

# THE TIMES.

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### THE TIMES.

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### Select Poetry.

What is a kiss? A herald fair  
That marshalleth the way to love;  
A fleeting breath of balmy air  
Which o'er the lip doth rove;  
An evanescent touch that thrills  
The ardent lover's trembling frame,  
A dew which on the heart distils  
And kindles into flame.

What is a kiss? A hisping sound  
Of language all unknown before;  
The accent of one rapture found,  
The whispered hope of more;  
The bending of the boy-god's bow,  
What time the string and arrow part;  
The blissful signet to the vow  
That yieldeth up the heart.

### An Astonished Parson.

A YOUNG woman, with a pleasing face, who rarely smiles, and seems to shun observation, and an old lady who comes out very little and always veiled.

That was the description given to the Rev. Charles Grosvenor of the new occupants of the little cottage which lay so close to his vicarage that he could see the smoke from the chimney over the tops of the trees that skirted his lawn.

The Rev. Charles Grosvenor had been away from the scene of his labors at Chumleigh for a month. Chumleigh was countryfied enough and healthy enough, but he had been ordered sea air, and had taken the trip, leaving his by no means extensive flock to the care of a temporary shepherd.

The Rev. Charles Grosvenor was a young man, and Chumleigh was his first village. He was quite new enough to his work to take interest in it, and he was on intimate terms with all his parishioners.

Directly he heard of the new arrivals in the village, he, of course, determined to call upon them, but he thought he would just inquire what sort of people they were.

The result was the above description—a description vague enough in all conscience, and yet sufficient at once to invest the heroines of it with a slight halo of romance.

The Rev. Charles Grosvenor had not so long left college life to bury himself among the pumpkins but that he could duly appreciate the piquancy which a little mystery lends to our humdrum existence.

Knowing that the young lady shunned observation, his curiosity was at once aroused, and he looked forward to his first meeting with her with more than ordinary eagerness. As to the old lady—well, he was a young bachelor remember, and however deeply old ladies may veil themselves, or how mysterious they may be, they cannot expect to command much attention when there is a younger lady in the case.

The curate called at Laburnam Cottage the day after his return from the seaside. He found the Smiths very quiet and unassuming people. Mrs. Smith said very little and sighed a good deal, and Miss Smith, though a fluent and agreeable speaker, as he could judge from the little she said, spoke only in answer to his questions, and kept her eyes fixed on the ground the whole time that he was talking to her.

"Something queer about these people," said the Rev. Charles Grosvenor to himself. "I wonder what it is. I must draw them out."

His notion of drawing them out was to engage their service in his parish work. The old lady sighed and con-

sented. The young one colored, cast down her eyes, and said that she was afraid she was not fit for such work.—Not religious enough she meant.

The Rev. Charles Grosvenor was much distressed to hear that Miss Smith was not religious. Here, at last, was a task congenial to his soul. He was quite willing to convert farm laborers and to reform market gardeners, but when a demure-looking young lady, with an agreeable manner, offered herself he could not refrain from looking forward to the prospect of higher and nobler work.

He talked seriously to Miss Smith, and Miss Smith listened seriously—so seriously that the curate was taken by surprise. He was almost alarmed at the terrible earnestness with which the girl spoke of religious questions and asked for spiritual consolation, and argued with him on the dread subject of the sinner's fate hereafter. The earnestness and the vehemence of the parishioner, however, only increased his interest in her.

Now, when Miss Smith called herself a miserable sinner, the Rev. Charles Grosvenor thoroughly believed that she was one. He accepted her confession in the same sense that he would have accepted it from the patron of his living or his mother, or any of his lady parishioners, and being enjoined to say so, a clergyman cannot, for the sake of being complimentary, refuse to believe a young lady when she affirms that she is no exception to the rule.

But as to attaching any really serious import to the confession of Miss Smith, that never occurred to him for a moment. He soothed her, offered her such consolation as he could, thought she was a most plous and interesting girl, and fell madly in love with her.

