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CLEMENT SULIVANE, Editor and Proprietor.

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Confidential.

Dear Norah, I'll tell you a secret—
I've captured a *bona fide* beau!
After Easter there'll be a grand wedding
And sleigh-ride—providing there's snow.

I shall send you a card in good season,
The envelope of which, you will find,
In the point where the corner folds down,
Has an L and a G interwined.

I've got me a new-fashioned bonnet,
All covered in feathers and lace,
While delicate ruches and flowers
Fall gracefully over the face.

My dress was imported from Paris—
An elegant lilac brocade,
Which left on a ship for this city
In time to escape the blockade.

With boots of the daintiest satin,
As white as the purest of snow,
A rosette the size of a saucer,
An inch from the tip of the toe.

I've perfumes and gloves by the dozen,
And jewels—mamma says they're pure—
A love of a watch, with a diamond,
"Too cunning for anything,"—sure.

I'd nearly forgotten to mention
The name of the man I'm to wed;
I think it is Gibson or Gibbons—
Just now I can't tell which he said.

Papa says "he's rich as old Croesus,"
(Who he is, I'm sure I can't tell,)
Has a stud of a dozen fine horses,
With which I shall cut such a swell!

Au revoir, my dear Norah, till Easter;
Come early, in season to see
The bundles of things I can't mention;
We start for the church at "sharp three."

NABBY'S HUSBAND.

A knock at the squire's door.

An eager "come in" from the squire, to whom any outside diversion is an inestimable boon, he having just reached that uncomfortable stage of masculine convalescence when life becomes a burden not only to the so-called "patient" himself, but also to those unlucky feminine relatives whose duty it is to officiate as his "ministering angels."

Mary, the servant, came in.

"Please, Mr. Hosley, there's a woman down stairs who says she must see you. She's been here before smce you were sick, and now she won't take 'no' for an answer."

"Show her right up, Mary," said the squire, alertly, brightening up visibly, like the war-horse who scents the battle afar off. Not all the cozy comfort of his surroundings, the "Sleepy Hollowness" of his easy-chair, the pleasant pictures on the wall, the wood fire which, now that the wintry twilight was settling down over the bit of gray sky left visible by the curtains' heavy folds, danced and fleshed all over the room in rosy shadows, could reconcile the squire to his enforced seclusion. Secretly he pined for his dingy old den of an office, and chafed at the doctor's restrictions, which as yet forbade all thought of business. But now the moral police force, represented by his wife and daughter, being luckily off duty, there was nothing to prevent his seeing this probable client.

"Show her up, Mary," said the squire cheerfully, straightening himself, and assuming as much of legal dignity as dressing-gown and slippers permitted.

Mary disappeared. Presently the door opened again. "Why, Nabby," said the squire, "is it you? How do you do?

"Yes, squire, it's me," said Nabby, dropping down with a heavy sigh into a chair; "and I don't do very well."

Nabby was a short, squarely built woman of fifty, with considerable gray in the coarse, black hair drawn stiffly and uncompromisingly back under a bonnet about five years out of date. She had sharp black eyes, and a resolute, go-ahead manner. Evidently a hard-working woman; yet in looking at her you could not help the conviction that something more than hard work had plowed the deep wrinkles which ran across and across her forehead, and threatened to lift her eyebrows up to her hair.

Nabby had lived with the squire's mother fifteen years—from the time when Mrs. Hosley took her in, a ten-year-old orphan, who was, as the good old lady sometimes expressed it, "more plague than profit," until she grew into the steady and reliable handmaiden, who finally, with every one's good wishes, married young Josiah Gould, and set up in the world for herself. Old Mrs. Hosley had long since gone to her reward, but the family still kept up a friendly interest in Nabby and her fortunes, the squire in particular being her "guide, philosopher, and friend" in all the emergencies of life.

"Why, what's the matter now, Nabby?" said the squire, good-naturedly. "Are you sick?"

"Yes, I *am*," said Nabby, emphatically, with a snap of her black eyes. "I'm sick to death of Josiah. I can't stan' it any longer, and I've come to talk with you about gittin' a divorce. You see he's ben a-growin' worse and worse now for a good while. I've kep' it to myself pretty much, because I was ashamed on't, and then I kep' hopin' he'd do better. I've talked and talked to him, and said and done every thing a woman could, but it seemed as if the more I talked the worse he grew."

The squire looked at Nabby's rather sharp, hard face, and perhaps was hardly so surprised as Nabby expected that Josiah had not been reformed by the vigorous "talking to" he had undoubtedly received.

