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AUTUMN.

And now the harvester appears in view,
Autumn upon the rolling planet steps.
The doors of earth's great treasure house are flung
Wide open, and upon the fruitful land
The riches lay scattered profuse and free,
Which first were sown by the fair hand of Spring,
And shooting upward all instinct with life
Were nourished tenderly by sun and dew;
And being at last through varied stages brought
By Summer's care, perfection now is reached,
And all is ready for the harvesting.
'Tis Autumn's task to gather of the wealth
So lavish spread abroad over the earth;
To thrust his sharp and shining sickle forth,
And reap the treasures of the yellow fields
Which gaily nod and rustle 'neath the wings
Of passing breezes as they fan the air;
To gather of the luscious fruits which hang
In tempting beauty upon outspread boughs.
He comes, in a rich purple garment clad,
Embroidered heavily with red and gold,
And glittering with many a glowing gem,
Around his swarthy brow is bound a wreath
Of dark red roses mingled here and there
With sheaves of wheat and purple clustered grapes.
His eyes are black, like unto midnight skies
Which ever seem revealing deeper depths
The more a steady gaze is on them fixed,
Until a feeling of strange awe steals o'er
The soul, and the beholder silently
And wrapped in meditation, gazes on.
Peering as spell-bound into the expanse.
And so it is with Autumn. When at first
He steps upon the scene, a joyous light,
Beams from his eyes speaking of happiness,
Telling of bounty plentiful and free
Over the bosom of the fruitful earth.
On hillside and in field and meadow spread,
And on his ruddy lips there plays a smile
The while the busy reapers are at work,
Who with glad swiftness his commands obey
And with sharp sickle lay the ripe grain low,
Which nimble hands soon bind and bear away
And store within capacious garner house,
Ample supply for future dearth and need;
While following the reapers here and there
Dotting the fragrant fields the gleaners come.
Orchards and vineyards of their precious hoard
Are soon despoiled. The yellow sunshine falls
With a mild radiance gilding all the scene,
And during all this blithesome merry time,
The while the birds are gleeful twittering,
And freely sharing of fair Nature's gifts,
And while the air is fragrant, soft and mild,
There beams upon his face a happy light.
But when at last the harvesting is o'er
And Nature is of all her treasure stripped,
When the soft, balmy breezes flit no more
From flower to flower, from leafy spray to spray.
But when the rude and blustering winds begin
Loudly to blow their shrilly bugle blasts
As gathering together for assault,
Then much of mirthful light passes away,
And his dark eyes now sadder seem to grow,
And o'er his face there steals a pensiveness
Which gradually seems to pass almost
To sternness; and his voice which gentle was,
Now harsher and still deeper seems to be,
Yet somewhat softened by a mournful sound,
A cadence sorrowful, which seems like to
The sighing of the winds through tree tops tall,
As unto listening Nature he breathes forth
His other name, now emblematical
Of the departing of fair beauteous life,
Autumn or fall. "Falling must now begin,
And so he sterner, harder seems to grow,
As if to steel his heart and nerve his arm
For the sad work which now before him lies.
But e'er the parting comes he casts abroad
Over the earth gay, brilliant coloring,
Touching the leaves with rosy tints, which glow
Among the green in a strange beauty rare,
And as the boughs are jostled by the wind,
Within the glancing light the colors gleam,
Crimson and brown and yellow, seeming like
Unto enchanted forests, wherein dwell,
All undiscovered, many a nymph and fay
Which flits on wings of light through balmy air.
But though so strangely, wildly beautiful,
The life current now flows on but sluggishly,
And o'er the glowing leaves there slowly steals,
In spite of brilliant color, a pale hue,
Which tells that the destroyer is at work.
And now still louder whistle the shrill winds,
And mercilessly seize within strong grasp
The tallest trees and sway them to and fro.
And now the leaves are parting from the stem,
And through the air they flutter for a space,
From off the topmost branches all are gone,
But some are clinging still on lower limbs;
But even these at last must lose their hold
And in a wild confusion through the air
They flutter hopelessly in sad dismay,
Until upon the bosom of the earth
They lie, and the last lingering hold upon
Existence is relaxed. And then it is
That earth speaks lovingly and tenderly
To the poor trees left—all so bleak and bare—
Reminding them that though now all looks dark
And cheerless, and though now they stand bereft
Of every trace of beauty and of life,
Yet smiling Spring, obedient to the voice
Of Nature's God, will with glad speed return
After the storms of Winter shall be past,
And with her bring fresh vigor and new life.

M. E. T.

PRIVATE THEATRICALS.

BY W. D. HOWELLS.

I.

West Pekin is one of those country places which have yielded to changing conditions and have ceased to be the simple farming towns of a past generation. The people are still farmers, but most of them are no longer farmers only. In the summer they give up the habitable rooms of their old square wooden houses to boarders from the cities, and lurk about in the nooks and crannies of their L's and leantos; and, whatever their guests may have to complain of, have hardly the best of the bargains they drive with them. But in this way they eke out the living grudged them by their neglected acres, and keep their houses in a repair that contrasts with the decay of their farming. Each place has its grove of maples, fantastically gnarled and misshapen from the wounds of many sugar seasons; and an apple orchard, commonly almost past bearing with age, stretches its knotted boughs over a slope near the house. Every year the men-folk plow up an acre of garden ground, and plant it with those vegetables which, to the boarders still feeding in mid-July on last year's potatoes and tough, new-butchered beef, seem so reluctant in ripening; but a furrow is hardly turned elsewhere on the farm. It yields a crop of hay about the end of June, in which the boarders' children tumble, and a favorable season may coax from it a few tons of rowen grass. The old stone walls straggle and fall down even along the roadside; in the privacy of the wood lots and berry pastures they abandon themselves to reckless dilapidation.

