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For the Columbian, CHILDHOOD'S DREAMS. BY LENA. LONG-FADED visions of my childhood's years...

JEAN RATHBURNE'S LIFE.

A SPRING long and cold, a short and fervid Summer, an Autumn bearing scant fruit—that was Jean Rathburne's life. And now she is dead, and the long wild grasses are tangled above her grave...

It was the will she left behind her which was the key-note to her life, and made it significant—a strange will, yet perfectly legal, and proved in court like the rest of them.

She explained her intention minutely. It was not to make the girls good merely, or respectable merely, or well-dressed, or well-fed merely; but, if possible, to make them happy, to indulge their whims, and give their individualities a chance.

Her parents had died before she could remember them, and left her a fortune and a guardian; left her, too, with a nature at once shy and sensitive, with a tendency to morbidness and hypochondria, which needed sorely the influence of a warm, loving, cheerful home.

Instead of that Sampson Dredlife and his wife starved her and froze her. I do not mean literally; there was fire and food enough in their great, comfortable house, and Miss Rathburne, as an heiress, should, was served with the best.

But she was always Miss Rathburne—never Jeanie, or darling, or mother's blessing, or heart's delight, or any of those fond, foolish names familiar to the lips of happy mothers. She knew well enough that no one loved her, and that strengthened her shyness, and deepened her despondency.

So she grew up to twenty-one—a long, slow cold Spring, as I said. Then her fortune came into her own hands, and with a certain Widow Dredlife, a sister-in-law of Sampson, to matrimonize the establishment, she went into a house of her own. The widow carried with her the old Dredlife influence, and the new home was at first scarcely other than a repetition of the old. Except that now Miss Rathburne began to go into society, and was enough of an heiress to be received there with favor.

She was not pretty, yet her figure was lithe and slender, her complexion was clear, and if she had ever been animated, might have been bright. Her eyes were large and dark, but the fire in them smoldered rather than sparkled. If she had had a little self-esteem, if some one had told her now and then that she was handsome, she might have been so; for many a woman sets up for a beauty on far less capital. But compliments never flowered in the Dredlife soil, and Jean had grown up feeling herself hopelessly plain, till the feeling had affected the very hue and lineaments of her countenance.

She had no taste in dress either—women seldom have who do not see any charm in their own faces. She wore colors which made her look sallow or dark nearly always, and her gowns distracted from the grace of her figure instead of being skillfully chosen to enhance it.

According to some creeds all this should have made her good by making her humble, but it had just the opposite effect. It nourished secretly a bitter, cynical pride, a grudging sense of injustice, a hard self-contempt—noxious weeds which do not grow in that sweet Valley of Humiliation where the heavenly pilgrims walked, and "the herb called heartiness flourished."

This was just the state—sick of herself, at odds with the world, yet desperately bent on wringing happiness out of some-

thing—in which Jack Brevoort found her.

He did not love Jean Rathburne—you are not to suppose that for a moment. At her brightest and best she would never have been his style; besides, a little blue-eyed girl, at home in his mother's nursery, a poor cousin, held so much heart as he had, and was more to him than any one else ever would be. But she lacked money just as entirely as he did, and it is not in such cases that two negatives make an affirmative. Of course, he could be much more dangerous to Miss Rathburne's peace than if he had really loved her, for his coolness would enable him to take advantage of all openings. He sorely needed money, and he had settled it with himself that he must marry it. He thought fate, which should, of course, have a special kindness for the old Brevoort blood, had placed her in his way on purpose.

He meant to make her in love with him; so he commenced, like a skilful tactician, by trying to make her in love with herself. For the first time she found herself studied with unmistakable interest. He noticed her tastes, and showed quietly his appreciation of them. He gave her hints about dress, and she grew handsome rapidly—much to his satisfaction; for, though he would have been ready to marry her in any case, it would be much more agreeable to have a wife who furnished to spectators an excuse for one's choice in something besides dollars and cents.

