

St. Tammany Farmer

"The Blessings of Government, Like the Dews from Heaven, Should Descend Alike upon the Rich and the Poor."

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THE SWEET GIRL GRADUATE.

She was a school girl graduate,
With school-girls used to play;
She got her sheep-skin and a great
Big 50-cent bouquet.
When she went home her dear mamma
Met her with a pleasant look,
And said, "Now, Mary Ann, bile in,
And take my place as—cook."

But Mary Ann popped up her nose
And said, "Mamma, I won't!
What! come right out of school and cook?
You bet your socks I don't."
That anxious, overbearing ma,
Like any mother should,
Hit Mary Ann beneath the ear,
With a great big stick of wood.

So now the school-girl graduate,
With pleasure in her eye,
Can cook a steak or wash a shirt,
Or make a dish-rag fly.
Her mother taught her what it was
To lead a useful life.
There's to be chaps a running there,
Each waits her for his—cook.

BILL SMILEY AND THE WIDOW.

"Wife," said Edward Wilbur, one
morning, as he sat stirring his coffee
with one hand and holding a
plump baby on his knee with the
other, and looking across the table
into the bright eyes of his little wife,
"would it not be a good joke to get
bachelor Bill Smiley to take the
Widow Watson to Barnum's show
next week?"

"You can't do it, Ed, he won't
ask her; he's so awful shy. Why,
he came by here the other morn-
ing when I was hanging out the
clothes, and he looked over the
fence and spoke, but when I shook
out a night gown he blushed like a
girl and went away."

"I think I can manage it," said
Ed; "but I'll have to lie just a little.
But then it won't be much harm
under the circumstances, for I know
she likes him, and he don't dislike
her; but, as you say, he's so shy.
I'll go over to his place to borrow
some bags of him, and if I don't
bag him before I come back, don't
kiss me for a week, Nelly."

So saying, Ed started, and while
he is mowing in the field, we will
take a good look at Bill Smiley. He
was rather a good looking fellow,
though his hair and whiskers show-
ed some gray hairs, and he had got
in a set of artificial teeth. But
every one said he was a good soul,
and so he was. He had as good a
hundred acre farm as any in Nor-
wich, and everything comfortable,
and if he wanted a wife, many a girl
would have jumped at the chance,
like a rooster on a grasshopper.
But Bill was so bashful—always
was—and when Susan Berrybottle,
whom he was so sweet on, though
he never said 'ooo' to her, got mar-
ried to old Watson, he just drew
in his head like a mud turtle into
his shell, and there was no getting
it out again, though it had been
noticed that since Susan had be-
come a widow he had paid more
attention to his clothes, and had
been very regular in attendance at
the church the widow attended.

But here comes Ed Wilbur,
"Good morning, Mr. Smiley,"
"Good morning, Mr. Wilbur;
what is the news your way?"

"Oh, nothing particular, but I
know of," said Ed; "only Barnum's
show, that everybody and his girl
is going to. I was over to old
Sackrider's yesterday, and I see his
son Gus had got a new buggy, and
he's got that white faced coat of his
sleek as a seal. I understand he
thinks of taking widow Watson to
the show. He has been hanging
around there a good deal of late,
but I'd just like to cut him out, I

would, Susan is a nice little woman,
deserves a better man than that
young pup of a fellow, though I
would not blame her much if she
takes him, for she must be very
lonesome, and she has to let her
farm out on shares, and it isn't half
worked, and no one else seems to
have the spunk to speak up to her.
By jingo! if I was a single man, I'd
show you a trick or two."

So saying Ed borrowed some
bags and started around the corner
of the barn, where he left Bill
sweeping, and put his ear to a knot
hole and listened, knowing the
bachelor had a habit of talking to
himself when anything worried him.
"Confound that young Sackrider!"
said Bill. "what business has he
there, I'd like to know? Got a
new buggy has he? Well, so have
I, and a new harness, too! and his
horse can't get in sight of mine, and
I declare I've half a mind to yes
I will! I'll go this very night and
ask her to go to the show with me.
I'll show Ed Wilbur that I ain't
half such a calf as he thinks I am,
if I did let old Watson get the start
of me in the first place!"

Ed could scarcely help laughing
outright, but he hastily hitched the
bags on his shoulder, and with a
low chuckle of success, started
home to tell the news to Nelly; and
about 5 o'clock that evening they
saw Billy go by with his horse and
buggy, on his way to the widow's.
He jogged along quietly, thinking
of the old singing school days, and
what a pretty girl Susan was then,
and wondering inwardly if he would
have more courage to talk up to
her, until, at about a mile from her
house, when he came to a bridge
over a creek, and it so happened
that just as he reached the middle
of the bridge, he gave a tremendous
sneeze, and blew his teeth out of
his mouth, clear over the dash
board, and striking on the planks,
they rolled over the side of the
bridge and dropped in four feet of
water.