"He grew more and more shiftless and good-for-nothin'," continued Nabby, "till, finally, he didn't do much but set round the kitchen fire, half boozy. If there's any thing I *hate*," burst out Nabby, "it's a man forever settin' round the house underfoot. And there I was a-takin' in washin', and a-slavin' early and late, to be kinder decent and forehanded, and him no better'n a dead man on my hands, so far as helpin' any was concerned. And so I told him, time and again. He worked just about enough to keep himself in drink. He knew he couldn't git any of my money for that.

"But I stood it till about a fortnight ago. I'd been workin' hard all day helpin' Miss Barber clean house, and it seemed as if every bone in my body ached, I was so tired. I came along home, thinkin' how good my cup of tea 'd taste. The first thing I see, when I opened the kitchen door, was old Hank Slater settin' there in my rockin' chair. He and Josiah were both drunk as—as *hogs*," said Nabby, slandering an innocent animal in her taste for a simile.

"They'd tracked the mud all over my clean floors. The cookin'-stove was jammed full of wood, roarin' like all possessed. I wonder they hadn't burned the house up before I got there. And they'd got my best tea-pot out to heat some water, and the water 'd all b'iled away, and the bottom come out. But the worst was to see my husband a-consortin' with such scum of the earth as that miserable, low-lived Hank Slater. I tell you, squire, I was *mad*. I just flung that kitchen door wide open, and sez I,

"'Git out of this house, Josiah Gould, and don't never let me see your face inside on't again.'

"Sez he, meek as Moses, 'Where shall I go to, Nabby?'

"Sez I, 'I don't care where you go to, so long's you don't come near me. I've always ben a respectable woman, and I don't want none of Hank Slater's friends round my house.'"

"Well?" queried the squire, as Nabby's narration came to a pause.

"Well," said Nabby, in rather a subdued tone, "he went off. And he hain't come back. And I want a divorce."

"Now, Nabby," remonstrated the squire, "you don't want a divorce. I know you better than that. You are not the woman to give Josiah up, and let him go to the bad, without a struggle. You feel a little vexed with him now, and I don't blame you. It is hard, very hard. But you know you took him 'for better or worse.' Do you think, yourself, it is quite right to break your contract because it proves the worse for you—because you are the strong one and he the weak one of the two? That don't strike me as good Bible doctrine, Nabby. 'We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and *not* to please ourselves,' you know.

"Well, I dunno," said Nabby, twisting the corner of her shawl dubiously. "I hadn't thought on't in that light, I must say. It's so aggravatin' to have such a man for a husband. Besides, I dunno's he'd come back now if I wanted him to."

"Hasn't he been back at all?"

"Why, yes, he did come once, for a pair of pantaloons. But I didn't take no notice of him."

"Now, Nabby, you may depend upon it, it wasn't the pantaloons he was after. He wanted to see if you wouldn't relent. If he comes again, be a little pleasant to him, and I'll warrant he will stay. Give him another chance, Nabby. Josiah isn't the worst fellow in the world, by any means. He has his redeeming traits, after all. I believe he will do better, if you will try to help him. You know Josiah is one that bears a good deal of encouragement, Nabby

"Well, squire, I'll think it over. Anyhow, I'm obleged to you. You talk so sorter comfortin' to a body. Your'e your mother's own son; just the same good heart. Would you be able to eat some of my cheese, squire?"

"Try me, and see, Nabby," said the squire, smiling, not impervious to Nabby's compliments. Nabby made her exit just as Mrs. Hosley rushed in, full of wifely indignation that the squire had been allowed to see a "client."

Nabby's home was over at "the Corners," three miles from the village. She walked rapidly along in the fast-thickening darkness, with the steady, strong gate becoming the self-reliant woman that she was. Yet even her unimaginative nature was not proof against the depressing influence of the chilly, raw November evening. The wind whistled through the bare tree branches, which creaked and groaned mournfully, and waved wildly up and down in the dim light overhead. The wind seemed to cherish a special spite against Nabby. It blew her bonnet off and her hair into her eyes, struggled madly with her for her shawl, took her breath away, and firmly resisted her every step. Finally, it began to send spiteful dashes of cold rain-drops in her face—rain that seemed almost to freeze as it fell.

"Josiah used to come after me with an umbrella when I was caught out in the rain," thought Nabby. "He was always real kind and good to me, after all. I dunno's he ever give me a cross word in his life, even when he'd ben drinkin'."

Here the driving, sleety rain and piercing wind pounced down upon Nabby with renewed fierceness, hustling her madly around in fiendish glee.

"An awful night to be homeless, Nabby," something seemed to say.

"I don't care," said Nabby to herself, beginning to feel cross again and generally ill used as she grew wetter and colder. "It serves him right. He's made his bed, and he can lie in it."