From the moment he made the discovery his conduct to her altered. He tempted her to talk less about herself and to be more cheerful. He didn't want the girl he was in love with to be too persistently a miserable sinner. She was so charming and so nice that he felt she might very well keep that in the background a little.

A white tie and a clerical coat do not alter a man's nature; and when a man falls madly in love with a woman, he likes to imagine her as near perfection as possible.

Miss Smith's manner changed also.—She discovered the parson's secret before it was many days old. She was still pleased to see him, but she avoided all reference to her sins.

Once he questioned her about her past life. For a moment she was deadly pale, then the color rushed to her cheeks and she stammered out a remark which turned the conversation.

Miss Smith saw that the Rev. Charles Grosvenor was at her mercy. It was only a question of time when he would make the avowal. Should she encourage him or discourage his secret, and stop it while there was yet time?

In her difficulty she laid her case before her mother, and asked for advice.

The old lady was frightened out of her wits. She dare not think about such a thing, she said. Of course it would be the making of her if she could marry a clergyman; but how could it be done? He would have to know the history of her life, and then—

"And then he wouldn't have me," answered the girl, passionately.

"Of course not, my dear," said Mrs. Smith; "at least I should think not."

"Shall I tell him? Shall I confess all the next time he comes?"

Again Mrs. Smith is frightened. She does not like to think what the result of that confession will be. They've managed at last to find a spot where they can live unknown. Why must all the miserable story be brought up again?

Miss Smith failing to get any practical advice from her mother, thinks the matter over quietly by herself, and by the time she sees her admirer again she has settled on her course of action.

She meets him in the fields that led to the church.

It was a bright summer morning, and they paused by a stile to look at the yellow and red of the far-stretching fields.

The Rev. Charles Grosvenor commences by talking about nature, and gradually comes down to talking about himself—his aims and prospects in life.

Little by little the conversation slides into the groove he wished and in five minutes his hand and fortune have been laid at the feet of the lady listener.

He hadn't meant to be so abrupt, he had meant to keep his secret a little longer, but it had slipped out accidentally among the poetry and domestic details, and he was very glad it was over.

Miss Smith of course was very much surprised. The curate had caught her hand as his accents grew more impassioned. She allowed him to retain it till he had finished then drew it gently away.

"Mr. Grosvenor," she said, quietly, "I will answer you fairly and frankly. Before you made me such an offer you should have ascertained to whom you were speaking."

"What do you mean?"

"You do not know who or what I am."

"I know that you are an angel."

"Miss Smith's lip curled slightly, but her voice trembled as she answered:

"As you have gone so far it is only right you should know something about me. My name is not Smith. That is a false name!"

"A false name!" the parson gasped.—

"Dear me! why do you want a false name?"

"Listen and I will tell you. Did you ever hear of a terrible crime for which two men and two women were condemned to death? It was called a 'mystery' at first. But when the facts came to light it was called a 'murder.' One man starved his wife to death, and the other people helped him. He wanted to marry a younger woman, and the younger woman was one of the accused."

"I remember the case," stammered the curate. "It was very awful; but I don't see what you have got to do with it."

The perspiration stood on his brow, and he began to mop it with his pocket-handkerchief. He half expected to hear that Miss Smith was a relative of one of the criminals.

"You remember," continued the girl, speaking rapidly now and without emotion, "that all four were condemned to death, but the young girl was at the last moment granted a free pardon and allowed to return to the world and her friends."

"Yes," gasped the clergyman, "I remember; but what has all this business to do with you?"

"This," answered the lady to whom he had just made an offer of marriage; "I was the girl that allowed the murdered woman's husband to love me—I was the girl who was condemned to be hanged by the neck and then granted a free pardon! I am—"

She stopped. The Rev. Charles Grosvenor had reeled back against the stile and closed his eyes.

"Excuse me," he muttered, "a little faintness, that's all."