It was not altogether the new colors that she wore which improved her. A subtle flame ran through all her veins, and kindled the smouldering fires in her eyes. Her cheeks were paler no longer, or her face spiritless. When she looked in the glass she saw what seemed to her, in contrast with her old self, a radiant vision. And when with this new Jean Rathburne Jack Brevoort began to fall in love it did not surprise or startle her.

This was the Summer of her life—fervid as short; it lasted three months. This time only, for her sad colorless existence, came happiness!

Brevoort was an ardent lover. He was gifted in the art of seeming to a degree amounting to positive genius. The degree of the honesty of others, and too delicately generous ever to remember that she was rich and he was poor. So her Summer was warm and bright, and all her roses bloomed!

It was something to see her in these days—her old dead-and-alive self no longer; in its stead a sparkling creature, melting into the unspeakable glory of love and womanhood. How a man who truly loved her would have delighted in what Jack Brevoort watched with the cynical coolness of Mephistopheles!

He hurried on the preparations for their marriage when once she had accepted him. He could not do without her, he said, longer than till Fall. It was the truest word he had uttered since he began his courtship; but the need he had of her was of a nature he would not have found it pleasant to communicate. She thought it was the eagerness of love.

It was to make some of the arrangements which his approaching marriage rendered necessary that Brevoort went out of town for a couple of days; and of course, in his character of impatient lover, he must write each day to his betrothed. The first letter—Jean Rathburne's first love-letter—was full of subtly sweet words, tender phrases, allusions which made her pulses beat fast. She read it till she knew it by heart, and then kept reading it over to see if she had forgotten anything.

The second she opened with fingers trembling with expectation. It commenced with "Dear Hal!" Her delicate sense of honor bade her fold it up again, for she understood at once that it had been sent to her by mistake. But as she doubted it over she caught her own name. She would have been more than woman if she had not read it then.

It was simply the letter of one fast young man to another, about betting and debts and horses. It shocked her taste; but she loved him enough to have excused it but for this passage:

"George cannot say that I am not making effort enough to pay him. I am to marry Miss Rathburne in October. Splendid woman as she is, she is not my style—never would have been. I care more for Nell's little finger. However, a man who owes forty thousand dollars, and has some conscience still left about paying it, can't very well afford to indulge in the luxury of a hat. I believe I got rid of mine pretty effectually some time ago."

Those were words which no sophistry could ever beguile her into forgiving. Her Summer was over. The untimely black frost had come.

Who "Nell" was she did not care, or "George," or "Hal." She had no curiosity at all. Enough for her that love had failed her.

She looked in the glass with sad, changed eyes, and lost forever all the fond self-complacency of recent days. There was nothing about her to love, after all. She had been deceiving herself yet more utterly than she had been deceived. The very depth of her self-abasement made her patient.

It was morning when the letter came, and at night Brevoort was to return. So she sat all day and waited, without knowing how long the hours were, or feeling once the weariness of delay. She felt as if her heart and her pulses were standing still, waiting also. She was too utterly benumbed to care for anything. Through the weary day the only thing like occupation which she attempted, was to draw up a check for fifty thousand dollars in favor of Jack Brevoort, and sign it.

At last he came. She heard the well-

known ring, the firm proud step in the hall—how she had loved to note and remember every one of his peculiarities! Then he opened the door, and came up to her as usual.

She made a slight gesture of warning, and that, or something in her face, repressed the enthusiasm which would otherwise have expressed itself in caresses.

"I believe forty thousand dollars is the amount of your debts?" she asked in a clear, metallic tone.

For once his self-possession failed him. His knees shook under him, and he sat down.

"Who told you?" he gasped.

"Yourself."

She took out the letter, and laid it in his hands. He looked at it, and knew Jean Rathburne well enough to give up his game.

"I haven't one word to say, though I am not quite so heartless, perhaps, as that letter makes me seem. I should have been kind to you. But you may as well despise me through and through."

