

# Saint Mary's Beacon.

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LEONARDTOWN, MD., THURSDAY MORNING AUGUST 12, 1886.

ESTABLISHED 1852.

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Oct 18, 1883—y

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Nov. 19, 1885—1

FOR SHERIFF.

Leonardtown, April 5, '86. Messrs. Editors—You will please announce Mr. J. L. CONNELLY as a candidate for the sheriffship at the next election and say that he will be cordially supported by the public generally.

April 5, '86—1

**Go, Feel What I Felt.**

Go, feel what I have felt; Go, bear what I have borne; Sink beneath the blows a father dealt, And the cold world's proud scorn, Then suffer on from year to year—The sole relief the scorching tear.

Go, kneel where I have knelt, Implore, beseech and pray, Strive the bottled heart to melt, The downward course to stay; Be dashed with bitter curse aside, Your prayers barbed, your tears defied.

Go, weep as I have wept, O'er a loved father's fall, See every promise blessing swept, Youth's sweetness turned to gall; Life's fading flowers strewn all the way That brought me up to woman's day.

With gnashing teeth, lip bathed in blood, A cold and livid brow; Go catch his withering glance and see There mirrored his soul's misery.

Go, hear, and feel, and see, and know All that my soul hath felt and known, Then look upon the wine cup's glow, See if its flavor can atone—Think if its flavor you will try When all proclaims, "Thy drink, and die!"

Tell me I hate the bowl, Hate is a feeble word; I loathe—abhor—my very soul With strong disgust is stirred When e'er I see, or hear, or tell Of the dark beverage of hell.

**A STORY OF INSANITY.**

BY HOMER FORT.

I had been practising law in the city three years when I received a letter from my uncle asking me to visit him for the purpose of defending a lawsuit against him. I use the word practising, but in reality my cases had been so few I could readily count them on my fingers. Since the day I left college I had ambitiously posed as an eminent jurist, and won notoriety if not distinction, by my frequent appearances in the court rooms during the trial of celebrated cases with which I had no connection. Nature had been kind in my physical development, and placed a white tuft of hair conspicuously to the front of my head, leaving a thick growth of black hair on the sides in remarkable contrast. This distinguished mark attracted the eye of the lightning artists and enlisted the didactic descriptions of the reporters on the great dailies. My name appeared, as frequently did my picture, in the list of prominent lawyers present.

There was but one drawback to the unsolicited, but not unwelcome publicity I achieved, and that was the inevitable reference to the fact that I had delivered a series of lectures on evolution before a literary club, which Prof. Huxley declared, after reading them, were in the main correct and followed his ideas closely. This statement prejudiced a large class against me who might have been among my clients, and caused the scientific to discuss the genius of ingenious and ingenious plagiarism. Altogether, as a young bachelor with a moderate income, outside of law practice, I certainly felt that my prospects were flattering.

My uncle, who resided in a small town in the interior of the state, had evidently been reading the city papers. In his letter he said that he was proud to see my name mentioned in connection with such big cases and noted lawyers, but regretted that I had ever consented to lecture about new-fangled notions. In a postscript he added that his stepdaughter, Reba, was "afflicted" mentally, and cautioned me not to speak about the doctrine of evolution in her presence. I could form no other conclusion but that his daughter was insane, a monomaniac, perhaps on some subjects.

It was the beginning of summer, so I concluded to sacrifice any chance clients that might call and go and defend my uncle's case. I left a card on my office-door to the effect that I was taking my usual annual vacation.

As the train sped along toward the town where I pictured myself as being received by the legal fraternity as a noted luminary from the city, I certainly pitied my less fortunate brethren whose names never got outside the directory. My thoughts finally reverted to my uncle and his stepdaughter. I recalled what I knew of his history.

Samuel Whitlow and my father were the only children of my stern, Puritanical grandfather. My uncle inherited his father's nature and constitutionally bewailed the degeneracy of the present time. The two brothers, who had ideas so diametrically opposite, drifted apart, one settling in the city and the other in a small country town. Sam Whitlow prospered, married

and in a few years was left a widower without any children. An English lady, Mme. Stanley, a widow with one child, came quietly and resided in the town. She attended the church regularly where my uncle officiated as deacon, contributed liberally to the maintenance of the pastorate and promptly accepted an offer of marriage from the stern high church member.

