Saint Mary's Beacon

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ST. MARY'S BEACON

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BEHIND THE FOOTLIGHTS.

"Will you please have this part dead-perfect at rehearsal to-morrow, miss?"

The speaker was the call-boy of the only theatre in a Western town.

The girl to whom he handed the part was tall and slight of physique. Her features were pale as marble, but transcendently lovely—one might almost risk the expression, "lovely as an angel's."

The deep-telling eyes scanned the MS. of the part, and a look of dismay lit their depths.

'Mercy!' she murmured; 'it is impossible. Rehearsal is called at ten, sharp. Mother lies in a raging fever, which threatens her brain, and here are twenty lengths at least. It is a hard life!' and a weary sigh followed, as the young girl took up her small satchel and drew her threadbare shawl around her fragile figure. 'Good night, Denny,' she said, in return to the salutation of the old door keeper, as she quitted the theatre.

'Be careful, dear,' he replied; 'he's there again,' and he jerked his thumb over his shoulder with a warning gesture.

A shade crossed her features and her mouth worked determinedly as her eyes flashed, and a slight flush tinged her white cheeks. The warning evidently disturbed her. Young as she was, hers had been the fate of many on the stage! She had admirers whom she scorned; but, having no brother, she was unprotected save by that mother who now lay at the point of death.

The night was cold, and Bessie Darling (her stage name, the real one being withheld,) was scantily clad. As she reached the street, she looked up at the stars, which glittered in the sky, like polished steel. She shivered and hastened on. The slight snow upon the pavement creaked crisply beneath her tread. At the corner a young man interrupted her, and raised his hat.

'Good evening,' he said, removing his cigar; 'may I not have the pleasure of seeing you home?'

She made no reply but strove to pass him.

'Don't be foolish,' he said, offering his arm; 'you know I would not harm you.'

'Your aid is not needed,' she replied, 'and your company is unpleasant. Let me pass. My mother is very ill, perhaps dying at this very moment.'

'All the more reason why you should have help,' he returned. 'Allow me to offer any service in my power.' He drew a roll of greenbacks from his pocket and held them toward her.

'I do not require your money. I would not accept it to save my mother's life, much as I love her. Let me pass or I shall call for aid.'

He sneered.

'It is late,' he said; 'the streets are deserted; you are alone, and none will hear your appeal.'

'O, yes they will!' It was the call-boy of the theatre who spoke.

The young man turned to the new comer. He was a singular personage—dwarfed in stature, with a head much too large for the diminutive body.

'Whom have I the honor to address?' inquired the young blood, scornfully.

'That is neither here nor there,' was the reply. 'But if Miss Darling will allow me, I will see that she is no longer detained by an unpleasant meddler.'

'Ho! ho!' laughed the other; 'a Quasimodo to protect his Esmerralda.'

The dwarf bit his lips, and turned pale as death.

'Look out that you do not meet the fate of the recreant priest.'

'We are not in Paris,' retorted the blood, 'and there are no towers of Notre Dame at hand.'

'Will Miss Darling accept my escort home? I will protect her from this sneaking bully.'

The young man, pallid with rage, returned:

'I'll thrash you within an inch of your life for this insolence, you crooked back cur! Take that!'

He launched a heavy blow at the manikin's head, but the little fellow darted nimbly aside.

'I am no match for you at fisticuffs,' he hissed, 'but I have not played the Sprite for nothing.'

The next instant he started forward, and planting his head full in the stomach of his antagonist, hurled him over the embankment where they stood.—The blood was unable to save himself. Down, down he fell, and striking head foremost on the bank of the river, lay insensible.

'My God! you have killed him,' whispered Bessie.

'Not much loss, miss. But the devil aids such as he. He is worth a score of dead men yet. But let us hasten or he may recover, and he would make it as hot as hades for me.'

Half an hour later Bessie sat watching her delirious mother. As she removed and replaced the icy cloths upon the bursting forehead she ever and anon applied herself to learning the part she must be perfect in on the morrow. Not a wink of sleep was hers that night, and when she appeared at rehearsal the red eyes and feverish cheeks told of that studious vigil by her mother's bed.