"Of course I withdraw from my promise to marry you; but your good intentions about paying your debts must not be frustrated by my truth-breaking. Here is a check for fifty thousand dollars. The margin of ten thousand over your own estimate of your liabilities will cover any little items you may chance to have forgotten, and make you a free man again, who can afford to have a heart."

"Do you think me mean enough to take it?"

"I think you will take it. There is a kind of justice in it too. I would have given you several times as much freely, if you had loved me as I thought. You deserve something for the weariness it must have been to you to act a part so long."

Her voice softened while she spoke to a tender, womanly pathos. He looked at her, with her sad, downcast eyes, her heavily-falling hair, her face that in its very weariness was sweet, and he came nearer to loving her than he had ever come before.

"You can't forgive me," he said, "and I won't ask you."

Then he took his hat and went away, leaving the check lying on the table.

She sent it to him next day in an envelope, without an additional word. Pride bade him return it; but his necessities constrained him. Jean Rathburne smiled grimly when the check came back to her from the bank, punctured like a railroad ticket, with little round holes.

Pride would have kept some women, in her place, in the midst of the world. She was prouder still, and disregarded the world altogether. She never was seen any more in society. She had had her day—her Summer was gone, with its roses. She chose to pass her Autumn alone. She pensioned off the widow Dredlife, and sent her away. She did not feel young or volatile enough to need matronizing any more.

If she suffered, no one knew it. As I said, the only complaint she was ever known to utter was that sentence in her strange will.

She died young. Natures like hers wear out fast, when no Spring of hope sustains them. Without doubt she was thankful when "the life that had been so sad" was over. She did not know, there under the daisies, that the first tears Jack Brevoort had wept in years were shed above her grave.

ANECDOTE OF COLUMBUS.

WHEN this celebrated navigator was crossing the Atlantic, after his first discovery of America, he encountered a dreadful storm. No prospect of deliverance appearing, the sailors abandoned themselves to despair, expecting every moment to be swallowed up. The feelings of Columbus at the time are best expressed in one of his own letters.

"I would," says he, "have been less concerned for this misfortune, had I been alone in the danger, both because my life is a debt that I owe to the Supreme Creator, and because I have at other times been exposed to the most imminent hazard. But what gave me infinite grief and vexation was, that after it had pleased our Lord to give me faith to undertake this enterprise, in which I had now been so successful, that my opponents would have been convinced, and the glory of your highness and the extent of your territory increased by me, it should please the Divine Majesty to stop all by my death. All this would have been more tolerable, had it not been attended with the loss of those men whom I had carried with me, upon promise of the greatest prosperity; who, seeing themselves in such distress, cursed not only their coming along with me, but fear and awe for me which prevented them from returning, as they often had resolved to have done. But besides all this, my sorrow was greatly increased by recollecting that I had left my two sons at school at Cordova, destitute of friends in a foreign country, where it could not in all probability be known that I have done such services as might induce your highness to remember them."

The latest novelty in the "feminine line" is patent eyelashes, now for sale in many city fancy-stores. A horrid old bachelor says that the way things are going now, a man that needs a wife will only have to step into a milliner's shop, purchase a water-fall, "plumpers," false curls, false calves, etc., put them together, and have one without farther trouble.

COUNTRY BOARD.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

ALL the long Winter of 1865-6 rumors of the approach of that dire pestilence, the cholera, had agitated the public mind. It was expected here at the opening of the Spring, and people prepared themselves for the dreadful visitation.

The common people were distracted by the theories of it ventilated in the public prints. Many felt slight interest in the question of contagion and non-contagion. Governed by their fears and their impulses alone, they resolved at all events to flee in good time from the impending danger.

Profound and anxious thought radiates. Excitements are seldom akin to pent fires, but far and wide they range the popular mind, producing consternation, affright, dismay; arousing the passions, stimulating greed, and all the baser tendencies of mankind.