Many houses in the region stand empty, absently glaring on the passer with their cold windows, as if striving in vain to recall the households, long since gone West, to whom they were once homes. By and by they will drop to ruin; or some shrewd Irishman, who has made four or five hundred dollars in a Massachusetts suburb, will buy one of them, and stocking the farm with his stout boys and girls will have the best looking place about. He thrives where the son of the soil starved; and if the bitter truth must be owned, he seems to deserve his better fortune. [illegible] enterprise and energy and industry, and to the [illegible] boarder, used to the drive and [illegible] of the city, the Yankee farmer often [illegible] none of these qualities. [illegible] the summer boarder [illegible]; I dare say he would not be willing himself to take his landlord's farm as a gift, if he must live on those stony hillsides [illegible] round, and find himself at each year's end a year older but not a day nearer the competence to which all men look forward as the just reward of long toil. I always fancied a dull discouragement in the native farming race; an effect of the terrible winter, that drowns a good half of the months in drifts of snow, and of the dreary solitude of the country life. Great men have come from the rural stock in our nation before now; and perhaps the people of West Pekin have earned the right to lie fallow; but whether this is so or not, it is certain that they often evince an aptness to open the mouth and stand agape at unusual encounters, which one can not well dissociate from ideas of a complete mental repose. If they had no thoughts, they have not the irrelevance and superfluity of words. They are a signally silent race. I have seen two of them, old neighbors, meet after an absence, and when they had hornily rattled their callous palms together, stand staring at each other, their dry, serrated lips falling apart, their jaws mutely working up and down, their pale blue eyes vacantly winking, and their weather beaten faces as wholly discharged of expression as the gable ends of two barns confronting each other from opposite sides of the road; no figure can portray the grotesqueness of their persons, with their feet thrust into their heavy boots, and their clothes—originally misshapen in a slop shop after some by-gone fashion, and now curiously warped, outgrown, outworn—climbing up their legs and mounting upon their stooping shoulders. But if they are silent they are not surly; give them time and they are amiable enough, and they are first and last honest. They do not ask too much for board, and they show some slow willingness to act upon a boarder's suggestions for his greater comfort. But otherwise they remain unaffected by the contact. They learn no greater glibness of tongue, or liveliness of mind, or grace of manner; if their city guests bring with them the vices of wine or beer at dinner and tobacco after it, the farmers keep themselves uncontaminate. The only pipe you smell is that of the neighboring Irishman as he passes with his ox team; the gypsying French Canadians, as they wander southward, tipsy by whole families, in their rickety open buggies, lend the sole bacchanal charm to the prospect that it knows. These are of a race whose indomitable light heartedness no rigor of climate has appalled, whereas our Anglo Saxon stock in many country neighborhoods of New England seems weather beaten in mind as in face; and this may account for the greater quick-wittedness of the women, whose in-door life is more protected from the inclemency of our skies. It is certain that they are far readier than the men, more intelligent, gracious, and graceful, and with their able connivance the farmer stays the adversity creeping upon his class, if he does not retrieve its old prosperity. In the winter his daughters teach school, and in the summer they help their mother through her enterprise of taking boarders. The farm feeds them all, but from the women's labor comes thrice the ready money that the land ever yields, and it is they who keep alive the sense of all higher and finer things, Heaven knows with what heroic patience and devoted endeavor. The house shines, through them, with fresh paper and paint; year by year they add to those comforts and meek aspirations towards luxury which the summer guest accepts so lightly when he comes, smiling askance at the parlor organ in the corner, and the black-walnut-framed chromo-lithographs on the walls.

Nehemiah Woodward left West Pekin in his youth, after his preparation in the academy, which still rests its classic pediment upon a pair of fluted pine pillars above the village green, and went to Andover, where he studied divinity and married his landlady's daughter. She was a still, somewhat austere girl, and she had spread no lures for the affections of her lover, who was of tenderer years than herself; he was not her first love; perhaps he was at last rather her duty, or her importuning fate. In any case she did not deny him in the end; they were married after his ordination, and went away to the parish in New York State over which he was settled, and she left behind her the grave in which the hopes of her youth were buried. The young minister knew about it; she told him everything when he first spoke to her of marriage; they went together to bid farewell to the last resting place of the dead rival whom he had never seen; and his sublime generosity touched her heart with a life long gratitude.

It was his only inspiration, poor soul! he was a dreadful dull man—too dull even for the inarticulate suffering of country congregations. Parish after parish shifted him from its aching shoulders: they loved him for his goodness, but they could not endure him, they hardly knew why; it was really because his sermons were of lead, and finally none the lighter that they were beaten out so thin. He had thus worn westward, leaving a deeply striated human surface behind him, in the line of the New England emigration, as far as to the farther border of Iowa, and he was an elderly man with a half grown family, when his father died and left the ancestral farm at West Pekin, to which none of the other sons would return from their prosperity in the neighboring towns or the new countries where they had settled. But it was not a fortune that Nehemiah could refuse; possibly he had always had his own secret yearnings for those barren pastures of his boyhood; at any rate he gladly parted from his last willing parish, and went back to the farm. Once returned, he seemed never to have been away; he looked as much a fixture of the landscape as any out building of the place. He quickly shed whatever clerical dignity had belonged to his outward man, and slouched into the rusty boots and scarecrow coats and hats that costume our farmers at their work, as easily as if he had only laid them off overnight. The physical shape of the farm was favorable to his luckless gift of going down hill, but the energy of his wife now stayed his further descent as effectually as if he had been a log propped on the edge of a slope by some jutting point of granite. She had indeed always done more than her half toward keeping her family's souls and bodies together; now, with a lasting basis to work upon, she took the share on which Nehemiah's lax hold had faltered. The house was built with the substantial handsomeness which a farmer could afford who two generations ago sent his boys to the academy. It was large and square, with ample halls crossing each other from side to side, and dividing it into four spacious rooms below and answering chambers overhead, some of which, after a season or two of summer boarders, Mrs. Woodward was able to cut in two and still leave large enough for single beds. In times a series of very habitable chambers grew out over the one story wing; a broad new piazza invited the breeze and shade around two sides of the house, from whose hill top perch you could look out over a sea of rolling fields and woods, steeply shored on the south by the long flank of Scattcong mountain. The air was a luxury, the water was delicious; the walks and drives through the white birch groves were lovely beyond compare; and long before the summer of which I write, the fame of Mrs. Woodward's abundant table and educated kitchen had made it a privilege to be her boarders for which people endeavored by engaging her rooms a year beforehand. Whoever abode there reported it a house flowing with unstinted cream and eggs; pease, beans, squash and sweet corn in their season, of a flavor that the green grocer never knew; blue berries, after their kind; and bread with whose just praise one must hesitate to tax the credulity of one's hearer.

