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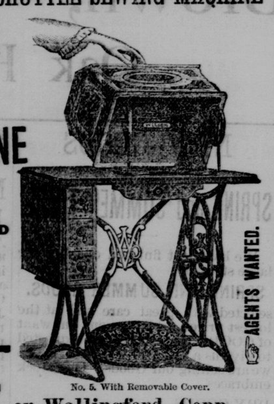

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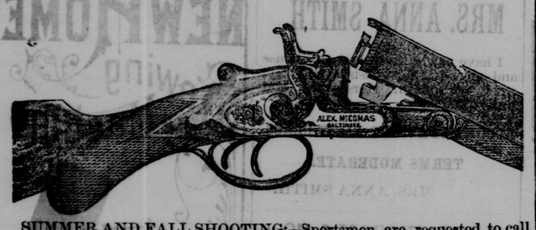

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WHAT BECAME OF HER.

There was great commotion in Foxville when old Parson Fox died. It was not only because he was the pioneer of the place, having come there when there was one primeval mass of green; and himself having erected the old stone parsonage around which the thriving village had grown up with almost incredible rapidity. It was not that he had preached the gospel to them for four and forty years; it was not his footsteps had been instant on every threshold where sickness came or sorrow brooded.

All this had been received as a matter of course, and forgotten as the necessities were past. But it was because Foxville curiosity was on the qui vive about Joanna, his grandchild, the sole remaining blossom on the gnarled old family tree who was left quite unprovided for.

"I declare to goodness," said Mrs. Emmons, "I don't know what is to come of that girl!"

"She hain't no faculty," said Sabina Sexton, the village dressmaker; "and never had."

"Books possessed no charm to her!" sighed Miss Dodge. who taught the Foxville district school. "She always cried over her parsing and rhetoric, and I never could make her understand cube root!"

"There's no denying that the minister was as near a saint as we often see in this world," said Mrs. Luke Lockedge piously. "But he hadn't ought to let Joanna run loose in the woods and fields the way he did. Why, I don't s'pose she ever made a shirt or fried a batch o' fritters in all her life!"

"Is it true," asked Miss Dodge, peering inquisitively up under her spectacle glasses, "that she is engaged to young Simon, Mrs. Lockedge?"

Mrs. Lockedge closed her mouth, shook her head and knitted away until her needles shone like forked lightning.

"Simon's like all other young men, Miss Dodge," said she—"took by a pretty face and a pair o' bright eyes. And they set on the same bench at school. And as long as we s'posed Parson Fox had left property, why there wasn't no objection. But there wasn't nothing—not even a life insurance. So I've talked to Simon and made him hear reason. There can't nobody live on air!"

"But that's rather hard on Joanna, ain't it?" said Mrs. Emmons, with a sympathetic wheeze.

"Reason is reason!" Mrs. Lockedge answered. "My Simon will have property and the girl he marries must have suthin' to match it."

So that Joanna Fox, sitting listlessly in her black dress by the window, where the scent of June honeysuckles floated sweetly in, and trying to realize that she was alone in the world, had divers and sundry visitors that day. The first was Simon Lockedge, looking as if his errand was somehow connected with grand larceny.

Joanna started up, her wan face brightening. She was only sixteen, a brown-haired, brown-eyed girl with a solemn, red mouth and a round, white throat, banded with black velvet.

"Oh, Simon," she cried, "I knew you would come when you heard—"

Simon Lockedge wriggled uneasily into a seat, instead of advancing to clasp her little outstretched hand.

"Yes," said he. "Of course it's very sad, Joanna, and I'm awfully sorry for you. But—"

Joanna stood still, her face hardening into a cold, white mask, her hands falling to her side.

"Yes," said she. "You were saying—"

"It's mother!" guiltily confessed Simon. "A fellow can't go against his own mother, you know. She says it's nonsense, our engagement, and we shouldn't have anything to live on! And so," with a final twist, "we'd better consider it all over. That's the sense of the matter, now ain't it Joanna?"

She did not answer.

"I'm awfully sorry," stuttered Simon. "I always set a deal of store by you, Joanna."

"Did you," she said, bitterly. "One would scarcely have thought it."

"And you know, Joanna," he added, awkwardly, mindful of his mother's drill, "when poverty comes in at the door, love flies out at the window!"

Joanna smiled scornfully.

"It seems," said she, "that love does not always wait for that."