In this case, country shared with city in the excitement. If the city was to be emptied of its inhabitants, the country must be prepared to receive them. Another necessity suggested itself to Rusticus. If Urban wanted a Summer home, and was afraid to stay in his own, he would doubtless submit to a good deal of extortion.

Rusticus had some reason on his side; also no inconsiderable amount of shrewdness, and more knowledge of human nature than is commonly supposed to belong to his habits. It was a very natural mistake he made, but it was a mistake. There was one thing not provided for his logic—that was the abatement of the excitement, and the prevention of the spread of the pestilence. Nevertheless, all drawbacks duly considered, I think he has made quite money enough out of the public trouble.

Arad Dempster was driving along the sandy road of a country town of unusual rurality of habit, situated not more than a hundred miles from New York. Arad was forty-five; but hard work, the tan of many burning Summers, and the hardening of many freezing Winters, had made him what his boys chose to call him, an "old man." He was bow-backed, and rheumatic, full of strange angles and of curves, which nevertheless deviated from the line of beauty.

Since leaving his home—a comfortable but unpainted farm-house—he had progressed a mile or two, when a tall, gaunt female, who might have seen the same number of years as himself, or more or less (if it was impossible to guess her age from her looks), came out of a low roadside dwelling, so tiny that it seemed hardly able to afford shelter to herself alone, and addressed him.

"Ho! Arad! Arad Dempster! What's your hurry? Can't you hear nothing, nor stop a minute? Stay!"

This last word, protracted into a dismal monotone, brought the reluctant Arad to bay. As he said afterward, "When he heard that he knew he might as well give in, 'Twa'n't no use trying to get away from old Caroline when she gatterer you for a talk."

"Hear the news, Arad?" she commenced, as he reined the old mare up to the fence.

"No—what is it?" quoth Arad, grimly.

"Why, they're goin' to have the cholery down to York this Summer, say as you live, and everybody's goin' to leave the city. That's paper? I saw down to Squire Muzzy's yesterday said as how't the grass would grow in the streets, and the 'brown stone fronts,'—whatever they are—would be covered with moss. An' it said, likewise, that they'd all go into the country to board, what didn't go over seas, and the country-folks must be prepared to 'commode their distressed brethren and sistren (they didn't say nothin' about little children, but I reckon they wouldn't leave them at home with the cholery), and board them till cold weather comes ag'in. Now, how many you goin' to take, Arad Dempster, and how much you calculate to ask?"

"With this momentous question Aunt Caroline paused to recover breath.

"Dun know," answered Arad; "dun know; ha'nt heerd nothin' about it, before. 'Sides, what do we want o' boarders?"

"Wal, you just hear what the folks has to say about it down to the Corners (I have been thinking about it nigh up on all the time since I read that piec in the papers), and list stop and tell me when ye come back, can't ye?" she screamed after him as she entered her house, and the old man drove away.

Arad was a ruminating animal, not a man of words, and he had matter for thought as he drove along after this colloquy, or perhaps, more properly, soliloquy. Long before he reached the Corners, this was the result of his cogitations:

"If all them city people that are so rich are goin' into the country, why, they'll fill it chuck-full, I guess—every house, an' maybe some in the barns an' corn-houses. An' I don't s'pose they'd mind paying any price—as much as four or five dollars a week, maybe, for their board. Guess we can make out to 'commode some on 'em, and there's plenty of pork down cellar, an' a lot of potatoes and inyons that we'd had to throw away. Guess we can."

He actually rode up to the store with an erect and defiant air.

Sundry round-about and unimportant questions at last introduced the subject to the circle he found at the store, and he soon found that nearly every one had

been thinking about the very matter, but too shy to introduce it to his neighbors.