Words cannot do justice to poor
Bill, or paint the expression of his
face as he sat there—completely
dumbfounded at his startling piece
of ill luck. After a while he stepped
outside of his buggy, and getting
down on his hands and knees look-
ed over into the water; yes, there
they were at the bottom, with a
crowd of little fishes rubbing their
noses against them, and Bill wished
that his nose was as close for a
second. His beautiful teeth, that
cost him so much, and the show
coming on, and no time to lose, for
some one might come along and
ask him what he was fooling around
there for. He had no notion of
spoiling his good clothes by wading
in with them on, and besides if he
did that, he could not go to the
widow's that night; so he took a
look up and down the road to see
that no one was in sight, then
quickly undressed himself, laying
his clothes in the buggy to keep
clean. Then he ran round to the
bank and waded into the almost ice
cold water, but his teeth did not
chatter in his head—he only wished
they could. Quickly he waded
along so as not to stir up the mud,
and when he got to the right spot
he dropped under the water, and
came up with them in his hand, and
replaced them in his mouth. But
hark! what noise is that? A wagon,
followed by a little noisy dog bark-
ing with all his might, and his horse
is starting.

"Whoa! Whoa! Stop you brute
you, stop!" But stop he would not,
but went off at a spanking pace,
with the unfortunate bachelor after
him, and the little dog yelping after
the bachelor. Bill was certainly
in capital running costume, but
though he strained every nerve he
could not touch the buggy or reach
the lines that were dragging on the
ground.

After awhile his plug hat shook
off the seat, and the hind wheel
went over it making it as flat as a
pancake. Bill snatched it as he
ran, stuck it all dirty and dimpled
on his head. And now he saw the
widow's house on the hill, and what
oh, what will he do? then his coat
fell out; he slapped it on, and then
making a desperate spurt, he grasped
the back of the seat, scrambled in,
and pulling the buffalo robe

over his legs, stuffed the other
things beneath.

Now the horse happened to be
the one he got from Capt. Moore,
and he got it from the widow, and
he took it into his head to stop at
the gate, which Bill had no power
to prevent, as he had no possession
of the reins; besides he was too
busy buttoning his coat up to his
chin, to think of doing anything
else. The widow heard the rattle
of the wheels and looked out, and
seeing it was Smiley, and that he
didn't offer to get out, she went
out to see what was wanted, and
there she stood chatting, with her
arms on the gate, and her face right
towards him, while the cold chills
ran down his shirtless back clear to
his bare feet under the buffalo robe,
and the water from his hair, and
the dust from his hat, had com-
bined to make nice little streams of
mud, that came trickling down his
face. She asked him to come in.

"No, he was in a great hurry,"
he said.

Still he did not offer to go. He
did not like to ask her to pick up
the reins for him, because he did
not know what excuse to make for
not doing it himself. Then he
looked down the road behind and
saw a white-faced horse coming,
and at once surmised that it was
Gus Sackrider.

He at once resolved to do or die,
and hurriedly told his errand. The
widow would be delighted to go, of
course she would. But wouldn't he
come in? No—he was in a hurry,
he said; he had to go to Mr.
Green's place.

"Oh," said the widow, "you're
going to Green's, are you? Why, I
was just going there myself, to get
one of the girls to help me quilt.
Just wait a second, while I get my
bonnet and shawl, and I'll ride with
you!" And away she skipped.

"Thunder and lightning!" said
Bill, "What a scrape!" and he has
tightly clutched his pants from be-
neath his feet, and was preparing
to wiggle into them, when a light
wagon, drawn by a white-faced
horse, driven by a boy, came along
and stopped beside him. The boy
held up a pair of boots in one hand
and a pair of socks in the other,
and just as the widow reached the
gate again he said:

"Here's your boots and socks,
Mr. Smiley, that you left on the
bridge while you was in swimming."

"You're mistaken," said Bill,
"they're not mine."

"Why," said the boy, "ain't you
the man that had a race after a
horse just now?"

"No, sir, I am not! You had
better go on about your business!"
Bill sighed at the loss of his good
Sunday boots, and turning around
to the widow, said:

"Just pick up the lines, will you,
please, this brute of a horse is for-
ever switching them out of my
hands." The widow complied, and
then he pulled one corner of the
robe cautiously down and she got
in.