That night Bessie Darling took the town by storm.

The play was ended.

The curtain rang down on a heart that little reckoned the floral offerings or the loud applause that called her before the green scene; for, as she returned to the prompter's box, news reached Bessie that her mother was dead.

The reaction was terrible. The poor girl was stricken down herself, and when the mother was buried by the kindly members of the company, the daughter was nearly a fit subject to occupy the same resting place.

Time passed, and slowly the young girl recovered. Each day during the interval the invalid found a fresh bouquet upon the table by her bed. At first she refused to look at them, thinking they were but new importunities from him whom she so utterly detested. But this was not the case, as she shortly found. The timely lesson, to the young libertine had proved favorable to her and useful to him. He never troubled Bessie again. Therefore the flowers were not from him.

'Who could it be?' she asked the nurse; but she professed ignorance, and stated that the bouquets were left on the doorstep early every morning.

Finally Bessie was able to attend to duty once more. What pleasure it was to meet the kindly greetings of her friends, as she appeared at the first rehearsal. Each member of the company strove to outdo the other in little attentions. One brought her a seat near the wings; another drew her shawl closer around her shoulders, fearing she would catch cold. Poor Jacken, the dwarfed call boy, insisted on bringing her a little warm wine (his panacea for trouble.) The manager greeted her and told her that her fortune was assured; he was about to produce a new sensational drama in which she was to act as the heroine. In fact, her cup of joy seemed full to the brim. (No relation to Jacken's panacea, for that had been disposed of with many thanks, at which the poor fellow's face turned red to the top of his ears.)

The day for the rehearsal of the new play arrived. In the last scene a telling effect was to be produced, where the heroine was thrown from a precipice by the villain of the piece. In falling she lodges in a pine tree, while he, losing his balance, topples from the cliff and is slain.

'I'll try that tree myself first, Miss Bessie,' suggested the call boy, 'to see that it is secure. Mr. Jones, will you go through the business with me?'

'Certainly; although I don't think that you make a charming substitute for the heroine,' laughed the heavy man.

So up the scaffolding they went. The struggle ensued. The orchestra gave the chord, and with a heavy lunge the dwarf fell in the abyss.

A shriek ensued from the ladies, and the strong men sickened. The villain paused in horror, for the tree had broken and poor Jacken fell through the trap with a harsh thud.

Friends hastened to his aid, and he was borne to the stage stunned and bleeding. The doctor of the theatre, who was present, shook his head.

'His spine is broken,' he said; 'human aid cannot save him.'

'O, don't say so!' moaned Bessie, who was wiping the blood from a deep wound in the poor boy's head.

The closed eyes opened and a happy light lit their vision.

'It's all over, Miss Bessie,' he murmured, 'and I don't know but what I am glad of it.'

'Poor boy, poor boy,' she said, smoothing back his curling hair.

'Mother used to do that, and her touch was no gentler than yours. O, I am so glad!'

Bessie's tears rattled down on the upturned face.

'Don't cry,' he said; 'it's better as it is. You never could have loved me as I loved you, and I am not more shapeless now than I should have been had I lived. Would you kiss me once—once for the flowers I left you when I feared that you, too, must die!'

Bessie pressed a kiss on the lips of the dying boy, and with that last benison the wandering spirit sought its God.

☞ One of the late zephyrs in Minnesota is reported to have blown two sheep into the top of a tree a mile away from their grazing place. The rest of the flock had presence of mind enough to hold on to the grass with their teeth.

Some persons pronounce the disgraced Secretary's name Belk-nap. This is wrong; the correct pronunciation is Bel-knap.

The melancholy days have come,
The saddest of the year;
Its most too warm for whiskey,
And a little too cool for beer.

THE SMOKER REFORMED.

CHAPTER I.

"One cigar a day!" said Judge Boompointer. "One cigar a day!" repeated John Jenkins, as with trepidation he dropped his half-consumed cigar under his work bench.

"One cigar a day is three cents a day," remarked Judge Boompointer, gravely; "and do you know, sir, what one cigar a day, or three cents a day, amounts to in the course of four years?"

