called her—and as Mrs. Smith had called every girl and woman of the fifty she had. Bridget's first duty was to wash and dress little Ed and Kate—and somehow or other the children were made to look unusually neat that morning, and Bridget's eyes were red as if from weeping—and Ed and Kate each had a remarkable story, "the new woman kissed them most to pieces."

When Mr. Smith returned to supper that evening he was agreeably surprised to find the house in unusual good order. Mrs. Smith was in cheerful spirits, for she had found less to do that day than she had for a long time before. Bridget seemed to be ahead of her in everything and to anticipate her wants,—The children minded her by instinct, and Mr. Smith declared that if Bridget was as good every day in producing comfort in the household as she was on the first of her introduction, he would not part with her for thrice her wages.

Two months rolled around and Mrs. Smith began to become very uneasy in her new situation, for she had no occasion to direct or superintend affairs—she became irritable and nervous, One day there had been quite a number of visitors, and whatever went wrong in the parlor that raised Mrs. Smith's ire, was visited on the head of the unoffending Bridget.

'Husband,' was Mrs. Smith's ejaculation of complaint as soon as Mr. Smith entered that evening, 'to-morrow morning, when you go down town, leave a note at the intelligence office, and tell them to send me another woman. Bridget was quite impudent and saucy to-day, and I will not put up with a servant's impudence,'

'But wife,' was Smith's remonstrance. I thought that Bridget was the chief *par excellence* of house maids, I think you said——'

'Mr- Smith I know what a servant should be,' she exclaimed, 'and I do not want you to tell me.'

'Yes, yes I have no doubt you do and Smith balanced a plate upon his fingers, as if in the act of washing it, and Mrs. Smith's face blushed as red as a scarlet.

'Mr. Smith' she exclaimed—and shrank back unable to articulate more—and just then Bridget entered and cut short her accumulating words.

The twilight of evening had come, and the sitting-room was lighted. Mr. Smith took out his portfolio, rang the bell, and Bridget entered the room.

'Bridget,' said Mr. Smith, "I am sorry but Mrs. Smith says she will dispense with your services after two months—I wish I could say two years—and I am sorry to part with you. Sign this receipt and here is a bonus with your wages.' And he placed a package of coin by the side of the paper.

Bridget took up the pen, and in a neat hand wrote 'Frances Depue.'

Mr. Smith took up the receipt and glanced at the name, and then walked across the room and held the paper before his wife.—Mrs. Smith,' said he, 'her name is Frances—*not* Bridget.' A blush suffused Mrs. Smith's face.

'Frances, what State are you from?' inquired Mrs. Smith, as the woman was leaving the room.

"Massachusetts,' she replied.

'What part Frances?'

'Lowell.'

'Was you accquainted with Mr. Robert Depue's family, they have the same name as yourself?' she eagerly inquired.

'Yes quite well, she answered very quietly.

'And is the old gentleman still living?' Mrs Smith earnestly asked, and continued: 'I have not heard from there in a long time.'

'No, he is dead,' she replied with a sigh.—'He has been dead about a year.

'Dead! Poor old man!' Mrs Smith exclaimed, and she brushed a tear from her cheek, 'Tell me, Frances, all you know about him and his death, and I will be thankful to you for it.'

'I suppose his death was like that of many other poor old men,' she began—and continued, as a sad expression stole over her face: 'The old gentleman had two daughters. The youngest got married and emigrated to St. Louis with her husband, leaving the oldest at home with her father. Finally she too got married, and like her sister emigrated West with her husband, leaving the old gentleman alone, and I believe he never heard from her afterwards, only through strangers. I know that they came to California, and it is said that her husband Mr. Smith, is rich.'

'Frances, hasten your recital,' exclaimed Mrs. Smith excitedly, and tell me about Mr. Depue's death.'

The tale is a short one, madam,' Frances replied—and she gave Mrs. Smith a look that made her tremble, "The old gentleman,' she continued, 'was left alone to the tender mercies of strangers. A long sickness followed, and exhausted his once competent means, for in the absence of those who should have been at his bedside, there was no one to take care of his affairs. After all was gone they mercifully sent the old gentleman to the alms house."

"Oh my God! and he died there?" exclaimed Mrs. Smith, between the choking sobs that escaped from her lips.

"Oh, no, he did not die there," Frances replied, "for his youngest daughter returned. She had buried her husband at St. Louis, and after gathering her estate together, she turned her attention to her father's house."

