American Union.

J. H. EMERSON, Editor.

DENTON MARYLAND.

A Child's Dream of a Star.

There was once a child, and he strolled about a good deal, and thought of a number of things. He had a sister, who was a child, too, and his constant companion.—These two used to wonder all day long.—They wondered at the beauty of flowers; they wondered at the height and blueness of the sky; they wondered at the depth of the bright waters; they wondered at the goodness and power of God, who made the world lovely.

They used to say to one another sometimes: "Supposing all the children on the earth were to die, would the flowers, and the water, and the sky be sorry?" They believed they would be sorry.

"For," said they "the buds are the children of the flowers, and the little playful streams that gambol down the hillside are the children of the waters, and the smallest bright specks, playing at hide and seek in the sky, all night, must surely be the children of the stars, and they would all be grieved to see their playmates, the children of men, no more."

There was one clear star that used to come out in the sky before the rest, near the church spire, above the graves. It was larger and more beautiful, they thought, than all the others, and every night they watched for it, standing hand-in-hand, at the window. Whoever saw it first cried out, "I see the star!" And often they cried out both together, knowing so well when it would rise and where. So they grew to be such friends with it that, before lying down in their beds, they looked out once again to bid it good night, and when they were turning round to sleep they would say, "God bless the star."

But when she was still very young, oh, very, very young, the sister drooped and came to be so weak that she could no longer stand in the window at night; and then the child looked sadly out by himself, and when he saw the star turned round to the patient's pale face on the bed, and said, "I see the star!" And then a smile would come upon his face, and a little weak voice used to say, "God bless my brother and the star."

And so the time came, all too soon, when there was no face on the bed, and when there was a little grave among the graves, not there before, and when the star made long rays down towards him, as he saw it through his tears.

Now these rays were so bright, and they seemed to make such a beautiful, shining way from earth to heaven, that when the child went to his solitary bed he dreamed about the star, and dreamed that, lying where he was, he saw a train of people taken up the shining road by angels; and the star opening showed him a great world of light, where many more such angels waited to receive them.

All these angels, who were waiting, turned their beaming eyes upon the people who were carried up into the star; and some came out from the long rows in which they stood, and fell upon the people's neck and kissed them tenderly, and went away with them down the avenue of light, and were so happy in their company that, lying in the bed, he wept for joy.

But there were many angels who did not go with them, and among them one he knew.

The patient face that had once laid upon the bed was glorified and radiant, but his heart found out his sister among all the host.

His sister's angel lingered near the entrance of the star, and said to the leader among those who had brought the people thither:

"Is my brother come?"

And he said: "No."

She was turning hopefully away, when the child stretched out its arms and said:

"Oh, sister, I am here! Take me!"

And then she turned her beaming eyes upon him, and it was night, and the star was shining into his room, making long rays down toward him as he saw it through his tears.

From that hour forth the child looked out upon the star as on the home he was to get to when his time should come, and he thought he did not belong to earth alone, but to the star, too, because of his sister's angel gone before.

There was a baby born to be a brother to the child; and while he was so little that he had never yet spoken a word, he stretched his tiny form on the bed and died.

Again the child dreamed of the open star and of the company of angels, and the train of people, and all the rows of angels, with their beaming eyes all turned upon those people's faces.

Said his sister angel to the leader:

"Is my brother come?"

And he said: "Not that one, but another."

As the child beheld his brother's angel in her arms, he cried:

"Oh, sister, I am here! Take me!"

And she turned and smiled upon him, and the star was shining.

He grew to be a young man, and was busy at his book, when an old servant came to him and said:

"Thy mother is no more. I bring her blessings on her darling son."

Again at night he saw the star, and all the former company. Said his sister's angel to the leader:

"Is my brother come?"

And he said, "Thy mother."

A mighty cry of joy went through all the star, because the mother was reunited to her two children. And he stretched out his arms and cried:

"Oh, mother, sister and brother, I am here! take me!"

And they answered, "Not yet," and the star was shining.

He grew to be a man whose hair was turning grey, and he was sitting in his chair by the fireside, heavy with grief, and with his face bedewed with tears, when the star opened once again.

Said his sister's angel to the leader:

"Is my brother come?"

And he said:

"Nay, but his maiden daughter."

And the man who had been the child saw his daughter, newly lost to him, a celestial creature, among those three, and he said:

"My daughter's head is on my sister's neck, and at her feet there is the baby of old time, and I can bear the parting from her, God be praised!"

And the star was shining.

Thus the child came to be an old man, and his once smooth face was wrinkled, and his steps were slow and feeble, and his back was bent. And one night as he lay upon his bed, his children standing around him, he cried as he cried so long ago:

"I see the star!"

They whispered to one another, "He is dying."

