

The North Branch Democrat.

HARVEY SICKLER, Proprietor.

"TO SPEAK HIS THOUGHTS IS EVERY FREEMAN'S RIGHT."—Thomas Jefferson.

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THE CONFESIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF A NERVOUS INVALID. Published for the benefit and as a caution to young men, and others, who suffer from Nervous Debility, Early Decay, and their kindred ailments—supplying the means of self-cure. By one who has cured himself after being a victim of misplaced confidence in medical humbug and quackery. By enclosing a post-paid directed envelope, single copies may be had of the author, NATHANIEL MAYNARD, Esq., Bedford, Kings County, New York.—v3 n15-1y.

Poet's Corner.

SPEAK GENTLY TO THE ERRING.

Speak gently to the erring—
Ye know not all the power
With which the dark temptation came
In some unguarded hour;
Ye may not know how earnestly
They struggled, or how well;
Until the hour of weakness came,
And sadly thus they fell!

Speak gently to the erring—
Oh! do not thou forget,
However darkly stained by sin,
He is thy brother yet.
Heir of the self-same heritage,
Child of the self-same God,
He hath stumbled in the path
Thou hast in weakness trod.

Speak gently to the erring—
For is it not enough
That innocence and peace are gone,
Without thy censure rough?
It surely is a weary lot
That sin crushed heart to bear;
And they who share a happier fate
Their chidings well may spare.

Speak kindly to the erring—
Thou yet mayst lead him back,
With holy words, and tones of love,
From his'ry's thorny track;
Forget not thou hast sinned,
And sinful yet must be;
Deal kindly with the erring one,
As God hath dealt with thee!

THE LAST SILVER DOLLAR.

'Tis the last silver dollar,
Left shining alone.
All its melting companions
Have melted and gone.
Not a coin of its kindred,
No specie is nigh
To echo back softly
Its silvery sigh.
You must leave bright dollar,
The last of my few,
Since thy mates have departed,
Skedaddle thou too.
Thus, kindly, I send thee
To wander afar,
So soon may I follow,
When thou art no more,
And I a wreck of starvation
On shipwrecked shore.
When the purse never jingles,
And shiners have flown,
Oh! who can feel wealthy
On pictures alone.

THE BRIDAL OF DEATH.

Everybody was astonished when Francis Clavering relinquished his splendid position in society and retired to the country. Young handsome, accomplished, brilliant in conversation, and the possessor of a princely fortune, Clavering had reigned supreme in the gay world. His grace, beauty, and sparkling wit won the love and admiration of women; his skill in billiards, horsemanship, shooting, and all manly accomplishments, made him a favorite with the men.

Frank Clavering was the arbiter elegantiarum in all matters relating to dress, dancing, dinners, games, and singing. From the cut of a coat to the praises of a poet, his decision was law—from it there was no appeal. Was to the unlucky poet or singer, who fell under his contemptuous criticisms; for, if he was damned by Clavering he was damned indeed. If he pronounced a lady to be ill-looking, she must be in spite of nature and art. His witty sayings went round the town—and they were repeated at the clubs, and whispered in drawing rooms.

This elegant trifler, this gay exquisite, this king of clubs and drawing-room hero, had commenced life full of sweet hopes and golden aspirations; he longed to place his name among those bright spirits whose genius has illuminated the world. But the seductive smiles of pleasure beguiled him from the path of fame—he stood like a swimmer, undecided for a moment, and then plunged into the bath of luxury. Hours, which were once devoted to books, were now devoted to billiards; hours which were once passed with Shakespeare, Addison and Goldsmith, were passed with gay, dissipated young men. The quiet library was abandoned for the noisy club; the instructive lecture room for the brilliant ball-room.

But the noble spirit of Francis Clavering began to tire of this unceasing round of dissipation and folly. He discovered, like Byron, that life's enchanted cup sparkles only near the brim; that pleasures which appear so fair and attractive to the sight, turn, like Dead Sea fruit, to ashes on the lips. He resolved to withdraw from the fascinating scenes where he had lingered so long, and seek in the retirement of the country that sweet happiness which the gay world could not give.