At "the Corners," the light streaming cheerfully out into the night from other homes made Nabby's little house look particularly gloomy and uninviting. Nabby fumbled under the mat for the door-key, fumbled with stiffened fingers for the key-hole, and, finally succeeding in unlocking the door, felt her way in through the little entry.

There is always something "uncanny" about going alone at night in a dark and shut-up house. Even people of the best-regulated minds experience a vague suspicion of something behind them, a sense of possible ghostly hands about to clutch them in the darkness. Nabby was a woman, like Mrs. Edmund Sparkler, with "no nonsense about her;" but, nevertheless, a cheerful tale she had read only yesterday in the *Chronicle*, about a burglar and a lone woman, kept coming into her head, and she carefully avoided the thick blackness of the corners and the pantry door as she groped around the kitchen for a candle. Of course the fire had gone out.

"Two heads are better than one, if one is a sheep's head," Nabby might have been heard muttering out in the wood-house as she stooped painfully down picking up chips; by which oracular utterance I suspect she was thinking what a good supply of kindlings Josiah always kept on hand for her, and how much more comfortable it was in the old times coming home to a house bright with light and warmth and Josiah's welcome.

For Josiah cherished the most profound admiration for Nabby—an admiration not unmingled with awe. He thought her a most wonderful woman. She was just as beautiful to him now as in the old courting days, before the brightness and quickness of the black eyes had degenerated into sharpness, before the smiling mouth had acquired its hard, firmly set expression, before there were any wrinkles in the smooth forehead. People thought Nabby had done well in marrying Josiah Gould—a pleasant, good-natured young fellow that every one liked; a young mechanic; not very rich yet, it was true; but, with a good trade and such a wife as Nabby, there seemed nothing to prevent his figuring as "one of our first citizens."

Any body can be somebody in this country if they are only determined. But that was exactly the difficulty with Josiah. He never was determined about any thing. He fell into the habit of drinking because he lacked sufficient strength of will to avoid it. Then Nabby's sharp words, and his own miserable sense of meanness and self-contempt, of utter discouragement and despair, drove him lower and lower, and he sank down supinely into the Slough of Despond without effort or hope.

By a beautiful dispensation of Providence, whenever a poor, shiftless, good-for-nothing man is sent into our world, some active, go-ahead little woman is invariably fastened to him to tow him along through, and keep his head above water. It's for the best, of course. What would become of the poor fellow without her? At the same time, she sometimes finds it a little hard.

Nabby was ambitious and proud-spirited, willing to work hard, to save, to do her part—anxious to get on in the world and stand well among the neighbors. The fact, gradually realized, that in her husband she had no help, no support, only a drag and burden, and finally a disgrace, had been a disappointment embittering her whole nature. To have a husband that no one respected, that even the boys around town called "Si Gould," was dreadful to Nabby. Perhaps it was hardly strange that she grew hard and bitter.

Meanwhile Nabby had succeeded in starting the fire, and having changed her dress, sat down to dry her feet until the tea-kettle boiled. But even the ruddy light and warmth with which the kitchen now glowed could not fend off the dreariness of the night. The rain "tapped with ghostly finger-tip upon the window-pane," and the wind howled and wailed around the house like the spirits of the lost pleading to be once more taken back into human life and warmth. Such a wind stirs in even the happiest heart a vague sense of loss, of change, of all that goes to make up the unsatisfactoriness of life. Dead sorrows creep forth from their graves on such nights, and stalk up and down the echoing chambers of the heart.

Nabby could not help wondering where Josiah was to-night. It was so lonely sitting there with no one to speak to, listening to the moaning wind, the creaking of the blinds, the loud ticking of the clock.

"And Thanksgivin' a-comin'," thought Nabby. "A pretty Thanksgivin' I shall have!"

The wind wailed and wailed, and Nabby thought and thought. The very fact of having "freed her mind," to the squire had relieved her long pent-up indignation, and now she felt more sad than angry. Up before her seemed to rise a picture of her life: the youthful dreams and hopes, the changes and disappointments, the love turned into wrangling. She even thought of Josiah with pity. For the first time she "put herself in his place," and realized how almost impossible it was for one of his weak nature to resist, unaided, the temptation which will cost a stronger will an effort.

"I'm afraid I've ben a little too sharp with Josiah," thought she. "I've sorter took it for granted I was a saint and he a sinner, and scolded him right along down hill. A nice saint I am! As proud and high-strong as Lucifer himself! Oh dear!" sighed Nabby: "a pretty mess I've made of living! If we could only go back and begin over again, seems to me things would go better."

Just then there was a faint noise, like the clicking of the door-latch. Nabby started and looked round. All was still again—no one visible. Yet Nabby could not rid herself of the impression that some one was near her, that odd sense we have of another's individuality near us though not present.