Two years of great happiness passed when she died, leaving her daughter Reba, then four years old, as a precious charge to her husband. I heard that Reba would have graduated with the highest honors at the seminary, but for some unexplained reason her step-father took her away a few months before the time. That was all I knew of my uncle and his affairs when the train halted at the depot. There was no brass band to welcome the cosmopolitan lawyer, but a servant was on hand to take charge of my luggage and show me the way to Deacon Whitlow's. I felt somewhat piqued at the absence of the worthy deacon and interrogated the servant.

"The boss, sir, wanted to come, but Miss Reba put him out by saying she would enjoy meeting you, too."

"I would have been delighted to meet her, too," I said, wondering why her wish to accompany her father had caused him to stay at home.

In a few moments I reached the house, a two-story frame dwelling, covered in front with trailing wisteria vines from which hung large branches of purple and white blossoms. Several shade trees with thick foliage grew in the yard, and a fountain, rusty and long since run dry, completed my hasty observations.

A tall, stern-looking man, with gray hair, met me and invited me in. He did not even apologize for sending a servant to meet me.

"You resemble your father somewhat," he said, when we reached the parlor. The gloom and silence that brooded in the house struck me as soon as I entered. It grew upon me as my kinsman client gave me the brief outlines of the suit I was to defend. It was a relief to go to my room upstairs to prepare for dinner. I threw open the windows and endeavored to break the monotony of the oppressive silence. "Why did I not meet Reba? How did she look? Was she 'afflicted' to the point of unsociality?" These thoughts occupied my mind until dinner.

My uncle escorted me to the dining hall. "Reba will be in presently, and I trust you will be judicious in your conversation with her," he said in a slow, solemn tone. We sat down and were waited upon by two slow and somewhat aged servants. I was relating a case that I had won, the only one I had been successful in out of the few I had been entrusted with, similar to his, when I looked up and saw a graceful and beautiful woman approaching. I was startled almost by the sudden vision, and kept my eyes fixed in undisguised admiration upon her. She had large black eyes, fair complexion and an expression that was lovely and attractive beyond description. Her movement was poetry itself as she came up and extended her hand.

"This is my city cousin, the lawyer? We shall make your stay pleasant, shall we not, papa?"

"Yes, Reba, I will do my best, but city folks always entertain themselves, somehow," he answered without looking up.

She took a seat opposite. "Could it be possible," I asked myself in pain, "that such a lovely creature was afflicted mentally? If so, what form did it assume? Was she epileptic and enjoyed sweet intervals of rational life, or subject to long fits of abstraction?"

She looked at me now and then in a sad, significant way, as if I were an object of pity. I did not understand it. Perhaps the white tuft of hair that adorned my head created compassion in her bosom for me. The conversation was confined to local topics, the deacon leading in a dry and uninteresting style. I did not eat much and felt relieved when the meal was over. The law case which had been uppermost in my mind was now relegated to a secondary place. Reba, this beautiful, afflicted girl (she was not quite 21 years old) was the sole cynosure of my speculations. I felt irresistibly attracted towards her and resolved to ask my uncle what affected

her mentally. If he evaded the question perhaps chance might reveal what I sought to know.

That evening we dined in the parlor. When I entered Reba was engaged in low and earnest conversation with her stepfather. She immediately ceased talking and turned her face towards me. I saw the faintest trace of a smile on her bright eyes and her expressive countenance. Still I remembered the injunction to be judicious in conversation.

"It is a beautiful day, and the moon shines brightly," said she with historic stress.

The girl's eyes dilated with uncontrolled pleasure as she answered: "Oh, do continue, cousin dear; your moonlight rhapsody, I am sure, will be fine."

It was sweet to be called dear, even with a privileged prefix, by one so lovely, no matter how unbalanced.

"I will repeat Shelley's Ode to the Moon, for you, if you like," I responded.

The deacon protested; he didn't desire to hear anything from Shelley. He requested Reba to sing as a compromise.

She went to the piano and sang in a sweet voice the Ballad of a Troubadour. I was moved by the purity and crystal-like melody of her notes. She asked me if I sang, and before I knew what answer I made we were singing Mendelssohn's duet, "I would that my love."

It must have brought back tender memories to her. A tear fell from her eyes as she ceased, and she hurriedly bade me good night and departed.

The deacon had buried his face in both his hands. When he looked up his eyes were red, and he said in a husky tone of voice:

"I heard her mother sing that way a few days before she died."

