The Millheim Journal.

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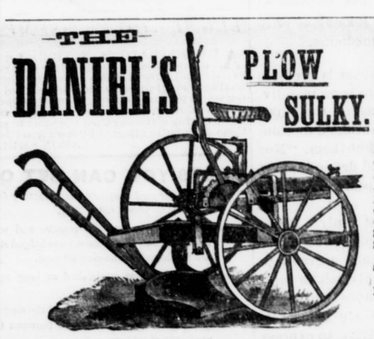

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Mrs. Wiggins Paints Her House.

I've been as busy as a bee all winter, and it's lucky for me that I've had enuff to keep my blood a-circulating; for, if I'd a-had to set still, I should have froze to death, with the mercury falling down among the zeroes.

I've braided all Reuben's old trousers and coats up into rugs, and I declare! when the poor man got out in the rain the other day, and wet hisself clean through, there warn't enuff every day clothes in the house for him to shift hisself into, and he had to put on his black trousers and his swaller-tail coat, that he's never made a practice of wearing anywheres except to prayer-meetings and Sundays. Reuben was mad as a bob-tailed dog in fly-time, and sez he, giving the cat a h'ist out of the rocking-cheer, where she'd got curled up for a nap, sez he:

"Mirandy, you'd ort to be ashamed of yourself, a-cutting up them good clothes of taine. And them gray panterloons warn't wore out at all, except a place on the knees and mebby they needed to be resceated." Sez he: "It's lucky that I'm put together solid, you'd braid me into a rug, soul and body, if you could tear me up into strips as you can a pair of panterloons."

And he kicked at that cat agin, jest as she was a-gwine to git back into the cheer Strange to me that, when men-folks git mad, they always spit out their spite onto the cat or dog. Jest as if that animal was to blame for my braiding up them britches!

But I was sorry enuff afterward, when Reuben come in from the barn, with his swaller-tail all spattered over with milk; he'd been a-milking, and the cow had took a notion to step into the pail to soak her corns, and the milk had flew all over the coat-tails of the pardner of my joys and sorrors.

It took me two hours, with a sponge and some amomiay, and my eyes and nose watering as if I had the chronical influenza, to scrub that milk off. And then I didn't git it off, for Reuben never could stand still a minnit to have anything done to him, and, as soon as I got a good grab on them tails, and got the sponge sot right to scrub he'd fetch a wisk, and I'd lose my holt intirely.

Margaret Ann, that is our darter from a city school, has got a pile of new idees brought home with her. Bent's Corner is an old-fashioned place, and the folks don't travel round to any great extent. And naterally we hain't got ahead so fur as some parts of the world. We still think that it ain't nice and pious for a man to have more than one wife to a time, and we shouldn't be likely to elect an absconding Canada tramp of a bank-cashier to be deacon of our meeting-house—not if we knowed about it; and we still think that it looks better not to go a-fishing Sundays.

Margaret Ann, a'most as soon as she got home, begun to complain how old-styled our house looked. It needed refurnishing, and repainting, and repapering, and re—almost everything else. "Why, mama," sez she—she has taken to calling me 'ma' and 'mama' jest as if she was a three-year-old—"you have no idee how superaminated our interior looks. There is nothing asthetick or rershashy about it."

"I should hope not indeed," sez I. "I shouldn't want anything with such a sounding name as them has got, in my insides, if that is what you mean."

"Ma, how dreadfully vulgar you are! If Arabella De Jones should come to seem she would fall into a state of nervous prostration. She is so delicate and refined that she would faint away if she should be in the room with a pair of those dreadful cowhide boots that pa wears, and I have known her to have a spasm when she inhaled the breath of someone who had been eating onions! Oh, she is altogether too ethereal for this mundane spear!"

"Then I should advise her to go to a spear where they don't eat onions," sez I. "Bent's Corner is no place for her."

"But, ma, why can't we fix up our old house?" sez Margaret Ann, a-tipping her head on one side to see how the little top-knot of a curl panned out, she'd been a-winding onto a curling-iron. And full half of the hair in it stuck fast to the iron, and the smell of burnt hair was so strong in the house that I had to burn some coffee on top of the stove to fumigate the air.

"'Twould cost money," sez I, "and yer father can't spare much, this year, on account of that hoss having the heaves and dying, and milk's going down to two cents onto a can."

