

THE NEW BLOOMFIELD PA. TIMES

VOL. XII.

NEW BLOOMFIELD, PA., TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1878.

NO. 41.

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

Invariably in Advance!

Advertising rates furnished upon application.

FOR THE TIMES.

EVANESCENCE.

The early glow of human hearts,

Alas, how transitory!

How soon the fire of life departs—

How fades its fairest glory!

Its magic wile with rosy light

Fills Youth's enchanted palace;

But shadows fall as dark as night,

When Age presents the chalice.

Our Summer brings the odorous bloom,

Of lilies and of roses;

Our Winter's frosty twilight gloom

Their scentless stems discloses.

The wreaths that round our brows we wove,

Or e'er we know it, wither,

And wing their flight the birds of love—

Ah, who can tell us whither?

The music that was wont to cheer,

No more to gladness urges;

Our heart-throbs turn to tollings drear,

Our roundelays to dirges.

The dreams are false that haunt the night,

Nor comfort thence we borrow,

To-day in festal garments dight,

In garb of dole to-morrow.

A world that seemed no change to know,

Was that where first we found us;

But toombs arise as on we go,

And pitfalls lurk around us.

And change on every side appears,

And cares our spirits cumber,

Till, wearied out with hopes and fears,

To wake no more, we slumber.

Georgetown, D. C. W. L. SHOEMAKER.

The Asher and Pettibone Feud.

THE cattle stood up to their knees in the creek, and every bird in the woods sat silent or whirled about in a languid, discouraged way, it was such boiling summer weather. The men were afraid of sunstroke, and would not go back to their threshing before two o'clock, in spite of Job Asher's exhortations. Both great doors of the barn were open, and some lounged on the floor in a pleasant breeze, while others lingered on the east porch of the house, or even explored the prim, dark parlor. Thirteen strong, voracious threshers were quartered for the day, and perhaps for several days—the length of their stay depending on the amount of grain to be threshed and the durability of the machine—at Job Asher's. They had eaten a huge dinner, and there was only one woman to wait on them all. She was not standing in the cool creek along with the happier cattle, at that time of day, I warrant you, not resting herself in such air as might be stirring, after the morning's labor of cooking for her army. While the men lounged and Job Asher fretted, his sallow, sad wife went stooping around the kitchen, washing the dishes, and preparing things for supper. Really, it seemed her vitality must be exhausted at the next step, but she knew she should keep on walking and working like a machine until all which was required of her was finished. She had long survived that period when she could find any pleasure in accomplishing tasks or the thrift to which her husband exhorted her. Poor Mrs. Asher was a broken spring—a stretched-out bit of elastic. She wished Jule were there. If Julia had gotten home in time for the threshing, she shouldn't have had it so hard. Julia sort of rested her, just by being in the house. She really smiled slowly, and with a wan glistering of the face, as she thought of her bounding, ruddy seventeen year old girl. Julia meant to get home, but school was not out until that very day, and her father did not want her to miss any of the advantages which cost him so much cash.

Mrs. Asher recollected, as she rubbed the dishes off, how long she and the dear

girl had besieged the father for the privilege of one year at boarding-school, and how reluctantly he consented. Julia went away the September before. She had been away nine months, during which time they had not seen her face. It is doubtful whether Julia would ever have seen the inside of a boarding school had not Pettibone been sending his girls to one; and whatever Pettibone did, Job Asher was bound either to contest or outdo. There was a feud between the two farmers, which began with some sheep and dogs when they were young men, just getting a foothold on the soil of which both now owned so many acres. In those days Pettibone had called Job Asher a "wooden-headed skinflint," and Job Asher had called Pettibone a "puffed up booby," and they had lived these neighborly lives, keeping up mutual annoyances ever since. If Pettibone favored a preacher, Job Asher set his face against that innocent man. If Job Asher was put forward for agricultural honors of any kind, Pettibone sneered at him all the time he was discharging his duties. The Pettibone girls and Julia Asher quarreled at the district school. Mrs. Asher and Mrs. Pettibone never dared to become friendly at social meetings; but in their later years, both the overworked woman, who felt they were being pushed down to the grave long before their natural time, thought how foolish the disagreement between their families was, and perhaps in Sunday afternoon prayer meetings they said kind, encouraging texts especially for each other. Not thus was it with Job Asher and Pettibone; if Asher made a prayer, he did so beg the Almighty to bring down the stiff-necked and the proud, and show them the judgment of Sinai, that Pettibone at once felt called upon to rise, puff out his portly person, and deliver himself in pertinent remarks on the subject of people's making so little progress in spiritual life, and remaining in their first narrowness and meanness.