Mrs. Woodward not only knew how to serve her guests well, but how to profit by serving them well. She made it her business, and mixed no sentiment of any sort with it. She abolished herself socially, and none of her boarders offered her slight at the point to which she retreated from association with them. She left them perfect freedom in the house, but she kept them rigidly distinct from her own family, whom she devoted each in his or her way to the enterprise she had undertaken. The family ate at their own table, and never appeared in the guests' quarter except upon some affair connected with their comfort; but they were all willing in serving. Even Nehemiah himself, under the discipline centring in his wife, showed a sort of stiff-jointed readiness in hitching up the horse for the ladies when the boys happened to be out of the way; and he had thus late in life discovered a genius for gardening. It was to his skill and industry that the table owed its luxury of vegetables; and he was wont to walk out at twilight, and stand, bent-kneed and motionless, among the potatoes, and look steadfastly upon the peas, in serene emulation of [illegible] attitude in another part of the patch. He was the most [illegible] and would willingly have talked with any one [illegible]. The others were civil, but [illegible] aloof by the [illegible] or [illegible] which [illegible] interfered with no one's rights or pleasures, and so was generally accepted by amiable new-comers after a few good-natured attempts to overcome it. There was only one of them who had succeeded in breaking the circle of this reserve, and her intimacy with the Woodwards seemed rather another of her oddities than anything characteristic of them.

The household of the boarders displayed that disparity between the sexes which is one of the sad problems of the New England civilization, and perhaps enforced it a little more poignantly than was just. They were not all single ladies; a good third of the fifteen were married; of the rest some were yet too young to think or to despair of marrying, and it could not be confidently said of others that they wished to change their state. Nevertheless, one's first sense of their condition was vaguely compassionate. It seemed a pity that for six days in the week they should have to talk to each other and dress only for their own sex. Not that their toilettes were elaborate; they all said that they liked to come to the Woodward's because you did not have to dress there, but could go about just as you pleased; yet having the taste of all American women in dress they could not forbear making themselves look charming, and were always appearing in some surprising freshness and fragrance of linen, or some gayety flannel walking costume. The same number of men would have lapsed into unshaven chins and unblacked boots in a single week; but these devoted women had their pretty looks on their consciences, and never failed to honor them. Some of them even wore flowers in their hair at dinner—heaven knows why; and the young girls were always coming home from the woods with nodding plumes of bracken in their hats, and walking out in the dusk with coquettish head-gear on, to be seen by no one more important than some barefooted, half grown, bashful farm boy driving home the cows. The mothers started their children out every morning in clean, whole clothes, and patiently put aside at night the grass-stained, battered, dusty, dishonored fragments. Even one or two old ladies who were there for the country air were zealous to be neatly capped. The common sentiment seemed to be that as you never knew what might happen, you ought to be prepared for it. What actually happened was the occasional arrival of the stage with an express package for one of the boarders, and a passenger for some farm house beyond, who at very rare and exciting intervals was a man. Once a day the young ladies went down to the village after the mail, and indulged themselves with the spectacle of gentlemen dismounting from the stage at the hotel, which at such moments poured forth on piazza and gallery a disheartening force of lady boarders. Regularly on Saturday night, when everybody had gone to bed, this conveyance drove up to the door of the farm house and set down the five husbands of five of the married ladies for whom it called again on Monday morning before anybody was up. These husbands were almost as unfailing as the fish balls at the Sunday breakfast; and when any one of them was kept in Boston it made great talk; his wife had got word from him why he could not come; or she had not got word; it was just as exciting in either case. The ladies all made some attractive difference in their dress, which the wives when they went to their rooms asked the husbands if they had noticed, and which the husbands had not noticed, to a man. After breakfast, each husband took by the hand the child or two which his wife had scantly provided him (a family of four children was thought pitiably large, and a marvel of responsibility to the mother), and went off to the woods, whence he returned an hour before dinner, and read the evening papers which he had brought up in his pocket. In the afternoon he was reported asleep, being fatigued by the ride from town the day before, or he sat and smoked, or sometimes went driving with his family. His voice as the household heard it next morning at dawn had a gayer note than at any other time in the last thirty-eight hours, and his wife, coming down to breakfast, met the regulation jest about her renewed widowhood with a cheerfulness that was apparently sincere.

It may not have been so dull a life for the ladies as men would flatter themselves; they all seemed to like it, and not a woman among them was eager to get back to her own house and its cares. Perhaps the remembrance of these cares was the secret of her present content; perhaps women, when remanded to a comparatively natural state, are more easily satisfied than men. It is certain that they are always enduring extremes of ennui that appear intolerable to the other sex. Here at Woodford farm they had their own little world, which I dare say was all the better and kindlier for being their own. They were very kind to each other, but preferences and friendships necessarily formed themselves. Certain ladies were habitually visiting, as they called it, in each other's rooms, and one lady on the ground floor was of a hospitable genius that invited the other boarders to make her room the common lounging and gossiping place. Whoever went in or out stopped there; and the mail, when it was brought from the postoffice, was distributed and mostly read and talked over there.