John Jenkins, in his boyhood, had attended the village school, and possessed considerable arithmetical ability. Taking up a shingle which lay upon his work bench, and producing a piece of chalk, with a feeling of confidence he made an exhaustive calculation.

"Exactly forty-three dollars and eighty cents," he replied, wiping the perspiration from his heated brow, while his face flushed with honest enthusiasm.

"Well, sir, if you saved three cents a day, instead of wasting it, you would now be the possessor of a new suit of clothes, an Illustrated Family Bible, a pew in the church, a complete set of Patent Office Reports, a hymn-book, and a paid subscription to *Arthur's Home Magazine*, which could be purchased for exactly forty-three dollars and eighty cents; and," added the Judge, with increasing sternness, "if you calculate leap year, which you seem to have strangely omitted, you have three cents more, sir; *three cents more!* What would that buy you, sir?"

"A cigar," suggested John Jenkins; but, coloring again deeply, he hid his face.

'No, sir,' said the Judge, with a sweet smile of benevolence stealing over his stern features; 'properly invested, it would buy you that which passeth all price. Dropped into the missionary box, who can tell what heathen, now idly and joyously wantoning in nakedness and sin, might be brought to a sense of his miserable condition, and made through that three cents, to feel the torments of the wicked?'

With these words the Judge retired, leaving John Jenkins buried in profound thought. 'Three cents a day,' he muttered. 'In forty years I might be worth four hundred and thirty-eight dollars and ten cents—and then I might marry Mary. Ah, Mary!' The young carpenter sighed, and, drawing a twenty-five cent daguerrotype from his vest pocket, gazed long and fervidly upon the features of a young girl in book muslin and a coral necklace. Then, with a resolute expression, he carefully locked the door of his workshop and departed.

Alas his good resolutions were too late. We trifle with the tide of fortune which too often nips us in the bud and casts the dark shadow of misfortune over the bright lexicon of youth! That night the half-consumed fragment of John Jenkin's cigar set fire to his workshop and burned it up, together with all his tools and materials. There was no insurance.

CHAPTER II.

THE DOWNWARD PATH.

'Then you still persist in marrying John Jenkins?' queried Judge Boompointer, as he playfully, with paternal familiarity, lifted the golden curls of the village belle, Mary Jones.

'I do,' replied the fair young girl, in a low voice, that resembled rock candy in its saccharine firmness—'I do. He has has promised to reform. Since he lost all his property by fire—'

'The result of his pernicious habit, though he illogically persists in charging it to me,' interrupted the Judge.

'Since then,' continued the young girl, 'he has endeavored to break himself of the habit. He tells me that he has substituted the stalks of the Indian ratan, the outer part of a leguminous plant called the smoking bean, and the fragmentary and unconsumed remainder of cigars which occur at rare and uncertain intervals along the road, which, as he informs me, though deficient in quality add strength, are comparatively inexpensive,' and blushing at her own eloquence, the young girl hid her curls on the Judge's arm.

'Poor thing!' muttered Judge Boompointer. 'Dare I tell her all? Yet I must.'

'I shall cling to him,' continued the young girl, rising with her theme, as the young vine clings to some hoary ruin. Nay, nay, chide me not, Judge Boompointer. I will marry John Jenkins!'

The Judge was evidently affected.—Seating himself at the table, he wrote a few lines hurriedly upon a piece of paper, which he closed and placed in the fingers of the destined bride of John Jenkins.

'Mary Jones,' said the Judge, with impressive earnestness, 'take this trifle as a wedding gift from one who respects your fidelity and truthfulness. At the altar let it be a reminder of me.' And covering his face hastily with a handkerchief, the stern and iron-willed man left the room.

As the door closed, Mary unfolded the paper. It was an order on the corner grocery for three yards of flannel, a paper of needles, four pounds of soap, one pound of starch, and two boxes of matches!

'Noble and thoughtful man!' was all Mary Jones could exclaim, as she hid her face in her hands and burst in a flood of tears.