"There's some one hangin' round here, I know," said she to herself.

Nabby was one who always met things half way. Accordingly, she walked to the outside door, and, opening it quickly peered out into the darkness. There stood Josiah—wet, sheepish, sorry. Once he had started to go in, but his courage failing, he lingered in dubious hesitation on the door-step.

"Why don't you come in, Josiah?" said Nabby.

"I don't know's you'd want me, Nabby," replied Josiah, with all the meekness becoming a returning prodigal.

"Want you? Of course I do," said Nabby, heartily. "Come right along in. I'm goin' to have griddle-cakes for supper, and you must tend 'em while I set the table." Griddle-cakes were one of Josiah's favorite weaknesses, and Nabby knew it.

Josiah came in. If he ever gets into heaven, probably his sensations will not be one whit more delightful than they were now, as from the bleakness and gloom of the night, the forlornness of his wretched wanderings, he came into the cozy brightness of the kitchen, and felt that he was home once more. How good the tea smelled! The fire roared and snapped, the tea-kettle boiled and bubbled and bubbed its lid up and down, and from the griddle the savory odor of the cakes ascended like a homely incense. Josiah's face, shining with mingled heat and happiness as he turned the griddle-cakes, was something worth seeing.

Nabby stepped briskly around getting supper ready. It seemed so pleasant to set the table for two again, to have some one to praise and appreciate her cooking. The November wind might howl its worst now. Its hold on Nabby was gone. In place of all the bitter sadness that had hung heavily around her heart was a warm feeling of happiness, of comfort and hope.

All the explanation they had wished was this: Josiah drew forth from under his shabby coat an exceedingly awkward and knobby bundle.

"I've bought something for you, Nabby," said he.

The "something," undone, proved to be a very handsome brittannia tea-pot. That tea-pot must have known it was a peace-offering, with such preternatural brightness did it shine and glisten. Something in Nabby's eyes shone and glistened too, although she winked hard, and scorned the weakness of a pocket-handkerchief.

"Thank you, Josiah," she said: "its a regular beauty, and I shall set lots by it."

Which, so long as they understood each other, was, perhaps, as well as if Josiah had made a long-worded speech of repentance and reformation, and Nabby another of forgiveness.

I wish I could say that Nabby never scolded Josiah again. But I can't. However, she "drew it mild," and there was a general understanding between them that this was only a sort of exercise made necessary by habit—a barking by no means involving biting. And Josiah was so accustomed to it that he would have missed it, and not felt natural without being wound up and set going for the day by Nabby.

One day, later in the winter, Nabby was washing for Mrs. Hosley.

"So you've taken Josiah back again, after all?" said Mrs. Hosley.

"Well, yes, I have," said Nabby, giving a last twist to the sheet she was wringing out. "Josiah mayn't be very much to brag of; but then, you see, he's my own, and all I've got. We're gittin' to be old folks, Josiah and me, and we may as well put up with each other the little while we've got to stay here."

"How has he been doing since he came back?"

"First-rate. He's walked as straight's a string ever sence. He's a good provider, now's he quit drinkin', and a master-hand for fixin' up things around the house, and makin' it comfortable. I tell you what 'tis, Miss Hosley, we've got to make 'lowances for folks in this world. We can't have 'em always jest to our mind. We've got to take 'em jest as they are, and make the best on't."

"I'm glad to see you so much happier and better contented, Nabby."

"Well, I used to fret and complain a good deal because things hadn't turned out as I expected 'em to; but lately I've thought a good deal about it all, and I've made up my mind that there's considerable comfort for every one in this world, after all. We mayn't git jest what we want, but we git somethin'."

In which piece of philosophy I believe Nabby was about right.

A Cunning Expedient.

There is a mode among the Hindoos that a thief having been detected and condemned to die, happily hit upon an expedient which gave him hope of life. He sent for his goaler, and told him he had a secret of great importance which he desired to impart to the king, and when he had done that he was prepared to die. Upon receiving this piece of intelligence, the king at once ordered the culprit to be conducted into his presence, and demanded of him to know his secret. The chief replied that he knew the secret of causing trees to grow that would bear fruit of pure gold. The experiment might be easily tried, and his majesty would not lose the opportunity; so, accompanied by his prime minister, his courtiers and his chief priest, he went with the thief to a spot selected near the city wall, where the thief performed a series of solemn incantations. This done the condemned man produced a piece of gold, and declared that if it should be planted, it would produce a tree every branch of which would bear gold.

"But," he added, "this must be put into the ground by a hand that has never been stained by any dishonest act. My hand is not clean, therefore I pass it to your majesty.

