American Sentinel.

WESTMINSTER, - MD.

FRIDAY, JUNE 21, 1907.

THE OLD FARM.

—:o:—

When the busy day is over with its anxious hopes and fears,
And the telephone stops ringing and the last clerk disappears,
With a sigh I lean back weary in my swinging office chair,
And my thoughts go back to childhood and the old farm that is there.

I can see the dear old homestead, broad and low beneath the trees,
And the rows of shining milk pans sunning in the fresh sweet breeze;
I can see the barn and horses, and the orchard on the hill
Where we gathered golden pippins for the old straw cider-mill.

I can see the upland pastures dotted o'er with grazing sheep,
And the wheat field waving golden, ready for the men to reap.
I can see the old stone fences where the chipmunks used to play,
And the cornfield, and the meadow with its piles of fragrant hay.

I can see the cattle standing 'neath the willows by the brook,
Where I used to fish for minnows with a bent pin for a hook;
And the pond where grew the lilies that my mother used to prize,
Ah, the light of heaven's shining now within those dear old eyes.

And I sigh while fancy lingers o'er each well known pleasant scene
Of the happy days of boyhood thrown by memory on the screen;
And I'd give all I have gained since, all my wealth and treasures rare,
To go back again to childhood and the old farm that is there.

—From "Maxwell's Talisman."

A LOVE OF YESTERDAY.

—:o:—

From Modern Society.

Bryan Eversham pushed the papers away from the desk and glanced up at the windows through which the light usually came somewhat niggardly fashion into his private office. Today there was quite a radiance in the somber room. The sun glinted on the mahogany chairs, and its occupier realized that it was summer.

For the last ten years the changing seasons had meant little to him. But lately an unaccustomed restlessness had taken hold of him. His spirit had revolted against the monotony of business, the work of placing once more upon a substantial foundation a business which, at the time of his father's death, had been undermined by worn out methods and neglect.

Brian had given ten undivided years of life to it, and long ago it had repaid him; for, above all wordly success, it had given him the thing he sought—forgetfulness. Yet now surely he could slacken the pace a little, step out into the world once more.

How fresh the country would look that morning, how green the fields; and what a wonder of blossom there would be in a certain garden. And the girl there moving among the flowers—a flower herself, a bud unfolding into a wonderful rose! What a different color life would take if he might win this girl's love!

Was love for him, the man wedded to work of the dullest kind? Yet, why not? But before he could speak there was something which must be done. Freedom of action must be obtained, on old sacred promise given back to him.

He sat down again and wrote a few lines—lines which demanded thought. Several torn sheets testified to the effort it cost him. He was about to place the letter in an envelope when his head clerk announced that a lady wished to see him.

At sight of the splendid figure in the door way his dreams fled. Feversham stood face to face with the woman of his past, the woman he had loved—ten years ago.

She was dressed in black—a tall, well-gowned woman. She was very pale, but a deep light shone in her dark eyes. And if ten years had changed her they had done no more than ripen a graceful girl into a woman.

She came hurriedly forward, holding out both hands. Feversham took them in silence; he seemed at a loss for words. It was she who spoke first.

'This is just as I have pictured our meeting,' she said, slowly—and her voice had a rich note in it, 'with this same somber background!'

She paused and glanced at him with expectancy, yet without trace of coquetry. 'You expected me?' she added.

'I—I was writing to you,' he said, hesitatingly, when you came in. I—I saw that—that your husband was dead!'

'It was fearful—the end,' she muttered. 'A quarrel sprang up one night at a gambling den he owned in Paris—he was playing himself at the time—a knife was drawn in swift anger, and it was he who was killed. Retribution, perhaps, Brian, but a terrible end for all that. He ruined lives, it it is true. Yet he forced me to become his wife—there his power over me ended. I bore his name, but my soul belonged to myself. My conscience is clean!'

Bryan looked at her with admiration and sympathy, and affection. But he no longer loved her.

'Remember, I have received not one word from you; have heard nothing at all about you since—' he broke off.