* * * * * * *

The bells of Cloverdale are ringing merrily. It is a w[illegible] tiful they look! [illegible] passes from lip t[illegible] leaning timidly o[illegible] Jenkins, enters th[illegible] bride is agitated, [illegible] betrays a feverish [illegible] stand in the w[illegible] kins fumbles ear[illegible] et. Can it be the [illegible] No. He draws a [illegible] from his pocket, a[illegible] hastily replaces th[illegible] furtively around. [illegible] Alas! the eyes of [illegible] party saw the ind[illegible] pointer shook his h[illegible] Jones sighed and [illegible]

CHAPTER III. AND LAST.

'What! more bread!' said John Jenkins, gruffly. 'You're always asking for money for bread. D—nation! Do you want to ruin me by your extravagance?' and as he uttered these words he drew from his pocket a bottle of whisky, a pipe and a paper of tobacco. Emptying the first at a draught, he threw the empty bottle at the head of his eldest boy, a youth of twelve summers. The missile struck the child full in the temple, and stretched him a lifeless corpse. Mrs. Jenkins, whom the reader will scarcely recognize as the once gay and beautiful Mary Jones, raised the dead body of her son in her arms, and carefully placing the unfortunate youth beside the pump in the back yard, returned with saddened step to the house. At another time, and in brighter days, she might have wept at the occurrence. She was past tears now.

'Father, your conduct is reprehensible said little Harrison Jenkins, the youngest boy. 'Where do you expect to go when you die!'

'Ah!' said John Jenkins fiercely, 'this comes of giving children a liberal education; this is the result of Sabbath schools. Down, viper!'

A tumbler thrown from the same parental fist laid out the youthful Harrison cold. The four other children had in the meantime gathered around the table with anxious expectancy. With a chuckle, the now changed and brutal John Jenkins produced four pipes, and, filling them with tobacco, handed one to each of his offspring and bade them smoke. 'It's better than bread!' laughed the wretch, hoarsely.

Mary Jenkins, though of a patient nature, felt it her duty now to speak. 'I have borne much John Jenkins,' she said. 'But I prefer that the children should not smoke. It is an unclean habit, and soils their clothes. I ask this as a special favor!'

John Jenkins hesitated—the pangs of remorse began to seize him.

'Promise me this, John,' urged Mary upon her knees.

'I promise!' reluctantly answered John.

'And you will put the money in a savings bank?'

'I will,' repeated her husband; and I'll give up smoking, too.'

''Tis well, John Jenkins!' said Judge Boompointer, appearing suddenly from behind the door, where he had been concealed during this interview. 'Nobly said, my man. Cheer up! I will see the children decently buried.' The husband and wife fell into each other's arms. And Judge Boompointer, gazing upon the affecting spectacle, burst into tears.

From that day John Jenkins was an altered man.

BRETE HARTE.

BILLING'S GOOD RESOLUTIONS.—That i won't borry or lend espeshily lend.

That i won't advise anybody until i know what kind of advise they are anxious tew follow.

That i won't wear any more tite boots if i have to go barefoot to do it.

That I won't swop dogs with no man unless i can swop two for one.

That poverty may be a blessing, but if it iz, it iz a blessing in disguise.

That the world owes me a living—pervided i earn it.

That no man shall beat me in politeness not as long as politeness kontinues to be az cheap az it iz now.

That if a man kalls me a phool i won't ask him to prove it.

That i will lead a moral life even if i go lonesome and lose a good deal of fun by it.

That if a man tells me a mule won't kik, i will believe what he says without trying it.

That the best time to repent of a blunder is just before the blunder is made.

That when i hear a man bragging on his ancesters i won't envy him, but will pity the ancesters.

The above will do for 1876.

☞ Reverdy Johnson was elected to the Maryland Legislature fifty-five years ago—ten years before Byron died and when Poe was only eleven years old.

A bill has just been introduced in the British Parliament to make Queen Victoria "Empress of India."

A revivalist asked an African if he had found the Lord. "Golly," said Sambo, "am the Lord lost!"

It is a thin excuse for a young lady to lie abed until nine o'clock in the morning because this is sleep year.

MARK TWAIN'S DUEL.