The king took the piece of gold, but hesitated. Finally he said, "I remember in my younger days that I often filched money from my father's treasury which was not mine. I have repented of the sin, but yet I hardly dare say my hand is clean. I pass it, therefore to my prime minister."

The latter, after a brief consideration answered, "It was a pity to break the charm through a possible blunder. I receive taxes from the people and as I am exposed to many temptations, how can I be sure that I have remained perfectly honest? I must give it to the governor of our citadel."

"No, no!" cried the governor, drawing back. "Remember that I have the serving out of pay and provisions to the soldiers. Let the high priest plant it."

And the priest said, "You forget; I have the collecting of tithes, and the disbursements for sacrifice."

At length the thief exclaimed: "Your majesty, I think it were better for society that all five of us should be hanged, since it appears that not an honest man can be found among us."

In spite of the lamentable exposure, the king laughed; and so pleased was he with the thief's cunning expedient, that he granted him a pardon.

How he was Hit.

There was a mixed company, on a certain occasion, on board a steamer which was passing the port of Monterey in California. One of the passengers exhibited his geography and history—or rather the place where they ought to have been—by observing:

"Thar's whar General Taylor gin the Mexicans fits."

Monterey suggested Buena Vista, on which another person incautiously said: "Thar's whar the Indianians run away."

This was of course at once contradicted by an Indianian, who averred, "They only fell back to get better fighting ground." That in return was controverted. A hot discussion sprang up, which was growing personal, and likely to be a rehearsal of the great fight, when a friend interfered as pacificator, by saying he did not want to be held responsible for what he was about to say, and he thought it would settle the whole difficulty.

That looked encouraging; but when he commenced by saying that "he heard they were liars as well as cowards," it did not look that way; it looked very much like a Free State free fight.

"Now just hold on till I tell you what I heard," expostulated the rash friend. "When the Indianians were running away, or falling back, as may be, a fellow was making back track as fast as his horse could carry him. Another fellow lying on the ground, and making as much noise as his lungs would allow, called to the horseman, 'For God's sake, take me and save me from massacre."

"'Where are you hit?'

"'Only in the leg.'

"He was benevolently taken up behind the horseman, and on they went, until they reached a surgeon's quarters. Pulling up, the rider told that functionary:

"'Here doctor, here's a case for you.'

"Scalpel looked up from his bloody work, but inquired with evident indignation:

"'What did you bring him here for?'

"'For you to attend to him of course!'

"'Go and get his head, then!'

"The rider turned, and saw a bleeding headless trunk. His astonishment was only equaled by his indignation.

"'The lying son of a gun!' he bawled out; "he told me he was only hit in the leg!'"

The friend's explanation proved satisfactory, as all hands laughed.

Better Late Than Never.—A stranger recently entered a store in Belfast, Me., and asked the proprietor if he had any demand against a certain person. The merchant, after some time recollected some old notes for small amounts, which he had laid aside as worthless. Upon hunting them up the stranger counted out the money, principal and interest for fifteen years. He had contracted the debts when a young man, and being unable to pay them he went to California, where he remained till a few weeks ago, and had been successful in business; and on his return his first care had been to look up his old creditor.

Miseries of Lodgers in Paris.