But Margaret Ann sed that didn't make no difference—we could do the work ourselves. And she talked at me so much and used so many words that had never been aired sense they was put into Webster or the bridge, that I give in. I could have stood out agin words of two syllables; but when they come to be shot at me eight and ten syllables long, I went down before 'em like grass before a four-hoss mowing-machine.

She talked the scheme into her pa in much the same way, and got ten dollars out of him and the liberty to do as she was a-mind to.

We harnessed the old mare into wagon and went over to Smith ville, and got the painter there to mix us some paint, and we bought some room paper, and some red curtains, and some prepared glue, and some varnish, and some tacks with brass heads, and other things too numerous to mention.

We begun on the front-room first. We piled all the furniture into the front-entry, and sot a table aginst the door that was loaded down with a lot of things, and Grandmarm Sawyer's chany set among 'em. That chany set beat anything I ever seed anywhere in the way of chany, and I sot a farm by it.

Margaret Ann put on an old red petticoat of mine over her dress and a blouse of her pa's and tied her head up in a gingham apron, before she went to business. My uniform was one of Reuben's old calico shirts that I had kept for him to wear in haying-time—because anybody sweats so, in haying that it rots the shirt clean to nothing—and put it on outside of my old delaine skirt that I wear when I'm a-washing.

We had the wash bench and two barrels with a board over 'em, to stand upon. I had the barrels and Margaret Ann had the bench.

"Now ma," sez she, dipping her brush into the paint, "you want to dip lightly: give it a little dab aginst the side of the pail, to shake out the superfluent paint, and draw it toward you—so, in this way." And she dabbed, and then she drawned—and, my soul and body, the result was amazing! The paint which was pale-blue, flew and squirted all into Margaret Ann's face and eyes, and she looked like the piece of "spatter-work" that Miss Dinsmore took the premium of twenty-five cents on, at the Smithville cattle-show, last fall. And she grabbed up the tail of that petticoat, which had dipped itself into a pot of black paint that we'd mixed to stripe off with and rubbed it over her counernance, and black and blue was about equally mixed.

"Heaven and earth! Margaret Ann," sez I, "you'll never come clean in the world without b'iling out." And I made a rush toward her, to wipe her off with my apron, and I forgot that I was on them barrels; and the board tilted up and I made a grab to save myself, and down I went into one of them barrels—feet fust, paint brush and all—and the barrel fitted me as well as if the cooper had took my measure.

"Murder!" cried Margaret Ann, running to the door and shouting down the road: "Ma has suicided herself! Help! Help!"

And, in a minnit, Reuben come running in like mad, and Squire Power, which had come over to swap some setting-hens' eggs—and he come in with him.

"Creation of Adam!" sez Reuben, "now there's another good barrel gone to shucks! And I shall have to buy barrels to put my apple-crop into! Twenty cents on a barrel out! Mirandy," sez he "it is strange that a woman as old as you are can't keep herself out of such scrapes like this."

"I guess it'll be a scrape in airnest before I git out," sez I, as I squirmed around and the nails on the inside of the pesky barrel begun to plow into my hide.

"Let's pull her out," sez Squire Power, spitting onto his hands and bracing hisself. "You hold onto the barrel, Wiggins, and I'll extract her jest as the dentist takes out a molder."

And Reuben grabbed the barrel, and the Squire grabbed me. He got me right by that shoulder of mine that I've had the rhumatiz into for nigh onto six year, and, for a minnit, I thought I should be made into two Mirandy Wigginses. I struck out with the hand that had the paint-bruah in it, and the Squire's mouth was the nearest and most convenient opening—and in the brush went, paint and all, and stuffocated him nigh about to death.

"W-o-o-u-g-h!" sez the Squire, squirting out what he had inside of his mouth and throat, and firing it right down the back of my neck, where that shirt of Reuben's had a button off. And he let go of me so suddint, that it upsot Reuben, who was a-holding onto the barrel with all his might.

"Ma! ma!" cried Margaret Ann, "can't you kinder screw yourself round and get out?"

"You might try it on yerself," sez I, feeling mad enuff to break something right in two with the poker, "and see how you liked it, with nine hundred and fifty nails a-sticking into your back and stummuk and clawing the in'ards out of ye."

