

# THE NEW BLOOMFIELD, PA. TIMES

VOL. XII. NEW BLOOMFIELD, PA., TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1878. NO. 37.

## THE TIMES.

An Independent Family Newspaper,

IS PUBLISHED EVERY TUESDAY BY

**F. MORTIMER & CO.**

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE.

(WITHIN THE COUNTY.)

One Year, ..... \$1 25

Six Months, ..... 75

(OUT OF THE COUNTY.)

One Year, (Postage included) ..... \$1 50

Six Months, (Postage included) ..... 85

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## Select Poetry.

"Man Proposes."

We parted one eve at the garden gate  
When the dew was on the heather,  
And I promised my love to come back to her,  
Ere the pleasant autumn weather—  
That we twain might wed  
When the leaves were red,  
And live and love together.

BUT ANOTHER MAN DISPOSES.

I found my love at the garden gate,  
Just where I expected to find her,  
And I found, also, too awfully late  
That her father was right behind her;  
And he gave me a "toot"  
With a government boot,  
That shattered my day dreams, kinder.

## WEIGHING A SHOP GIRL.

AND you really fancy yourself in love with this fair-haired little shop girl?"

Mr. Meredith, a tall, noble-featured man of fifty, looking rather sadly at his enthusiastic young nephew.

"Fancy, uncle? That is hardly an appropriate word to use. I am quite certain of that fact."

"I consider you will think me a very poor judge of the human character, if I tell you that I like her cousin's demure face best. Believe me, Harry, there is more real stamina in Ruth Durr than in her pretty cousin Rachel."

"There, sir," answered Harry, resolutely, "is where I beg leave to differ with you."

"Well, my boy, you must choose for yourself. Remember, it is no question of a partner for a waltz, or a pair of bright eyes whose glitter is to amuse you for one or two evenings. The woman whom you now set for your wife must necessarily exert a more or less potent influence over your whole life."

"I know, sir," and Harry's mischievous face became for the moment almost grave.

"That she earns her own living behind the counter of a fancy store—that they both do, is no drawback in my eyes. Independence and self-reliance are to me cardinal virtues, and even though your wife will be raised into an atmosphere of comparative wealth, a few lessons taken beforehand in the impartial school of worldly experience will be of incalculable use to her."

Harry Meredith sat long that night, before the snug bright fire in his snug little bachelor apartment, musing over his uncle's words.

He had met the two cousins, Rachel and Ruth Durr at a quiet little birthday gathering at the house of a friend, and had instantaneously felt drawn towards the elder one, elder by eighteen months. She was a beautiful blonde, while the other was rather of the brunette type.

During the three months which had followed upon his first introduction, Harry Meredith had contrived to see the cousins several times a week, and consequently fell deep in love with the golden-haired lassie even while he was quite conscious of Ruth's deeper character and stronger intellect.

Sometimes he was almost tempted to waver in his allegiance toward the older, and then betook himself with very unnecessary sternness to task.

To-night, however, he passed the whole of the last few weeks in review before his memory, and decided that inaction was the very worst policy in the world.

"This suspense must be put an end to," ejaculated our hero half aloud, and then he smiled mischievously to himself, as an idea came into his head.

"I'll do it," he thought, biting his lip. "Of course it's merely for the fun

of the thing. I have not the shadow of a doubt that she is all she seems, but still—"

He was silent for a few minutes, and then arose to prepare for slumber.

"They are polite enough to me as the favored child of luxury. Now I will take measures to learn whether this courtesy is genuinely from the heart, or merely born of empty form and adulation to wealth."

So our hero, laying his head on his pillow, dreamed of private masquerade parties all night long.

Rachel Durr and her cousin Ruth were shop girls in Savery and St. Clair's great fancy store.

"Oh, dear!" sighed Rachel, one morning as she took off her bonnet in the little dressing-room at the back of the store and shook down her golden shower of curls, "how tired I am of this horrid drudgery. How I wish Harry Meredith would propose if he's going to."

Ruth laughed as she smoothed down her satin-brown hair, and tied the bow of her crimson ribbon at her throat.

"And what do you think of me, Rachel! I, who have no such brilliant hopes of matrimony to light up the monotony of my daily toil!"