Then followed a caucus of Elmville leaders—the squire, the parson, the blacksmith, the school-teacher—in which it was unanimously voted, in the language of the schoolmaster, that "in view of the anticipated exodus of the inhabitants of the great seaboard cities, these distressed people fleeing before the presence of the pestilence that walketh at noonday, should be welcomed by the kindly hearts to hospitable homes, and all the houses in Elmville be opened for their accommodation."

And furthermore, "that it being necessary in time of such universal distress to fix upon a tariff of prices to keep grasping people from being extortionate, ten dollars a week for grown people, and half price for children, should be the sum uniformly charged."

"An' how much for dogs and nussin' babies, Mr. Cherrman?" squeaked a voice from a dark corner. Nobody replying to this pertinent question, the meeting adjourned sine die, or, as the blacksmith observed, "sine died."

"Ten dollars a week! Ten dollars a week!" ruminated Arad, as he rode homeward. "I must stop and tell old Caroline, in course, though how she consarns her I don't see, nohow. Her house holds her, but nobody else couldn't squeeze in there. They might eat out under the old apple-tree, and sleep with their heads inside the door at night, just like that are bird I've hearn tell of in Aisy, or Africa, or somewhere—that puts his head under the sand and thinks he's covered up. He's a fool of course," pursued Arad, "but maybe some of them city folks aint no smarter than he is, if they do wear his feathers."

"Ten dollars a week!" exclaimed Aunt Caroline (she was an "everybody's aunt"). "Why, the land sakes! You don't say! Wal! I'm just agoin' to send word down to York to Squire Murphy (Sophy Brown it used to be) to come up here and board long o' me this Summer. Guess I can 'commode her slick. She can sleep 'long o' me, and I've got plenty of chickens and garden sass coming on. Besides old Crummele's calf'll be old enough to kill by that time, 'n I can change round with the neighbors so's to have veal a considerable spell, and—"

"And what ye goin' to do with Mr. Murphy when he comes?" interrupted Arad.

"Murphy! Why, for the land sakes, I never thought of him! He can't come here, o' course. No man has ever entered my door since I lived here. I won't have 'em, the ugly creturs! When I'm dead I s'pose they can take me out to bury me, but I won't have one on 'em in here before."

"Wal," replied Arad, coolly, "I reckon my old woman couldn't go anywheres to live without I went too, and I guess Murphy aint a fool, nor his wife neither. But I've told you the price agreed on, and you know better'n I whether you can make hay while this sun shines or not. Gee up, Patty, and off he drove, leaving Aunt Caroline to finish her remarks to empty air."

Elmville was all commotion from the Corners to the Green—a space of fully four miles. At the unanimous request of his neighbors, the schoolmaster prepared for the squire (who was also the merchant) a letter which he forwarded as a sort of circular to the firms with which he dealt in New York, and which set forth the fact that he, and all the better class of the inhabitants of Elmville, were prepared to open their doors as places of refuge for the people of that city, driven from their homes by the horrors of the pestilence; and that in consideration of the hardship and distress which these unfortunate persons were undergoing, they were willing to accommodate them for the paltry sum of ten dollars a week, "children half price."

In the cold days of early Spring several New Yorkers, deluded by this high-sounding document, sought the classic precincts of Elmville in search of board. The exterior was by no means promising, for Elmville has to make many strides ere she overtakes modern civilization, but the interior was a thousand times worse. The best bedroom was usually a place of deposit for all the box-trunks and best bonnets of the family, all the hanks of woolen and linen yarn unwoven, besides miscellaneous odds and ends innumerable, while little by way of furniture, save the high post bedstead and mountainous feather bed, could be seen. The blue-edged table-ware, brown, home-made linen, two-tined steel forks, and utter want of the unknown luxury of napkins, made New Yorkers stare; as also the fried pork, swimming in its own grease, sordid eggs fried in the same, potatoes in their jackets, etc., which formed the chief staples in the feeding department.