The misfortune of her only parent and friend was a sad blow to her; but she soon provided a home for him, and for nearly a year she nursed and watched over him, and on his death-bed received his last blessing in reward for her dutiful conduct. He is buried beside his wife in the old burying ground."

"She remained in Lowell for some time after her father's death," Frances continued, "expecting to hear from her sister Elizabeth, to whom she had often written without receiving a reply. She finally concluded to come to California. She arrived here two months ago, and by a strange fatality was introduced into her sister's house as a servant, where she remained ever since."

Her words were so calmly spoken that Mrs. Smith was startled. "How could this be?" exclaimed Mrs. Smith, as she sprang towards Frances, "and I know you?" Ah! Ella Frances, my sister; and Mrs. Smith extended her arms to embrace her. But Frances quietly prevented her from doing so, as she replied:

"No, Elizabeth. I came here as your servant; as such you have treated me, and as such I will leave you."

And she left the room. Not the prayers of her sister nor the entreaties of her brother-in-law, could change her resolve.

It was a terrible lesson to Mrs. Smith, and she will never forget it. Ella Frances Depue W—— was soon afterwards married to a merchant who knew her at St. Louis and appreciated her and she is now mistress of a home equal in wealth to her sister's, and more replete with happiness.

With the exception of names, this "Story of To-day" is true; and the actors need not blush at its recital, for this is but one of the many that are stranger than fiction.

Miscellaneous.

THE SOLDIER'S FATE.

BY PEARL DE VERE.

Missing! That was all the paper said; but upon the heart of the mourning mother, who sat there, with the yellow sunlight drifting slowly over her folded hands, it fell like a note of doom; and in that one word was concentrated the agony of a lifetime.

The apple-trees were all white with their pink-tinted blossoms when, at his country's call her fairhaired boy, her only one, had said:

"Good-bye, mother!"

And as, with a blending of pride and tenderness, she watched his receding form until it grew dim and indistinct in the distance, a murmured prayer went up before the throne of Him who "doeth all things well," that He would guide her boy, and keep him from all harm. And Hope with magic hand had painted many a fair picture, woven many a golden day-dream, which now lay broken and shattered before the terrible reality contained in the one word "Missing".

And oh! well might the hope fade from the mother's heart! Many time shall the pink-tinted apple buds burst into blossoms, and be drifted in white clouds at her feet; Many times shall spring merge in to summer, and summer, into autumn, but he will never come again.

Far down in a quiet valley, where a few days before silence reigned, and the grass grew fresh and green untrodden by the foot of man, the harvest-moon shone upon the lifeless form of the widow's child, as he lay sleeping calmly the last still sleep of death. The light wind sighed mournfully through the tall trees which waved above him, and lifted the bright hair stained with life's crimson current from his fair forehead; the blue eyes were closed forever, and the white hands, which had never defrauded another, were crossed over the stilled heart, which once beat so high with hope and happiness, but now never would know joy or sorrow again. The moonbeams glinted down through the trembling leaves, and cast uncarthly shadows over the still face of the sleeper, and the cold stars looked down pityingly upon the beautiful dust of one who was not permitted to rest near his home, or sleep beside his kindred.

And as the moonbeams also crept into the happy home which had once been his, but over which the dark shadow of grief now rested like a pall, the mother clasped her hands, and prayed—prayed that God would give her strength to say "Thy will be done,' and prayed that among the redeemed in heaven her fair-haired boy might not be "missing."

THE JAIL HOSTAGES,

Mr. Greeley recently threatened in his over-bearing way another New York editor that the newspaper press should be bent to the support of the Lincoln dynasty, or the editors be sent to Jail. We copy below the spirited reply of the *Express*:

BROOKS VS. GREELEY.—Now Mr. Greeley and the *Express* and the public may just as well understand one another. If a Mr. B. is *kidnapped* and taken to a Washington prison, as many others have been, from this city and State, 25,000 men will band together to kidnap Mr. G. and to keep him as a hostage for the safe return of the Washington victim. Fort Lafayette now is not strong enough to hold a State prisoner imprisoned for politics. No soldier of Democratic or Whig antecedents, or of Republican conservative antecedents will guard such a prisoner. Or if they did, a *posse comitatus*, under a sheriff, 100,000 strong, can be summoned to bring him out. A thorough understanding of all these things may save the city and the State a world of trouble, because the *Express* intends hereafter, very fearlessly, to discuss the perverted issues of this war, and to dare the consequences. When and Where a free press, amenable only to the laws, cannot be published, life is not worth having.