And she turned and walked like a young queen into the adjoining apartment; while Simon, slinking out of the door like a detected burglar, muttered to himself,—

"It's the hardest job o' work that ever I did in my life. Splittin' big stumps is nothing to it. But mother says it must be done—and mother rules the roost in our house!"

Next came Mrs. Emmons.

"Joanna," said she, "I'm deeply grieved at this 'ere affliction that's befell you!"

"Thank you, Mrs. Emmons!" said the girl, mechanically.

"I've come to ask you about your plans," added the plump widow. "Because, if you have no other intentions, I'll be glad to have you help me with the housework. I'm going to have a house full of summer boarders, and there'll be a deal more work than me and Elviry can manage. Of course, you won't expect no pay, but a good home is what you need most, and—"

"Stop a minute," said Joanna. "Do you desire me to assume the duties and position of a servant, without a servant's wages?"

"You'll be a member of the family," said Mrs. Emmons, "and you'll set at the same table with me and Elviry, and—"

"I am much obliged to you," said Joanna, "but I must decline your kind offer."

And Mrs. Emmons departed in righteous wrath, declaring her conviction that pride was certain, sooner or later, to have a fall.

"I have plenty of friends," said Joanna, courageously, "or rather dear grandpa had. I am sure to be provided for."

But Squire Barton looked harder than any flint when the orphan came to him.

"Something to do, Miss Fox?" said he. "Well, that's the very problem of the age—woman's work, you know; and I ain't smart enough to solve it. Copying? No, our firm don't need that sort of work. Do I know of any that does? No, I can't say I do; but if I should hear of an opening, I'll be sure to let you know. Ahem!—I am a little busy this morning, Miss Fox; sorry I can't devote more time to you. John, the door. Good-morning, my dear Miss Fox! I assure you, you have mine and Mrs. Barton's prayers in this sad visitation of an inscrutable Providence."

Old Miss Gringe, who had fifty thousand dollars at interest, and who had always declared that she loved dear Joanna Fox like a daughter, sent down word that she wasn't very well and couldn't see company.

Dr. Wentworth, in visiting whose invalid daughter poor old Parson Fox had contracted the illness which carried him to the grave, was brusque and short. He was sorry for Miss Joanna, of course, but he didn't know of any way in which he could be useful. He understood there was a kid glove factory to be opened on Walling river soon. No doubt Miss Fox could get a place there; or there could be no objection to her going out to domestic service. There was a great deal of false sentiment on the subject, and he thought—

But Joanna excused herself without waiting for the result of his cogitations. She should detain him no longer, she said; and she went away with flaming cheeks and resolutely repressed tears.

When she got home she found one of the trustees of the church awaiting her. He didn't wish to hurry her, he said, but the new clergyman did not wish to live in such a ruinous old place, and it was their calculation, as the parsonage was mortgaged much beyond its real value, to sell it, and buy a new frame near the depot for the use of the Rev. Silas Speakwell.

"Am I to be turned out of my home?" said Joanna, indignantly.

Deacon Blydenbug hemmed and hawed. He didn't want to hurt no one's feeling; but as to her home it was well known that to all intents and purposes the old place had long passed out of Parson Fox's ownership; and they were willing to accord her reasonable length of time to pack up and take leave of her friends—say a week.

So Joanna, who could think of no remaining friend but her old governess, who had long ago gone to New York to fight the great world for herself, went down to the city, and appealed to Miss Woodin in her extremity and Miss Wooden cried over her and caressed her, like an old maiden aunt.

"What am I to do?" said poor, pale, Joanna. "I can't starve!"

"There's no necessity for anyone starving in this great busy world," said Miss Woodin, cheerfully. All one wants is faculty."

Joanna shrank back a little from the hard, stereotyped word which she had heard so often from the lips Mrs. Emmons, Miss Sabina Sexton, and that sisterhood.

"But how do you live?" said she.

"Do you see that thing there in the corner?" said Miss Woodin.

"Yes," answered Joanna. "Is it a sewing-machine?"

"It's a type-writer," announced Miss Woodin, "and I earn my living on it."

"But what do you write?" asked Joanna.

"Anything I can get," replied Miss Woodin.

And thus, in the heart of the great wilderness of New York, Joanna Fox commenced her pilgrimage of toil.