'Since we were forced to part,' she murmured. 'It was better not to write. Both of us knew that both would be true to the vow which we took. Ah, that night, Brian, when you and I said farewell, that night when you made me swear that, should I ever be free once more, I would marry you; and you, in turn, promised to wait your own life lonely. You and I, Brian, belong to the few who can remain faithful to their word through time and absence. And so I have come back. I left your life empty then, Bryan—I will fill it now!'

There was tenderness in her voice which it was impossible for the man to hear unmoved, a look of humility on the lovely proud face.

But Brian Feversham could find no words for a moment. The room was spinning round him, a cloud fell over the rosy future, all the world seemed at an end. He was bound by an old promise which chained him to the past.

'And you have remembered me all this time?' he asked, gently.

'Yes—yes. I have remembered you,' she said, in low tones, as I felt that you were remembering me!'

Brian Feversham realized, and resolved that she should never know his own love had changed. And when presently she left him, it was with their old engagement renewed.

If only Ruth Harberton could have understood that the love of yesterday had died with yesterday! But he could not tell her that; it would be a brutal thing to do. If there was a sacrifice to be made it must be made by himself.

He would go down to the country that very day. Thank God, he had never told Joan Arlington that he loved her! But all the same, she must know that he was going to be married to another woman. Yes, must know that. For if his lips had been dumb so far as spoken love was concerned, yet what message had his eyes sent into hers?

She was in her garden when he reached his destination. She flushed warmly at sight of him, and held out a little hand in welcome.

'I quite expected you,' she said, gayly. 'Also mother had one of her presentiments, as she calls them, that you would come. Though, I am bound to confess it didn't prevent her retiring for her usual afternoon sleep.'

She smiled brightly into his face. Then, noticing, how grave he looked, her own smile died away, the pretty color left her cheek.

'Is anything wrong?' she asked, a tremulous note in her voice. 'Are you ill?'

He shook his head as they moved over to the tea table under the elm tree.

'I have news to tell you,' he said, in a low voice.

'What is it?' she inquired, as the trim little servant in spotless cap and apron brought out the tea.

'I'm going to be married,' he said abruptly.

He heard the cups rattle, but he dared not look at her. Her eyes rested on the grass. He found himself counting daisies growing on the velvet turf.

'This—this is news, indeed!' she murmured. Her fingers groped among the cups in an uncertain fashion. 'Is—is it to be soon?'

'I—I hardly know,' he responded lamely. 'Yes—yes, I think so; some time this year, I suppose. It—it is an old understanding.'

'I see!'

She lifted her face now. There was a fixed smile upon it; but the color came and went, from red to white, from white to red. She handed acrosss his cup and passed on at once to indifferent matters.

* * * *

Ruth Haberton walked through the open door of the flat and rapped sharply on the gong on the hall stand. But no one came in reply. The servant in charge must have slipped out, leaving the door ajar.

Brian had mentioned to her yesterday his intention of remaining from business today. As a letter had reached her in connection with her late husband's affairs, she had come to ask his advice, meaning it to be a surprise visit, but apparently he was out.

Yet she thought it worth while to wait, as there was a chance he would return in a few minutes, and, opening a door at haphazard—for this was her first visit to Brian's flat—she entered a drawing room furnished with a keen appreciation of color and artistic effect. A door at the farther end of it, which stood a little open, appealed to her curiosity. It led into a small study with a serviceable-looking desk. Placed prominently upon the desk to face the writer when he was seated there rested a portrait. A beautiful face, sweet with the charm of youth, the eyes grave yet gay, and a mutinous mouth.

'I wonder who she is?' Ruth pondered. 'Some girl friend. And yet—placed there upon his desk!'

Hearing voices, she put the portrait back and moved to the door which separated the study from the drawing room.

When she reached it and glanced beyond she saw Brian and the original of the portrait.

'You should not have come to the station,' Ruth heard the girl say in low tones. 'I could have done mother's errand alone. I could have found my way to the lawyer's quite well!'

