

Saint Mary's Beacon
 PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY
 By T. V. YARR & F. V. KING
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 TERMS FOR ADVERTISING:
 One square, one insertion.....\$1.00
 Each subsequent insertion..... 50
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Saint Mary's Beacon

VOL. LV.

LEONARDTOWN, MD., FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1895.

769.

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OUR COUNTRY COUSIN.

This is how it happened: My two sisters, the fashionable Misses Seymour, towards the end of a certain summer, having been the rounds of all the old summer resorts and tiring of the last one, suddenly remembered that somewhere in the rural districts in the interior of the States they possessed some cousins of more or less nearness or distance. As a last resort, in order to overcome the ennui that was then gradually taking possession of them, they decided to settle down on these cousins for the remaining days of the late summer and the heated period of autumn.

With them to decide was to act, so with almost unfashionable alacrity—and my sisters were strictlers for fashion, too—letters were dispatched to the suddenly remembered cousins and the answer to them awaited with breathless impatience.

They came at last, bearing the most cordial invitation for my sisters to follow their inclinations and come up into the country at their earliest convenience.

To say that my sisters jumped at the chance would be wholly misleading, my sisters never jumped at anything; they were entirely too elegant for that.

But with surprising haste they answered, informing their hostesses when they would arrive, and then on the heels of the letter swept up into the country, bag, bandbox and baggage.

Letters told us how they found their cousins, a charming widow and her daughter, with a fine old place, and, what blessed it, real country hospitality. The widow was set down as a person who had seen something of life, and the daughter was voted nice, though a trifle old-fashioned.

As father and I were very busy in town that summer, we did not join the ladies in the country, but merely took a week's fishing at one of our favorite haunts and went right back to work again, so it was not until early in October, when the girls came back to town, brown as berries and full of the pleasures of their trip, that I received a regular, detailed description of my cousin, Harriet, and her daughter, Alice.

And from the description I gathered that the young lady was a person who would do very well—for the country.

Indeed, my sisters gave me very plainly to understand that our cousin, Alice Seymour, would not shine under the city's lamps.

In a few days after their return there was nothing new to tell, either of their trip or of their entertainers, and I heard no more of my country cousins until one day in early winter, when the female portion of the household was thrown into sudden consternation by the arrival of a letter from Mrs. Harriet Seymour, in which she informed my sisters and their maternal parent that she would like to have her daughter spend a month in town with them.

There were other sundry remarks of a pleasant and personal nature in the letter, but they were hardly noticed in the all-absorbing importance of the desire expressed.

Sister Florence came to me with indignation written on every feature.

"To think," she exclaimed, "Cousin Alice wants to come here!"

"Well, why shouldn't she?" I asked.

"Why shouldn't she?" echoed Florence. "Why it simply can't be done."

"Why not?"

My sister did not deign to answer me, but swept away in great indignation.

It was Caroline next who expressed to me how awful the idea was. I expressed entire inability to see its awfulness, and was told by my sister that men didn't understand these things at all.

"I understand, I think," said I, "that you accepted the hospitality of people whose kindness you are unwilling to return," and Caroline left me in disgust.

Then mother whispered to me confidentially that she couldn't see how she was going to avoid having that girl come and was entirely amazed when I asked why she should wish to avoid it.

"Why, it would never do in the world, Hubert," said my mother. "I love the girl as well as any one can, but you know that the country and the city are so different."

"Is my cousin a lady?" I asked.

"To be sure," said my mother, "but—"

"Is she an idiot?"

"Why, certainly not, but—"

"Can she tell a train of cars from a hansom?"

"Hubert!"

"Well, then I can't see why it's going to be such a terrible thing to bring her to the city."

My mother left me with the parting assurance that men never could appreciate such difficulties.

But after studying it, they could find no way but to allow the girl to come, and come she did.

The girls wanted to send a servant to meet her, but I insisted on going myself, so Florence went with me.

I could hardly believe that the dainty little lady in the gray traveling suit, who answered my sister's greeting with a quiet smile, was the objectionable country cousin. She was a lady all over from her charming hat to her pretty little walking boots.

She was so pretty that as I looked at my sister I began to understand the point of objection which the coming of my cousin had raised.

Now, while I do not believe in love at first sight, I must confess that a strange fancy for this quiet little girl took immediate possession of me, and as the days passed it grew. What else could be expected of any obnoxious young fellow, anyway, when his mother and sisters opposed him?

So I found myself loving Alice Seymour. But in this I was not alone; several other young fellows seemed to share my feelings and it made me uneasy.

Her manners were so perfect, and yet she said and did such quaint and unstudied things that a man couldn't help being attracted to her. She was not conventional, but she possessed a natural dignity that was greater than convention could give. As Beverly Briggs said, she was one of nature's noble women.

Confound the fellow, he always had the trick of turning a neat phrase.

Well, like a blind man, I went on seeing nothing about me, until one day I came upon my little cousin looking very dolorous. She was alone in the parlor and she looked as if she had been weeping.