First on the type-writer, then promoted to a compiler's desk in the "fashion department" of a prominent weekly journal; then, by means of a striking original sketch, slipped into the letter box of the "Ladies' Weekly" with fear and trembling, to a place on the contributors' list; then gradually rising to the rank of a spirited young novelist, until our village damsel had her pretty flat furnished like a miniature palace, with Miss Woodin and her type-writer snugly installed in one corner.

"Because I owe everything to her," said the young authoress, gratefully.

And one day, glancing over the exchanges in the sanctum of the "Ladies' Weekly," to whose columns she still contributed, she came across a copy of the "Foxville Gazette."

"Hester," she said, hurrying home to Miss Woodin, "the parsonage is to be sold at auction to-morrow, and I mean to go up and buy it; I am sure—quite sure that I could write better there than any where else in the world."

Miss Woodin believed most firmly in whatever Joanna believed. In her loving eyes the successful young writer was always right.

So Joanna Fox and Miss Woodin, dressed in black and closely veiled, went up to Foxville to attend the auction sale.

Everybody was there. They did not have an auction sale at Foxville every day in the week.

Squire Burton was there, with a vague idea of purchasing the old place for a public garden.

"It would be attractive," said the squire. "These open-air concert gardens are making an end of money in the cities. I don't see why the Germans need pocket all the money there is going."

Mrs. Emmons came because everybody else did. Miss Dodge, who had saved a little money, thought that if the place went cheap she would pay down and give a mortgage for the remainder.

"And my sisters could keep boarders," she considered, "and I could always have a nice home there."

But Simon Lockedge was the most determined of all to have the parsonage.

"I could fix it up," he said to himself, "and live there real comfortable. It's a dreadful pretty location, and I am bound to have it; especially since mother's investments have turned out bad and we've got to sell the old farm. Nothin' hasn't gone right with us since I broke off with the old parson's grand-daughter. It wasn't quite the square thing to do, but there seemed no other way. But, let mother say what she will, it brought bad luck to us."

And the rustic crowd surged in and out, and the auctioneer mounted to the platform on an old kitchen table, and the bidding began at five hundred dollars, and "hung fire" for some time.

"Six hundred!" said cautious Simon Lockedge at last.

"Seven!" piped Miss Dodge, faintlo.

"Eight!" said Simon, resolutely.

"A thousand!" uttered the voice of a quiet veiled lady in the corner.

Every one stared in that direction.

"Tain't worth that," said the old squire, sotto voce; "all run down—fences gone to nothing."

But Simon Lockedge wanted it very much.

"E—lev—en hundred!" said he, slowly and unwillingly.

"Fifteen hundred!" spoke the soft voice, decidedly.

"Fifteen hundred!" bawled the auctioneer. "I'm offered fifteen hundred dollars for this very desirable property. Fifteen hundred—fifteen—teen—teen—teen!—Fifteen hundred once—fifteen hundred, twice—fifteen hundred, three times and—gone! The name, ma'am, if you please?"

And the lady, throwing aside her veil, answered, calmly,—

"Joanna Fox!"

The old parsonage was rebuilt, and studded with a little bay window and mediæval porches. Laurels and rhododendrons were set out in the grounds, the little brook was bridged over with rustic cedarwood, and Joanna Fox and Miss Woodin came to live there in modest comfort.

But Mrs. Lockedge and her son moved out of Foxville when the mortgage on their old place was foreclosed, and the places that had known them once knew them no more.

And Mrs. Emmons said,—

"She's done real well, Joanna has. I always knew there was something in her."

And Mrs. Wentworth and the two Misses Barton tried desperately to become intimate with the young authoress, but without avail.

For there is nothing in the wide world so successful as success, and it is a fetish which has many worshippers.

The Cigarette Young Man.

A prominent Baltimore physician, who is a strong temperance man, said the other evening in private conversation: "I would as lief see my son drink a glass of the strongest whiskey as to see him smoke a cigarette." He supplemented this assertion by explaining the effects of cigarette smoking on the system; how it weakened the body and mind, and how it was destroying much of the strength and usefulness of the rising generation.

