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DAILY LEADER.

[From the London Punch.]

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

FOLLEN LEITHGATE, MAY 12, 1865.

You lay a wreath on murdered Lincoln's bier,
You, who with mocking pencil wont to trace,
Broad for the self-complacent British sneer,
His length of shambling limb, his narrowed face,

His gaunt, gnarled hands, his uncouth, bristling hair,
His gawky manners, his bearing ill at ease,
His lack of all we prize as debonair,
Of power or will to shine, or art to please?

You, whose smart pen backed up the pencil's laugh,
Jeering each step as through the way were plain;
Reckless, so it could point its paragraph,
Of chief's perplexity, or people's pain!

Beside this corpse, that bears for winding-sheet
The stars and stripes he lived to rear anew,
Between the mourners at his head and feet,
Say, scurril jester, is there room for you?

Yes, he had lived to shame me for my sneer,
To lame my pencil, and confute my pen—
To make me own this kind of princes peer,
This rail-splitter a true-born king of men.

My shallow judgment I had learnt to rue,
Noting how to ocean's depth light he rose,
How his quaint wit made home-truth seem more true,
How, iron-like, his temper grew by blows.

How humble, yet how hopeful he could be;
How in good fortune and in ill the same;
Nor bitter in success, nor boastful he,
Thirsty for gold, nor lavish for fame.

He went about his work—such work as few
Ever had laid on head and heart and hand—
As one who knows where there's a task to do,
Man's honest will must Heaven's good grace command;

Who trusts the strength will with the burden grow,
That God makes instruments to work his will,
If but that will we can a-rive to know,
Nor tamper with the weights of good and ill.

So he went forth to battle, on the side
That he felt clear was Liberty's and Right's,
As in his peasant boyhood he had plied
His warfare with rude Nature's thwarting might.

The uncleared forest, the unbroken soil,
The iron bark that turns the lumberer's axe,
The rapid, that o'ersways the boatman's toil,
The prairie, hiding the maned wanderer's tracks,

The unbuished Indian, and the prowling bear—
Such were the foes that helped his youth to train;
Rough culture—but such trees large fruit may bear,
If but their stock be of right girth and grain.

So he grew up, a destined work to do,
And lived to do it: four long-suffering years,
Ill-fate, ill-feeling, ill-report, lived through,
And then he heard the bitter change to cheers.

The taunts to tribute, the abuse to praise,
And look to work with the same unswerving mood:
Till, as he came on light, from darkling days,
And seemed to touch the goal from where he stood,

A felon hand, between the goal and him,
Reached, from behind his back, a trigger-pressed—
And those perplexed and patient eyes were dim,
Those gaunt, long-labouring limbs were laid to rest!

The words of mercy were upon his lips,
Forgiveness in his heart and on his pen,
When his vile murderer brought swift eclipse
To thoughts of peace on earth, good will to men.

The Old World and the New, from sea to sea,
Utter one voice of sympathy and shame!
Sore heart, so stopped when it at last beat high;
Sad life, cut short just as its triumph came.

A deed accursed! Strokes have been struck before
By the assassin's hand, whereof men doubt
If more of horror or disgrace they bore;
But thy foul crime, like Cain's, stands darkly out.

Vile hand, that brandest murder on a strife,
Whate'er its grounds, stoutly and truly waged,
And with the martyr's crown crownest a life
With much to praise, little to be forgiven!

THE WIFE'S SECRET.

OR,

How One Man was Cured of Jealousy.