Pettibone prospered in a better way than did Job Asher. He made his home comfortable, and it became quite a thoroughfare of hospitality. He handled stock, and took shares in banks, and became quite the great patriarchal father of the soil. Job Asher on the other hand, set out with a greedy hunger for land. He lived in the same old house his forefathers occupied, and added no improvements. He allowed his wife no help, and kept down the social and refining wants of both mother and daughter. He was always "land poor." It was harder to cajole five dollars from his pocket than to earn five times that amount at hod-carrying. Pettibone's ways were not his ways; yet he was not going to let Pettibone carry a high hand over him; he didn't choose to spend and not spare, but his daughter would sometime ride over the thrifless Pettibones, and she should be educated as well they were. So she was allowed to go to boarding school, but in a way that made her the butt of the Pettibone girls, and taxed her proud spirit more than she would ever tell. Job Asher would pay the exorbitant school bill—and she might have extras if the Pettibone girls did—but clothes were another matter. Clothes were a fleeting and evanescent vanity—Job Asher aimed at the solid. Julia Asher went through her collegiate year clad worse than any other girl in the institution, and stunted and mortified in every way. But she had a brave, sensible nature, and taking hold of her advantages, she tried to live in them, and forgot her mortifications. But who likes, especially at seventeen, to be an oddity and a sort of pariah? Times were when her life was a burden in spite of all the long-desired advantages. But she found a friend in Charley Pettibone, an unexpected ally even in the midst of the enemy's camp.

Charley Pettibone was the oldest son of the family, and had been a year or two at college—a college for both young men and young women—before his sisters came. Jule Asher's calico and rough boots attracted his notice from the contrast with the elegant and befrizzled young ladies who were her classmates. Her apt recitations and questioning mind made her a comrade for him. He had been brought up to think little of the Ashers; yet he beheld one of the class who challenged not only his respect but his admiration. Julia was a child; he felt quite a man; and, therefore,

when he found her one evening in the dusky chapel crying passionately over some mortification, and as passionately determined to endure it without asking her father to do any thing more for her, he undertook to console her. He leaned against the window while Julia dried her eyes, and delivering himself of his own and his father's opinion, declared, "It's a shame! your father hasn't any idea of the decencies of life, Julia!"

It was the clan call. Julia straightened herself.

"I said I was silly enough to cry because Nora Dickinson had no better breeding than to laugh at my everlasting calico, and I didn't mean to ask father for any thing more. But I didn't dispute my father's judgment in putting me in calico, did I?"

"Well, you know he is stingy," urged Charley, uneasily, finding herself in the predicament of having his sympathies thrown back on his hands.

"Well, I'm thankful he hasn't the faults of some other people," retorted the Asher.

"I don't think my father's perfect," proceeded Charley; and I must say, I don't see why the two families have to bicker always."

And returning to the subject at intervals, the young man eventually found out that two members, at least, of the rival families, need never differ any more. They grew to be quite of one mind. They consulted frequently on hard questions in mechanics; they had something to say on the languages—and perhaps in a language—to each other. The affair grew right up before the Pettibone girls—before they could believe their eyes, they wrote home to their father, and by that time vacation had come.

Pettibone had threshers at his home on that hot day when the letter came, stating explicitly that Charley owned to being engaged to "that Asher girl." One of his men brought the mail, and the rotund farmer read this bit of news after a delightful dinner, which in no wise mollified him. Threshing at Pettibone's was not a labor to disturb the flow of animal life. There was an abundant table, and the usual array of laborers; but a cook and her assistant shared the trials with Mrs. Pettibone, whose only desire was to get through with this necessity of farm-life, and have the house in order before the girls came home—the girls who were going East with a party of schoolmates for a few weeks, to return and flood the place with company until September. Her overwork was a different kind from Mrs. Asher's, and perhaps carried more pleasure with it, but was overwork all the same.