There was wisdom in his remarks. Cigarette smoking is one of the really great evils, and the worst thing about it is that it is allowed to spread without any settled opposition to check it. A little roll of paper filled with tobacco looks harmless enough to the careless eye, and many doubtless believe that it is too small to be of much account, either one way or the other. But there is where appearances deceive. The little bits of tobacco are soaked with poisonous substances, the paper is impure, and when the smoke is inhaled it carries into the system the seeds of deterioration and disease. And that is not all. The odor that arises from the burning of this combination of poison, bad tobacco and worst paper, is disgusting to decent nostrils, and is one of the worst inflictions a suffering public has to bear. It seems that the cigarettes have decreased in quality as rapidly as they have increased in quantity. Whole packages of them can now be bought for a few cents, and boys not knowing the mischief they contain fall willing victims to their destroying influence. It is somewhat of a mystery what elusive charm these things possess. If there is any good in them it is so covered up with evil that ordinary penetration has never been able to seek it out.

The cigarette young man is a comparatively unimportant part of business and professional life. He is generally content to look prettty in fine clothes, and to dawdle up and down the streets with a burning roll of paper stuck between his expressionless lips. In the counting-room he lingers and yawns over his work; at home he is sluggish and disagreeable; in society he is vapid and lumpish and in the world generally he is a negative quantity. The thriving business man looks upon him with a mild form of pitying contempt, and the sensible young lady drops him as quickly as her mercy and politeness will permit. He is a spectacle—nothing more.

The cigarette young man was not always a nonetity. Naturally his intellect was bright; he was fair of face, and strong of limb; loving parents marked out for him a brilliant career, and fancied to themselves the mark he was to make in the world. But the cigarette got hold of him; it stultified his mental brilliancy and took away his physical vigor; it gave him a sluggish mind and pipestem legs; it nipped the bud of his promise and left him a sickly flower to blossom feebly and helplessly in an obscure corner of the world's garden. Less able youths than he eschewed the cigarette and went forward to honor and prosperity, while he lagged behind, and, in the vulgar parlance, "got left."

The cigarette young man is a nuisance. He loiters in the foyers of the theatres, vitiating the atmosphere with the fumes of his poisonous tobacco; he mixes with the crowds on the streets, and distributes around him the same disagreeable perfumes; he inhabits the railway smoking car, and with his odoriferous cigarette makes life miserable. He is an abomination and a curse. And yet, with all this, at least seven out of every ten boys are addicted, either openly or clandestinely, to this evil. Parents do not appreciate the dangers to which their children are subjected. The injury is all the more mischievous because it is insidious. One little cigarette, they say, will do no harm. Oh, no, certainly not; it is the multiplicity of cigarettes that brings death and destruction. Better let a boy any day smoke a full-fledged cigar than one of those little rolls of tobacco.

It is no exaggeration to say that the cigarette is doing as much harm to the rising generation as alcohol. All physicians who have examined the subject acknowledge that fact. It has become an evil which our societies and churches must recognize, and must take measures to repress, or at least to check. The Sunday-school has a great work to do in this direction, and parents especially must exert themselves to put down the danger. In every household of the land there ought to be a society for the suppression of the cigarette smoker.—Baltimore American.

A Tax-Ridden People.

There is a difference of opinion between two prominent Republican newspapers as to the burden of taxation resting upon the American people. The New York Times claims that this is "the most tax-ridden country in the world." The Philadelphia Press dissents from this opinion, and in the hysterical manner in which it usually financial and economical questions, expresses surprise that a paper like the Times should give such an absurd statement a place in its columns. While Republican newspapers should be expected to be well informed in regard to to the taxes which the policy of their party has so heavily imposed upon the country, it is singular that there should be such a wide difference in views of authorities on the subject.

The Press may disagree with the Times in this matter because it does not go down deep enough to get at the inwardness of the question. The defect in its position is that if a tax collector is not actually before its eyes it concludes that there are no taxes to be paid. It associates the idea of taxation with the personality of the official who collects the amount assessed against the citizens as his share of the taxes. If he is not the subject of that officer's attention it is a mystery to the Press how the citizen can be harrassed by taxation. But the matter of taxes in its various ramifications has been reduced to such a refined system that in the collection of the most frequently payed and most burdensome of those exactions the usual agents of taxation, such as assessors and colloctors, are not required. The heavies taxes are paid at the stores, in the the shops, and in the markets, in the ordinary course of business. The housekeeper and business man, the farmer and mechanic pay them in the quietest and most orderly manner while making their daily purchases, and without being conscious that they are doing it, yet if the same livies were demanded of them by the customary tax gatherer they would feel much like kicking him out of doors if it were not for the restraint of the law.