Mark Twain contributes the follow[illegible] to Tom Hood's *Annual*:

[illegible] only merit I claim for the fol[illegible] narrative is that it is a true [illegible] It has a moral on the end of it, [illegible] claim nothing on that, as it is [illegible] thrown in to curry favor with [illegible] element.

[illegible] I had reported a couple of [illegible] the Virginia City (Nevada) [illegible] they promoted me to [illegible] and I hated just a [illegible] But I made an [illegible] while I [illegible] I had a [illegible]

[illegible] to collect; however, this history concerns only the former. It was the old "flush times" of the silver excitement, when the population was wonderfully wild and mixed; every body went armed to the teeth, and all slights and insults had to be atoned for with the best article of blood your system could furnish. In the course of my editing I made trouble with a Mr. Lord, the editor of a rival paper. He flew up about some little trifle or other that I said about him—I do not remember now what it was. I suppose I called him a thief or a body-snatcher, or an idiot, or something like that; I was obliged to make the paper readable, and I couldn't fail in my duty to a whole community of subscribers merely to save the exaggerated sensitiveness of an individual. Mr. Lord was offended and replied vigorously in his paper.—Vigorously means a great deal when it refers to a personal editorial in a frontier newspaper. Duel was all the fashion among the upper classes in that country, and a very few gentlemen would throw away the opportunity of fighting one. To kill one man in a duel caused a man to be even more looked up to than to kill two men in the ordinary way. Well, out there if you abuse a man and that man did not like it, you had to call him out and kill him, otherwise you would be disgraced. So I challenged Mr. Lord, and I did hope he would not accept; but I knew perfectly well that he did not want to fight, and so I challenged him in the most violent and implacable manner.—And then I sat down and snuffed and snuffed till the answer came. All the boys—the editors were in the office "helping" me in the dismal business, and telling about duels and discussing the code with a lot of aged ruffians, who had experience in such matters, and altogether there was a loving interest taken in the matter that made me unspeakably uncomfortable. The answer came—Mr. Lord declined. Our boys were furious, and so was I on the surface.

I sent him another challenge, another, and the more he did not want to fight the more blood thirstier I became. But at last the man's tone began to change. He appeared to be waking up. It was becoming apparent that he was going to fight me after all. I ought to have known how it would be—he was a man who could never be depended upon. Our boys were jubilant. I was not, though I tried hard to be.

It was now time to go out and practice. It was the custom there to fight duels with navy six-shooters at fifteen paces—load and empty till the game for the funeral was secure.

We went to a little ravine just out of town and borrowed a barn door for a target—borrowed it from a gentleman who was absent—and we stood this door up, and stood a rail on end against the middle of it to represent Lord; and put a squash on top of the rail to represent his head. He was a very tall, lean creature, the poorest sort of material for a duel; nothing but a line shot could fetch him, and even then he might split your bullet. Exaggeration aside, the rail was of course, a little too thin to represent the body accurately, but the squash was all right. If there was any intellectual difference between the squash and his head it was in favor of the squash.

Well, I practiced and practiced at the barn door and could not hit it; and I practiced at the rail and could not hit that; and I tried for the squash and could not hit that. I would have been entirely disheartened but that occasionally I crippled one of the boys and that gave me hope.

At last we began to hear pistol shots near by in the next ravine. We knew what that meant! The other party was out practicing too. Then I was in the last degree distressed, for of course they would hear our shots and then send over the ridge, and the spies would find my barn door without wound or mark, and that would simply be an end to me; for of course the other man would immediately become as bloodthirsty as I was.

Just at this moment a little bird no larger than a sparrow flew by and lit on a bush about 30 paces away, and my second, Steve Gills, who was a dead shot with a pistol—much better than I was—snatched out his revolver and shot the bird's head off! We all ran to pick up the game, and sure enough, just at this moment, some of the other duelists came reconnoitering over the little ridge. They ran to our group to see what the matter was, and when they saw the bird Lord's second said:

"That was a splendid shot. How far off was it?"

Steve said with some indifference:

"Oh, no great distance. About thirty paces.