By the first of June all fears of cholera had subsided. Messames Brown, Jones, and Robinson had each and all developed a sudden and keen appreciation of home comforts and privileges, and had each gathered her flock together and departed. Not a boarder remained in Elmville, and the magical ten dollars a week which Elmvillians had hoped to charm into their yawning pockets, had disappeared like the vague fancies wrought by a conjuror.

Every one was gone, and only Aunt Caroline had high hopes, for her boarder was yet to come.

On the first of June arrived Mrs. Sophia Murphy, nee Brown, a ponderous woman, once Aunt Caroline's contemporary, but now her junior by thirty-

several years, if looks were the test. In her shadow meekly followed Mr. Murphy—always Murphy—and not so meekly as he looked.

Mrs. Murphy had received Aunt Caroline's invitation to board with her, a little wondering at its phrasing, and the anxiety it evinced that she should leave the city at once.

"Ten dollars a week! How very cheap, when we should have to pay forty or fifty, at the very least, at any fashionable place!" Thus said Mrs. Murphy to her husband, nothing doubting, worthy spouse, that the invitation was intended for the matrimonial unit, and not to that fraction of it which she composed. He assenting, she forthwith accepted the proposition, and arranged to be with Aunt Caroline on the first of June.

What was her dismay at sight of the tiny cage before whose gate they alighted. "Why, the whole house is no larger than my bedroom at home," she said to her husband. "We never can live here."

But a pair of bony arms encircled her neck, and a strident voice, with something of the old melody yet lingering in the tones produced by genuine emotion, assured her that this was the home of the ancient spinsters. But—

"Who's this man?" cried Aunt Caroline, when the first salutations were over.

"Mr. Murphy, my husband. Of course you remember him."

"Oh! Wal, you'll only have time to get to the cars. I'll take care of your wife and her things—you needn't mind."

"But I am not going back to-night. I am intending to remain here awhile."

"Here! where? I never let any man into my house. Besides, there aint no room for you. Why, there aint more'n dishes enough for two, and there aint no place for your wife to sleep only 'long o' me."

Mr. Murphy gave a rueful whistle, which changed to one of amusement.

"I perceive," he said, "you are very disinterested. So you meant to charge my wife ten dollars a week for the privilege of being exceedingly uncomfortable here. I think she still prefers living with me—eh, Sophy? What do you say, my dear—shall we return at once? The carriage can take us back to the station for the down train."

And so ended Miss Caroline's speculations, and all Elmville's magnificent hopes of Summer boarders.—New York Ledger.

AN OBLIGING DISPOSITION.

IT is several years since the following capital story made its last circuit on the papers, and we start it once more on its travels. It will find some new readers and many old ones who will enjoy it.

There is nothing like an obliging disposition, I thought to myself one day when travelling in a railway car from Boston to Worcester, seeing a gentleman put himself to considerable trouble to land another gentleman, who had fallen asleep, at his destination.

"Passengers for West Needham?" cried out the conductor—"the car stops but one minute."

"Hallo!" exclaimed a young man in spectacles, at the same time seizing an old gentleman by the shoulders, who was sleeping very soundly, "here's Captain Holmes fast asleep, and this is West Needham, where he lives. Come, get up, Captain Holmes, here you are."

The gentleman got upon his feet and began to rub his eyes, but the young man forced him along to the door of the car, and gently landed him on the roadside. Whiz went the steam and we began to fly again. The obliging young man took his seat again, and said with a good deal of satisfaction to somebody near him: "Well, if it hadn't been for me Captain Holmes would have missed his home finely. But here he has left his bundles;" and the young man picked up a paper parcel and threw it out.

"Well," he said again, "if it hadn't been for me Captain Holmes would have missed his bundles finely."

When we stopped at the next station, a lady began to rummage under the seat where Captain Holmes had been sitting, and exclaimed in great alarm: "I can't find my bundle."

"Was it done up in a piece of brown paper?" I asked.

"Yes, it was, to be sure," said the lady.

"Then," said I, "that young man yonder threw it out of the window at the last stopping-place."