A correspondent of a London weekly says: "It is stated that numbers of Americans who were in a measure settled in Paris are leaving altogether. They shake the dust off their feet, having had difficulties with proprietors for which the arbitral juries, "from patriotic motives," would give no redress. Some heads of English families rather than go on paying fancy prices for wretched Paris lodgings, have made up their minds to let the proprietor sell their furniture. Frenchmen, as a rule, love to exercise power, and are greatly tempted to misuse it. Proprietors have both the will and the way to tyrannize. They can and do assert an authority, when there is no written agreement to the contrary, and put out the gas lighting the stairs at half-past ten instead of midnight. Strangers not familiar with each stair, curve, or angle, risk breaking their necks. A visitor, if not wary, may tumble down a flight when descending from your flat. Another proprietary way of annoying is to take a screw out of the pump-handle, pretend it is an accident, and find some excuse for not making the necessary repairs. The tenant is in this way placed on short commons as regards the water supply. If he buys furniture to suit his flat, and puts down carpets, the *conciege* reports at headquarters that he is snugger than any wren in its nest. Forthwith M. le Proprietaire comes on a visit of inspection. He politely asks you to let him see a chimney in the bedroom, which he is afraid wants repairing, the kitchen stove, which he thinks of improving, or a dressing-room window, which will neither shut nor open. When he is satisfied that the tenant has made himself comfortable, and would be a loser by a *demenagement*—at least until the carpets are worn out—he discovers that he let the place too cheap, and tightens the screw accordingly. Your life may be rendered insupportable by the neighbor overhead, underneath, or on the same flat. The cobbler on the sixth who is not obliged to study the convenience of the inhabitants on the fifth floor, may find it necessary to the well-being of his family to keep tapping at soles and heels through the small hours of the morning. A dog-fancying old lady is a still greater pest. She subjects her fellow-lodgers to a nameless insect invasion, to say nothing of other things which offend the nose and eyes. What do you think, you who live in detached villas, of the retired grocer inhabiting the pavilion in the garden and keeping poultry? Having passed forty years in his Faubourg St. Martin, this estimable member of society fancies a house *entre rue et jardin*, near the Champs Elysees, in the country. To realize the pleasures of a rural life, and the comforts too, for he is fond of a fresh egg, he peoples his patch of garden with gallinaceous creatures. As he is a heavy, plodding sort of person, and, if his wife does not calumniate him, snores like a ploughman, it does not matter to him when a city life deranges the nervous system of his cocks and hens. But nobody who is at all wakeful can enjoy a really refreshing sleep within hearing distance of the nocturnal crowing and cackling of the irritated birds. And what, if you live on the first floor, would you not do were the proprietor to let the shop on the ground floor to a butcher, or to an individual wanting to start an office for wet nurses? Imagine the clatter of twenty peasant female, all speaking different *patois*, and the mewlings and wailings of as many new-born babes! Who is there that lives in Paris that is not subject to one or more of these annoyances?

Hard on Bubby.—A charming actress who plays light parts in a theatre, who is also an excellent wife and mother, had been annoyed by the overwhelming attentions of a young down town jeweller. At last, his notes and bouquets becoming too frequent, she mentioned the fact to her husband, who immediately fired up and threatened to punish the infatuated youth. A powerful athlete, he armed himself with a cane of the "genus" bludgeon and left his hotel the next morning with the avowed intention of giving his rival a few blows and teaching him to mind his own business. Entering the shop where he was employed, he strode hastily through and inquired if there was a young man there named H——. "There is," said the owner of the establishment: "he is at the window tinkering watches. Mr. H——, you are wanted." As the little male flirt arose and confronted the large man, he trembled and turned pale. "Did you send my wife these notes?" said he, producing some of the offending *billet-doux*. "I—I—yes—I did," stammered the culprit, trembling in every limb. He saw the weapon, and he thought his time had come. "Well, well," said the broad-shouldered, big-hearted actor, reaching over the counter and patting the poor, frightened fellow gently on the top of the head, "look here, bubby, you must not do so any more." And he left poor H——, to the tender mercies of his fellow clerks.—*N. Y. Paper.*

Keeping her Promise.—A Scottish widow in the time of King George was one day in spring seen by the clerk of her parish crossing the churchyard with a water-pot and a bundle. "Ah, Mistress Mactavish," said the clerk, "what's yer bus'ness, wi' sic like gear as that y'are carryin'?" "Ah, weel, Mr. Maclachlan," replied the widow, "I'm just goin' to my gudeman's grave. I've got some hayseeds in my bundle, the which I'm goin' to sow upon it; and the water in the can is just to gi'e 'em a spring like!" "The seed winna want the watering," rejoined the clerk, "they'll spring finely o' themselves." "That may well be," rejoined the widow; "but ye dinna ken that my gudeman, as he lay a-deeing, just got me to make promise that I'd never marry agin till the grass had grown aboon his grave. And, as I've had a good offer made me but yestreen, ye see, I dinna like to break my promise, or to be kept a lone widow, as ye see me!" The minister's aide-de-camp looked on the widow indeed with a mirthful expression. "Water him weel, widow," said the clerk; "Mactavish aye was drouthy!"

The poet of the Chicago *Post* gets off the following:

A tinker and a tailor,
A soldier and a sailor,
A newspaper reporter who couldn't get his pay
Bank messengers and tellers,
And a host of other fellows,
Are now carpenters and masons at $5 a day.

An Indian Story.