"It'll be a very easy matter to settle Charles." Pettibone was angry, but in a lofty and benevolent way, which became a man of his avoirdupois and influence. He would just meet Charles at the depot and have a talk with him; there would be a good opportunity, for the girls were not coming home, and they would have the carriage to themselves. Charles was the eldest, and his pride. He would send the young man East for a time, until he overcame his fancy. He didn't know, though, but it would be better to let the boy see that Asher girl at home; that would cure him! Pettibone left his threshers to attend to their business, and drove slowly toward the station to meet the train. It was a very hot day; he was inclined to get along slowly, and as he passed the lane leading up to Asher's, it occurred to him to go in and have a word with Job. If Job's girl had any design on Charles, he would have it out with Job himself.

Asher's men had gotten reluctantly up to resume their labors, and he was perspiring with an inward fire of haste as great as the outward heat of the sun. Job Asher was a lean, brown, sharp-eyed man, and Pettibone looked at him with all his old dislike intensified. Mrs. Asher, hearing carriage wheels, came to the door and looked out eagerly; the eagerness died out of her face, and she shrunk back, hiding her soiled apron, as she saw her neighbor. She thought Julia had come from the train. Her husband had no time to go after the child to-day. He said some of the neighbors could bring her over, and he would get her trunk home some time when he went to town with grain. He was too busy to take out a team just to

bring her in. She had been gone nine months, and her mother's heart was almost breaking to see her; all her mother's back was literally breaking for the relief her willing young hands would bring. But threshing is one thing, and women are another. Of the two Job Asher was most devoted to threshing.

"Hullo, Job!" said Pettibone, drawing his lines, and giving his neighbor a curt nod.

"Well, Pettibone," replied, "Asher, coming forward with ill-will in every line of his hard face, and chaff from the grain covering him. He carried a wooden rake in one hand, and tried to look the contempt he felt for the man riding in his carriage.

"Hot day, isn't it?"

"Yes, powerful hot. Threshing to-day up your way?"

"Been at it since five. I'm just going over to the train now to meet my son."

"Comin' from school, eh? I expect my girl to-day, but I hain't got time to look after her. I've got to look after her sustenance and providin' for her future; so I can't afford to loll around in carriages and let my farm go to the dogs, just now."

"If you mean to intimate that my farm's going to the dogs," said Pettibone, his black eyes snapping, "I can assure you I ain't intending to let you have it. You're always standing with your mouth open ready to snap up any piece of land around. I'd rather see my family decently circumstanced, if I was you, to be heapin' up what I couldn't take with me."

"You can't take nothin' you've got with you, I bet," exclaimed Asher, hotly. "And for all the airs of some people in this neighborhood, my daughter will be better fixed than any of them—after awhile."

"She's her father's child," said Pettibone, with a sneer. "Looking out for the future, and sparing no pains to help herself to all she can. Do you know, sir," cried the fat farmer, giving way to the wrath boiling within him, "that your girl has got my boy to promise to marry her?"

The lean farmer struck his rake on the ground.

"That isn't so, sir. My daughter wouldn't take up with none of the Pettibone set!"

"I tell you it is so, sir; and it's got to be stopped!"

"And I tell you, sir, that your son can't have my daughter; and if he comes 'round here I'll set the dogs on him."

"Set the dogs on my son, sir! I'll horsewhip you if you do, sir!"

"Get off my place, sir!"

There was a pause in the threshing, and the threshers, winking and nodding to each other, drew nearer this conference.

"You're a contemptible, narrow-souled snail," hurled Pettibone, perspiring plentifully, as he began to turn his horse's head; you're in the same little shell that your grandfather started in. If a son of mine ever dared mention to me that he wanted to marry your girl, I'd cut him off without a cent; so that's your warning, sir. Tell her that she'll get nothing by that transaction, if she tries to carry it out."

"And your warning, sir, is the same old warning," shouted Asher. "Your dog came and killed my sheep once, and the whole tribe of you have been trying to prey on me ever since. Your dog'll be shot like that un was afore, so keep the puppy at home."

"That's a way for church brethren to commune!" observed one thresher to another.