Jealousy? Why, I had been married sixteen years without entertaining that passion, so that it was not very likely, however well acted, that that passion should entertain me. Misunderstanding! The thing was impossible, for whenever there promised to be a "row in the pantry"—and every man will understand me when I make use of that metaphorical expression—I brought it to a head, and had it out, and off we started again (speaking of self and Mrs. B.) on the smooth current of our lives with the little fracas buried forever in its depths. As for the mother of eight children falling in love with another man—it is very well in a stage play, and particularly (with all deference to Miss Anna Dickinson), where the husband is a black man, and, as I have said, belitting among persons of quality; but upon the Notting Hill side of Bayswater any such mischance would, I felt, be out of place and ridiculous—a social presumption, as well as a grave domestic crime. Imagine, therefore, my astonishment when my opposite neighbor, Mr. Peabody, who also calls himself my friend, did me the honor to call upon me a few weeks ago, to speak in confidence of the alarming conduct of my wife. Having demanded and obtained a private interview, this scandalous old person, who was once an indigo merchant, and yet retains the trade of his calling upon his nose, set before me in detail a number of curious circumstances connected with "goings on," as he was pleased to call them, of my wife, which he was not, indeed, prepared to say "might not possibly be only coincidences after all," but which he felt it his duty, as a fellow creature, and one who had been a husband in his time—here his lips made a dumb motion of gratitude—to let me know. Even as a neighbor, and an inhabitant of a common Crescent, hitherto remarkable for its respectability, and which, I doubtless remembered, had declined to permit Mrs. Jones to put up "Apartments" in her window lest we should be confounded with the lodging-house localities; nay, which, by the mere force of its public opinion, had prevented No. 484 from being let to a play-actor—even in this character, said Peabody, he would have felt it his duty to make me aware of what was being said, though doubtless falsely, respecting the behavior of Mrs. B. Here I should have locked the door, and informed Peabody that this last hour had arrived, and that he had better make his peace with Providence before I cut his throat; but from ignorance of the proper conduct to be adopted in such exceptionable circumstances, and perhaps from the knowledge that there was nothing but a paper-knife in the room with which to effect the righteous punishment, I only burst out laughing, and called him a meddling and impertinent fool.

"Very true," returned he, for he always makes use of that form of words—"very true; but still the facts are worth investigating, even from their singularity. Do you know, for instance, that at eleven o'clock, three days a week, your wife goes out in a cab by herself?"

"No," said I, "I do not; though, if she does, it is surely better than if she had an ineligible companion. As a matter of fact, however, she does not do so; for I have offered to go shopping with her twice this week, and she has declined to accompany me upon the ground that she had a sore throat.

"Upon what day did she give this excuse?" inquired Peabody, taking out his pocket-book.

"Last Monday and last Thursday," returned I.

"Well, here's a memorandum: Monday, 4th—Saw Mrs. B. start, as usual, at 11; Thursday, 7th, ditto, ditto. She could not be going to a morning concert, because she had no morning gloves on."

"I will grant that much," quoth I, sardonically, and yet by no means unmoved by this unexpected intelligence. "My wife does not go to morning concerts."

"Very true," observed Peabody. "Then the question arises, where does she go to? Now as an inhabitant of the Crescent—"

"Peabody," interrupted I, severely, "I acknowledge the right of no man; no, not even the man in the moon himself; to meddle in my affairs upon that subject. I ain't obliged to you for the interest you have taken in this matter, but the simple fact is, that it has been entirely misplaced. I have been perfectly well aware of my wife's movements, and they have had my fullest permission and approbation. I only wanted to see to what length your impertinence and love of interference would carry you. That is your hat. I believe your umbrella is the alpaca one; I wish you a very good morning."

I ushered my visitor out, and then sat down in my parlor with my elbows upon my table, and both my hands thrust into my hair. I had temporarily extinguished Peabody, but I was on fire with jealous apprehensions myself. What could it all mean? For sixteen years my wife had never taken any excursion unless in company, upon which, she had always given me to understand, she doted; and yet, after refusing to go out with me on Monday and Thursday last, on the plea of sore throat, she had started, the instant my back was turned, in a hansom—or even supposing it was a four-wheeler—in a cab and without white gloves, and—confound it, here was a row in the pantry, and one which my peace of mind demanded to have cleared up at once. "Anna Maria," cried I, huskily, from the bottom of the stairs, "Anna Maria, I wish to speak with you immediately."

"Lor' bless me," answered my wife, from the top story, "it isn't one of the children, is it, John? Pray tell me the secret at once."

"No, it is I," replied I stiffly.

"Then it's the kitchen chimney," exclaimed she, in a dogmatic tone. "And didn't I tell Mary to have it swept a week ago; and now the fire engines will spoil everything, even if we are not burnt out of house and home."