And he said:

"I am. My age is falling from me like a garment, and I move toward the star as a child. And, oh, my Father, I thank thee that it has so often opened to receive these dear ones who await me!"

And the star was shining; and it shines upon his grave.—*Charles Dickens.*

The Way Trouble Begins.

'I want it.'—'I want it.'

'You shan't have it.'

'I want it, and I will have it.'

'I want it myself, and I'm going to keep it.'

That's the way trouble generally begins. It is in a mild way at first, and even tolerably pleasant; no scratching, nor biting, nor pounding, nor tearing, nor saying very ugly words, nor doubling up of the little fists.

'I want it' has caused more quarrels than almost anything else in the world. Often a quarrel has begun with a very little want almost as small as a child's doll. One side wanted it as much as the other side did.—The question got to be, who was the strongest? It generally turned out that the strongest wanted it the most, and got it if it was worth having. If what was wanted turned out not to be worth having, the strongest one would generally let the little one have it.

To fight for a holy principle is noble.—To quarrel and snatch and try to get every good thing that we see that belongs to other people is not lovely.

If you want people to love you and treat you kindly, begin early to treat everybody else kindly.—*Good Cheer.*

"Grass Widow."

Judge Turpie has been reading a paper to the 'Fiat Lux' society on the origin of the phrase, 'grass widow' or rather 'grace widow,' for the first has no foundation in fact, and is simply a barbarism or fungus which has attached itself to the English language. 'Grace widow' is the term of one who becomes a widow by grace or favor not of necessity, as by death and originated in the early ages of European civilization, when discoveries were granted but seldom, and wholly by authority of the Catholic Church. When such a decree was granted to a woman the papal receipts dated 'Viduca de gratia' which interpreted is, 'widow of grace.' In the law of the French it would read, 'Venuve de grace,' which in English gives 'Widow of grace,' or 'grace widow,' 'veve' being translated as widow. In this novel and exceedingly interesting paper Judge Turpie also makes again public two important historical facts: 1. That the whole modern system of law in relation to marriage and divorce originated in the Roman Church. 2. That French was the official language and court vernacula, not only of England, but of Western Europe during this period of ecclesiastical ascendency.

Dox't Do It.—Don't linger where your love lies dreaming. Wake up and tell her to get up and get breakfast.

Don't insult a poor man. His muscles may be well developed.

Don't ask your pastor to preach without notes. How else could he pay his provision bill.

Don't put on airs in your new suit.—Remember that your tailor is suffering.

Don't stand still and point the way to heaven. Spiritual guide boards save but few sinners.

Don't be too sensational. A dead heart properly cooked will make a savory meal.

Don't fret. The world will move on as usual after you are gone.

Don't write such long obituaries. Save some of your kind words for the living.

Don't depend wholly on Spalding's prepared glue. It will not mend a broken promise.

Little Things.—Life is made up of little things. He who travels over a continent must go step by step. He who writes a book must do it sentence by sentence.—He who learns a science must master it fact by fact, and principle by principle.—What is the happiness of our life made of? Little courtesies, little kindnesses, pleasant words, genial smiles, a friendly letter, good wishes and good deeds. One in a million, once in a lifetime, may do a heroic action; but the little things that make up our life comes every day and every hour. If we make the little events of life beautiful and good, then is the whole life full of beauty and goodness.

Love One Another.—The affections are the best and purest part of our nature. Love one another; in your homes, in all the pursuits of business and walks of life. Love one another purely, deeply, always. Remember it is the eleventh commandment—"Love ye one another."

A little boy was recently presented with a toy trumpet; to which he became greatly attached. One night, when he was about to be put in his "little bed," and was ready to say his prayers, he handed the trumpet to his grandmother, saying: "Here, grand'ma you blow while I pray."

The Rev. Jos Striker.

IT WASN'T THE RIGHT MAN.

Max Adeler has the following:

Over in W. one of the churches recently called a clergyman named Rev. Jos. Striker. In that city, by a most unfortunate coincidence, there also resides a prominent prize-fighter named Joseph Striker, and rumors were afloat a few weeks ago that the latter Joseph was about to engage in a contest with a Jersey pugilist for the championship. Our sheriff considered it his duty to warn Joseph against the proposed infraction of the law, and so he determined to call upon the professor of the art of self-defense. Unhappily, in inquiring the way to the pugilist's house, somebody misunderstood the sheriff and sent him to the residence of the Rev. Mr. Striker, of whom he had never heard. When Mr. Strikes entered the room in answer to the summons, the sheriff said to him familiarly:

'Hello, Joe! How are you?'

Mr. Striker was amazed at this address, but he politely said:

'Good morning.'