I was all up in arms in a moment to know who had offended her, but she hesitated a long time before she told me hesitatingly that she had grown to believe that my sisters did not want her there and that she was going home.

Somehow I steeled myself to say: "I do not want you here either."

She raised her tear-stained face to me—I had forgotten to tell you that she was freckled—just about a dozen bewitching ones placed where they would do the most good. I saw surprise in her look, but before she could speak I kissed her and whispered: "Let us make a little nest of our own, dearie, and—"

Oh, psst, a fellow can't tell about these things, you know, but she was willing and I was happy.

When my sisters were informed they acted very well, kissed us and feigned a great deal of enthusiasm. I thought at first it was all pretended, and I never understood until later.

Both of my sisters are now married.

SANITARY ITEM.—Lay off your overcoat, or you won't feel it when you go out," said the landlord of a Texas hotel to a newly arrived guest who was sitting by the fire.

"That's what I am afraid of," replied the stranger. "The last time I was here I laid off my overcoat, and I didn't feel it when I went out, and I haven't felt it since."

Genius and Gastronomy.

What should a mental worker eat to stimulate imagination? Oysters, lobsters, etc.—this is a difficult question to answer. Men of genius have tried a great many things, each going his own way. Gormandizing occurs quite frequently. A famous composer, whose one weakness was his great liking for pastry, was censured by some on that account. "Do you suppose," he quickly retorted, "that dainties have been reserved for fools?" Haydn, Goethe and Rossini were well-known gourmands. Rossini himself invented a number of culinary recipes. On the other hand; we often find cases of moderation and temperance almost ascetic. Richard Wagner, for example, while surrounded by luxury of all sorts at Wahnfried, was, nevertheless, very temperate in both eating and drinking; he took only two meals a day; confining himself to a purely vegetarian diet at that.

Beethoven would drink a little soup in the morning, taking no other meal before supper; late in the afternoon, however, he would take a walk to Silvring and drink a glass of young wine. Schubert had his days when he might have well passed for a professional faster, and yet on those days he did not work. The Russian poet Lermontov was once invited by a rich boyar to a banquet. A mass of delicacies was laid before him. The poet tasted this and that, took leave of his host as soon as he could, and repaired to the nearest cafe, where he satisfied his appetite by two orders of roast beef. Charles Gounod was very fond of cherries, and a mere glance at a plate of pretty red cherries, encouraged him in work. Alfred Tennyson could not stand the vapor emanating from boiled potatoes, though he did eat potatoes. Similarly the Hungarian Petoif would not touch hare's meat in whatever way prepared. Alessandro Manzoni disliked roasted chestnuts; Grillparzer, roasted goose. Mehul was one of the first among the French who tasted of horse-flesh.

More important, however, is the manner and time of eating, and the size of meals, all of which affect mental health to a considerable degree. It is surely interesting to note that Alfred de Musset always took his dinner at noon, as did the eastern Europeans, contrary to the universal custom that prevails in Paris and all France of eating dinner in the evening. Alphonse Daudet and Dumas fils, again, take their dinners late in the evening, sometimes as late as 9 o'clock.

Emile Zola, a model of orderliness, eats his dinner at 4 o'clock, in a small dining-room, having no companion but his wife. No less pleasant are the dinners of the Count Tolstoi at Iasnaia Polyana. The entire family—and it is a large one—gathers around a coarse wooden table, the old count at the head; a silent prayer is said, and thereupon the dinner proceeds, accompanied by conversation. If a guest be present, his place is at the right hand of the Count, and the host waits on his guest himself.

W. F. Greenwell & Son, Leonardtown; Jos. S. Matthews, Valley Lee and country stores will tell you that no one is better qualified to judge of the merits of an article than the dealer, because he bases his opinion on the experience of all who use it. For this reason they wish us to publish the remarks of other dealers about an article which they handle. Messrs. C. F. Moore & Co., Newberg, Ore., say: "We sell more of Chamberlain's Cough Remedy than all others put together, and it always gives good satisfaction."

Mr. J. F. Allen, Fox, Ore., says: "I believe Chamberlain's Cough Remedy to be the best I have handled." Mr. W. H. Hitchcock, Columbus, Wash., says: "Chamberlain's Cough Remedy sells well and is highly praised by all who use it."

PROTECTED.—Miss Penstock—Didn't it make the cold shivers run down your back when he proposed?" Miss Griggson—Not at all, my dear. You see, I was pretty well wrapped up.

Brown on Human Nature.

"Brown, I don't see how it is that your girls all marry off as soon as they get old enough, while none of mine can marry."

"Oh, that's simple enough! I marry my girls off on the buckwheat straw principle."

"But what is that principle? I have never heard of it before."

"Well, I used to raise a good deal of buckwheat, and it puzzled me to know how to get rid of the straw. Nothing would eat it, and it was a great bother to me. At last I thought of a plan."

"I stacked my buckwheat straw nicely and built a high rail fence around it."

"My cattle, of course, concluded that it was something good, and at once tore down the fence and began to eat the straw."

