

The North Branch Democrat.

HARVEY SICKLER, Proprietor.

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

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Select Story.

A TWILIGHT WOOLING

It's an awful thing to lose a friend by marriage. To see him drop into your room occasionally, always with a paper parcel under his arm suggestive of lace and ribbons, instead of having him all to yourself, day in and day out. To know that the blue-breathed evening cigar will inevitably be abbreviated by "Oh, my wife will be anxious if I'm not at home by eight o'clock." To tell him about the pretty girl with the pink bonnet that you met in the stage yesterday, and be generally confidential, and then find your tongue suddenly palsied by the conviction that he will tell his wife every word you have been saying. There is no use talking about the thing—it's actually indescribable.

Do you suppose I didn't feel jealous when Jack Marcyffe got married? Do you suppose the green-eyed monster did not inspire me with all sorts of unamiable feelings toward the little brown-eyed beauty who had cut me out completely? It took some time to reconcile me to the new state of things. But when I found out that she did not object to my sitting on the balcony and speaking with Jack—nay, that she actually lighted our cigars for us, and then brought her little footstool and sat down by the side of us—that she laughed like a peal of merry bells at our bachelor blunders and mishaps, and that she liked to have me come to dinner on Sundays,—then I thought Jack's wife wasn't so bad an institution after all. And one day, when she brought out her tiny wicker work basket, and stood on tip-toe to sew the loose buttons on my coat I capitulated in good earnest.

"Jack," said I, "your wife is well, isn't she?" "Exactly an angel, for I don't believe in angels about the house—but the sweetest little woman I ever set my eyes upon. You won't be jealous, old fellow?"

"Jealous—no," said Jack, stretching his neck so as to look after the light disappearing figure. "I'll tell you what, Arthur, you ought to see Mary's sister."

Sure enough, about two weeks afterward she came in, at the sweet-brier shadowed gate, and passed to look at the crimson gloves pink just opening their fringed petals, the silver tones of another voice sounded in the low-ceaved piazza, and almost before I knew it Jack Marcyffe's arm was through mine, and he was introducing me to a duplicate-edition of his wife—a scarlet-lipped, arch-eyed girl, in white muslin, with a coral bracelet on her arm.

From that moment I was gone—I did not know whether I sat in Jack's velvet easy chair, or on top of the rail fence. I said, "no thank you," when Mrs. Jack asked me how I was. I stirred my cup of chocolate with a penknife, and tried to put the table cloth in my pocket, instead of a handkerchief, and finally disgraced myself irrevocably by putting the match box in the cradle, and depositing the baby on the mantelpiece.

"Good gracious, Mr. Arden!" exclaimed Marcyffe, "what's the matter?"

"I believe—I think—I've got a cold in my head!" faltered I, looking at the time straight at Agnes, who was playing with her coral bracelet, and pretending not to laugh.

"Jack," said I, that evening as he went out to the gate with me, "there's no use trying to mince matters—if I can't win Miss Agnes, I shall take arsenic."

Jack squeezed my hand; he had been through the mill himself.

"Do you think she cares for me, Jack?" I asked, plaintively, about a month afterward. "I declare, honestly, I've the greatest respect mind in the world to jump off the pier, or hang myself peaceably. Now what does she mean by flirting with that red-whiskered Carew? Oh, Jack, do be merciful—tell me what you really think."

Poor Marcyffe! It was about the thirtieth time he had been asked the same question.

"Why, how can I tell, Arthur? You might as well ask me to read the Hindoo alphabet as to decipher the mysteries of a woman's heart. Why don't you ask her yourself?"

"Me ask her!" and the cold chills ran through me like ice. "Jack, I date not for my life!"

Jack burst into a laugh.

"Well, I can't give any better advice," said he; "only remember, my boy, a faint heart never won fair lady."

He turned away, and left me standing in the amber flash of the twilight, among the crimson cluster of cinnamon-roses, and the fall coronal of gleaming lilies. Up in the rosy sky the new moon hung, as a curved thread of silver, and one bright star bore its lance of pearl against the radiant horizon. I looked silently up at the fair atmosphere—down at the blossoming garden of flowers, thinking, in the midst of my perplexity, how like the blue heavens was Agnes's eyes, and marveling that the pink roses were so near skin to the dainty color that came and went upon her silk soft cheek.