'Joe,' said the sheriff, throwing his leg lazily over the arm of the chair, 'I came around here to see you about that mill with Patsy Dingus, that they're all talking about. I want you to understand that it can't come off anywhere's around here.—You know well enough it's against the law and I ain't agoing to have it.'

'Mill, Mill, sir? What on earth do you mean?' asked Mr. Striker in astonishment. 'I do not own any mill, sir. Against the law! I do not understand you, sir.'

'Now see here, Joe,' said the sheriff, biting off a piece of tobacco and looking very wise, 'that won't go down with me. It's pretty thin, you know. I know well enough that you've put up $1,500 on that little affair, and that you've got the whole thing fixed with Bill Martin for referee. I know you're going down to Pea Patch Island to have it out, and I'm not going to allow it. I'll arrest you as sure as a gun if you try it on, now mind.'

'Really, sir,' said Mr. Striker, 'there must be some mistake about—'

'Oh, no there isn't your name's Joseph Striker, isn't it?' asked the sheriff.

'My name is Joseph Striker, certainly.'

'I knew it,' said the sheriff, spitting on the carpet, 'and you see I've got this thing dead to rights. It shan't come off; and I'm doing you a favor in blocking the game, because Patsey'd curl you all up and sicken you any way if I let you meet him. I know he's the best man, and you'd just lose your money and get all bungled up besides; so you take my advice, now, and quit. You'll be sorry if you don't.'

'I do not know what you are referring to,' said Mr. Striker. 'Your remarks are incomprehensible to me, but your tone is very offensive, and if you have any business with me I'd thank you to state it at once.'

'Joe,' said the sheriff, looking at him with a benign smile, 'you play it pretty well. Anybody'd think you were innocent as a lamb. But it won't work, Joseph—it won't work, I tell you. I've got a duty to perform, and I'm going to do it, and I pledge you my word if you and Dingus don't knock off now, I'll grab you and send you up for ten years as sure as death. I'm in earnest about it.'

'What do you mean, sir?' asked Mr. Striker, fiercely.

'Oh, don't go to putting on any airs about it. Don't you try any strutting before me; said the sheriff, 'or I'll put you under bail this very afternoon. Let's see, how long were you in jail last time? Two years, wasn't it? Well, you go fighting with Dingus and you'll get ten years, sure.'

'You are certainly crazy!' exclaimed Mr. Striker.

'I don't see what you want to stay at that business for, anyhow,' said the sheriff, 'Here you are in a snug home where you might live in peace and keep respectable. But no, you must associate with low characters, and go to stripping yourself naked and jumping into a ring to get your nose blooded and your head swelled, and your body hammered to a jelley, and all for what? Why, for a championship! It's ridiculous. What good'll it do you if you are champion? Why don't you try to be honest and decent, and let prize fighting alone?'

'This is the most extraordinary conversation I ever listened to,' said Mr. Striker. 'You evidently take me for a—

'I take you for Joe Striker, and if you keep on I'll take you to jail,' said the sheriff, with emphasis. 'Now, you tell me who's got those stakes, and who's your trainer, and I'll put an end to the whole thing.'

'You seem to imagine that I am a pugilist,' said Mr. Striker. 'Let me inform you, sir, that I am a clergyman.'

'Joe,' said the sheriff, shaking his head, 'it's too bad for you to lie that way—too bad indeed.'

'But I am a clergyman, sir—pastor of the Church of St. Sepulchre. Look! here is a letter in my pocket addressed to me.'

'You don't really mean to say that you are a preacher named Joseph Striker?' exclaimed the sheriff, looking scared.

Certainly I am. Come up stairs and I'll show you a barrelful of my sermons.'

'Well, if this don't beat Nebuchadnezzar!' said the sheriff; this is awful! Why I mistook you for Joe Striker, the prize-fighter! I don't know how I ever—A precher! What an ass I've made of myself! I don't know how to apologize, but if you want to kick me down the front steps, just kick away; I will bear it like an angel.'

Then the sheriff withdrew unkicked and Mr. Striker went up stairs to finish his Sunday sermon. The Sheriff talked of resigning, but he still continues to hold on.

It was 12 o'clock at night when Mr. Berger, of Macon, Georgia, discovered a colored preacher in his stable untying his horse, and the preacher only observed: "Jes what I said all de time, Mistah Berger, your horse is bay sure enuff, an' dat spute between me an' Brudder Jackson is settled."

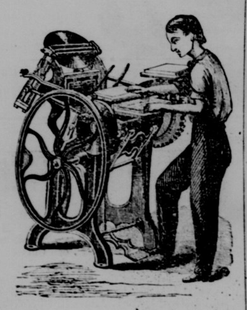
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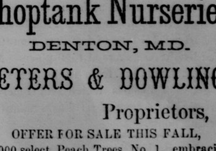
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