Was it possible the woman could have deceived me, as Peabody had said, and yet talk so simply of her children, and of house and home? By the time Anna Maria had got down to the drawing room flight, I began to be rather ashamed of myself. When the mother of eight reached my sitting room door, with her honest face aglow with animation, and her voice so earnest about the soot, I did not dare to mention what I had in my mind.

"I called you down, dear, to say that I was going to give myself a holiday to-day, and to ask you to go with me to Hampstead Heath, and dine at Jack Straw's castle this afternoon, it being such a beautiful day."

A ray of joy passed over her features, and then, as if recollecting herself, she began to stammer that she was very sorry, but really she had so much to do about the house just then; if I would wait till Friday week, which was my birthday, then we would go somewhere, and she would enjoy it above all measure. This afternoon, however, the thing was impossible.

"Well," said I gravely," "we have not many holidays together, and I am sorry. You had a sore throat on Monday and Thursday when I offered you a similar opportunity."

"O yes," answered she shaking her little head, which is very prettily—could it be too prettily?—set upon her shoulders; "it is quite impossible that I could go with that throat."

"Here," thought I, for she could not have gone out without that throat; "is some dreadful falsehood; but Peabody may have told it, and not she. Perhaps she never went out at all. Should I not rather believe the wife of my bosom than that scandalous old retired indigo merchant? Was it not even base even to suspect Anna Maria of deception? Doubtless it was, but yet I thought I would just satisfy myself with my own eyes."

"Very well," observed I quietly, "since you cannot come with me to-day, I will go to the city as usual. I don't care for a holiday by myself."

"Poor dear fellow," said Anna Maria coaxingly, as she helped me on with my great coat, "I am quite grieved to disappoint you. Good-by, John. Mind you have a good luncheon; it's bad for you eating those buns and rubbish."

"Ah, what a tangled web we weave," says somebody, "when first we practice to deceive," though after all with but a little trying, there's nothing easier than lying. I protest I felt like a pickpocket as I dodged and lurked about our Crescent, watching in the distance my own door, to see whether Mrs. B. would cross the threshold. I suppose I have none of the attributes necessary to the profession of a detective, for whenever a passer-by cast his eyes on me, I felt like blushing all over, and hanging my head on one side, as a dog hangs his tail. I dared not, of course, stop in the Crescent, but loitered at the corner of a street which commanded it, now trying to dig up the tops of the coal cellars by inserting the nozzle of my umbrella in their circular holes, and now eliciting mournful music by dragging it against the area railings. Exhausted with these exercises, I had been leaning against a lamp-post for about ten minutes when the door of a house opposite opened suddenly, and a widow lady of vast proportions came suddenly out upon me, with her cap-strings streaming in the wind.

"Now, you just go away, my gentleman," said she, in a menacing voice, "before the police makes you. I know who you're looking for, and I tell you she ain't coming, for I've got her locked up in the coal-cellar. I know you, although you have not got your red coat on to-day; and mind, if you get another slice of meat in my house, I'll prosecute you as sure as my name is Mivins."

"Gracious heavens, madam!" I cried, "do you take me for a common soldier?"

"No, sir," answered she maliciously, "but for a tuppeny-ha'-penny life guardsman, who never saw a shot fired in his life; and if you ever come after my Jemima again——"

I turned and fled into the very arms of the abominable Peabody. "Make haste," exclaimed he, "there's not a moment to be lost. No; the cab is coming this way; you may see for yourself whether I am not right this time."

And sure enough, who should drive by at a rapid rate, but Anna Maria, in a four wheeled cab, and without her bonnet, and with a flower in her hair! This blow, coming so closely upon the attack of the widow lady, was almost more than I could bear.

"Where can she be gone to?" gasped I, half unconsciously. "It's the most extraordinary thing I ever heard of."

"I have heard of similar things," returned Peabody, quietly, "although I never experienced it myself. Of course I don't know where she's going to, but the direction she has taken is toward St. Joan's Wood."

I hastened back to my own house, and with the air of a man who had forgotten something, began to search in the pockets of a great coat that was hanging up in the hall.