While contemplating this retreat, Clavering received a sudden and forcible blow.—The lady upon whom he had lavished all the wealth of his warm and generous heart—whom he had fondly expected to share his retirement—whom he had hoped to be partner of his joys and the controller of his sorrows, proved to be a mere coquette—a light, giddy creature, who changed her lover as often as her laces. This deep and crushing disappointment drove Clavering into the country, to lead "A life within itself, to breathe without mankind."

He selected a wild and picturesque spot, by the side of a beautiful river, where, surrounded by all the charms of nature, he hoped to pass days in sweet tranquillity.—Clavering took possession of his new home in the lovely month of June, welcomed by the merry songs of birds and the laughing flowers.

In this delicious retreat Frank Clavering entered upon a new existence. He who had once passed his nights in the splendid scenes of fashionable dissipation—the gay saloon, the dazzling ball-room, the elegant opera—now retired to early and refreshing slumbers. As soon as Aurora, with her rosy fingers, had opened the gates of morn, he was up and abroad. The sweet, early hours he spent gliding over the crystal stream in his swift boat, and bathing his superb limbs in the cooling waters.

Reclining beneath the shady trees, in the midst of rich and brilliant flowers, with the snowy clouds floating in the clear sky above him, his ears enchanted by the music of the birds, and musing over a favorite poem of romance, the young hermit tasted a purer delight than he had ever found in the crowded hall, or at the merry festive board.

One morning as Clavering was taking his accustomed sail along the flowery banks of the stream, he descried a beautiful bird perched on a tree a short distance from him. Its brilliant plumage and graceful form made him desirous of securing it for the museum he was collecting. He directed his boat to the shore, and gun in hand, proceeded to accomplish his design. He fired, and missed—the bird flew, and Clavering pursued it, loading his gun as he ran. The bird lighted in a magnificent grove of oaks. Upon coming up, he fired, but instead of bringing down the game, Frank was brought down himself, having, in the excitement of the chase, put a double load in his gun. Nothing daunted, our sportsman continued the pursuit through the grove. As he emerged from the latter, a delightful and unexpected scene burst upon his sight.

A beautiful garden lay stretched out before bathed in the soft splendor of the rising sun; gorgeous butterflies and industrious bees, flitted from flower to flower, feasting on their sweets, and the glad birds carol their morning hymns to the great God of nature. In the centre of the garden, stood a rustic bower, almost buried beneath trailing vines. Immediately opposite the place occupied by Clavering, a small white cottage emerged from a wilderness of roses, and clustering honey-suckles. The lower windows and doors of the cottage opened upon a porch, which descended by two or three steps to a gravel walk.—While Clavering was admiring the beautiful scene spread out before him, the cottage door was opened, and a young lady came forth, attended by a graceful boy.

The whole thing appeared so much like the gorgeous pictures of Eastern poets, that Clavering almost believed that he had been suddenly transported to an enchanted garden.—He watched the lady, as she descended the porch, and passed with swan-like grace, toward the bower. As she approached, her eyes were suddenly raised to the spot where Clavering stood. Startled at the unusual sight of a stranger with a gun, she uttered an exclamation of surprise and terror, and was on the point of flying to the cottage, when Clavering advanced to account for his unexpected presence. With that easy elegance of manner, which had been one of his greatest charms in society he addressed her:

"Lady, I owe you many apologies for the fright which I have occasioned. While pursuing a beautiful bird, I came suddenly on this place, and have been held spell-bound by all that I have seen and heard. This card will inform you that my name is Francis Clavering, a name not unknown in the great city from which I have lately removed, to take up my residence in this neighborhood."

With that mate politeness which every true woman possesses, Nina Egglemont—(for such was the name of the fair lady)—invited him to take a seat in the bower; and with an unaffected simplicity, perfectly rivalling to one so long accustomed to the artificial forms of fashionable life, the beautiful girl sat beside him and they conversed with each other like intimate friends. Clavering's noble countenance and distinguished appearance was sufficient to recommend him to the favor of any lady. Gifted with an extraordinary talent for conversation, he possessed the rarer, but most fascinating power of drawing others out, (as it is called) and making them talk in a manner pleasing to themselves and to their listeners. He discovered that Nina's mind was naturally, a remarkable fine one, but sadly in need of proper training. The cause of this, Clavering learned from herself.