Rachel shrugged her shoulders. "I don't see how you bear it so patiently. I should die with vexation and 'ennui,' if I did not hope for something better."

"Hush!" said Ruth, "there is Mrs. Wickes, the forewoman calling us."

"How I hate the old vixen!" Rachel ejaculated, slowly following Ruth into the store.

"Really, Miss Rachel Durr, you must be a little more punctual," said Mrs. Wickes, pursing up her mouth primly.

"You are full five minutes behind time, and it was just so yesterday."

Rachel pouted and went to work labeling a box of newly arrived ribbons.—She and Mrs. Wickes had never agreed very harmoniously, nor did she affiliate with the shop girls. "A stuck up, impertinent thing," they call her; while she, from the serene heights of the possibility of her one day becoming Mrs. Harry Meredith, treated them with disdain which was anything in the world but agreeable.

In vain were Ruth remonstrances.—Rachel had always been willful and inclined to superciliousness, nor would she listen to her cousin's mildly proffered advice now.

"It's all very well for you, Ruth, you have got to spend all your days," but she said, curling her pretty lips, "but I shall soon be lifted out of this groveling atmosphere."

"It is by no means a certainty."

"Yes it is," laughingly answered Rachel, blushing like a damask rose.

And Ruth would sigh softly, and think how brightly the future was unrolling its vast map before her pretty little cousin.

Rachel Durr waited rather languidly upon one or two customers that morning. Evidently her heart was not in her work, and Mrs. Wickes, from her lurking place behind the cash box, cast several envenomed glances towards her premonitory of a coming storm.

Presently a new customer hobbled in bent and crooked, and made his way directly to the counter where Rachel and Ruth were standing. A huge cotton umbrella protruded in a war like manner from beneath his arm, and mended cotton gloves covered his hands while a rusty red wig was half concealed by his battered hat.

"My goodness! Ruth, what a figure!" ejaculated Rachel, in a very audible voice. "What can that old bundle of second-hand clothes want here?"

"Hush!" said Ruth, almost sternly, "he will hear you?"

"And what if he does! What do I care?"

"He is old and very infirm, Rachel, and his age should render him sacred in your eyes."

Rachel tossed her head sneeringly.

"Ruth, you are too absurd for anything. I won't wait on him."

But the old man steered resolutely for Rachel herself.

"I want to buy some gloves, miss," he said, in a feeble croaking voice.

"You'd better go somewhere else," said the young lady, superciliously; "our store doesn't keep cheap goods."

"Please let me see the articles," he asked.

Rachel tossed a box down on the counter; the old man bent his spectacled eyes down to survey the goods.

"How much are these?"

"A dollar a pair."

"But I am a poor man; have you nothing cheaper?"

"No!" snapped Rachel, "I told you to go elsewhere, I have no patience with paupers."

"I beg your pardon," said the old man, "I am not a pauper."

"Well," observed the girl, scornfully, "you look like one."

"Appearances are dreadful deceitful. Did you tell me you had cheaper gloves?"

"I didn't tell you any such thing!"

"Rachel!" remonstrated her cousin. "Let me show you what you want, sir, she said, softly, turning to the old customer. "We have some very nice gloves at seventy-five cents."

"Seventy-five cents is a great deal of money to pay for a pair of gloves," said the old man looking sorrowfully down on the mended fingers of those he wore, "but the weather is getting very frosty, and I am not so young as I was."

"I should think that was quite evident," said Rachel, with a heartless titter.

Ruth bent toward the old man, saying in a low, sweet voice:

"Take the warm worsted gloves, sir. The price is seventy-five cents, but you shall have them for fifty. I myself will make up the difference to the store.—You are an old gentleman, and I am young and able to work."

"But I am nothing to you, Miss."

Ruth folded the gloves neatly in a piece of paper, and handed them to him.

"For the sake of the dear father who died a year ago, old age can never be 'nothing' to me, sir. Please don't thank me; indeed I deserve no gratitude."

And Ruth drew blushing back, while Rachel burst into a laugh.

"Upon my word, Ruth, you are the greatest fool I ever saw!" she cried while the old gentleman hobbled out of the store. "I would see the old beggar in Jericho before I would have given him anything. Why doesn't he go to the poor house?"