Pettibone started out of the farm-yard gate, even his sorrel horse seeming to shake the Asher dust off his feet, but the way was blocked by a messenger bringing a warning different from those which the two men had been sending to each other. This was Abijah Pence; his nag was dripping, and the tall, lean colt behind it looked but the spirit of a colt.

"My gracious!" cried Abijah Pence, shaking two fingers at the farmers, "haven't you heard the news?"

Now, Abijah being always as full of news as a walnut is of meat, nobody felt startled by that introduction; but when he proceeded, Pettibone drew his lines with a spasmodic grip, and Asher ran up and down like an insane man.

"The two-twenty train from the East off the track down here—hundreds of passengers smashed in the wreck—a burning axle caused it—and the whole on fire!"

"What are you saying, Abijah Pence?" called Pettibone, hoarsely. "That's the train my son's on!"

"That's the train my daughter's on!" cried Asher, jerking one of the horses, insanely, "unhitch this beast this minute. The threshing'll have to wait, men. I've got to go over there and see to my daughter!"

"What's the matter?" cried Mrs. Asher, coming down to the barn lot, with her kitchen sun-bonnet on.

Pettibone had lashed his horses; but he paused and stood up in his carriage.

"Get in with me, both of you," he called, his face white and stiff. "Get in, Job Asher; our children's burning to death, if they ain't mangled corpses already. There's no use quarrelling about them now."

The lean farmer, without a word, helped his half-fainting wife into his enemy's carriage, and his hickory shirt sleeve rubbed Pettibone's frantic elbow as it urged the galloping horse to the scene of the disaster. Job Asher was a mean, miserable man, but he was a man, as God knew. His jaws were set like iron, while poor Pettibone's plumper face worked spasmodically.

"Pears like you could make more speed if we were out, neighbor Pettibone," he said, humbly. "I don't want to hinder you."

"O, don't speak of that," begged Pettibone; "do you think I could leave you behind, and go on to see my son, and your little girl, maybe, cryin' to you all the time?"

"Oh, my Julia!" wailed Mrs. Asher, rocking herself and wringing her hard hands. "The kindest, lovin'est child that ever was born! 'O, mother,' she says in her letter, 'I'm getting the good education, but I'll be glad when the holidays come, so I can come home and help you. I'm afraid you work too hard, mother,' says she. Lord, how can I give up my child? O, Lord, lay not this burden upon thy tired, tired handmaid! O, my child, my child!"

"She was mine, too, mother," put in Job Asher, hoarsely.

"And mine, in a measure," said Pettibone, "if my boy was wantin' to marry her. She was a likely, fine little girl. My boy was a fine boy, too."

"That he was," assented Job Asher. "Bright and forward a young man as I ever see. Do you s'pose there's any hope that they may be saved? Abijah Pence loves his tall stories so."

Pettibone lashed his galloping horse afresh.

"I was in a railroad wreck once," said he. "It's a chance if they escape; but the wreck being on fire!"

They dashed on at a furious rate.

When they reached the scene of terror the poor, panting animal was ready to stand of his own accord, and the three distracted people ran around seeking their children. A crowd had already gathered; men were trying to force open the heaped-up cars with axes and crow-bars. The train was thrown into a dry ravine, known as Black Lick. Job Asher looked down and saw a swimming panorama of men panting up the bank with helpless and groaning shapes in their arms; of long cars, half shattered, half bent; he heard shouts and yells and the long-a-s! of escaping steam, the roar of ascending fire, and he felt its terrible heat. Pale, yellow tongues of flames were gathering color and volume. Mrs. Asher hung to Job's arm, trembling in every limb, and shrieking with all her remaining strength. The capable and energetic farmer, who always wanted the head and direction of every business, was dazed and half senseless. He followed Pettibone's lead when Pettibone dashed down the bank among the rescuers, and he found himself chopping and shouting with the rest; but through every yellow sheet of flame, through every panel of the smoking carriages he seemed to see his dear girl's face reproaching him. "Yes, it's too late now, father," her silent voice said, "I'm lost to you. You can't do any thing for me any more. I know you were living for me, but you made my life just as hard as if you were living against me. What good does all your pinching and stint-