John W. Forney tells the following romantic story:

Shortly after I took possession of the Lancaster (Pa.) *Intelligencer*, more than thirty-four years ago—before I had reached manhood—Mrs. Dickson, the amiable and gentle postmistress of that place, handed me a soiled letter directed to "the editor of a newspaper," which she said had been in her possession for more than a year, and had not been delivered because it had no definite address. Upon opening it I found it dated Logansport, Indiana, and signed by George W. Ewing, United States Indian Agent. He stated that he had only recently stopped at an Indian wigwam for the night on the banks of the Mississinewa, about fifty miles south of Fort Wayne, and found it occupied by a family who were rich for Indians, and boasted of considerable property in houses and lands. He went on to say that in the course of the evening he noticed that the hair of one of the women was light and her skin under her dress white, and so he entered into conversation with her, which was not difficult, as he spoke the language of the tribe. She told him she was white, but had been carried away when a very small girl. She could only remember that her name was Slocum; that she had lived in a little house on the banks of the Susquehanna; also the number of her father's family, and the order of their ages; but she could not recall the name of the town from which she was taken. Fascinated by this romantic story, yet undecided how to let the facts be known, he wrote a letter and sent it to my native town of Lancaster as the place nearest the Susquehanna that he could remember of any importance. After, as I have said, sleeping in the post-office for many months, it came out through the columns of my little journal, and in that way got to the Slocums of Wilkesbarre, being the first intelligence of the child which had been stolen from them sixty years before. The brother of Frances, who was only two years and a half old when his sister was carried off by the Indians, started for the Indian country in company with his eldest sister, who had aided him to escape, and another brother, then living in Ohio, born after the captivity of Frances. After a long journey they found a little wigwam among the Miami Indians. "We shall know Frances," said the sister, "because she lost the nail of her first finger. You, brother, hammered it off in the blacksmith shop when she was four years old." They entered and found a swarthy woman who looked to be seventy-five. She was painted, jeweled, and dressed like an Indian in all respects. Nothing but her hair and her covered skin indicated her origin. They got an interpretor, asked her name and where she was born. "How came that nail gone?" said the eldest sister. She answered, "My elder brother pounded it off when I was a little child in the shop." They had discovered the long-lost sister. They asked her Christian name. She had forgotten it. "Was it Frances?" As if smitten by a revelation, she answered, "Yes." It was the first time she had heard it pronounced in sixty years. Here they were met, two brothers and two sisters, after having been separated for more than half a century. The brothers were walking the cabin, unable to speak, the sister was drowned in tears, but the poor Indian sat motionless and passionless. She could not speak a word of English. She did not know when Sunday came. She was carried off by the Indians, and when she grew up she married one of their number. He either died or ran away, and then she married a Miami chief, since dead. She had two daughters, both married, who, thirty-four years ago, lived in all the glory of Indian cabins, deer-skin clothes, and cow-skin head-dresses. They had horses in abundance, and when the Indian sister accompanied her new relatives, she bridled her horse and mounted it astride. At night she slept on the floor, with her blanket around her. They could not persuade her to return to Wilkesbarre, even when the invitation was extended to her children. She had always lived with the Indians, they had been kind to her, and she promised her last husband on his death-bed she would never leave them. It is now nearly ninety-five years since this white child was torn from her parents' home in Wyoming Valley. She herself has been gathered to her fathers, and most of her double family who were living in 1838, with the exception, believe, of Mr. Joseph Slocum, now one of the most influential and respectable citizens of Scranton. Among all the changes that have taken place in this long interval, few are more interesting than this transformation from civilization to barbarism.

Hotel Accommodation in Texas.—One of the exhibitors at the recent Texas State Fair, at Houston, gave an amusing account of his experience at the hotel, which illustrates the crowded condition of the taverns at that time. "When I got there, I just said, 'Captain, I wrote you about six weeks ago to save me a room; I hope you have done so.' 'Certainly I have; waiter, show the gentleman to No. 91.' I'm blessed if there wasn't forty others beside myself in that same apartment, and when they went to undress at night, the room looked like an arsenal, for every man had a knife and a six-shooter or two. My partner had an immense pistol, which he coolly took off and placed between us. 'Say, Stranger,' says I, 'If I had to carry a thing like that, blamed if I wouldn't put it on wheels.' 'Guess if I choose to wear it it's nobody's business,' he replied. 'Well,' says I, is all of this artillery company in this room?' About half the occupants were changed every day, and I could tell every new arrival the number of his room the instant I set eyes on him. 'Hallo, Colonel, just got in?' I would say. 'Yes—just in, and lucky enough to get a room.' 'What's your number?' I would ask. 'Ninety-one,' was sure to be the reply."

The Difference.—The "Policeman Y Ballads, or War and the Military," just out in London, have this bit of cynical philosophy among a bushel of badly-spelled rubbish:

"By a gen'ralship's requited
Him who brings a lot to grief;
Kill ten thousand he'll be knighted;
Double that, command'r-in-chief.
Fifty thousand—through this here age
Loud he'll have his praises sung;
Half a million gets a peerage;
Kill but one and you gets hung."

Tell the Truth.

Boy, at all times tell the truth
Let no lie defile thy youth.
If thou'rt wrong, be thine the shame;
Speak the truth, and bear the blame.