This led to a scene between the obliging young man and the old lady, which ended by the former taking the address of the latter, and promising to return the package in a few days provided he should ever find it.

"Well," said the obliging young man, "catch me doing a good-natured thing again. What can I do for that poor woman, if I cannot find her bundle?"

Whiz went the steam, ding, ding, ding went the bell, the dust flew, and the cars flew, as they say, like lightning, till we stopped again at the next station, I forgot the name of it now, but it would be of no consequence if I could remember it. An old gentleman started up and began to poke under the seat where Captain Holmes had sat.

"What are you looking for?" I inquired.

"Looking for?" said the old gentleman, "why, I am looking for my bundle of clothes."

"Was it tied up in a yellow handkerchief?" I asked.

"Yes, and nothing else," said the old man.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the obliging young man, "I threw it out of the car at Needham; it I thought it belonged to Captain Holmes."

"Captain Holmes!" exclaimed the old fellow, with a look of despair, "who is Captain Holmes? That bundle contained all my clean clothes, that I was to wear at my son's wedding to-morrow morning. Dear me, what can I do?"

"Nothing could be done but to give his address to the obliging young man as before, and console himself with the promise that the bundle should be returned to him, provided it was ever found. The obliging young man was now in despair, and made another solemn vow that he would never attempt to be obliging again. The next station was his landing-place, and as he went toward the door of the car, he saw a silver-headed cane, which he took hold of and read the inscription on it, "Moses Holmes, East Needham."

"Well," again exclaimed the obliging young man, "if here isn't Captain Holmes's cane!"

"Yes," said a gentleman, who got in at the last station, "and the old man is lame too. He will miss his stick."

"Do you know him?" inquired the obliging young man.

"Know him? I should think so," replied the gentleman; "he is my uncle."

"And does he live at East Needham?" asked the obliging young man.

"Of course he does. He never lived anywhere else."

"Well, if it don't beat everything," said the obliging young man, "and I put him out at West Needham, a mile and a half the other side of his home."

A BOY STRUCK BLIND FOR BLASPHEMY.

THE vengeance of the Almighty was visited on a youth named Richards, recently, in the most awful and sudden manner. It appears that the lad, who is thirteen years of age, and the son of parents in very humble circumstances, was playing in the street with four or five other lads about his own age at "cat and dog." Richards and his companions had been playing for some time, when a dispute rose among them as to the notes or jumps he had made more than twenty, and his opponents protested that he had not scored so many. High words and bad language were freely used on both sides. Each boy accused the other of falsehood, and at length Richards, failing to convince his companions of the truthfulness of his statement, flew into a violent rage and fiercely shouted:

"May God strike me blind if I have not made more than twenty!"

He had scarcely uttered the adjuration before he felt the "dog" fall out of his hands, and throwing up his arms, exclaimed:

"Oh, dear, I cannot see!"

His companions ran to him, and finding what he said was true, at his request led him home, where on examination it was found that a thick film had overspread each of his eyes. In this miserable condition the unhappy youth has remained ever since, and we are informed that there is little or no prospect of sight being restored.—Brighton Observer.

NOT DEEP ENOUGH FOR PRAYER.

A good story is told of two raftsmen, who were caught in the late big blow on the Mississippi, at which so many crafts were swamped and so many steamboats lost their sky riggings. The raft was just emerging from Lake Pepin as the squall came. In an instant it was pitching and whirling as if suddenly dropped into Charybdis, while the waves broke over her with tremendous uproar, and, expecting instant destruction, the raftsmen dropped on their knees and commenced praying with a vim equal to the emergency. Happening to open his eyes an instant, he observed his companion, not engaged in prayer, but pushing a pole in the water at the side of the raft.

"What's that yer doing, Mike?" said he; "get down on yer knees now, for there isn't a minute between us and Purgatory!"

"Be easy, Pat," said the other, as he coolly continued to punch with his pole, "be easy, now