

# The North Branch Democrat.

HARVEY SICKLER, Proprietor.

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

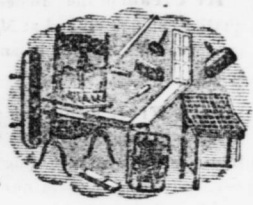
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## Select Story.

### TROUBLED HONEY-MOON.

BY CLARA AUGUSTA.

George Jameson and Katie Vaughan had  
a brilliant wedding. Everything was fault-  
less—from the icing on the cake to the ar-  
rangement of the bride's waterfall.

Mrs. Vaughan cried just enough not to  
redden her nose; Vaughan did the digni-  
fied PATER FAMILIAS to a charm; and  
George and Katie were so affectionate as  
to give the world the idea that here was a  
match made in heaven.

The bridal-breakfast over, the white  
moire antique and orange flowers were  
laid aside, and the pretty traveling suit  
of alpaca, with nazarine blue trimmings  
was donned—the sweetest love of a thing Mad-  
am D'Aubrey had made up for the season.  
Then there was the little bonnet of gray  
silk to match the dress, with its blue face  
trimming to match Katie's eyes; the gold-  
den bird of paradise dropping its plumage  
over the crown; and it was such a fine  
morning, and everything looked propitious  
and in the midst of congratulations and  
kisses George and Katie started for the de-  
pot.

They arrived just in season. The whistle  
sounded in the distance. George buck-  
led up his traveling shawl and Katie grasp-  
ed her parasol.

"George, dearest," said the bride, "do  
run out and see to the trunks! I should  
die if, when we get to the Falls, my clothes  
should not be there! It would be dread-  
ful to be obliged to go to dinner in my  
traveling dress! Go see to them, there's  
a darling!"

George vanished; the train pulling and  
smoking shot into the depot. Conductor  
popped his head into the ladies' room,  
shouting at the top of his voice:

"All aboard for Danville! Come, hur-  
ry up, ladies! Five minutes behind time  
and another train due."

Katie did not know whether she was  
bound for Danville or not; probably she  
had better get in and let George follow.  
So she entered the long and smoky vehicle  
feeling very much at sea. The conductor  
passed by her seat; she caught him by the  
arm.

"Is my husband—"

"Oh, yes, yes, all right," said the officer  
hurryingly on in a way railway officials have.

"I'll send him right along," and he van-  
ished from view in the long line of mov-  
ing carriages.

Meanwhile George having seen to the  
baggage—a proceeding that had occupied  
more time than he had intended—return-  
ed to the ladies' room to find Katie miss-  
ing—searched about wildly, inquiring of  
every one he met without success.

"She's probably already in the train,  
sir," said a ticket agent of whom he made  
inquiry. "You are going to Buffalo, I  
think you said; that's the train to Buffalo;  
you'll likely find her there. Just starting  
not a moment to lose."

George grasped the railing of the hind  
car as it flew by, and, flinging open the door  
he rushed through car after car, but seek-  
ing in vain for Katie. She was not on the  
train. "Most likely she got on the wrong  
train," said the conductor. "Grotton is a way station fifteen  
miles further ahead. We stop there fifteen  
or twenty minutes for refreshments. You'll  
doubtless find her there."

The cars flew over the track. George  
mentally blessed the man who invented  
steam engines—he could reach Katie so  
much sooner. Dear little thing! how vexed  
and troubled she must be—and George  
grew quite lethargic over her desolate  
condition.

But it seemed ages to George before  
they whirled up to the platform at Grotton,  
and then he did not wait to practice any  
courtesies. He leaped out impetuously,  
knocking over an old lady with a flower  
pot and a bird cage in her hand, demolish-  
ing the pot and putting the birds into hys-  
terics. The old lady was indignant, and  
hit George a rap with her umbrella that  
spoiled forever the fair proportions of his  
bridal beaver, but he was too much engag-  
ed in thought of his lost bride to spare a  
regret for his hat.

He flew through the astonished crowd,  
mashing up a crinoline here, and knocking  
over a small boy there, until he reached  
the clerk of the station. Yes, the clerk  
believed there was one lady who had come  
alone; she had gone to the Belvidere House  
—she must be the one.

George waited to hear no more. He  
hurried up the street to the place, where  
the landlord assured him that no lady of  
Katie's style had arrived; perhaps she had  
stopped at Margate, ten miles back. George  
seized on the hope. There was no train to  
Margate until the next morning, but the  
wretched husband could not wait all night  
—he would walk.