Truth is honest, truth is sure;
Truth is strong and must endure
Falsehood lasts a single day,
Then it vanishes away.

Boy, at all times tell the truth;
Let no lie defile thy youth.
Truth is steadfast, sure and fast,
Certain to prevail at last.

Brevities.

Far behind must follow the faster.

Prosperity gains a mulitude of friends.

Of evil grain no good seed can come.

He is wise that knows when he is well enough of.

Follow the wise few rather than the vulgar many.

There is no joy so great as that which springs from a kind act or pleasant deed.

It costs a New York gentleman upwards of thirty dollars to take a young lady to the opera this season.

The newest style of curtains for parlor windows are of fine white muslin, with a monogram of lace in the centre, and edged all round with a fluting of rich and costly lace.

Nearly all the young gentlemen have their overcoats made with a pocket in one side lined with flannel or fur, in which a lady may slip her hand when walking of a cold winter's evening.

Man can boast 370 muscles. Lyonet, who spent his whole life in watching a single species of caterpillar, discovered in it 4,000. The common fly has 8,000 eyes, and certain butterflies 25,000.

Mark Twain at a lecture in Hartford the other evening, took from his pocket a ragged piece of linen instead of a handkerchief. The audience tittered, and Mark probably said something to Mrs. Clemens when he got home.

A gentleman engaged in investigating the charges of carelessness against the workmen in some coal mines, found afterward that during the investigation he had been given an open keg of powder to sit on, while he held a lighted candle in his hand.

An old lady gave this as her idea of a great man: "One who is keerful of his clothes, don't drink spirits, kin read the Bible without spelling the words, and eat a cold dinner on wash day without grumbling."

"Mr. Speaker," said a member of the Jamaica Legislature, discussing a bill for the regulation of the timber trade, "I know these timber merchants to be most egregious rascals—I was in the timber line myself twelve years."

At Mull a messenger having requested a London clergyman to announce that "if Dr. Leach was among his audience he was urgently wanted," the clergyman added from sympathy, "and may God have mercy on the poor patient."

A table just printed of the daily wages paid in this country for mechanical labor shows that for nearly all kinds of handicraft work the average rate of wages is higher in the New England States than in the Middle, the Western or the Southern States.

A guild of ladies is proposed to be formed in England under the leadership of Miss Harrison of Swanage' Doretshare, "to promote modesty of dress, to do away with extravagance, and substitute the neatness and sobriety suitable to Christian women."

When you see two young persons seated in the centre of a pew in church, you may make up your mind that they are engaged, or going to be; but when one is at the head and the other at the foot of the pew you can immediately determine that they are married.

At an Indiana breakfast table a few days ago, a traveler from the East handed to one of his fellow-travelers a plate of sausages, whereupon the question was asked, "Is it safe?" To which it was replied, "This is a prolific hog country, and it is safe to eat sausages wherever hog is cheaper than dog."

The latest wrinkle at fashionable weddings is for a colored page, in livery, to walk into church before the bride and groom, carrying a small white satin cushion, upon which is embroidered a monogram in gilt letters, which he carefully places in front of the altar for the couple to kneel on, and carries it out again at the close of the ceremony. What next?

A Kansas City book-keeper received a note stating that he had been selected by ballot from 333 persons as a sacrifice to some spirit which required human food. Supposing it a joke, he pocketed the note but a couple of hours afterward a bullet came crashing through the window and struck the desk a few inches from his head.

A little five-year-old was being instructed in morals by his grandmother. The old lady told him that all such terms as "by golly," "by jingo," "by thunder," &c., were only little oaths, and but little better than other profanities. In fact, she said he could tell a profane oath by the prefix "by." All such were oaths. "Well, then, grandmother," said the little hopeful, is "by telegraph," which I see in the newspapers, swearing?" "No," said the old lady, "that's only lying."

The House A-fire.—A gentleman once offered to bet that he would empty the whole of a good winter fire in a drawing-room out of the grate, and place it upon the carpet in the center of the room, all the company to be seated around it in a circle, and that the room should not take fire. Mr. Braidwood, formerly Captain of the London Fire Brigade, said that he would have backed such a bet; and that the fire in such a case would probably have died out of itself. It is not very easy to set fire to a house without first lighting curtains or other articles that produce a lively flame. This fact, however, should not make us less careful respecting the causes of fires. Nearly all fires can be managed at the outset by the immates of the house. By shutting the doors and windows, so as to prevent the supply of air to the fire, and by resolutely attacking the flames with water, rugs or blankets, door-mats, etc., the larger part of fires in dwelling-houses may be smothered.

Corns.—A skilled farrier once told us that he never saw a horse called "knee sprung" that was not found to have corns; and when they were removed the trouble was gone.

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