"Thirty paces! Heavens alive! Who did it?"

"My man—Twain."

"The mischief he did! Can he do it often?"

"Well, yes. He can do it about four times out of five."

I knew the little rascal was lying, but I never said anything. I never told him so. He was not of the disposition to invite confidence of that kind, so I let the matter rest. But it was comfort to see those people look sick, and see their jaws drop when Steve made that statement. They went off and got Lord and took him home; when we got home, half an hour later, there was a note saying that Mr. Lord peremptorily declined to fight.

We found out afterward that Lord hit his mark thirteen times in eighteen shots—if he had put those thirteen bullets into me it would have narrowed my sphere of usefulness a good deal.—True, they could have put pegs in the holes and used me for a hat-rack; but what is a hat-rack to a man who feels he has intellectual powers?

I have written this true incident of my history for one purpose only—to warn the youth of to-day against the practice of dueling and to plead with them to war against it. I was young and foolish when I challenged the gentleman, and thought it very fine and grand to be a duelist and stand upon the "field of honor." But I am older and more experienced now, and am inflexibly opposed to the dreadful custom.

I am glad, indeed, to be enabled to lift up my voice against it. I think it is a bad, immoral thing. It is every man's duty to do all he can to discourage dueling.

If a man were to challenge me I would go to that man and take him by the hand and lead him to a retired room—and kill him.

A SPLENDID DESCRIPTION.—On a certain occasion, one Paul Denton, a Methodist preacher in Texas, advertised a barbecue, with better liquor than usually furnished. When the people had assembled, a desperado in the crowd cried out:

"Mr. Paul Denton, your reverence has lied. You promised not only a good barbecue, but better liquor.—Where's the liquor?"

"There!" answered the missionary in tones of thunder, and pointing his long, bony finger at the matchless double spring gushing up two strong columns with a sound like a shout of joy from the bosom of the earth.—"There?" he repeated, with a look terrible as lightning, while his enemy fairly trembled at his feet; "there is the liquor which God, the Eternal, brews for all his children. Not in the simmering still, over smoky fires choked with poisonous gasses, and surrounded with the stench of sickening odors and corruption, doth your Father in heaven prepare the precious essence of life—pure, cold water. But in the glade and glassy dell, where the red deer wanders and the child loves to play; there God brews it—and down, low in the deepest valley, where the fountain murmurs and the rills sing; and high in the mountain tops, where the naked granite glitter like gold in the sun; where the storm-clouds brood and the thunder storms crash; and out, out on the wide, sea, where the hurricane howls music, and the big waves roll the chorus, sweeping the march of God—there he brews it—beverage of life, health-giving water. And everywhere it is a thing of beauty, gleaming in the dew drop, singing in the summer rains, in the ice gem, till they seem turned to living jewels;—spreading a golden vein over the setting sun, or a white guaze around the midnight moon; sporting in the cataract; sleeping in the glazier; dancing in the hail showers; folding its bright curtains softly around the wintry world, and wearing the many colored iris, that seraph's zone the air, whose word is the rain drops of earth, and checkered over with the celestial powers of the mystic hand of refraction—that blessed life-water, no poison bubbles on its brink; its foam brings not madness or murder; no blood stains its liquid glass; pale widows and starving children weep not burning tears! Speak out my friends; would you exchange it for the demon's drink—alcohol!"

A shout like the roar of a tempest answered "No!"

This most beautiful of all the descriptions of water has for many years form the chief beauty of Gough's temperance lectures; the lecturer giving it as original.

☞ That was a shrewd girl, and not devoid of sense either, who remarked, when other girls were making fun of her short skirts, and affected to be much shocked at the exhibition thereof at a party:

"If you'd only pull up your dresses about your necks, where they ought to be, they'd be as short as mine."

She was not troubled any more.

☞ A farmer made his last will and testament in words few but significant: "I have nothing, I owe nothing, and I give the residue to the poor!"

Darwin says: "Man is the only being of the animal creation that abuses the female of his race."