He pulled himself together, stammered a little, coughed, and for a minute seemed at a loss what to say.

She broke the silence first.

"I have told you now the secret of my life. I am here with my mother, and here we wish to remain—unknown, forgotten by the world. We are bound to live under an assumed name. We should be hooted and stoned if it were known who we really are. Will you keep my secret?"

"Certainly," stammered the curate; "and I trust—"

"That I shall keep yours. Rest assured of that, Mr. Grosvenor. I will forget that anything has happened this morning beyond the ordinary interchange of courtesies between clergyman and parishioner."

She smiled, bowed and passed on, He walked back slowly to the church, muttering to himself, "What an escape—who'd have thought it?"

The Rev. Charles Grosvenor is still the curate of Chumleigh, and Miss Smith and her mother still live at Laburnam Cottage. The parishioners however, noticed that the visits of the clergyman to the cottage are few and far between, and that when he calls he is generally accompanied by one or the other of his lady visitors.

And old Dame Turvey, who knows everything about everybody, and is a great authority on village matters, assures every one that she can't make it

out at all, for at one time she was quite sure that the parson was sweet in that quarter, and she quite expected that Miss Smith would have presided at the parsonage tea table.

"Something must have happened very unexpected to break it all off," concludes the worthy dame, for it was all altered in a minute."

Dame Turvey is right for once. What happened was very unexpected, and it made such an impression on the Rev. Charles Grosvenor that he will remember it to the end of his life.

### Under the Water.

GEORGE W. TOWNSEND, a well known submarine diver, has been interviewed by a representative of the Boston Herald. He said: "The first time a man goes down he is apt to be considerably scared on account of the pressure. If a man is lowered too fast it will kill him. Divers are seldom or never killed by drowning, but by an unequalled amount of pressure. A diver could cut a hole in the lower portion of his suit without danger of being drowned so long as he stood erect, for as long as the air is supplied by the air pump, the water cannot reach his mouth. In deep water the pressure is usually very great, and a diver can descend as deep as he can stand the pressure. You see we are in a vacuum. There is no pressure perceptible to us on the copper helmet about our heads. The pressure is all on the lower garments, and, if it is too great, it drives all the blood in the body to the head and the result is death. I have seen men killed in this way whose heads were fairly split open and whose eyes were driven from the sockets. A more horrible death could not be imagined, and I and almost all other divers have narrowly escaped it. When a diver is ten feet down, the pressure to the square foot is 6250 pounds; and at 30 feet, 18,750 pounds; and at 50 feet, 31,250 pounds; at 70 feet, 43,750 pounds; at 90 feet, 56,250 pounds; at 110 feet, 68,750 pounds; at 130 feet, 81,250 pounds; at 150 feet, which is the greatest depth to which I have descended, 93,750 pounds; and at 100 feet, 100,000 pounds. Divers seldom descend over 100 feet, and rarely as deep as that. Under the water the ears feel stopped up, but sometimes we make ourselves understood by putting two helmets together and shouting, but then it doesn't sound louder than an ordinary whisper. A man who went down for the first time would be likely to signal to come up after feeling the pressure in the ears, which is very unpleasant until you are used to it."

"How about the fish; do they molest you?"

"Very seldom. You see we made it a rule not to disturb them. We know that they are in their element, and we are not in ours. As for sharks we don't care for them. They are cowardly, and easily frightened off. We are much more afraid of the baricotas, a surface fish, with teeth three inches long. Talk about fish, why, one can't have any conception of them until he has been under the water and seen them all sizes and colors of the rainbow. The noise made by a school of fish sounds under the water like the rumbling of thunder. One of the greatest curiosities in this line was the Jew fish I encountered while diving in the Bay of Cumana, on the coast of Venezuela. The fish are from six to fifteen feet in length, and have a large mouth, with small teeth. The Jew fish have a great deal of curiosity—more than any woman I know of—and used to eye us while we were at work. We were a little afraid of them at first, but found they would not harm us. I suppose you have heard of the electric eel, which has the power to give a shock equal to a battery. When we were diving at the West Indies one of our divers received a shock from an electric eel, and for a time seemed almost paralyzed. Mules and other animals, when fording streams in this country, often receive a severe shock."