"My father and I have lived here five years, during which time I have seldom seen a conversable being. My father, who is passionately fond of experimental chemistry, passes his days and nights in his laboratory, surrounded by retorts, stills, and bottles, filled with crimson, yellow, and green liquids, which he examines, smells, and handles, with infinite care. He will not allow me to enter his sanctum sanctorum, for he says, the curiosity which all women have inherited from mother Eve, would make me handle some of his apparatus, and probably cause an explosion. I have been thus left to my

own guidance. My reading has been extensive, but, I fear, unprofitable. Romance and poetry possess a never ceasing charm for me. Often have I wandered in fancy through Prospero's island of wonder and enchantment, and visited Portia's palace at Belmont. Often have I read, with streaming eyes, the sad story of Juliet's love, and the cruel fate of sweet Desdemona. I have sailed, in imagination, with Byron, over the blue Meditteranean, and visited wondrous Venice.

"Throned on her hundred isles." I have followed Sir Walter Scott to the gay tournament, and distributed the prizes to the gallant and successful knights."

As Nina concluded, the tall but bent figure of a man appeared at the entrance of the bower. He fixed his dark, piercing eyes upon Clavering with evident surprise.

"My father—Mr Clavering," said Nina with a slight embarrassment.

Clavering arose, and extended his hand.—Mr. Egglemont coldly bowed, without touching the proffered hand, and a peculiarly disagreeable expression passed over his face.

"Am I right, Mr. Clavering, in supposing you to be a relative of Colonel Reginald Clavering?"

"I am the son of Colonel Reginald Clavering."

"I thought so, from the striking likeness which you bear to him."

"You knew my father, then?"

"He was once my most intimate friend," he answered, with bitter emphasis on the last word.

The breakfast was now ready, and Nina invited Mr. Clavering to eat with them.—With thanks he declined, and departed.

Clavering had mingled in the high society of many polished cities, and had seen the women of many lands; the voluptuous beauties of the East; the black-eyed maids of Italy; the sprightly daughters of sunny France; the fair haired girls of Germany, and the stately women of England; he had seen them in splendid scenes of courts clothed in the gorgeous trappings of pride, brilliant with diamonds and jewels; but this young girl of eighteen, in a simple white dress, with a fresh rose in her glossy hair, surpassed them all in beauty and grace.

"But who can view the ripened rose, nor seek To wear it? Who can curiously behold The smoothness and the sheen of beauty's cheek, Nor feel the heart can never all grow old?"

Frank Clavering had left the city a wounded and disappointed man. By the faithless ness of one, his trust in the women had been shattered—almost destroyed. He saw Nina Egglemont and his faith was revived, his confidence was restored; once more he loved and the object of his passion was worthy of his noble heart. After the first accidental meeting, already described, Clavering was a frequent and delighted visitor at Nina's bower. It was his sweet task to read to her his favorite books while she was occupied with some elegant handiwork. He encouraged her to make observations on what he read, and listened with pleasure to her sensible remarks. He thus gradually introduced Nina into the garden of English literature, and taught her where to find the most beautiful flowers. He directed her appreciative mind to the polished essays of Addison and other courtly writers of the reign of Queen Anne. With grand old Milton they walked the dorey paths of Paradise, or joined the glittering train of Comus. They entered the family of Vicar of Wakefield, and listened to his simple but touching narrative. In imagination they wandered through the deserted lands of sweet Auburn, and wept over the desolation of that once happy village. From this spot they passed to the beautiful bowers of Lalla Rookh, and revelled with the delicious abandonment in the glorious description of Tom Moore.—They turned from these to the strange creations of the genius of Edgar Poe. Clavering who was an elegant reader, taught Nina to admire that wonderful poem, "The Raven," by his tasteful and beautiful rendering of it.

In these delightful and instructive employments were passed the bright summer mornings. The evenings were devoted to sailing on the beautiful river, when the soft music of Clavering's guitar, and the heavenly sweetness of Nina's voice lent an additional pleasure, to the enchanting scene. Oh, love! bright, young love! what bliss to be bound in thy rosy chains! How delicious! how enrapturing! how enchanting! Love beautifies everything—the evening sky seems more richly painted, the moon more silvery, and the stars more lustrous to the eyes of lovers.