Squire Power was intirely overcome, and he staggered back and fell into a cheer that Reubeu had bought at an auction because it was two hundred and twenty year old, and Washington had sot into it. Margaret Ann had jest painted the back of it with some yaller daisies and a sunflower, and I yelled out as I seed the Squire a-going:

"Con't set into that cheer! It's—"

But the Squire had sot before I got the words out, and the deed was done. And, when he got up, there was that bunch of daisies and that sunflower, fortygraphed onto the back fo his coat as slick as you could mark your name onto a soap-box with a stencil-plate.

"I'll empty her out," sez Reuben, seized with a bright idee; "strange that I didn't think of it afore." And he grabbed that barrel and stood me right up on my head, rocked the barrel round fust one way and t'other, jest as if I was coal-ashes that had got wet and stuck.

"Reuben Wiggins," sez I as soon as I could speak, "if ever I git out of here, I'll make you sorry for this. You're a-running my brains all out through the top of my head."

"Bu'st off the hoops," sez the Squire, coming to the rescue. And he seized a hammer and hit the barrel a lick that sot my rhumaticks off into tantrum and nigh about blowed off the top of my skull. But the barrel caved, and I was saved.

Jest as I got out, I heerd a terrible wailing kind of a howl from Nero—that's our dog—and I knowed he was in trouble. I went out into the sitting-room, where the noise come from—and, Ideclare, I didn't know wether to laff or cry. Margaret Ann had sot that pot of prepared glue onto the table, and the dog had got up there and upsot it, and the glue had run out, and he laid down and got to sleep, and his tail had dried into the glue—and so had my ten-dollar switch of hair that I'd took off afore I begun painting and laid down there!

The table-cloth on that table was one that Mary Ann Simons worked in this 'ere kerosene-work that was so stylish jest now, and we'd either got to cut the cloth off from the the tail or cut the tail off from the cloth. It was a question of no table-cloth or a tailless dog. I did not hesertate: I grabbed the scissors, and was a-going to slash right into the cloth, when the dog—seeing no doubt how desprit I looked—give an awful howl and a frantic leap and cleared hisself—cloth false hair, and all—from the table and dashed into the front-entry right over the mess of chany and through the winder, and down the road like a streak, with that table cloth and that ten-dollar switch, warranted not dyed and all long hair, a-trailing after him like a tail to a kite.

And that chany was smashed into kindling, and we all sot after the dog a-yelling: "Git out there! git out!" And the grocery-man's clerk come out and fired at Nero, thinking he had the hydrophoby, and killed old Mrs. Mulligan's goat, that was a-lunching off the ole hoop-skirts and tomato-cans in Grigg's back-yard. And she's sued him for damidges.

And, jest as Reuben and the Squire and I and Maragret Ann had got to the front-gate, a-pursuing Nero, a carriage driv up and out stepped Arabella De Jones and Gabriel Van Robinson, her young man.

Imagine if you can, the tableau!

As they say in the five-volume novels, when they don't feel fit to describe anything, "we draw a curtin over the scene."

P. S.—Nero come back, the next day, with his tail bare of hair mostly; but I never heern anything from my switch nor the table-cover And we got Jenkins, the painter, to paint our house because we thought it would be cheaper.—*Peterson's Magazine.*

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ON GOOD BREEDING.

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Subtle, fragrant, indescribable, but all-pervading is that lovely thing we call good breeding. As subtle and as indescribable, but by no means fragrant, is its ungainly opposite. Keenly conscious of the absence of the former, but unable to exactly specify and define when present, we know and feel, but cannot analyze nor tabulate—save in cases of exceptional sweetness and refinement, when we can touch the exact action and repeat the commanding word which governed all. So with ill-breeding. We can scarcely say where it was unless the misdemeanor was as deep as a well, as wide as an church door; but there it was and we felt and knew, whether we were able to define it or not. No one can describe discord nor harmony. So with the mystery of good breeding—the subtle harmony and passing flavor of true politeness. It is heard in an intonation—an inflection—in the choice of one word over another seemingly its twin, but with just that difference of application, rather than meaning, which creates the essence of good breeding. The almost microscopic recognition of a stranger—the specialized attention of an unobtrusive kind—is its evidence; the careless neglect of an apparently insignificant form is its death warrant. To be the only stranger in a room-ful of intimates and to be unintroduced a neglected is an act of ill-breeding specially Britannic. If by chance one more kind-hearted to begin with, and more polished by friction to go on with, takes pity on the poor social waif and stray and offers any attention or reels off the thread of a conversation, that person has this marvelous charm we call good breeding, in which all the rest have been deficient. When you enter a room and are presented to the hostess her reception of you proves her good breeding or her bad. The way her children meet you—the way in which, at any age beyond the babyhood, they speak and hold themselves—is so eloquent of their gentle training or ungentle as is a correct accent or a provincial. No idiosyncrasy mars the real essence of good breeding, and all the excuses made for lapses and lessons are futile.