"It depends how clear the water is, whether it is dusk or not. I have been down 20 fathoms where I could see to read the finest print, and I have been down 10 feet where you could not see your hand before you. It is not very pleasant exploring a wreck, especially where there are bodies, when you are in utter darkness. We got used to those,

and, while we can't say that we don't mind them, I can say that they don't deter us from going down. I am one of those who believe that drowning is an easy death, comparatively, because I have noticed that the face of a drowned person looks as if he had gone to sleep, and seldom denotes pain, but, when the eyes are wide open glassy in appearance, and the gas in the stomach makes the body stand bolt upright, it is rather trying to the nerves. Sometimes we find drowned persons with a death grip upon a piece of rigging or the side of a bunk, and it is very difficult to unloose their hold. Before we see a body or any object under water we always see its shadow first. In looking for a body not on a vessel's wreck, we sometimes find it by closely following the sediments in the water."

"In many places the bottom of the ocean is beautiful, especially where the coral reefs are. Coral is like a forest of trees that has been cut down. I have seen coral as large as the stump of any tree you ever saw, with enormous limbs running downward, the trunk and branches being of the pure white coral. I have encountered a reef after descending three fathoms, and a bottom of the pure white sand after descending two fathoms more."

### Boys, Get a Plug Hat.

An exchange says: "The plug hat is virtually a sort of social guarantee for the preservation of peace and order. He who puts one on has given a hostage to the community for his good behavior.—The wearer of a plug hat must move with a certain sedateness and propriety. He cannot run, or jump, or romp, or get into a fight except at the peril of his head gear. All the hidden influences of the beaver are toward respectability. He who wears one is obliged to keep the rest of his body in decent trim, that there may be no incongruity between head and body. He is apt to become thoughtful through the necessity of watching the sky whenever he goes out. The chances are that he will buy an umbrella, which is another guarantee for good behavior, and the care of a hat and umbrella—perpetual and exacting as it must ever be—adds to the sweetness of his character. The man who wears a plug hat naturally takes to the society of women, with all the elevated tendencies. He cannot go hunting or fishing without abandoning his beloved hat, but in the moderate enjoyment of croquet and lawn tennis he may sport his beaver with impunity. In other words the constant use of a plug hat makes a man composed in manner, quiet and gentlemanly in conduct, and a companion of the ladies. The inevitable result is marriage, prosperity and church membership."

### A Doctor's Dilemma.

A physician, being summoned to attend a miser's wife in her last illness, declined to continue his visits unless he had some legal guarantee for payment, as he knew by experience the slippery character of the husband where pecuniary obligations were concerned. The miser thereupon drew up a document, formally promising, after haggling over the amount, that he would pay to Dr. So-and-So the sum of—, "if he cures my wife." "Stop!" said the doctor.—"I cannot undertake to do that. I will treat her to the best of my ability; but she is very ill, and I fear she will not recover." So the sentence was altered to, "For attendance upon my wife, kill or cure," the paper signed and delivered over to the physician. His skill was unavailing, and the patient dies, but when the bill came in the widower quietly repudiated the debt *in toto*. In vain it was represented to him that the doctor held his legal acknowledgment; so the latter sued him in perfect confidence of gaining the day. The miser did not dispute the circumstances in Court, but requested to see the document, which he then read aloud with great deliberation. "And did you cure my wife, sir?" he asked, glancing over his spectacles at the plaintiff, "No; that was impossible." "Did you kill her?"—Verdict for the defendant. Doctor sold.

Happiness is like a sunbeam, which the least shadow intercepts, while adversity is often as the rain of spring.