I intended to ask all about Reba's mental derangement, but I concluded to wait and not add more anguish to him that night.

I retired, but could not sleep. The melody of Reba's voice rang in my ears and her beautiful face haunted my vision. I got up and dressed. I gazed out of my window at the clear, moonlight night. It was tempting, so I descended and strolled to the rusty old fountain. Everything was quiet and the far-off bark of a dog had a lonesome wail in its dying echoes. Suddenly a light beamed from a lower window in the house. It was in Reba's room. I could not refrain from looking, when my heart sank within me at the sight I beheld.

The figure of the girl, clad in white material, that clung in classic folds to her superb form, was standing erect, her long hair falling in wild disorder over her shoulders. In her right hand she held a poniard on high, its bright blade pointed at her bosom.

In imagination I saw the crimson stream stain the white robe, heard the short gasp and moan, and pressed the cold form that lay silent on the floor. I sprang to my feet and rushed forward, my only impulse being to reach her before she fell. I prayed that some thought would seize her and make her stay her mad purpose but for a minute. I reached the window just as the flashing blade was dashed to the floor, and the girl stood unharmed.

With a single bound I cleared the low window sill and caught her in my arms.

"Reba, for God's sake don't kill yourself!" I cried.

She turned pale and freed herself from my arms. I thought perhaps she would faint. She sat down in a chair and began to laugh heartily. It seemed to amuse her infinitely. My feelings were wrought up to a high pitch, and I started to speak harshly to her for such levity, when suddenly it occurred to me that her crazy fit was upon her.

Pity for her condition was more in order than censure.

"Did you see me with the poniard?" she asked smiling.

When I explained where I was at and how I felt, rushing forward to save her, she said:

"I believe you have the elements of a hero in you. You wanted to save my life, did you not? Perhaps I may give you that chance yet, but only on one condition. Will you promise?"

I promised anything if she would not attempt suicide again.

"Do not tell my father anything that happened to-night. Before you leave for the city I have a plan to disclose to you. Will you trust and believe in me?"

How could I resist such a pleading look? So in order to humor her I agreed.

She then walked to the poniard, picked it up and presented it to me. She asked me to keep it as a souvenir. As she bowed me out with the grace of a queen, she repeated these lines:

"Beneath misfortune's stroke The firmest mind will fall and stunned depart From its safe plan of action."

I knew then that she was insane, or else she never would have uttered words that conveyed that idea.

The next day I met Reba and my uncle at the breakfast table. She was looking bright and saluted me with a smile. She even went so far as to ask me if I had had a good night's rest and if my dreams carried me back to the busy scenes of the city.

"What admirable acting; nothing but insanity could make such an utter forgetfulness on her part of the transactions of the night," I thought.

My uncle declared that I looked as if I had not slept a wink, and I felt it decidedly. The case began that day, so I was occupied until nearly sundown in the task of getting a jury.

At dinner the deacon persisted in talking about the jurors I had selected, but I told him that if I did not win the suit for him and put the plaintiff in for costs and damages I would charge no fee. This put him in a good mood, and in the joy of the moment he said:

"Reba, that is the way big lawyers in the city do things. I think my nephew would make some woman a good husband."

The remark was embarrassing to both of us and brought forth no ready response.

Finally, she colored up like a full-blown rose and merely suggested:

"Doubtless he has made a selection already among his many friends in the city."

It now came my turn to protest that I was still free to act as my feelings dictated.

This untimely allusion to marriage by my uncle pretty much checked conversation and I was glad when dinner was over.

As on the first evening of my arrival we enjoyed an hour or so in the parlor. Reba sang divinely and was as chatty and pleasant as if she had never contemplated suicide. Once I noticed that she looked at me, but for a moment only, with that sad, piteous expression that I observed when we first met. "My white tuft of hair again," I thought.

I was very sleepy and retired early. When I bade father and daughter good night in the parlor, I was surprised to see her come forward and offer her hand. Instantly I felt a note and my fingers quickly closed upon it. Its contents were as strange as the writer and as mysterious:

My New Friend and Cousin: If the case is finished to-morrow, meet me at midnight near the old fountain. I desire to impart my plans to you. I have prayed for some strong friend like you. REBA.