Good breeding is the current coin of society. He who is bankrupt therein ought not to take rank with the rest. The defaulting Lombard had his bench broken in full conclave and was chased out of the street where his better brethren carried on their business What the old money-changers and money-lenders did with their defaulting members, society ought to do to the ill-bred—to the people who oppose all you say for the mere sake of opposing you, and dot for anything approaching to a principle; who contradict you flatly, and do not apologize when they are proved in the wrong; tell you home truths of bilious complexion and vinegar aspect; who repeat ill-natured remarks made in their presence, or repeated to them, making you feel you are scorned and despised you know not why, and vilified without the chance given you for self justification; who abuse your known friends and ascribe to them all the sins of the Decalogue, who brutally attack your known principles in religion, morals, politics; who sneer at at your cherished superstitions and fall foul of your confessed weaknesses; who take the upper hand of you generally, not counting susceptibilities as worth the traditional button. Such people as these—and there are many of them masquerading as ladies and gentlemen of good position and irreproachable credentials—but no matter what their lineage or fortune they should be cashiered, and society would be all the sweeter and more wholesome for the want of them. Contrast these spiny hedgehogs, these aggressive thorn-bushes, these stinging mosquitoes and ramping tarantulas with their opposite—the well-breed and gentle folk who never tread on your corns nor offend your susceptibilities in any way and who carefully carry out of sight all their own private little flags which may be your bed rags. This is not want of courage, but it is good breeding.

A WESTERN JOKE.

Lending a Friend a Dress Suit and Then Telling Him it is a Servant's.

From the Chicago Herald.

Colonal A. D. Babcock, of Canton, Ill., is as well known here as at home. He has achieved a comfortable fortune and has of late been concerned with the Senator Farwell-"Ab" Taylor syndicate in building the Texas State House. He is one of the "regulars" at the Grand Pacific, which is almost as much a home to him as Canton. Another well-known character about the hotel is Dr. Osgood, who gives more time nowadays to practical joking and meterial enjoyment than to the practice of medicine. Both these gentlemen are small of stature and, despite their gray hairs, lively as any youngsters. There is constant rivalry between them as to who is the smallest, and either could ride a Shetland pony without his feet dragging. Colonel Babcock was going to take his daughters to the game dinner at Mr. Drake's hostelry, but had no dress suit. Osgood offered to loan his, which fitted the colonel perfectly. As the latter sat at table with his daughters and Colonel Taylor and other friends, looking as fine as a fiddle in the doctor's dress suit, a boy came in with a message. The document was labeled "important," and the colonel opened it with some eagerness and more embarrassment. It proved to be a letter from Dr. Osgood, in which the latter sent forth that he had just received a very importaant business call to new York and must leave in twenty minutes. The dress suit he had loaned the colonel was, he said, the property of his negro servent, who, of course, accompaied him to New York and would, of course, need his suit. The situation was a delicate one and he regretted extremely to thus embarrass the colonel, but he would, of course, appreciate the importance of sending the cloths at once by the messenger. He would suggest that the colonel slip under the tadle, disrob, and hand the suit to the messenger. Then his daughter could wrap him in a napkin, lay him on a chair and smuggle him out unperceived when the feast was over.

Colonel Babcock is still looking for a chance to get even.

What Stunted the Growth of the Town.