Beside the low, French window, that opened upon the piazza floor, I saw the bow of muslin drapery through the fragrant gloom—it was where Mrs. Marcyffe was wont to sit with her baby. I caught the refrain of the low, delicious cradle song, warbled in the tiny sleeper's ear. A bright thought struck me—I would take woman's wit into my counsel.

"Mary," said I, sitting down on the piazza step, and leaning my head against the rose-wreathed pillar just opposite the window. "I wish you'd tell me what to do—I'm desperately in love with your sister Agnes,—and don't laugh now—I have not the courage to tell her so."

I paused an instant, and then went on: "I love her better than life. No, that is not saying enough. I would die to make her happy. Oh, Mary, can't you give a word of encouragement? I dare not tell her my love, because my heart sinks so in dread from the one little word, 'No.' Will she speak it, do you think?"

There was no answer.

"Mary will she break my heart?" I spoke with trembling accents, fresh from the deepest recesses of my soul—the very air seemed to sob around me as I ceased. One instant of silence, in the soft pulsing fragrance of the mid-summer twilight, and then there was a fluttering of light, azure robes, the fall of a fairy foot. Ere I could look up, a soft, white arm, gleaming with the clasp of a blood-red bracelet, was around my neck—a shower of brown curls nestled on my breast.

"She will not—she never will!"

"The voice was that of Agnes. Day; I held the coy, coquetish trembler to my heart.

It has been brimming with sweets ever since. Many a golden moment has passed to sprinkle its chalice of joy around my footsteps, as it passed into the world of the by-gone; but in all my existence, there never came a second time, like that, I had been pleading to Agnes herself; and Mary stood smiling in the background, the veriest spice of roguery gleaming in her hazel eyes, through a quiver of joyous tears.

"So I'm really to have a brother-in-law, she said, putting aside the roses and coming forward, just as the wicket fastening clicked under Jack's hand, and the fiery spark of his clear flashed through the purple gloaming, slowly traveling up the garden walk.

BOSTON IN THE OLDEN TIME.

A hundred years ago, on account of political disturbance, certain municipal regulations were made, conducive to the better order of the town. Among them was an order to "arrest all negroes found out after dark without a lantern." Soon after it happened that an old colored man was picked up, the record says, "prowling about in total darkness." When examined by the magistrate the following day, he replied to the query, "Ar, you hold?" "No sht! I has de lantern," holding up before the astonished court an old one with neither oil nor candle in it. He was discharged, and the law amended so as to read, a lantern with a candle.

Old Tony, not long after, was arrested a second time on the same complaint, and again pleaded "not guilty," producing a lantern with a candle. The wick, however, had never been discovered by a flame. The shrewd deputy was again discharged with a reprimand, and the law was still again amended so as to require "a lantern with a lighted candle." Old Tony never troubled the watch any more. He was overheard saying, "Massa got too much light on de subject."

An English traveller, coming over about this time to see what kind of a place these colonies might be, says of Boston: "The buildings, like their women, are neat and handsome, and their streets, like the hearts of their men, are paved with pebbles. They have four churches built with clapboards and shingles, and supplied with four ministers—one a scholar, one a gentleman, one a dunce and one a clown. The captain of a ship met his wife on the street, after a long voyage, and kissed her for which he was fined ten shillings."

What happiness, thought I, do we enjoy in Old England, where we can not only kiss our own wives, but other men's without danger of penalty."

Artemus Ward insures his life.

I run to the conclusion lately that life was so uncertain, that the only way for me to stand a fair chance with other folks, was to get my life insured, and so I called on the agent of "Garden Angel Insurance Company," and answered the following questions which were put to me from the top up a pair of gold specks, by a sleek little man, with as fat an old belly on him as any man ever had:

1st. Are you male or female? If so state how long have you been so.

2d. Are you subject to fits, and if so do you have more than one at a time?

3d. What are your fighting weight?

4th. Did you ever have any ancestors, and if so, how much?

5th. What is your legal opinion of the constitutionality of the 10 commandments?

6th. Do you ever have any night mares?

7th. Are you married or single, or are you a bachelor?

8th. Do you believe in a future state? If you do, state it.

9th. What are your private sentiments about a rush on rats in a bed—can it be did successfully?

10th. Have you ever committed suicide, and if so, how did it seem to affect you?

After answering the above questions like a man in the confidence, the sleek little fat old man, with gold specks on, and I was engaged for life, and probably would remain so for a term of years.