He got directions about the roads; was  
told that it was a straight one—for the  
most of the way through the woods—rather  
lonely and pleasant. He set forth at  
once, not stopping to swallow a mouthful.  
Excitement had taken away his appetite.  
The fine day had developed into a cloudy  
evening—the night would be darker than  
usual.

George hastened on, too much excited  
to feel fatigue—too much agonized about  
Katie to notice that he had split his elegant  
French gaiters out at the sides.

After three or four hours hard walking  
he began to think that something must be  
wrong. He ought to be approaching the  
suburbs of Margate. In fact, he ought to

have reached the village itself sometime  
before. He grew a little doubtful about  
his being on the right road, and began to  
look about him. There was no road at all,  
or rather, it was all road; for all vestige of  
fences and wheel tracks had vanished—  
there was forest, forest everywhere.

The very character of the ground be-  
neath his feet changed at every step he took.  
It grew softer and softer, until he sank an-  
kle deep in mud; and, suddenly, before he  
could turn about, he fell in almost to his  
armpits. He had stumbled into a quag-  
mire! A swift horror came over him!  
People had died before now in places like  
this—and it would be so dreadful to die  
thus, and Katie never know what had be-  
come of him. He struggled with the  
strength of desperation to free himself, but  
he might as well have taken it coolly. He  
was held fast.

Thus slowly the hours wore away. The  
night was ages long. The sun had never  
taken so much time to rise in;—  
but probably it realized that nothing could  
be done until it was up, and was not dis-  
posed to hurry.

As soon as it was fairly light, George  
began to scream at the top of his voice, in  
the hope that some one who might be go-  
ing somewhere might hear him. He amu-  
sed himself in this way for an hour; and  
at the end of that time you could not  
have distinguished his voice from that of a  
frog close at hand, who had been doing  
his very best to rival our hero.

At last, just as George was beginning  
to despair, he heard a voice in the dis-  
tance calling out—

"Hallo, there! Is it you or a frog?"

"It's me," cried George, "and I shall  
be dead in ten minutes! Come quick! I'm  
in the mud up to my eyes!"

Directly an old woman appeared, a sun-  
bonnet on her head and a basket on her  
arm. She was huckleberrying.

"The land sakes," cried she, "you're in  
for it, ain't ye?"

"Saved ye right! I am glad of it!—  
Didn't ye see the notice that the old man  
put up? that nobody must come a huckle-  
berrying in this ere swamp?"

"Huckleberrying, indeed! I am after  
my wife!"

"Land sakes! Your wife! Well, of  
all things, I declare I never!"

"She got on the wrong train, and so did  
I; and I expect she's at Margate, and I  
started from Grotton last night to walk  
there, and lost my way. Help me out, do  
that's a dear woman."

The old woman steadied herself by a  
tree, and being a woman of good muscles,  
she soon drew George out—mud from  
head to foot. He shook himself.

"There, if you'll show me the way, I'll  
go right on!"

"No you won't either! You'll go right  
over to our house and have a cup of cof-  
fee and something to eat, and a suit of  
the old man's clothes to put on while I  
dry yours; and I'll send Tom over to  
Margate with the horse and wagon to  
bring your wife."

"You're a trump," cried George, wring-  
ing her hand. "God bless you!—You  
shall be well rewarded for your kindness."

Mrs. Starks' house was only a little way  
distant and to its shelter she took  
George. Tom was dispatched to Mar-  
gate to hunt up Mrs. Jameson; and  
George, arrayed in a suit of Mr. Starks's  
clothes—blue swallow tailed coat, home-  
made gray pantaloons, cow hide boots,  
and white hat with a broad brim—for the  
Starks were friends—felt like a new man.

They gave him a good breakfast, which  
did not come amiss; and while Tom was  
absent, the old lady made him lie down  
on the lounge and take a nap.

Tom returned about noon. He had  
scoured the whole village, but found nothing.  
Only one passenger had left the  
train at Margate on the previous day, and  
he was an old man with patent plaster  
for sale.

Poor George was frenzied. He rushed  
out of the house and stood looking first  
up and then down the road, uncertain  
which way to wend his course. Suddenly  
the train from Grotton swept past, and a  
white handkerchief was waving from an  
open window, and above the handkerchief  
George caught the gleam of the golden  
hair and blue ribbons! It was Katie be-  
yond a doubt. He cleared the fence at a  
bound, and rushed after the flying train.  
He ran, till he was ready to drop, when  
he came upon some men with a hand car,  
who were repairing the road. He gave  
them ten dollars to take him to Grotton.  
He was sure he could find Katie there!