The days crept on and one day Mr. Harry Meredith astonished little Ruth Durr very much by asking her to be his wife.

It was as if the gates of Paradise had been suddenly opened to her—the modest little girl, secretly worshipping Harry Meredith in her heart of hearts had never dreamed of the possibility of such good luck being in store for her.

That evening she told her cousin.—Rachel listened in silence. The prize had been near her grasp once, but somehow it had slipped away.

"I think you must be mistaken, Ruth," she said, acrimoniously. "I think Mr. Meredith never would—"

She checked herself, for at that instant the door opened, and Harry Meredith was announced.

"Well, Rachel," he said, pleasantly, "are you ready to congratulate me upon the sweet little wife I have won?"

Rachel muttered one or two formal sentences, but she was very pale. Meredith observed her with a smile.

"Ruth," he said, turning with a smile, "I have something to show you."

He put a tiny parcel in her hand. She opened it, and out fell a pair of worsted gloves.

She looked wistfully into his face, then the whole tide of memory came back upon her heart.

"Harry! were you the old man?"

"I was the old man, my dearest."

And then Rachel knew why it was that the ship freighted with all her hopes had drifted away, when it was so near the haven. She had been weighed and found wanting.

### Where She was Fooled.

THE colonel, a rigid martinet, is sitting at the window of his room, when looking out he sees a captain crossing the barrack yard towards the gate. Looking at him closely, he is shocked to observe that, the rules and regulations to the contrary notwithstanding,

the captain does not carry a sword.

"Captain," he calls from the window. "Hi, captain; step up to my room for a moment will you?"

The captain obeys promptly, borrows a sword from the officer of the guard, the guard-room being at the foot of the stairs, and presents himself to the old colonel, in irreproachable manner.

The colonel is somewhat surprised to see the sword in its place, and having to invent some pretext for calling his subordinate back, says with some confusion:

"I beg your pardon, captain, but really I've forgotten what I wanted to speak to you about. However, it can't have been anything very important; it will keep. Good morning."

The captain salutes, departs, returns the sword to its owner, and is making off across the barrack yard, when he again comes within the range of the colonel's vision.

The colonel rubs his eyes, stares, says softly to himself:

"How in thunder is this? Dem it, he hasn't a sword to his waist."

Then he calls aloud:

"Captain! Ho, captain, one moment, please."

The captain returns, borrows the sword again, mounts the stairs and enters the colonel's presence. His commanding officer stares at him intently; he has a sword, he sees it, he hears it.

"Captain," he stammers growing very hot, "it's deuced ridiculous, you know, but—ha! ha! I'd just remembered what I wanted to say to you, and now—ha! ha!—it's gone out of my head again! Funny, isn't it? Ha! ha! Losing my memory. Never mind. I'll think of it and write you. Good morning."

The captain salutes, departs, returns the sword to its owners and makes for the gate. As he crosses the barrack yard, the colonel calls his wife to his side and says:

"See that officer out there?"

"Yes."

"Has he got a sword on?"

The colonel's wife adjusts her eyeglass upon him, scans him keenly and says:

"He hasn't the taste of a sword."

The colonel says:

"That's just where you fool yourself. He has!"

### The Gregg-M'Duffy Case.

I AM afraid the case of James Buchanan Gregg now pending in Congress, is not fully understood by the country. The facts are these:

Mrs. Pandora M'Duffy, Mr. Gregg's mother-in-law, went to Venezuela, several years ago, to look after some indigo mines which had been owned by her deceased husband. While she was there she died, and her body was prepared for shipment to the United States. About the same time Admiral Paregorikoff, of the Russian South Pacific Squadron, also died while upon a trip through Venezuela, and his body was packed in a coffin for transportation home.

Unhappily the coffins resembled each other closely, and, as they lay upon the wharf together, it so happened that Mrs. M'Duffy's body was placed in a boat, and taken aboard the Russian frigate, where it was received with the highest honors. Meantime, nobody discovered the mistake, and the remains of Admiral Paregorikoff were shipped by steamer home to James Buchanan Gregg, of Baltimore.