I thanked him and smiled one of my most pensive smiles.

Refinement is indicated, to no small extent, by a delicate appreciation of the comparative merits of perfumes; and it is a proof of the critical taste of the American public in toilet luxuries, that they have adopted as the standard article of its class, Phalon's "Night-Clooming Cereus." Sold everywhere.

Dr. Loring, a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives from Salem, the gentleman who nominated Mr. Breckinridge for the Presidency, in the Baltimore Convention, in 1860, has offered a series of resolutions condemning President Johnson and "whitewashing" Mr. Sumner. The Doctor is a suitable person to treat so grave a subject. Boston Post.

The following is the way to judge the weather by the sky: The colors of the sky at different times afford wonderfully good guidance. Not only does it at sunset presage fair weather, but there are other tints which speak with clearness and accuracy. A bright yellow in the evening indicates wind; a pale yellow wet; a neutral gray color constitutes a favorable sign in the evening—an unfavorable sign in the morning. The clouds are full of meaning in themselves. If they are soft, undefined, and feathery, the weather will be fine; if the edges are hard, sharp and definite, it will be foul. Generally speaking, any deep unusual hues betoken wind rain, while the more quiet and delicate tints bespeak fair weather. Simple as these maxims are, the British Board of Trade has thought fit to publish them for the use of the sea-faring men.

A gentleman, talking to another on the subject of marriage, made the following observation:

"I first saw my wife in a storm; carried her to a ball in a storm; courted her in a storm; married her in a storm; lived in a storm all her life; but, thank Heaven I buried her in pleasant weather."

Deal honestly.

WORK A BLESSING.

Many young men have fathers that are well off, and they have no ambition, and no particular prospect. They scorn a trade. A man that is too well born for a trade, is very well born for a gallow! Thousands of parents who by industry have gained a position which enables them to destroy their children, take the surest means of accomplishing their destruction, by encouraging them in idleness, and allowing them to grow up with feelings of contempt for labor. No child ought to be reared to feel that it is disgraceful to work at whatever manual labor best suits his talents, no matter if his father is a minister, or a lawyer, or a senator, or the president of the United States. Many young men are looking forward upon life with the general idea that they are going to enjoy themselves. They are provided with needful physical comforts and they mean to be very happy. They have no trade. They slight their profession. Their whole governing principle in life is to shirk anything like work; and they expect to have enjoyment without industry. But no man in this world will be happy who violates the fundamental law of industry. You must work if you are going to be a happy man. I know you think it is hard; but if God had meant that you should be a butterfly, you would have been born a butterfly. And as you were not born a moth or a miller, but a man, you must accept the conditions of your manhood. And if there is one principle that is more important at the very threshold of life than another, it is that man is born to work. At the beginning of the history of the race, it may have been a curse that doomed man to work; but, thank God, it has been changed to a blessing now. And the baptism of work is a baptism of blessing.

His NAME.—The vivid sketch of editorial character on the Pacific side from Artemus Ward, who says: "My arrival at Virginia City was signalized by the following incident: I had no sooner achieved my room in the garret of the International Hotel, when I was called upon by an intoxicated man, who said he was an editor. Knowing how rare it was for an editor to be under the blighting influence of either spirituous or malt liquors, I received this statement doubtfully. But I said, 'What name?' 'Wait,' he said, and went out. I heard him paging up and down the hall outside. In ten minutes he returned, and said, 'Pepper! Pepper was indeed his name. He had been out to see if he could remember it; and he was so flushed with his success, that he repeated it over several times, and then, with a short laugh, he went away. I had often heard of a man being so drunk that he didn't know what town he lived in, but here was a man so ludicrously intoxicated that he didn't know what his name was. I saw no more of him but I heard from him, for he published a notice of my lecture in which he said I had a dissipated air."

Artemus Ward, in the prospectus of his Irving Hall entertainment, tempts the public to come and see him with the following inducements:

The festivities will be commenced by the pianist, a gentleman who used to board in the same street with Gottschalk. The man who kept the boarding house remembers him distinctly. The overture will consist of a medley of airs, including the touching new ballad, "Dear Sister, is there any Pie in the House?" "My Gentle Father, have you any Fine Cut about you?" "Mother, is the battle over, and is it safe for me to come home from Canada?" and (by request of several families who have not heard it) "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, the Boys are Munching." While the enraptured ear drinks in this sweet music, I will pay our pianist nine dollars a week and find him; the eye will be entranced by the magnificent green baize covering of the Panorama. This green baize cost 40 cents a yard at Stewart's store. It was bought in defiance of the present popularity of "The Wearing of the Green." We shall keep up with the time if we spend the last dollar our friends have got.