'But, Joan, I—I wanted to have a talk with you, and your mother wished it, too. That was why she did not come to town with you. I want to speak to you, my dear child, not only as your dead father's friend but—but as your friend, as well. And that was why I asked you to come back here. I could not quite make out your mother's letter. She—she tells me that you have become engaged, Joan, and adds that it is to a man you care nothing about. She implores me to use my influence with you to break it off!'

'Why should she have written that?' demanded the girl, passionately.

'What is there against Lionel Maine?' He is a good man, and he wants me to become his wife. Why should I refuse?'

Ruth looked at the girl through the glass panels and wondered at the glow of color, at the strange light in her eyes.

'You do not love him, Joan,' he said simply.

'I do love him,' she answered. But her voice lacked decision.

'Joan, my dear Joan!' he went on. 'You and I are spoiling our lives. But there is no need for you to spoil yours. Why be in such haste? One happy day you will meet the man whom you may love. Wait for that day, little one. He will step into your life like a prince out of a fairy tale. Wait for his coming, Joan. As for me, I cannot help myself. I—I am bound by a promise. And a man's word once given must be held by him as a sacred bond. But, oh, Joan! it will break my heart for me to know that you have wasted your life on a man you do not love. You are so young. Have patience, child, have patience.'

'Why should it break your heart?' she replied coldly. 'Why should it trouble you at all?'

There was a silence. No answer came to that question for some moments.

'It does concern me, Joan,' he said at last, a little huskily, 'because—because—' He faltered for a moment, and then added firmly, all weakness conquered, 'for your father's sake, as well as for your own, I would like to see his daughter happy!'

Perhaps it was not the answer which Joan had expected. But at that moment Brian's man came into the room with the announcement that luncheon was ready.

The two followed him, leaving the way clear for Ruth to make her escape from the flat.

When she reached her hotel Ruth sat down and wrote a letter:

'My Dear Old Sweetheart of the Past—You and I have been a little foolish, and more than a little unfair toward each other. Where there should have been mutual trust and confidence there has been instead mutual reticence.

'Learn, to your confusion, sir, that I was at your flat today, and, by accident in the first place, and by deliberate but justifiable eavesdropping in the second, overheard what passed between you and Miss Joan Arlington, and realized the full meaning of it—that you love her, that she loves you!'

'That was your secret. Well kept, honorably kept.

'Now hear mine! My love has changed, Brian, in these ten years, just as yours has changed. And here comes the most surprising thing. The man I care for, but whom I have already refused since my husband's death, is Lionel Maine, the very man who has asked Joan Arlington to be his wife out of pique, just as she has accepted him in the same spirit. We met in Paris. He was kind to me there, helped me with advice at the time of Morden's tragic death.

'Dear old Brian, it was my stupid vanity which has been to blame for all this misunderstanding. I thought—nay, I was convinced—that you still cared for me. I did not want to disappoint you twice. That would have seemed too cruel. But all the time, Brian, I loved Lionel Maine, and he loved me.

'Go to Joan at once, dear Brian!—I believe that she is worth a man's love, that she is worth your love. And I—I will send for Lionel Maine. He is worth a woman's love, and will have my love.'

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"I really don't remember. It must have been mother."

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"To earn it Mr. Merger?"

"Well, to get it."—Washington Herald.

What are the principal trades in the United States? Operating for appendicitis, writing advertisment poetry, and going out on a strike.

The man who really believes that the world owes him a living is willing to do some work to earn what is due him.

The ear does as much to circulate scandal as the tongue.

Hypocricy is the necessary burden of villainy.—Dr. Johnson.

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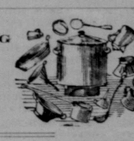
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Rat Poisons and Rat Traps.