Her "plans," I imagined, were the rambling fancies of a diseased mind. I resolved to humor her, because I felt sure that she would do herself harm if disturbed in any of her ideas. My intentions had been to remain a month, but now my great desire was to finish the case and leave. My sleep was full of sweet dreams about this beautiful girl, and I awoke refreshed. The deacon and I had early breakfast alone, and hurried to the court-house. There were few witnesses to examine, and by noon the plaintiff's lawyer addressed the jury for three wearisome hours. I knew the jurors were farmers and wanted to get home by sundown, so I spoke five minutes, saying that I did not desire to keep them away from their families, and that I had such a clear case that to argue for hours a self-evident fact to them would be an insult to their intelligence. In a few minutes the jury decided against the plaintiff and mulcted him for costs and damages. My uncle was disappointed because I made such a short speech, but when the decision was rendered his satisfaction knew no bounds. On the way to his house he slapped me on the back and said he had something to impart to me the next day. He declared that it would be a surprise.

My anxiety was to get away, for I knew that if I remained much longer

I would be a slave to the caprice of a crazy woman. Hence I paid little attention to what my uncle was saying.

After dinner I took a long walk and returned to my room. I read until near midnight and then, drowsily slipping down the stairs and reached the rusty old fountain. A slight breeze was stirring and wafted the fragrant odor of flowers upon its surface. The moon was far down and the Pleiades were hiding a carnival of brightness overhead. I had heard

I stood within the deep shadow of a tree.

"How noble in my uncle to watch over this girl and keep her from going to an asylum," I said in thought. I turned, and at my side, dressed in a black traveling habit, with a valise in her left hand, stood Reba. Her face was pale and her eyes looked as if she had been weeping. She spoke first:

"My plan is simply this: I wish to fly to the city with you."

It took my breath away. It was some minutes before I could answer. "She is crazy as a March hare," I mentally uttered, "so I'll humor her."

"Yes, we will fly to the city, but not to-night. To-morrow I'll get uncle's permission for you to accompany me."

"Oh, no; he'll never consent for you to go anywhere with me. He thinks you are—"

She stopped and looked down. I urged her to finish the sentence.

"That you are afflicted; that you are a monomaniac."

"And pray what do you think?" I asked.

"I think you are just as sane as I am. At first I thought you might be afflicted, but I have no such idea now."

Well this was a revelation. The girl had thought I was insane; the deacon had evidently told her so because I lectured on evolution.

The next thing I expected her to say was that she wished to fly to the city and marry me, so I resolved to rush on fate and discover her full plan.

"What do you intend to do in the city?" I asked.

"I am studying to be an actress, but my father will never consent. He took me away from school because he heard I was inclined to such a profession."

"Then you are not crazy?" I almost shouted.

I saw it all, the suicide scene was acting.

"You are not crazy on religion, are you?" she asked naively as a response.

"I am mad with love," I answered. By that old rusty fountain two crazy people vowed eternal fidelity, and the same old, old story was repeated.

My uncle, the next day, gave us his blessing, and said that after I had won that case he resolved to make me his heir.

I forgave his peculiar way of expressing Reba's peculiar desire to become an actress, and frequently write to him that some "afflictions" are blessings in disguise.

VAN WYCK SAVED HIS BEACON.—Senator Van Wyck was out on a stump before an immense audience in Nebraska. There were thousands there to hear him open the campaign. As usual, he grappled with the monopolists. Right in the middle of his speech a shrill old fellow in the edge of the crowd sang out: "Senator Van Wyck, will you let me ask you a question?" "Certainly I will," responded Old Van. "Answer me this, then," said the old man: "Isn't it true that you came here from the East on passes, and isn't it true that one of them was given to you by the Union Pacific Railroad, which you are now attacking?" As quick as a flash the Senator put his hand in his pocket, saying as he did so, "Of course I did! Here are a lot more of them I got there; and I will take as many more as I can get. Always forage on the enemy is my motto."

Farmers speak highly of our Farmers Hand-Book. Merchants of our Merchants' Manual and Ladies of our Ladies' Book, while the editor says that as books of reference they are invaluable. For six cents in stamps we will send them to any address. R. H. McDonald Drug Co., 532 Washington Street, New York.

A man in New York recently committed suicide by pushing a handkerchief down his throat. Ancient history informs that Cleopatra, the dusky beauty, also committed suicide with a "wiper."—Norristown Herald.

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