☞ The political skies in this section are looking brightly. From all parts of the country, we hear of men forsaking the Republicans and coming over to the side of the Constitution and truth.

THE IRISH BLOOD SPILT.

How many Irishmen have been mutilated in this war? How many of them have been killed in it? How much Irish blood shed in all our battle-fields? How many Irish widows and orphans has it made? These are melancholy questions. Who can solve them? We cannot but rejoice that our people have enlisted freely in support of the Constitution. Their patriotism and their valor honor their race and their adopted country forever. But what has their blood, their valor, their patriotism achieved? Certainly not that which was expected.

For this bad result we are to blame the inability and dishonesty of the politicians, statesmen, and county-attorney warriors at Washington. It is not an unfair calculation that thirty thousand Irish lives have been lost in this war—that it has made ten thousand Irish widows; that it has made orphans of forty thousand Irish children; and that it has rendered desolate forever, thousands of Irish parents and brothers and sisters. Verily, the Irish have an interest in seeing this war ended! There were once ample reasons for holding that they did not enlist in vain; that the splendid sacrifice they made would be followed by the triumph of the Republic. Those reasons exist now only in the shadow; and in addition to their substantial dispersion, their solid places are occupied by reasons of another kind. THIS ABOLITION FACTION IS THE GREAT CURSE OF THE COUNTRY. Justly may we all go on our knees and invoke the God of nations to destroy it for all time. It merits the Irish malediction in a most particular manner, only for its heart-rending desolation had not entered tens of thousands of our happy Irish homes!

WINDS DAGEROUS TO THE HEALTH.

The dread of the east wind is universal.—Every one has seen and experienced its effects. Man and beast turn from it as from an enemy; and vegetation shrinks from its blasting influence. Rising in the dry arid plain of Asia, and passing over the great northern plateau of Europe, it is deprived of all moisture, imparting to everything it touches a dry, chilled, parched feeling, verifying the well known adage, "when the wind is in the east, it is neither good for man or beast" The Mistral, too, in the south of France, is destructive to health and life. The Sirocco, prevailing in the Mediterranean, Italy, and Sicily, is a hot, south east wind enervating the body and destroying the energies of the mind. Its heat, like a blast from an oven, is insupportable. Under its influence every fibre is relaxed, every pore is opened, all nature languishes, and life itself is burdensome. In Spain, the Solona and Gallego—the one a cold and the other a hot wind—are pernicious in their effect; this dreaded for its keeness, that reduces those with whom it comes in contact to a peculiar state of inactivity. The air of Madrid is exceedingly insalubrious, rendering the capitol of Spain one of the most unhealthy cities in Europe. Nor are Spaniards unaware of this, for they have a proverb, that "the air of Madrid is so subtle that it will not put out a candle, yet it will extinguish a man's life."

☞ The *Tribune* informs the nation that "Simon Cameron, true to this policy and to "the manhood of his report of 1862, proposes "to lead a brigade of colored Unionists into "the heart of the rebellion." The *Tribune* is hard upon its chromatic patriots. Simon Cameron may be very happy to lead a brigade of "colored Unionists" into the heart of the rebellion (wherever that may be) or anywhere else out of the reach of Dr. Boyer and senatorial committees. But what will the "colored Unionists" say to the matter? "Wendell Philips," said a certain Boston lawyer of dubious fame to an acquaintance, called me Judas Iscariot in a speech to-night, but I don't mind it." "I dare say not," replied his acquaintance; "but how do you suppose Judas would like it?"

☞ A HAPPY WOMAN.—Is she not the very sparkle and sunshine of life? A woman who is happy because she can't help it,—whose smiles even the coldest sprinkle of misfortune cannot dampen. Men make a terrible mistakes when then they marry for beauty, for talents or style. The sweetest wives are those who possess the magic secret of contented under any circumstances. Rich or poor, high or low, it makes no difference—the bright little fountains of joy bubbles up just as musically in their hearts. Do they live in a log cabin, the first that leaps up on its humble hearts become brightrr than the gilded chandeliers in Aladdin's palace. Were the stream of life so dark and unpropitious that the sunshine of a happy face falling on the turbid tide would not awake an answering gleam. Why, these joyous tempered people don't know half the good they do.

☞ Take care of your neighbor; don't let them stir without watching—they may do wrong if you do. To be sure, you never knew them to be anything very bad, but it may be on your account they have not—perhaps if it had not been for your kind of care, they might have disgraced themselves a long time ago, Therefore don't relax any effort to keep them where they ought to be. Never mind your own business—that will take care of itself!