When a suit of clothes is bought it must be of unusual material if price is not increased at least twenty-five per cent. by the duties imposed. The Press may contend that the purchaser is not taxed in the transaction, and in fact the victim himself may be unconscious of it, but the extra cost resulting from the tariff duties is as much a tax as if paid directly to a tax collector. The same holds good as to every commodity found on the list of dutiable merchandise, and as that embraces most of the articles required for domestic or mechanical use it is evident that the citizen, although he may not be visited by the tax officer more than once a year, or perhaps not as often as that, or not at all, is paying taxes every day in almost all the purchases he makes. Taking the regular taxes for State and local purposes, with the duties and licenses required by the internal revenue system and the imports exacted by the tariff laws, all combined constitute a burden, a taxation, which justifies the assertion that we are the most tax-ridden people in the world.

Our Smallest Coin.

The smallest of American coins, the ubiquitous cent, alike incapable individually of exciting the greed of counterfeiter or stimulating the covetousness of the ordinary citizen, has, despite its despised paltriness, swelled in the aggregate to enormous proportions. Since the time of James Jarvis of New Haven, who, in the year 1787, coined the first American cent, the manufacture of this bit of legal tender has gone on unremittently until there have been sent out, under the orders of the Treasury Department, considerably over 600,000,000 American cents. In other words, there have been circulated in the United States more than $6,000,000 worth of this coin.

The cent has not always been what it is to-day. While the total has been growing to such enormous proportions, the single coin has, in deference to public convenience, been getting smaller and smaller. Many people still remember the unwieldy size of the old-fashioned "copper" which prevailed in our grandfather's time; but even that was a less bulky article of circulation than its predecessors of the same value. The difference between the James Jarvis cent and the cent of to-day is the difference and weight between 264 and 48 grains. The old-fashioned "copper," the coinage of which was discontinued in 1857 after $1,562,887 worth had been made, only weighed 168 grains. It will be seen by this that the cent of the younger days of the Republic was not far from requiring the services of a dog-cart for its transportation. Our present bronze cent, which began to be used in 1864, and is 95 per cent. of copper and 5 per cent. of tin and zinc, has reached a circulation of $2,000,000.

The cent enjoys the distinction among coins, in common with the silver dollar, of being profitable to the government which issues it. For every dollar made the government makes thirteen cents, and the profit is so great on the smaller coin that it is sent in kegs from the mint absolutely free of express charges. On all other coins something like two dollars on every $1,000 is paid by the banks for transportation.

Two May-Day Marriages.

Rev. Virgil Norcross, a Baptist clergyman of this city, has just had two novel matrimonial experiences. When Mr. Norcross got upon a street car for Jamestown, where he was to perform a marriage ceremony, he found a fellow-passenger, Mr. John Stewart, who was in company with Miss Dora Ward.

"Here you are Mr. Norcross," said Stewart. "I have been looking for you all day."

"Well, what's wanted?" asked the clergyman, in his quiet way.

"Why, I want to get married, this young lady and I. Can't you marry us right now—right here on this car?" The couple, standing up and holding car straps to keep them from falling, repeated the vows which made them one to the astonishment of the passengers.

Proceeding to Jamestown, where he was to unite in marriage Mr. Dawson Blaine to Miss Annie Sesterile, at the residence of the bride's mother, he found a large company present, anxiously awaiting his arrival, and with a rapidity indicating experience in such matters, Mr. Norcross got the couple upon their feet and began repeating the marriage vows. Everything in the room was as still as death until the minister reached that part of the ceremony in which he asked if any one present knew any reason why these two should not be made one. Hardly had he finished when the bride's mother arose and said:

"I object to the wedding. She is my daughter and my consent has not been asked."

This declaration threw a damper upon the audience and Mr. Norcross held out the marriage license to the groom, but before his hold upon it had been reliquished the mother said:

"Well, I guess it is all right. Let the wedding go on."

Objection being thus withdrawn Mr. Norcross completed the ceremony and declared them man and wife. Atlanta Constitution.

Sound Business Principles.

An exchange truthfully puts the matter thus: "It is an experience of publishers that too many people are apt to think it matters but little whether the newspaper bill is paid promptly or not, that it is a small sum and is of but little consequence. This is not because subscribers are unwilling to pay, but because they are negligent. Each one imagines because his year's indebtedness is so small a sum, the publisher cannot be much in want of it, without for a moment thinking that the income of a newspaper is made of just such small amounts, and that the aggregate of all subscriptions is by no means an inconsiderable sum of money."

Order is Heaven's first law.

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