"Ah! so delicious is the unsating food, That men who might have towered in the van Of all the congregated world, Have been content to let occasion die, Whilst they did sleep in love's Elysium."

Mr. Egglemont had observed the constant intercourse of Clavering and Nina. From the first interview at Nina's bower he had regarded Clavering with no favorable eye.—The very mention of his name—that name which was the sweetest of all names to Nina—threw an angry frown over his countenance.

One evening Nina returned home after a moonlight sail on the river. She was completely happy. Clavering had opened his heart to her. He had spoken of his ambitious youth, of his glorious aspirations, of his bright hopes. He told her how he had abandoned the blue-eyed goddess of wisdom to

join the gay followers of the goddess of pleasure.

"For your sake, dear Nina, I will unceasingly enroll myself among the votaries of Minerva. I'll seek the glory of a name worthy to offer thee; be thou

"My guide, my good angel, my all upon earth."

he exclaimed his face all aglow with ardent love.

Nina entered the cottage after this blissful interview, her young heart bounding with joyful hopes of future happiness. This evening, which had begun so auspiciously, was destined to have a sad termination. Mr. Egglemont met his daughter as she was passing along the hall to her chamber, and said that he wished to see her in the parlor.—Alarmed at so unusual a summons, Nina followed her father with fear and trembling, to the apartment.

When they were seated, he thus addressed her:—

"Nina, I have noticed with pain and sorrow, the daily and hourly intercourse between Francis Clavering and yourself. It must cease. Such an intimacy might lead to love; and love between the son of Reginald Clavering and the daughter of Henry Egglemont, would be strange indeed."

"Why, father, is love forbidden between the son of Clavering and the daughter of Egglemont?"

"Do you ask why?" he cried, his dark eyes flashing with fire. "Listen to what no mortal ever heard before, and then judge whether it is meet for an Egglemont to wed a Clavering. Do you suppose that I was allowed what I am now—a poor, despised, ridiculous experimentalist? I was once the proud possessor of lordly halls, where the gay, the refined, the most distinguished men and women of the land were glad to partake of my boundless hospitality. In an evil hour, Reginald Clavering came, recommended by his elegant manners and most flattering address. Under the spacious garb of friendship, he approached me, and I, unsuspecting, received him to my hearts embrace. Under a confiding and open manner, was concealed a heart cold, calculating, and selfish. By his insinuating arts, he became acquainted with all my family affairs. He knew the amount of my income, and also knew that, although I was liberal in my household and other expenses, I did not use more than half of it.—He determined to secure some of my superfluous money for himself. To accomplish this, he took advantage of my passionate fondness for cards. One day while we were playing cards Clavering suggested that a small stake should be put up, to add to the interest of the game. I consented, and almost imperceptibly, a love of gaming took possession of me. At first I won nearly every game, Clavering permitted this to induce me to play for higher sums. We sometimes played all day and night—only stopping to take our meals. In a few weeks I lost enormously, but the baneful vice had become so entwined around my heart that I found it impossible to shake it off. It is unnecessary to prolong the painful story— suffice it to say that Reginald Clavering having won my princely fortune, also won from me my destined bride, who, proud and beautiful, was taught by Clavering to despise one whom he had made a beggar. Then it was that I swore deadly and eternal hatred to all who bore the accursed name. Can you marry the son of one who ruined your father?"

"Father, that son loves me and I love him—why should he suffer for his father's crimes?"

"You love this Clavering, then, better than your father?"

"I can love you both father."

"I would rather see you lying dead at my feet, than see you wed Reginald Clavering's son."

"Clavering is so kind, so gentle, so loving, father, I cannot give him up. I was an ignorant, and simple girl—he came and I learnt to love. I am a woman now, and in my true woman's heart lies the image of Francis Clavering, never never, to be removed."

"Be it so; unhappy girl!" cried Egglemont, rising, and stretching his right hand in a menacing manner toward her; "but cursed be the day, and cursed be the hour that saw the wife of Clavering."

And the interview ended. The following day, when Frank Clavering came as usual to Nina's bower, he found her bathed in tears. When he inquired the cause of her weeping; she related the conversation which had taken place between her father and herself the evening before.