But no! the train had not stopped at  
all. This was the express for Buffalo.  
But a bystander informed him a lady an-  
swering the description he gave of Katie  
had been seen the day before at Danville,  
crying, and saying she had lost her hus-  
band.

George darted off. He caught with  
avidity at the hope thus held out. It  
must be Katie! Who else had lost her  
husband?

A train was just leaving for Dan-  
ville. He sprang on board, and suffered  
an eternity during the transit, for it was an  
accommodation train, and everybody  
knew about those horrible delays at every  
station.

But they reached Danville at last.—  
George inquired for the lady who had  
lost her husband. Yes, she was all right  
—she had gone to the American House to  
wait for him. She expected him by every  
train, till he came, said the ticket mas-  
ter.

He hurried with all speed to the Amer-  
ican.

Yes, she was there, said the clerk; she  
was waiting for her husband; room 221,  
right hand, second flight.

George flew up stairs, burst open the  
door of 221, and entered without ceremo-  
ny. She was sitting by the window look-  
ing for him, with her back to the door.  
He sprang forward, and holding her in  
his arms, rained kisses upon her face.

"My Katie! my darling! my darling!  
have I found you at last?"

She turned her face and looked at him  
before she spoke, and then she set up such  
a scream as made the very hair stand on  
George's head.

"You are not my James!" she cried.  
"Oh, heaven! Help! Help! Somebody  
come quick! Help! Help! murder!—  
thieves!"

George stood aghast. The lady was  
middle-aged, with false teeth, and a decid-  
edly snuffy looking nose. No more like  
the charming little Katie than she was  
like the Venus de Medici!

He turned to flee just as the stairway  
was alive with people alarmed with the  
cries of the woman. They tried to stop  
him, but he would not be stayed. He  
took the stairs at a leap, and landed some-  
where near the bottom, among the wreck  
of three chamber maids, and as many  
white as roused waiters.

"And before any one could seize him he  
was rushing down over the front steps.—  
A lady and gentleman were slowly ascend-  
ing them, and George in his bad haste,  
ran against the lady and broke the rim of  
her bonnet.

"You rascal!" cried the gentleman  
with her, "what do you mean by treating  
a lady in this manner?" and he seized our  
hero by the collar.

Then, for the first time, George looked  
at the couple before him.

"Tis Katie! Oh, Katie!" cried he, for  
this time there was no mistake; it was  
Katie and her uncle Charles. "Oh, my  
wife! my wife!"

He tried to take her in his arms, but  
she fled from him in terror.

"Take that dreadful man away," she  
cried. "I am sure he is insane or drunk!  
Only see his boots and his awful hat!"

"I tell you I am your George!—Oh,  
Katie, where have you been?" exclaimed  
he.

Katie looked at him now, and recogniz-  
ing him, began to cry.

"Oh, dear, that I should have ever  
lived to see this day! My George that I  
thought so pure and good, faithless and  
intoxicated! Oh, uncle Charles, what will  
become of me?"

"My dear niece, be patient," said her  
uncle. "I think this is George, and we  
will hear what he has to say before con-  
demning him. Mr. Jameson, I met your  
wife in the cars yesterday, and she infor-  
med me that you deserted her at the Win-  
dham depot. Of course I could not believe  
that your absence was intentional and I  
persuaded her to remain here while I tele-  
graphed to the principle stations along the  
road for information of you. Why did I  
receive no answer?"

"Because the telegraph does not run in-  
to old Mr. Starks' huckleberry swamp,  
where I had the honor of spending last  
night," said George, losing his temper.

"But this extraordinary disguise!"

"My clothes were muddy, and I have  
got on Mr. Starks's," said George. And  
though the explanation was not particu-  
larly lucid to those who heard it, they  
were satisfied.

"My dearest George!" cried Katie,  
rushing into his arms, "and so you did not  
desert me, and I shan't have to be divor-  
ced?"

"Never, my darling! and we'll never be  
separated again for a moment."

"No, not for all the baggage in the  
world! Oh, George, you don't know how  
I have suffered."

The crowd could be kept ignorant no  
longer, for scores had assembled round the  
hotel, drawn thither by the disturbance.—  
Matters were explained, and cheers long  
and loud rent the air.

The landlord got up an impromptu  
wedding dinner, at which Katie presided;  
and George, looking very sheepish in Mr.  
Starks's swallow-tail, did the honors.

They proceeded on their tour next day,  
and soon afterward Mr. and Mrs. Starks  
were delighted to receive a box by ex-  
press, containing the lost suit of the old