Till a bed was put into the parlor one of the young ladies used to play a very little on the organ after breakfast on rainy days. One of the married ladies, who had no children, painted; she painted cat-tail rushes generally; not very like, and yet plainly recognizable. Another embroidered; she sat with her work in the wide doorway, and those passing her used to stop and take up one edge of it as it hung from her fingers, and talk very seriously about it, and tell what the had seen of the kind. Some of them were always writing letters; two or three had a special gift of sleep, both before and after dinner, which distinguished them from several nervous ladies, who never could sleep in the daytime. The young girls went up the mountain a good deal whenever they could join a party; twice when one of their brothers came from the city they camped out on the mountain; it was a great thing to see their camp fire after dusk; once they came home in a rain, and that was talk for two days, and always a joke afterwards. They had a lot of novels, not very new to our generation, which they read aloud to each other sometimes; they began to write a novel of their own, each contributing a chapter, but I believe they never finished it; the youngest kept a journal, but she did not write in it much. She could also drive; and her timid elders who rode out with her said they felt almost as safe with her as with a man. All the ladies said that the air was doing them a great deal of good, and, if not, that the complete rest was everything; none of them had that worn-out feeling with which she had come; if any did not pick up at once, she was told that she would see the change when she got home in the fall. Two or three, in the mean time, were nearly always sick in bed, or kept from meals by headache. From time to time the well ones had themselves weighed at the village store, to know whether they had gained or lost. They all talked together a good deal about their complaints, of which, whether they were sick or well, they each had several.

These were the interests and occupations, this the life at Woodward farm, to the entire simplicity of which I am afraid I have not done justice, when a thing happened that complicated the situation and for the moment robbed it of its characteristic repose. It appears that while Mrs. Stevenson was quietly multiplying cat-tail rushes in her cool, airy, upstairs room, one of the Woodward girls, who taught school, and in vacation waited on the boarders at the table, had also been employed—somewhere in the mysterious L-part, where her family bestowed itself—on a work of art, a head of the Alderney cow, known to the whole household as Blossom. Whether it was ever meant to be seen or not is scarcely certain; that lady, who alone had the intimacy of the Woodwards, came out with it from the kitchen one morning, as by violence, and showed it to the boarders after breakfast, while they still loitered at the table, none of the artist's kindred appearing. They all recognized Blossom in a moment, but the exhibitor let them suffer and guess a while who did it. Then she exploded the fact upon them, and the excitement began to rise. They said that it was a real Rosa Bonheur; and Mrs. Stevenson, who was indeed in another line of art and could feel no envy, set her head on one side, held the picture at arm's length in different lights, and pronounced it perfect, for a charcoal sketch. They had looked at it in a group; now they looked at it singly, and from a distance, cautioning each other that the least touch would ruin it. Then they began to ask the exhibitress if she had known of Miss Woodward's gift before; the young girls listening to her replies with something of the zeal and reverence they felt for the artist. At last they said Mrs. Gilbert must see it, and followed it in procession to the room of the public spirited lady on the first floor. She had been having her breakfast in bed, and now set in beruffled, sweet-scented dishabille, which became her pale, middle-aged, invalid good looks—her French marquise effect, one young girl called it, Mrs. Gilbert's hair being quite gray, and her thick eyebrows dark, like those of a powdered old regime beauty. They set the drawing on her chimney piece, and she considered it a long while with her hands lying in her lap. "Yes," she sighed at last," "it's very fair, indeed, poor thing."

"Blossom or Rachel, Mrs. Gilbert?" promptly demanded the lady who had been chaperoning the picture, with a tremor of humorous appreciation at the corners of her mouth, and a quick glance at her very dark brown eyes.

"Rachel," answered Mrs. Gilbert. "Blossom is a blessed cow. But a woman of genius in a New England farmhouse where they take summer boarders—oh, dear me! Yes, it's quite as bad as that, I should say," she added thoughtfully, after another stare at the picture. "Quite."

The company had settled and perched and poised upon the different pieces of furniture, as if they expected Mrs. Gilbert to go on talking; but she seemed to be out of the mood, and chose rather to listen to their applauses of the picture. The sum of their kindly feeling appeared to be that something must be done to encourage Miss Woodward, but they were not certain how she ought to be encouraged, and they began to stray away from the subject before anything was concluded. When the surprise had been drained to the dregs, a natural reaction began, and they left Mrs. Gilbert somewhat sooner than usual, and with signs of fatigue. Presently no one remained but the lady who had exhibited the picture; her, as she made a movement to take it from the mantel, Mrs. Gilbert stopped, and began to ask about the artistic history of Miss Woodward.

II.

Mrs. Belle Farrell, one of the summer boarders, stood waiting at the side of the road for Rachel Woodward, who presently appeared on the threshold of the red schoolhouse, with several books on her arm. It was Saturday afternoon; her school term had ended the day before, and she had returned now for some property of hers left in the schoolhouse overnight. She laid down the books while she locked the door and put the key in her pocket, and then she gathered them up and moved somewhat languidly toward Mrs. Farrell. This lady was slender enough to seem of greater height than she really was, but not slender enough to look meagre, and she wore a stuff that clung to her shape, and, without defining it too statuesquely, brought out all its stylishness. Her dress was not so well suited to walking along country roads as it was to some pretty effects of pose; caught with the left hand and drawn tightly across from behind, its plaited folds expanded about Mrs. Farrell's feet, and as she turned her head for a sidelong glance at her skirt, it made her look like a lady on a Japanese fan. The resemblance was heightened by Mrs. Farrell's brunette coloring of dusky red and white, and very dark eyes and hair; but for the rest her features were too regular; she knitted her level brows under a forehead overhung with loose hair like a French painter's fancy of a Roman girl of the decadence, and she was not a Buddhist half the time. This afternoon, for example, she had in the hand with which she swept her skirt forward, a very charming little English copy of Keble's Christian Year, in mouse-colored, flexible leather, with red edges. It was a book that she had carried a good deal that summer.

She now looked up and down the road, and seeing no one but Rachel she undid her attitude and pinned her draperies courageously out of the way. "Let us go home through the berry pasture," she said and at the same time she stepped out towards the bars of the meadow with a stride that showed the elastic beauty of her ankles and the neat fit of her stout walking-shoes; she mounted and was over before the country girl could let down one of the bars and creep through. In spite of Mrs. Farrell's stylishness, the pasture and she seemed joyously to accept each other as parts of nature; as she now lounged over the tough, springy knolls, and leaped from one gray lichened rock to another, and glided in and out of the sunshotten clumps of white birches, she suggested a well millinered wood nymph not the least afraid of satyrs; she suffered herself to whistle fragments of opera, as she stooped from time to time and examined the low bushes to see if there were any ripe berries yet. Such as she found she ate with a frank, natural, charming greed; but there were not many of them.