"You wanter know what's holdin' this country back, d've?" said a man in Green River City, Wyo., who had a beard like a woven-wire mattress which had been struck by a cyclone and rolled together as a scroll—"you ask what's holdin' it down," he continued, as he led me over by a faro table which was not in use; "you desire information as to what's retardin' its development an' causin' it to languish by the wayside, as it were? I can tell you, stranger; I can sum it up in two words an' give it to you at one dose. It is Eastern detectives—bloodhounds of the law that drag away our most successful cit'zens!

'What can you expect of a country where the Eastern detective comes in and demands requisitions for all the leadin' cit'zens? With the icy hand of the detective laid on the Mayors of our principal cities, how can our country develop? With the Pennsylvania Sheriff sneakin' up behind the President of our National Bank and indentifyin' him, how can you look for progress?

'As long as one of Pinkerton's men can come into our otherwise peaceful and an' prosperous communities, look at a photographn an' then adjust a pair of time-lock handcuffs on the principal of our schools, how can you come among us an' ask us with a holler sneer why we don't boom?

'Stranger, what is there to induce us to git up, whoop an' develop the country, with leg-irons on the pastor of the First Babtist Church?

'Why should we invest our money in business with a Sheriff from Massachusetts an' a detective from Ohio each with separate warrants an' each on a fast hoss chasin' our Porbate Jedge across the divide?

'Why should I feel enouraged an' cheerful with the City Attorney bein' tried in North Carolina? Would you yourself feel like settlin' down in a country an' makin' a home with the Superintendent of the Union Sunday-school gittin' onto the east-bound train chained to the editor of the morning-paper?'

'My friend, I don't think you would; I am pos'tive you would not, 'specially if your didn't know but what it might be you turn next, as you prob'bly would.

'This country could never become thickly and permanently settled as long as the Eastern officer who has raked up some old charge again a prominent member of the comunity can walk in an' ply his vocation unrestrained by the strong arm of the law. As long as it is possible, while a meeting' of the leadin' cap'talists is bein' held to devise means of establishin' a woolen factory, or to raise a bonus for a new railroad, as long as it is possible on such an occasion, I repent, for a paid spy from a rival town to sneak in the back door of the hall an' yell: 'Eastern detective comin' lan' then stand and watch the President of the savin's bank an' the Circuit Judge break their legs as they fall out of the winder an' subsequently git tramped into the ground by the crowd; as long as this is poss'ble, I again say, jes' so long will progreess languish.

'While a man can stand in our theater an' holler 'Fire!' an' not cause anybody to look around, an' another man can stampate the audience acrost the stage by pullin' out a paper an' a pair of handcuffs, jes' so long will our nat,rol resource remain dorment, as it were.

'That, my friend, is about all I've got to say. That is about all there is to say.'—*Dakota Bell.*

Rough on the Chaplain.

Gen. N. P. Banks tells a story about one of his army chaplains which never fails to "bring down" the G. A. R. camp-fires. The chaplains of the regiments during the war had charge of the mails for the regiments to which they were attached. The mail for the regiment of this particular chaplain had not come to hand for many days. The regiment was out of the line of communication. Every day from one half to two-thirds of the soldiers boys filed up to the chaplain's tent with such stereotyped inquires as these:

"Any mail yet, chaplain?"

"Have you heard from the mail?"

"Do you know when the mail will come?"

"What do you think is delaying the mail?"

The good man was so pestered with inquiries that he had no time to prepare his weekly sermon. He was obliged to spend all his time in explaining that he had no mail, that he had heard nothing about the mail. It occured to him that he might put an end to his troubles by a sign. Procuring the bottom of an old hard tack box he marked it with charcoal and nailed it on a tree in front of his tent so that all might see this notice:

THE CHAPLAIN DOES NOT KNOW WHEN THE MAIL WILL ARRIVE.

The next anxious inquirer who came along was a reckless young wag. He gazed for a while at the notice, and, discovering the piece of charcoal which the chaplain had dropped on the ground at the completion of the sign, he seized it and added these words:

AND HE DON'T CARE A D—N.

The chaplain took in the sign and never put out another one.—*New York Tribune.*

NEWSPAPER LAWS

If subscribers order the discontinuation of newspapers, the publishers may continue to send them until all arrearages are paid.

If subscribers refuse or neglect to take their newspapers from the office to which they are sent they are held responsible until they have settled the bills and ordered them discontinued.

If subscribers move to other places without informing the publisher, and the newspapers are sent to the former place, they are responsible.

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