"I must see your father, Nina, on this subject—I will go this instant." And leaving Nina, he proceeded to seek Egglemont, where he was sure to find him—in his laboratory. He received Clavering with freezing politeness and demanded his business.

"I have come, sir, to ask why your object to my marrying your daughter?"

"Were I not speaking to your father's son, I would say that he was a villain—he not only robbed me of my splendid fortune, but took from me the woman who had promised to be my wife. He changed the bright summer days of my youth to dark and dreary winter; he tore me from the society of my school fellows from the gay scenes where I knew no superior, to hide myself in obscurity—I, who was formed for the bright, the beautiful world.—

I have sworn eternal hatred to all who bear your father's name. The day my daughter becomes your wife will be an unfortunate day for both of you."

"Suppose we are willing to take the consequences, sir?"

"Be it so, then—upon you will rest the responsibility."

Notwithstanding the threats and curses of her father, Nina and Clavering determined to consummate their engagement. The day appointed for the wedding arrived—a beautiful day in midsummer—all the preparations were complete. Two or three of Clavering's particular friends came from the city. A few hours after the ceremony the bridal party were to set out on a tour to the lakes. All the simple arrangements were perfected. A neighboring clergyman was present to perform the ceremony. Clavering and Nina entered; she radiantly beautiful, he with a world of happiness in his manly face. The short but impressive marriage ceremony was over, the blushing bride already had been saluted by the few persons who were present, when Nina's father approached. A strange light gleamed in his eyes, a strange smile was on his livid lips.—In each hand he held a glass, brimful of some rosy liquor.

"Happy pair," he said, "it is meet that you drink to the reconciliation of the houses of Clavering and Egglemont."

After saying these words he departed.—They drained the glasses, and instantly fell to the floor—DEAD. Henry Egglemont was thus fearfully avenged for the wrongs done him by Reginald Clavering. The wretched man fled and was never seen or heard of more.

Miscellaneous.

Hard Times.

We all called the times hard in 1857. They were hard for robbers and charlatans but for the real toiling and industrious interests of the nation, they were good—because the currency was gold, and all manner of goods were cheap. Malcontents clamored for revolution—and therefore complained of the times. Now, however, we have hard times.—The hardest ever known since the revolution. How is the poor and honest man to live? The contractor and robber of course gets rich off the sufferings of others. The poor man, however pays forty cents for a pound of coffee—the same money would have bought him four pounds in 1827. He pays 40 cents for mullin. He could have bought four times the quantity of better goods for the same money in 1857. Does he get four times the wages now? If he does not, he must suffer in proportion as he receives less. These are truly terrible times—and they are getting worse every day. How can the laborer pay his rent and keep his family from starvation at the present prices?

Sail Joe to Bill—both were old bums, and both were terrible dry:

"Bill, if you'll treat, I'll tell you where you can get a whole suit of clothes on six months credit."

"Will you though? Now, no foolin' yer Eilly."

"True as preachin' I will said Joe, and the parties took a drink at Bill's expense, when Joe with a twinkling of the eye, said:

"You go up to the recruiting rendezvous, and tell 'em you want a suit of clothes.— They give them to yer on six months trust!"

Bill said his health was so poor he couldn't list.

"Please, sir, lend pappy your knife to make a pen with."

"Certainly, my son, here it is." Youth retires with the knife and returns in about an hour.

"Please, sir, here's your knife; pappy's done with it."

"I should think he was. Why what the—has he been doing with it?" I thought he wanted it to make a pen?

"So he did, but I forgot to say it was a pigpen."

Exit youth, a little in advance of an old boot.

"I wish I had your head," said a lady one day to a gentleman who had solved for her a knotty point. "And I wish I had your heart," was the reply. "Well," said she, since your head and my heart can agree, I don't see why they should not go into partnership."

Swearing is fearfully prevalent among the teamsters of the Cumberland army.—The last achievement in that way was "swearing the hair off a mule's back"—time, nine minutes from the word go.

A western Editor was recently requested to send his paper to a distant patron, provided he would take his pay in "trade." At the end of a year he found his new subscriber was a coffin maker.

"Patrick, where's Bridget?" "In-dade, ma'am, she's fast asleep looking at the bread baking."