The world is governed by three boxes—cartridge-box, the ballot-box and the band-box.

It is our opinion that the latter governs all.

We would respectfully suggest to the young people whom we saw gazing at the stars, one evening, not long since, that midnight is not quite the appropriate time for such proceedings.

"Husband, I wish you would buy me some pretty feathers?" "Indeed, my dear little wife, you look better without them."

"Oh, no," said she coaxingly, "you always call me your little bird, and how does a bird look without feathers?" "Why, dressed, to be sure," said he.

We have all heard of asking for bread and receiving a stone; but a young gentleman may be considered as still worse treated, when he asks for a young lady's hand and gets her father's foot.

"What will you take first in Canada? I asked a quizzing Yankee of a faithful Finician. 'Hot whisky punch,' was the prompt reply!"

ODDS AND ENDS.

Industry must thrive. Wit—Wisdom masquerading. Letter—conversation with the pen. What suit wears not at the pocket?—A lawsuit.

The Artist's Adieu to his Pictures.—You be hanged!

When is snow like truth?—When it does not lie.

How to Ruin your Constitution.—Keep tinkering at it.

A dogma is defined as an opinion laid down with a snarl.

Organ-grinders' Device.—One good turn deserves another.

Do right; fear not; virtue and honesty will be rewarded.

Album.—A drawing-room, man trap set by young ladies.

Woman.—An essay on grace, in one volume, elegantly bound.

Gentleman.—A manual of good manners bound in cloth.

Old Maid.—A quiver full of arrows with no bow (bean) attached.

The friends of labor are generally those who like it in others.

An eloquent speaker is like a river—greatest at the mouth.

To many a poor fellow the bone of contention is his rib.

The greatest organ in the world—The organ of speech in woman.

When is a wave like an army doctor?—When it is a surgeon.

"Chalking the lamp-post" is the term for bribery in Philadelphia.

Why are the girls of Missouri so sweet? Because they are Mo. asses.

A prudent head is watchful of the tongue that vibrates in the mouth of it.

The quickest way to make eye-water is to run your nose against a lamp post!

Self-conceit is about as uncomfortable a seat as a man can have for a steady thing.

Death comes to a good man to relieve him; it comes to a bad one to relieve society.

Every bear should be taught to dance, for what is the use of bruin without hops?

When a man is saddled with a bad wife there is sure to be stir-ups in the family.

Why are pretty women like barking dogs? Because they show their teeth and don't bite.

Thought at a Wedding-breakfast.—The bridal reign (bride rein) begins with a bit in the mouth.

People who are always sighing and groaning should be sent to a lunatic asylum as moon-maniacs.

An editor afflicted with hand-organs thinks the runderpest cannot be compared with the grinderpest.

Never tread on the tail of a cat, or tell a woman she is not handsome, unless you are fond of music.

A Misogynist.—Calling a certain nether garment, between five and six feet in diameter a "petty-coat."

If you wish to be a saint, instruct your children; because all the good they do will be imputed to you.

Bachelor.—a dandy-lion run to seed in a garden of beautiful flowers. The ingrafted crab-tree of humanity.

Old Snarl says that love is a combination of disease—an affection of the heart, and an inflammation of the brain.

Mrs. Jones declares that the only way a traveler can avoid being in railroad collisions, now-a-days is to take the other train.

Fashionable young lady detaching her hair before retiring: "What dreams may come when we have shuffled off this mortal coil!"

All nonsense.—Getting up with larks in the morning, when you've been up on a lark all night. What says our fast young men?

There is an old saying, and a true one that there is no felling what a man is worth until he is dead and his funeral expenses paid.

Will the young gents who had the encounter with the—lately, favor us with a short account of the affair for publication.

"Toby, what did the Israelites do when they crossed the Red Sea?" "I don't know ma'am, but I guess they dried themselves."

A charity scholar under examination on the Psalms, being asked, "What is the pestilence that walketh in darkness?" replied, "Please, sir, bed-bugs."

The young lady who lost her veil, while returning from Dr. Gleason's lecture, one evening, last week, will do well to remember the old adage of "More haste, less Speed."