"We shall have to stick to custard pie for another week," she said; "I'm glad it's so good. Don't let's go home at once, Rachel. Sit down and have a talk, and I'll help you through afterward, or get you out of the trouble somehow. "Halt!" she commanded.

The girl showed a conscientious hesitation, while Mrs. Farrell sank down at the base of a bowlder on which the sun set had been shining. The day was one of that freshness which comes often enough to the New England hills even late in July; Mrs. Farrell leaned back with her hands clasped behind her head, and closed her eyes in luxury. "Oh you nice old rock, you! How warm you are to a person's back!"

Rachel crouched somewhat primly near her, with her books on her knee, and glanced with a slight anxiety at the freedom of Mrs. Farrell's self-disposition, whose signal grace might well have justified its own daring.

"Rachel," said Mrs. Farrell, subtly interpreting her expression, "you're almost as modest as a man; I'm always putting you to the blush. There, will that do any better?" she asked, modifying her posture. She gazed into the young girl's face with a caricatured prudery, and Rachel colored faintly and smiled.

"Perhaps I wasn't thinking what you thought," she said.

"Oh yes, you were, you sly thing; don't try to deceive my youth and inexperience. I suppose you're glad your school's over for the summer, Rachel?"

"I don't know. Yes, I'm glad; it's hard work. I shall have a change at least, helping about home."

"What shall you do?"

"I suppose I shall wait on table."

"Well, then, you shall not. I'll arrange that with your mother, any way. I'll wait on table myself, first."

"I don't see what difference it makes whether I work for the boarders in the kitchen or wait on them at the table."

"It makes a great difference; you can't be bidden by them if you're not in the way, and I'm not going to have a woman of genius asking common clay if it will take some more of the hash or another help of pie in my presence. Yes, I say genius, Rachel; and Mrs Gilbert said so, too," cried Mrs. Farrell, at some signs in the girl, who seemed a little impatient of the subject, as of something already talked over; "and I'm proud of having been in the secret of it. I never shall forget how they all looked, when I came dancing out with it and stood it up at the head of the table where they could see it. They thought I did it, and they had quite a revulsion of feeling when they found it was yours. Where are you going, Rachel? To Florence, or the Cooper Institute, or Doctor Rimmer?"

"I have no idea of going anywhere. I have no money; father couldn't afford to send me. I don't expect to leave home."

"Well, then I'll tell you; you must. Why can't you come and stay with me in Boston this winter? I've got two rooms, and money enough to keep a couple of mice—especially if one's a country mouse—and we'll study art together. I might as well do that as anything—or nothing. Come, is it a bargain?"

"If I could get the money to pay for my boarding, I think I should like it very much. But I couldn't," answered Rachel, quietly.

"Why, Rachel, can't you understand that you are to be my guest?"

Even the [illegible] of West Pekin are slow to melt in gratitude, and Rachel replied without effusion.

"Did you think that? It is very good of you—but I could never think of it," she added firmly. "I never could pay you back in any way. It would come to a great deal in a winter—city board."

"Do I understand you to refuse this handsome offer, Rachel?"

"I must."

"All right. Then I shall certainly count upon your being with me, for it would be foolish not to come, and whatever you are, Rachel, you're not foolish. I'm going to talk with your mother about it. Why, you little—chipmunk," cried Mrs. Farrell, adding the term of endearment after some hesitation for the precise expression, "I want you to come and do me credit. When your things are on exhibition at Williams and Everett's, and Doll and Richards', I'm going to gather a few small spears of glory for myself by slyly telling round that I gave you your first instruction, and kept you from blushing unseen in West Pekin. I've felt the want of a protegee a good while, and here you are, just made to my hand. I heard before I came away that they were going to get up a life-class next winter. Perhaps we could get a chance to join that."

"Life class?"

"Yes; to draw from the nude, you know."

"From the"—Rachel hesitated.

"Yes, yes, yes! my wild-wood flower. From the human being, the fellow-creature, with as little *on* as possible," shouted Mrs. Farrell. "How can you learn the figure any other way?"

A puzzled, painful look came into the girl's eyes, and "Do—do—ladies go?" she asked faintly.

"Of *course* they go!" said Mrs. Farrell. "It's a regular part of art-education. The ladies have separate classes in New York, but they don't abroad."

Rachel seemed to be at a loss what to answer. She dropped her eyes under Mrs. Farrell's scrutiny, and softly plucked at a tuft of grass. At last she said, without looking up, "It wouldn't be necessary for me to go. I only want to paint animals."

"Well, and aren't men animals?" demanded Mrs. Farrell, leaning forward and trying to turn the girl about so as to look into her averted face.

"Don't!" said the other in a wounded tone.

"Rachel, Rachel!" cried Mrs. Farrell, tenderly, "I've really shocked you, have n't I? Don't be mad at me, my little girl; I didn't invent the life-class, and I never went to one. I don't know whether it's exactly nice or not. I suppose people wouldn't do it if it wasn't. Come, look round at me, Rachel; I'm so glad of your liking me that if you stop it for half a second you'll break my heart!" She spoke in tones of anxious appeal, and then suddenly added, "If you'll visit me this winter we won't go to the life-class; we'll sleep together in the parlor and keep a cow in the back room."