"What a lovely evening," said
she, "and so warm I don't think
we need the robe over us, do we?"
[You see she had on a nice dress
and a new pair of gaiters, and she
wanted to show them.]

"Oh, my," said Bill, earnestly,
"you'll find it chilly riding, and I
wouldn't have you catch cold for
the world."

She seemed pleased at his tender
care for her health, and contented
herself with sticking one of her lit-
tle feet out, with a long silken neck-
tie over the end of it.

"What is that, Mr. Smiley? A
necktie?"

"Yes," said he, "I bought it the
other day, and I must have left it
in the buggy. Never mind it."

"But," she said, "it was so care-
less," and stooping over she picked
it up, and made a movement as if
to stuff it between them.

Bill felt her hand going down,
and making a sudden dive after it,
clutched it firmly in his, and held it
hard and fast.

They then went on quite a dis-
tance, he still holding her hand
and she wondering why he did not
say something nice to her, as well
as squeeze her hand, and why his
coat was buttoned up so tightly on
such a warm evening, and what

made his hat and face so dirty, until
one of the traces came unhitched,
and they had to stop.

"Oh, murder!" said Bill. "What
next?"

"What is the matter, Mr. Smi-
ley?" said the widow, with a start
that came very near jerking the
robe off his knee.

"One of the traces has come off,"
said he.

"Well, why don't you get out and
put it on?"

"I can't," said Bill. "I've got—
that is, I haven't got—oh, dear, I'm
so sick. What shall I do?"

"Why, Willis," said she, tender-
ly, "what is the matter? Do tell
me?" and she gave his hand a little
squeeze, and looking into his pale
face, she thought he was going to
faint; so she got out her smelling
bottle with her left hand, and pull-
ing the stopper out with her teeth,
she stuck it up to his nose.

Bill was taking in breath for a
mighty sigh, and the pungent odor
made him throw back his head so
far that he lost his balance and
went over the low-back ed buggy.
The little woman gave a little
scream, as his bare feet flew past
her head, and covering her face
with her hands, she gave way to
smiles or tears—it is hard to tell
which. Bill was "right side up" in
a moment, and was leaning over
the back of the seat humbly apolo-
gizing, when Ed Wilbur, with his
wife and baby, drove up behind
and stopped. Poor Bill felt that he
would rather have been shot than
to have Ed Wilbur catch him in
such a scrape, but there was no
help for it now; so he called Ed to
him and whispered in his ear.

Ed was like to burst with sup-
pressed laughter, but he beckoned
to his wife to draw up, and, after
saying something to her he helped
the widow out of Bill's buggy and
into his, and the two women went
on leaving the men behind.

Bill lost no time in arranging
his toilet as well as he could, and
then with great persuasion Ed got
him to go home with him, and
hunting up slippers and socks, and
getting him washed and combed,
had him quite presentable when the
ladies arrived. I need not tell how
the story was wormed out of bash-
ful Bill, and how they all laughed as
they sat around the tea table that
night, but will conclude by saying
that they went to the show together,
and Bill has no fear of Gus Sack-
rider now.

"If Jones undertakes to pull my
ears," said a loud-mouthed fellow
on the street corner, "he will have
his hands full." The crowd looked
at the man's ears and smiled.

A Texas matron, some days ago,
was astonished by little Susie's ex-
claiming: "I don't want to be an
angel, ma." "Why, Susie?" "Be-
cause I don't want to leave all my
fine clothes and wear feathers like
a hen."

She said it was a very bright idea.
He said he knew a brighter one,
and when she asked him what it
was and he answered, "Your eye,
dear!" there was silence for a mo-
ment; then she laid her head upon
the rim of his ear and wept.

"Is your programme full, Miss
Beet crusher?" asked a young man
of a Western dandy who had just
struggled out of the refreshment
room with disappointment in her
eye and an "order of dandies" in her
hand. "Programme full?" said the
daughter of the setting sun, "Well,
I guess not! I ain't had nothin'
but a piece o' cake and an ice cream
an' that don't go fur towards fillin'
my programme, I can tell you."

Just before visiting the menagerie
Johnnie had a passage-at-arms
with the young aunt who assisted
at his toilet, and with whom he
flew into a rage. Arrived at the
menagerie, Johnnie was immensely
interested by a strange foreign ani-
mal with a long lithe body. "What
animal is that, mamma?" he asked.
"It is called an ant eater, my son."
After long silence—"Mamma, can't
we bring Aunt Mary here some
day?"