"I drove them away and put up the fence a few times, but the more I drove them away the more anxious they became to eat the straw."

"After this had been repeated a few times, the cattle determined to eat the straw, and eat it they did, every bit of it."

"As I said, I marry my girls off on the same principle."

"When a young man I don't like begins calling on my girls I encourage him in every way I can."

"I tell him to come as often and stay as late as he pleases, and I take pains to hint to the girls that I think they'd better set their caps for him. It works first-rate."

"He doesn't make many calls for the girls treat him as coolly as they can."

"But when a young fellow that I like comes around—a man that I think would suit me for a son-in-law—I don't let him make many calls before I give him to understand that he isn't wanted around my house."

"I tell the girls, too, that they should not have anything to do with him, and give them orders never to speak to him again."

"The plan works first-rate. The young folks begin to pity each other, and the next thing I know they are engaged."

"When I see that they are determined to marry I always give in, and pretend to make the best of it. That's the way I manage it."

Her Revenge.

Sometimes school board officers are very officious and arrogant in manner. An elderly but fresh looking woman opened her door to one lately and answered the following questions:

"Have you any children?"

"Yes."

"How many?"

"Three."

"Are they at school?"

"No."

"Are any of them?"

"No."

"We must see to that," said the man pompously taking out a notebook. "Now, your name and address?"

Given.

"Your children's names?"

Also given.

"Now, their ages."

"Well, let me think," answered the woman, with a gleam of fun in her eyes. "Willie, the youngest, is 30 and was married last week."

"Thunder and lightning!" roared the man. "Why didn't you tell me that at first?"

"Because you didn't ask me," she answered quietly.

JIMMY'S DEFINITION OF A PIG.—Now, Jimmy," said Mr. Parkins to his young hopeful, when you go to the party to night you must not make a pig of yourself. Now, remember, you know what a pig is, I suppose?"

"Yes," said Jimmy.

"Well, what is a pig?"

"An old hog's little boy."

THE RETIRED BURGLAR.—"Speaking of cinches," said the retired burglar, "the easiest, softest, smoothest snap I ever struck was in a house in a small town in Rhode Island. There was a thunderstorm coming up as I went along toward this house, and just as I got there it began to sprinkle. By the time I'd got inside it was coming down pretty hard, and I was glad to get under shelter, for I hadn't brought any umbrella with me. I hadn't had any supper either, and when I got into the dining room I thought I'd get something to eat. The sideboard was locked and the key carried up stairs, but a little jimmy opened the door as easy as a knife would open a pie. I set out a little snack on the table and sat down and ate comfortably, with the rain pouring down outside. If there's anything I like, it's to hear a storm a-raging outside when you are settled down all snug and comfortable within."

"But here was something I hadn't counted on. The thunder was roaring and plunging like a dozen earthquakes bursting down through the sky, and it kept the house in a tremble all the time. I knew nobody could sleep in that thunder. They'd be sure to be all awake, but here I was, and I hated to lose a night, and after I'd waited a little and the storm didn't show any signs of letting up I thought I'd go ahead and see anyhow. The very first room I looked into up stairs settled the whole business."

"Over in one corner of the room, beyond a bed, I saw a woman standing in front of an open closet door. Two children hopped out of bed, and the mother pushed them into the closet, and then crowded in herself and pulled the door shut tight. It was all very simple. Husband away, no help; two children sleeping in another room, woke up by the thunder, come into their mother's room, all scared; mother puts children in closet and gets in herself, as lots of folks do in thunderstorms. And then I walk over and turn the key in the lock, and there you are. No danger of them coming out till the storm is over anyway, but just as well to be sure about it, and then I just quietly go through the house. It isn't big, and it doesn't take long, and I come back before the storm is over and unlock the closet door again and skip, and that is all about it."

THE COUNTRY EDITOR.—The country editor must be uncasing in his efforts to secure news and extend the circulation of his paper; and he will find he will be more successful if in public matters he voices only the sentiments of the people and keeps his own opinion to himself. In small towns, where much jealousy exists and his constituency is limited it is not safe for him to take sides in personal matters, as can the editors of city papers. He should endeavor to give all the news and, at the same time speak as well of all persons as possible; and when it is impossible to speak well of one, it is better to say nothing, but give the bare facts in the case. It is much better to make a friend than an enemy. Every man no matter how degraded has some friends; and if he offends a person, the influence of that person and his friends will be against his paper to the injury of his business. If people have battles to fight, let them fight them out themselves. Every statement made in the paper must be well weighed, and the editor should know that it is positively correct; but having made a statement, he should be willing at all times to stand by it.

—Exchange.

NOT TO BE CONGRATULATED.—"Life is full of ups and downs," said the man who is airy and affable under all circumstances.

"So I have heard."

"Well, I am at present in the full enjoyment of one of the ups."

"I congratulate you."

"Don't. It's a case of 'hard up.'"

No cloud can overshadow a true Christian but his faith will discern a rainbow in it.