OLD FASHIONED LOVE LETTERS.—Letters between the first Governor of Massachusetts and his wife, about the year 1625:

My Most Sweet Husband: How dearly welcome thy kind letter was to me, I am not able to express. The sweetness of it did much refresh me. What can be more pleasing to a wife than to hear of the welfare of her best-loved, and how he is pleased with her poor endeavors? I blush to hear myself commended, knowing my own wants. But it is your love that conceives the best, and makes all things seem better than they are. I wish that I might always please thee, and that those comforts which we have in each other may be daily increased, as far as they may be pleasing to God. I will use the speech to thee that Abigail did to David: "I will be a servant to wash the feet of my lord." I will do any service wherein I may please my good husband. I confess I cannot do enough for thee; but thou art pleased to accept the will for the deed and rest contented.

I have many reasons to make me love thee, wherefore I will name two: first because thou lovest God; and, secondly, because thou lovest me. If these two were wanting, all the rest would be eclipsed. But I must leave this discourse, and go about my household affairs. I am a bad housewife to be so long from them; but I must needs borrow a little time to talk with thee, my sweetheart. I hope thy business draws to an end. It will be two or three weeks before I see thee. Though they be long ones, God will bring us together in his good time, for which I shall pray. Farewell my good husband; the Lord keep thee.

Your obedient wife,
MARGARET WINTHROP.

My Good Wife: Although I wrote to thee last week, yet, having so fit an opportunity, I must write to thee again; for I do esteem one little sweet, short letter of thine (such as the last was) to be worthy of two or three from me.

I began this letter yesterday, at two o'clock, thinking to have been at large, but was so taken up by company and business as I could get but hither by this morning. It grieves me that I have not liberty to make better expressions of my love to thee, thou art more dear to me than all earthly things; but I will endeavor that my prayers may supply the defect of my pen, which will be of use to us both, insomuch as the favor and blessing of God is better than all things besides.

I know thou lookest for troubles here, and, when one affliction is over to meet with another; but remember our Saviour tells us, "Be of good comfort, I have overcome the world." Therefore, my good wife, rise up thy heart, and be not dismayed at the crosses, thou meetest with in family affairs, or otherwise; but still fly to Him who will take up thy burden for thee. Go thou on cheerfully, in obedience to His holy will, in the course He hath set thee. Peace shall come. I commend thee and all thine to the gracious protection and blessing of the Lord.

Farewell, my good wife. I kiss and love thee with the kindest affection, and rest thy faithful husband,

JOHN WINTHROP.

Most Loving and Good Husband: I have received your letters. The true tokens of your love and care of good, now in your absence as well as when you are present, make me think that saying false, "Out of sight out of mind," I am sure my heart and thoughts are always near you, to "do you good, and not evil, all the days of my life." I rejoice in the expectation of our happy meeting; for the absence has been very long in my conceit, and thy presence much desired. Thy welcome is always ready; make haste to entertain it.

And so I bid my good husband farewell and commit him to the Lord.

Your loving, obedient wife,
MARGARET WINTHROP.

WHY I AM A POOR MAN.—"Wool Hat" in the planters advocate tells the following plain story why he is poor:

"I am poor because I buy more than I sell. In the first place, I buy a part of my meat from the North West; my fish comes from Portland; for the taking of which the Mainelander receives a bounty from the Government. My onion sets and all my garden seeds I buy from Michigan. I sold the wool from eighteen sheep at 37½ cents per pound to an agent manufacturing company at Reading Penn., four months thereafter bought a hat from the same company, paying at the rate of six dollars a pound for the wool. The hide of Buck, I sold at 5 cents per pound. It went to Elmira, N. Y., was tanned, sent back, and I bought it at 35 cents a pound, and it weighed more than it did when I sold it. My axe handles come from Connecticut, my matches from Delaware, my pen, ink and paper from New York. Am I the only fool in Georgia?"

☞ The country shopkeeper said: "Here, my friend, those balls of butter I bought of you last week all proved to be just three ounces short of a pound." And the farmer innocently answered: Well, I don't see how that could be, for I used one of your pound bars of soap for a weight.

The home circle—walking around with the baby at night.

"She stoops to conquer," was written before the days of pin-back skirts.