The Department of Agriculture has just issued a most interesting bulletin on the methods of destroying rats. The report is made by David E. Lantz, assistant of the Bureau of Biological Survey. In his introduction Professor Lantz says that the brown, or Norway, rat is the worst mammal pest in the United States, and the losses from his depredations amount to more than all the other injurious mammals combined. In addition to its destructive habits, the brown rat is known to be an active agent in disseminating infectious diseases. The brown rat was introduced in America in 1775 and has supplanted and nearly exterminated the black rat, and despite the incessant warfare of man, has extended its range and has steadily increased in number. The brown rat breeds three or four times a year, and produces from 6 to 12 and even more at a litter. Young females breed when only four or five months old. The species is practically omniverous, feeding upon all kinds of animal and vegetable matter.

Among the most important measures to be recommended for destroying the brown rats are poisons, traps, ferrets, fumigation and rat-proof construction of buildings.

One of the cheapest and most effective poisons for rats and mice is barium carbonate, or barytes. This mineral has the advantage of being without taste or smell, and in small quantities used in poisoning rats is harmless to larger articles. Its actions on rodents is slow but reasonably sure, and has the further advantage that animals before dying, if exit is possible, usually leave the premises in search of water. The poison may be fed in the form of dough of one-fifth barytes and four-fifths meal, but a more convenient bait is to mix it with ordinary oatmeal and water, using one-eighth of barytes. It can also be spread upon bread and butter.

Strichnine is a rapid method, but animals often die upon the premises. Dry strichnine crystal may be inserted in raw meat, sausage, or toasted cheese, or oatmeal may be wet with a strichnine syrup. The latter is prepared by dissolving a half-ounce of strichnia sulphate in a pint of boiling water, add a pint of thick sugar sirup and stir thoroughly.

Arsenic and phosphorous are also commonly used for poisons, but experiments prove that the rats have great power of resisting arsenic, and the Biological Survey does not recommend preparations containing phosphorous, because such mixtures, when of sufficient strength, are dangerous, as rats may carry the baits into walls and crannies and thus cause fire.

Speaking of trapping the bulletin says this, if persistently followed, is one of the most effective methods of destroying rats. The guillotine trap, with the baited trigger and coiled string, and simply constructed, is preferred.

The bulletin states that rats are very suspicious and baits and traps should be handled as little as possible. Increased success may be secured both in trapping and poisoning if the rats are fed for a night or two with a kind of food to be used for bait. To destroy rats by fumigation the bulletin advises the use of a wad of cotton, or other absorbent material saturated with carbon bisulphide. This pushed into the opening and packed so as to prevent the escape of gas, is most effective in destroying rats in their burrows in the field. The best way of excluding rats from buildings is the use of cement in construction. Cellar walls should have concrete footing and the walls themselves should be laid in cement mortar. The cellar floor should be of 'medium' rather than 'lean' concrete. All water and drain pipes should be surrounded with concrete. Rats holes may be permanently closed by a mixture of cement, sand and broken glass or bits of stone.

The value of carnivorous mammals and the larger birds of prey in destroying rats should be recognized, especially by the farmer and game preserver. Chief among the animals that are used for destroying these rodents are the fox, skunk and weasel and the larger species of owl and hawk.

Getting At The Root.

While visiting the South, recently, a traveler chanced upon a resident of a sleepy hamlet in Alabama.

'Are you a native of this town?' asked the traveler.

'Am I a what?' languidly asked the one addressed.

'Are you a native of the town?'

'What's that?'

'I asked you whether you were a native of the place?'

At this juncture there appeared at the open door of the cabin the man's wife, tall, sallow and gaunt. After a careful survey of the questioner, she said:

'Ain't you got no sense Bill? He means was yo' livin hear when yo' was born, or was yo' born before yo' begun livin hear. Now answer him.'

If you would avoid gapes in chickens, change the location of the chicken coops. Put the coops on ground never used before for this purpose. If this cannot be done, plow the ground in the chicken lot and use slaked lime freely under and around the coops. The coops should have floors put in them or be set on boards.

A woman is apt to make some very striking remarks when she has occasion to hit her husband for a little pin money.

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