

The North Branch Democrat.

HARVEY SICKLER, Proprietor.

NEW SERIES.

North Branch Democrat.

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BY HARVEY SICKLER.

Poet's Corner.

MY MOTHER.

When wandering in a stranger land,
A strangely bending o'er me,
And thoughts of home and boyhood's hand,
Are thronging fast before me;
As they rise, each friendly face—
Or father, sister, brother—
And seek in mind the fond embrace,
Comes first of all my mother!

A brother's warm and faithful heart,
Draws closely to me over;
A sister's love beyond the art
Of chance or change to sever;

My father's form, revered, will rise,
Praised far beyond all others,

Save when I see, with boyhood's eyes,
In memory's glass, my mother!

Earth's other ties may seem full strong;
Loved spirit's round us hover;

And beauty, fame, and wealth, and song,
May win me for their lover;

But still my memory's magnet true,

Point ever to one other,

Investing with hope's brightest hue,

That most loved form—my mother!

Then let the poet sing for fame;

The miser hoard his treasure;

Let warriors win a deathless name;

An' fill their glory's measure;

Go, it will, and at the shrine

Of proud ambition, another

Each nobler impulse—yet my mine!

Ever seek my mother!

Or weak be woe, how'er the tide of fortune!

The barge speeds o'er life's ocean,

Our heart to mine is still allied,

With unimpaired devotion;

Fortune fail, and friends forsake;

There's one, and there's another, adieu!

Who loves me, let me shake;

That one? She is my mother!

In childhood's hour; mature years;

From life's bright noon till even,

She bids our hopes all ours, fears,

And points the path to heaven;

And if a sky-born spirit's here

Was sent to guard another,

That spirit is—my mother!

I know it before," said Amy. "Howard told me."

"My brother? When did you see him?"

"Last week. He came with Lord Bret-

nel.

"Then you have seen Roberto. Do you like him, Amy?"

"Yes; he is splendid. So says Howard, so says my father, and so says I!"

Arthur bit his lips.

"He looks like the pictures of the Knights

of Saint George, with his raven hair, flash-

ing eyes, and marble face. But every man

likes a commanding presence, and a lip

shaded by a moustache as dense as a Cuirassier's of the Old Guard."

Arthur laughed rather scornfully at Amy, who was watching the changing reflection of the jealousy in his eye.

She saw a slender figure, blue eyes, chestnut hair, but a smooth lip and chin.

"Howard comes of age to-morrow,

and I have come to ask you to ride with me to the Minster," continued Arthur, in his usual tone. "I shall stay here until then, if you invite me, and are willing to accept my invitation."

"Of course you will stay, Arthur. But your invitation comes too late. I have prom-

ised to go with Lord Bretnel."

"I am sorry; you will be no kind words for me to-morrow. Why do you not ask why I leave England so suddenly?"

"Because I do not believe that you will go so soon."

"But indeed it is true, Amy. I have only

a younger brother's portion, and it will

never satisfy me. I must win a name, Amy,

or I can never be content. As an artist I

hope to do thus. I shall go to Italy, and I

can but fail."

"My father says you were not born an ar-

tist; you can paint well, but you will never

find fame or fortune in Italy."

"I shall try."

The next day a splendid carriage, drawn

by superb horses, drew Roberto and Amy to Rothwell, a distance of five miles.

Arthur followed slowly on horseback. Passing by the pond he saw a green and white scarf that Amy had dropped the day previous.—He put it in his bosom and rode on to Roth-

well.

No expense had been spared to make the

feast magnificent. All the beauty and noble

blood for fifty miles around assembled to

honor the future Lord of Rothwell. Arthur

was the merest of the merry young men

who loved him far better than his haughty

brother. Amy Preston, in a robe of violet

silk, and with pearls on her neck and arms,

was envied by all fair ladies, because of the

marked attention paid her by the young

Lord of Bretnel. At twilight Arthur found

her alone and proposed a walk on the ter-

race. "It will be our last for many months,

perhaps years," he said.

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If honest Abe they, he is honest Abe now?

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