Rachel gave way to a laugh, with her face hidden in her hands, and Mrs. Farrell fell back, satisfied, against her comfortable rock again, and put her hand in her pocket. "Look here, Rachel," she said, drawing it out, "here's something of yours." She tossed a crisp, rattling ten dollar note into the girl's lap, and nodded as Rachel turned a face of question upon her. "I sold your Blossom for that this morning; I forgot to tell you before. No, ma'am; I didn't buy it. Mrs. Gilbert bought it. The others praised it, Mrs. Gilbert paid for it: that's Mrs. Gilbert. I told her something about you, and how you owed everything to my instruction, and she offered $10 for Blossom. I tried to beat her down to five," she continued, while Rachel stared dumbly at the money, "but it was no use. She wouldn't fall a cent. She——Ugh! what's that?" cried Mrs. Farrell.

She gathered her dispersed picturesqueness hastily up, threw her head alertly around, and confronted a mild faced cow, placidly pausing twenty paces off under the bough of a tree, through which she had advanced her visage, and softly regarding them with her gentle brown eyes. "Why, Blossom, Blossom!" complained the lady. "How could you come up in that startling way? I thought it was a man! Though of course, she added less dramatically, "I might have remembered that there isn't a man within a hundred miles."

She was about to lean back again in her lazy posture, when voices made themselves heard from the wood beside the pasture, out of which Blossom had emerged. "Men's voices, Rachel!" she whispered. "An adventure! I suppose we must run away from it!"

Mrs. Farrell struggled up from her sitting posture, and, entangling her foot in her skirt, plunged forward with graceful awkwardness, but did not fall. She caught the pins out of her drapery, and Rachel and she were well on their way to the bars which would let them into the road, when two men emerged from the birch thicket out of which Blossom had appeared. One was tall and dark, with firm, very dark mustache branching across a full beard. The other was a fair man, with a delicate face; he was slight of frame, and of the middle stature; in his whole bearing there was an expression of tacit resolution, which had also a touch of an indefinable something that one might call fanaticism. Both were city clad, but very simple and fitly for faring through woods and fields; the dark man wore high boots, he carried a trouting rod, and at his side was a fish-basket.

They looked after the two women, with eyes that clung charmed to the figure of Mrs. Farrell, as she drifted down the sloping meadow-path.

"Magnificent!" said the dark man, carelessly. "'A daughter of the gods, divinely tall and most divinely fair!'"

A flush came over the cheek of the other, but he said nothing, while he absently advanced to the rock beside which the women had been sitting, as if that superb shape had drawn him thus far after her. A little book lay there, which he touched with his foot before he saw it. As he stooped to pick it up, Mrs. Farrell stopped fleetly, as a deer stops, and wheeling round went rapidly back toward the two men. When Mrs. Farrell advanced upon you, you had a sense of lustrous brown eyes growing and brightening out of space, and then you knew of the airy looseness of the over-hanging hair, and of the perfection of the face, and last of the sweeping, undulant grace of the divine figure. So she came onward now, fixing her unfrightened, steadfast eyes upon the young man, out of whose face went everything but worship. He took off his hat, and bent forward with a bow, offering the pretty volume at which he had hardly glanced.

"Thanks," she breathed, and for an instant she relaxed the severe impersonality of her regard, and flooded him with a look. He stood helpless, while she turned and swiftly rejoined her companion, and so he remained standing till she and Rachel had passed through the meadow bars and out of sight.

Then the dark man moved and said solemnly, "Don't laugh, Easton; you would'nt like to be seen through, yourself."

"Laugh, Gilbert!" retorted Easton, with a start. "What do you mean? What is there to laugh at?" he demanded.

"Nothing. It was superbly done. It was a stroke of genius in its way."

"I don't understand you," cried Easton.

"Why, you don't suppose she left it here on purpose, and meant one of us to pick it up, so that she could come back and get it from him, and see just what manner of men we were; and—"

"No! I don't suppose that."

"Neither do I," said Gilbert, nonchalantly. "I never saw anything more unconscious. Come, let's be going; there's nothing to call her back, now."

He put his hand under the fish basket, and weighed it mechanically, while he used the mass of his uncoupled rod staffwise, and moved away. Easton followed with a bewildered air, at which Gilbert, when he happened to glance round at him, broke into a laugh.—*Atlantic Monthly.*

Gulf Coast Steam Line.

We are advised, authoritatively, that a steam line between St. Marks and New Orleans is about to go into operation. Two propellers of proper draft, freightage capacity and passenger accommodations, will each make semi-monthly trips, thus furnishing an arrival and departure per week from New Orleans, Pensacola, Apalachicola and St. Marks. An extension of their route to Cedar Keys would probably attract much western produce freight by rail from Pensacola for embarkation to peninsular ports.—*Pensacola Gazette.*

Philadelphians are obliged to pay $2 for reserved seats to hear Titiens sing. They think it is a little steep for one voice; but the old lady is fashionable, and draws well.

[Written for the New Orleans Republican.]

THE ROYAL CHARLES.

BY JULIA PLEASANTS CRESWELL.

The Whigs are up! Oh, glorious day!
A woman pealed their deathless cry.
A woman leads them in the fray,
To show the wonders of the sky.

She sends their banners out to them,
And gives their places in the ranks;
For gods brought down each diadem,
And left with her no room for thanks.

A Pleasants roams beside the wave
Where Henry Clay is carved in stone.
A Pleasants ruled the ocean wave,
When old Virginia felt her moan.

That man was shorn of all his wealth,
When that great Pleasants gave his slaves
To God and freedom; not by stealth,
But sent them grandly o'er the waves.

Four hundred went, a mighty gift!
And God sends back a wreath to him,
Whose sturdy shoulders now will lift
The snow-white flag through shadows dim.

For Deborah sends to him her flag.
He knows the name, and now will weep,
To think how Caddo's lonely crag
For him such precious memories keep.

He knows the name; how at her board
So many sons and daughters fed,
He can not turn from her last word
To whom he owed his earliest bread.

Up man of God! there is no shift,
For those who shut their ears to me.
You are the man, that flag, to lift,
And set your suffering cousin free.

Go peal the Pleasants' battle cry!
Their blood has cried aloud to God!
Go lift the flag of Clay on high,
And spread his mighty deeds abroad.

—Caddo.

One of Aaron Burr's Jurors.