Poor Mrs. M'Duffy had a royal time of it on the Russian frigate. The captain fired a salute of five guns every two hours during the entire voyage; all the flags were at half mast, the officers could hardly take observations for crying, and the band used up 200,000 cubic feet of wind a day playing melancholy dirges over the coffin.

When the vessel reached St. Petersburg there was a turn-out of Grand Dukes and Princes and so forth, and the late Mrs. M'Duffy was taken away to a gorgeous sepulcher by a funeral procession that netted the Paregorikoff family undertaker not less than ten thousand dollars.

The other coffin went direct to Baltimore. When it reached Gregg's house, he pried the lid off while Mrs. Gregg and the children, and his aunt stood by

sobbing. Gregg's first feeling was one of amazement at observing that Mrs. M'Duffy had grown side whiskers and a mustache while she was in Venezuela. His aunt said she thought the nose was remarkably red for a strictly temperate woman, and Mrs. Gregg declared that she never before noticed that wart over Mrs. M'Duffy's left eyebrow.

However, they replaced the lid, and interred the corpse in Gregg's splendid marble family vault at the cemetery, and so the matter rested.

One day, several months later, a Russian frigate sailed up the Chesapeake, and landed a squad of ten sailors at Baltimore. They marched out to the cemetery, where they undermined Gregg's marble vault, blew it to splinters, seized the coffin of the supposed Mrs. M'Duffy, and carried it aboard the frigate.

In consequence of this outrage some diplomatic correspondence ensued, which explained the matter, and Mr. Gregg went over to Russia to collect Mrs. M'Duffy from that despotic government.—He found that the family of Admiral Paregorikoff, upon discovering Mrs. M'Duffy in the coffin, were so much enraged that they pitched her and the coffin into the Neva. She floated calmly out with the tide, and spent the next two months in cruising about the Gulf of Bothnia, drifting off occasionally, into the Skager Rack and Cattegat, and bumping up, now and then, against Denmark, and Sweden, and Norway, in a most scandalous manner. Finally the captain of a Copenhagen schooner fished her out, tied an anvil to her, and sank her in 800 fathoms of water.

Gregg at once put in a claim against the Russian government for \$200,000 damages, to which Russia responded with a bill of \$250,000 for transportation of Mrs. Duffy, for the music by the band, for eight tons of powder fired off in saluting her, and for funeral expenses generally. Gregg then carried the matter into Congress, and his friends are pushing through a resolution which requires the State Department to present the following alternatives to the Russian government:

1. The Russian government to drag the Baltic Sea with grappling-irons for the purpose of resurrecting the original Mrs. M'Duffy.
2. Or to kill some respectable Russian mother-in-law and ship the body, at the expense of Russia, to Baltimore.
3. Or to pay \$200,000 damages.
4. Or to fight.

Prominent statesmen in Washington believe that the Russians will refuse to give reparation, and in that event, a war with Russia over James Buchanan Gregg's mother-in-law may be regarded as certain. The Czar will find Gregg to be a dangerous man when he gets angry. If we win in the fight Gregg proposes to make peace on condition that the Czar himself shall go out in a skiff and dive for Mrs. M'Duffy.

### His Recollection of it.

"Now, Leander dear, I want you to be sure and not forget to bring those few things when you come down to-night," said a young wife, just before the kiss and "good by" at the Summer hotel, in the morning, as the gentlemen were starting for the city.

- "Certainly not, my love."
- "And this is the way the list ran:
1. Two yards of blue barge.
  2. Three yards Hamburg edgings.
  3. My new braid from the hat store.
  4. Half a dollar's worth of nainsook.
  5. Box pearl powder for my upper drawer.
  6. "Modern Minister" from Loring's Library.

Arriving in town, he forgot all about the list till late in the afternoon, and then couldn't find it in any of his pockets; but hadn't he read it over, and didn't he recollect it all? Of course he did, and this is what he brought to his expectant little wife:

1. Two heads of blue cabbage.
2. Two yards handsome netting (mosquito.)
3. Some blue braid.
4. Half a dollar's worth of canned soup.
5. Box of sedleitz powder.
6. Loring said he hadn't got any such book as "The Mug and Canister" in the library.

Exclamation on receiving the above: "O, Leander, Leander, you must have been dining at that horrid club again, or you couldn't have made such a mistake!"