A venerable gentleman, with a history of peculiar interest, is at present sojourning temporarily at the Good Samaritan Hospital, in this city. He came here several weeks ago, totally blind, suffering from a cataract of his left and sole remaining eye. He was operated on for cataract by one of our Cincinnati oculists, and although the venerable man has attained the uncommon age of ninety years and four months, the delicate operation was perfectly successful, and the patient now has the happiness of enjoying his sight once more.

The old gentleman is a physician, by name Dr. David Creel, and is one of the earlier graduates of the old University of Pennsylvania, at Philadelphia. He is the father-in-law of Judge Safford, of our State, and is at present a resident of Chillicothe.

Part of Dr. Creel's history is a matter of national interest, from the fact that he was one of the jurors in the great trial of Aaron Burr for conspiracy against the United States government.

Father Creel is cheerful, happy and enthusiastic as a girl of sixteen. Before the trouble with his eyes, his health was perfect, better than sixty years ago, he says, and he is yet able to walk a good five miles. He says that still, at his great age, he is as desirous of living as he ever was, and doesn't want to get out of this world a bit more than he did when he was twenty years old. His hearing is excellent, his memory as good as yours or anybody's, and his mind perfectly clear. He is a man of much learning and great intelligence; quotes Latin at will and knows Shakespeare, Cicero and all those old fellows by heart.

Dr. Creel has written much for publication in his day, and gave the final shock to his eyesight by sitting up and using his eyes writing at night.

"Its a great shame that I made such a blockhead of myself," says he.

This frisky old boy is going to the Philadelphia centennial next year to see the sights, and says he really can not see any reason why he shouldn't live ten years yet. He was asked if he pursued any particular plan of diet or habits by which he kept his health and hopefulness in such a remarkable degree at this advanced age.

"No," said he, "I have no particular diet or habits, except that I take plenty of exercise by walking, and I live on brown bread entirely. When flour is bolted all that is good is taken out of it, and white bread is not fit for any human being to eat. Then I only drink black tea, black Oolong, and not very much of that. I use very little tea or coffee either."

Like most of the very old men left among us, Dr. Creel went through the war of 1812. He is a Virginian by birth, and was surgeon to the Second Virginia Regiment in the war of 1812. On his way to the seat of war in the North he stopped at Cincinnati a few days, and a party was given him by General Findlay. General Harrison's daughter Elizabeth, then a blooming young lady, was at the party. Dr. Creel says that Elizabeth was a very beautiful woman, and the perfect picture of her father.

Dr. Creel's recollections of the Burr trial, whom he knew well, are, however, the most interesting of all. The trial of Aaron Burr, it will be remembered, took place in September, 1807. So far as our venerable friend knows, he is the sole man remaining of the twelve men who acquitted Aaron Burr of treason against the United States. There is probably no doubt that he is the only one left, as he was one of the youngest of the jurors, and he is now over ninety years old.

"The trial lasted a month," said Father Creel.

"And how did the jury stand?" was asked.

"Unanimous for acquittal," said he—unanimous. Burr's principal lawyer was Luther Martin, of Philadelphia. Luther Martin was considered the finest lawyer of the day, but he was, unfortunately, a hopeless drunkard. He was retained in the Burr case on condition that he would drink nothing intoxicating as long as the trial lasted. He accepted the condition, and agreed to drink nothing which would make him drunk till the case was finished. But Luther Martin could no more keep from liquor than a duck could keep from swimming; so, though he kept his pledge by the letter, he broke it in the fact. He took bread and soaked it in brandy, and ate it incessantly during the whole trial, thus whipping the devil around the stump.

"Oh! it was a famous trial, that was—worth a lifetime to hear. Luther Martin was one of the first lawyers of the age, and put forth his most powerful efforts in Burr's behalf. Chief Justice Marshall allowed Burr to speak in his own defense whenever he chose, and, although, as I said, Martin was one of the most accomplished lawyers of the age, yet Burr knocked to pieces in five minutes all that Martin could say. Whenever he opened his lips there was most perfect silence in the court. Aaron Burr was so graceful and splendid in all that he did or said. Every word made a most profound impression on the jury. I shall never forget it—never—though I live to be 500 years old."

"Was he so eloquent?"

"No; he was not eloquent at all, in the ordinary sense of the word. He was not a bit flowery in his language. It was just clear, precise and simple, with no attempt whatever at ornamental clap-trap, but he had a way of putting a point before a jury more clearly than any man I ever knew, so clearly that they had to see it."

"What was the fascination about him do you think?"

"I think it was his manner. There was a charm about that that no human being could resist, particularly a woman. It is a fact, without a particle of exaggeration, that when once he fixed his fascinating eye upon a woman there was no escape for her. It may sound strange, but I, having seen and known the man as I have, must say that I doubt if there was ever another as fascinating a man on earth as Aaron Burr. Then his intellect was far more powerful than is generally supposed. His head did not slope back from his brows like that of Henry Clay, as is sometimes represented in his pictures, but it was massive and full in the forehead. His brain was magnificent, in my opinion, equal to Jefferson's."

"Was Aaron Burr so very handsome?"

"Not so handsome in the face, but though rather a small man, he was the most perfectly formed man I ever saw, and his manner of carrying himself was indescribably princely and splendid."

"Did the jury which tried him really believe him innocent?"

"Not one of us thought he had any direct designs against the government of the United States. His ambition and his plans were magnificent, but they were not to be directed against this country, at least not then. As nearly as we could conscientiously get at the truth, we judged that his plan was about this: First, the conquest of Mexico and the establishment of a government which would probably have been a mild form of monarchy, with Aaron Burr for king. Then, afterward, perhaps a few of the Southern United States would have been attached, but he never had an idea of trying to break up the United States government itself. After conquering Mexico, and perhaps annexing a few of our Southern States, his plan was to go on south, and add to his kingdom from the South American States. There was not the shadow of doubt in our minds, either, that General Wilkinson, who commanded the United States troops in the South, was just as guilty as Aaron Burr was, but for some reason Wilkinson was never brought to trial."

"You knew the Blennerhassetts well, too, Dr. Creel?"

"Very well, said the Doctor. "Blennerhassett and his wife have visited at my father's. I danced with Mrs. Blennerhassett at a ball in Parkersburg, West Virginia, once. She was a very accomplished, agreeable woman, and her husband idolized her."

"Was she handsome?"

"No, not very. She was a very graceful, finely formed woman, with dark hair and rather dark eyes, but not so stylish as handsome and elegant. At the time of her acquaintance with Burr she must have been as much as forty five years old. Blennerhassett was very wealthy then, and Burr won over Mrs. Blennerhassett to his cause; she won over her husband, and so Burr got Blennerhassett's money. Mrs. Blennerhasset was a remarkable woman. I remember she used frequently to walk from home to Marietta, twelve miles, before breakfast, in the morning, and take breakfast in Marietta. Blennerhassett himself was very English in appearance. He strongly resembled Lord Ashburton, formerly English minister at Washington. Blennerhassett and his wife were a most affectionate couple, devotedly and faithfully attached to each other."

"And what became of their children after the failure of Burr and the ruin of their home?"

"They had three sons," said the venerable doctor; "Harmon, Dominique and Joseph Lewis. Joseph was the youngest. I do not know the fate of the elder sons, but a few years ago Joseph Blennerhassett, the youngest son, was living in Missouri, on the banks of the Mississippi river, a few miles above St. Louis. For anything I know, he is there still. He is a farmer, if I am not mistaken. The high spirited, but broken-hearted, Mrs. Blennerhassett, died poor and lonely in the care of some kindly Sisters of Charity, in New York, and none but these angels of mercy followed her to the grave. It was a mournful ending to a life like hers.

The bright old nonagenarian seemed to muse sorrowfully for a few moments, then all at once he turned the green shade over his eye inquiringly upon his tormentor.

"What church do you belong to?" said he suddenly.

Being answered, he continued, thoughtfully:

"Well, it's a very uncommon thing, I know, for a man ninety years of age to drop his theology and become a free-thinker, but in the last year, I must confess, that is what has happened to me. I have thought and thought about it, and the more I have thought the more it has seemed to me that dogmatic theology and dogmatic theologists are the curse of the civilized world. Dogmatic theology blocks science and progress at every step. This great and mighty world is many millions of years old, and the theologists say it is only about 6000.

"Standing upon the sunset hills and looking backward, it seems to me that I should like to leave this word to those behind. In the light of the sunset, dogmatic theology becomes only a blot on the face of true religion. One theological sect is as apt to be right as another, and none can know for certain whether it is right or wrong. Man does not want to slavishly adore a relentless God, like a blind Hindoo devotee, but he wants to reverence, in the light of all the reason he has, a God of love, purity and peace.

"The old man, standing upon the sunset hills and looking backward, would like to say that this is the lesson which ninety years of life have taught him.—*Cincinnati Commercial.*

Emerson on His Contemporaries.

A Boston correspondent writes to the Concord, New Hampshire, *Monitor* of a talk with Ralph Waldo Emerson, saying:

Emerson was very fond of Oliver Wendell Holmes and James Russell Lowell, said with some appearance of pleasure, if not of pride, "We are all sons of ministers." "James," as he called him, "has been of late writing such good poetry that his long silence can be excused." From Mr. Emerson I learned something in reference to the mental habits of some of the poets. Holmes is so full that he can write at any time. Lowell broods over his subject for a time and then composes with great swiftness. He does not like to write to order, though desirous of employing the stimulus of great occasions. We asked him to read a poem at Concord on the one hundredth anniversary of the fight, but he said he could not. His wife a day or two before wrote to me, saying: "I can not speak for James, yet I think you may expect a poem from him on the nineteenth. He has been going about for some time in that peculiar way which is promise of something"—and on the nineteenth Lowell was on the ground with his poem—and a grand one it was. Longfellow prepares his poems to be read on great occasions, as a minister who lives near Boston prepares his sermons, nearly a month ahead. He wrote the poem read at Bowdoin College last summer early in the fall of the preceding year, and well it was that he did so, for the months intervening have been fruitless as far as literary labor is concerned, owing to physical prostration. He is, happily, better now. Mr. Emerson informed me that a new book of his would probably be issued by Osgood & Co. this month. This information will account for Emerson's frequent and long visits at the libraries during the last year. He has many essays and lectures and a few poems in manuscript, which may see the light some day. But Emerson is getting old and can not work much more, and possibly the "labor of preparing my manuscripts for the press," as he said, "may be delegated to some one younger than myself."

Under the British Channel.

The work of sinking a shaft to the depth of 100 metres will begin next week on the French coast, near Calais. This will be the preliminary operation upon the channel tunnel.

It really begins to look as though the tunnel under the English Channel were about to become an accomplished fact. The measure has received the legislative indorsement of both England and France. The bill looking to its construction passed the English House of Lords on the thirtieth of last July, having previously passed the House of Commons, and on the second of August a similar measure received the sanction of the French Assembly. The English bill provided for the appointment of a royal commission to have charge of the scheme, while the Chatham and Dover and Southeastern Railway Companies received permission to set apart £20,000 each toward ascertaining the feasibility of boring the sub-oceanic strata from the English side, and negotiations were opened on the part of Baron Rothschild, who desires to join these two companies in their part of the great undertaking. The French measure gives power to certain persons, the company of the Chemin de Fer du Nord, Baron Rothschild and some capitalists to make a tunnel halfway across the Straits, and to enter into negotiations with any other company prepared to complete the tunnel to the English side of the Channel. The submarine tunnel proper will be a little more than sixteen miles long, and the late investigations have shown that it can be so constructed as to be nearly 250 feet below the bottom of the Channel, and that there would be below it a considerable and uniform depth of chalk. It is expected that the cost, at the outside, will be $50,000,000.—*Philadelphia Telegraph.*

Molasses is made from watermelons in Massachusetts; but the making of it spoils the watermelons, without producing very good molasses.