"By-the-by," said I, as the servant who had let me in was disappearing, "I think your mistress must have got it after all. Just run up and tell her that I wish to see her."

Emily Jane, who had been in our service ever since we were married, turned as scarlet as her cap-strings.

"Sir," said she, bolder than brass, "Missis has just stepped out; she has taken two of the little girls for a morning walk."

"Which two?" inquired I, looking this abandoned person full in the face. Her subtle spirit was cowed by this course of procedure. She replied that she didn't know—she didn't recollect—she hadn't paid particular attention, but she rather thought it was the two youngest—all in a breath.

"In that case," rejoined I, pointing with withering scorn to the perambulator, "how comes this here? No, Emily Jane; your mistress must have taken out with her to-day the same two children that she took on Monday and on Thursday, when her sore throat was so bad that she could not go out with me."

"Yes, sir," replied she, "it was the same two.

"Emily Jane," said I, solemnly, "always tell the truth. I know all. Where is your mistress gone to, all by herself, to-day, with her hair so neatly arranged, and a flower stuck in the left hand side of her head, and that after telling me she was too busy to move out. Concealment is worse than useless. Where is she?"

"Wild horses shouldn't do it," returned the domestic resolutely. "I told her I would keep it dark, and I won't betray no confidence as has been reposed in me. You must find out all of your own head, sir; O dear, O dear!"

Here, to my confusion, Emily Jane cast her apron, by a sudden and dextrous movement, over her features, and in that blinded condition, rushed down the stairs like a bull stung by bees.

At that moment the front door bell rung with a violence such as none of our visitors, except the captain, ever dared to use. My wretched heart seemed to experience a little throb of joy. He at least then—and I confess my suspicions had been turned in that direction, for was it not his profession to guard us from foreign foes and to destroy our domestic peace—he at least, I say, until there was more than one——. I dared not trust myself to finish the reflection, but opened the front door with my own hands.

It was somebody in uniform, but not the captain. "Telegraph for Mrs. B.," squeaked the boy, in his shrill, thin voice, "please to sign on the right hand side." Then danced a double shuffle on the door step in order to keep warm, he broke forth into the ballad. "There's somebody in the house with Dinah, there's somebody in the house I know; there's somebody in the house with Dinah——"

I didn't like his impudence, and I didn't like his song, but there was nothing for it but to submit. What could Anna Maria be doing with telegraphs? "From Rupert Merrington, 6 Cupidon Villas, St. John's Wood. Pray be punctual this time. I am engaged after twelve. I trust you will be looking your best, not pale as on Monday and Thursday."

"There's somebody in the house with Dinah, there's somebody in the house, I know"—. I rushed out with the receipt in my hand, and the boy snatched it, and took to flight, for he saw that I was dangerous. What could this dreadful message mean, or rather what meaning could it have but one? Rupert Merrington! not at all a steady sounding name, to begin with; the sender, too, was evidently no business man, or he would not have exceeded his twenty words so foolishly. It had a military smack all over (and I didn't like that notion—a military smack!). Merrington was of course an assumed name. The handwriting was good, and so far unlike the captain's; but then people don't write their own telegraph messages. I felt that some immediate action was necessary, or that I should be suffocated. In a couple of minutes I was in a handsome carriage bound for Cupidon Villas, in a state of mind easier imagined than described; and yet I have often read descriptions of it in novels which professed to describe aristocratic life, and had often seen upon the stage (although principally in farces) the husband racked by jealous pangs.

What had there been to laugh at in the I wonder now? Why should the tenderest emotions of the human heart be made the subject of buffoon—. But what a wicked looking set of houses were those which I was now passing? If brick and mortar—and especially stucco—can look vicious, certainly St. John's Wood possesses a patent for—

"What number, sir," shouted my driver through the little hole in the roof; "this is Cupidon Villas."

"I am sorry to hear it," groaned I, passing my pocket-handerchief over my brow. "Don't mind me, my good man, (for his countenance evinced much dismay at my voice and manner;) I know it is not your fault that I am miserable. Please to pull up at No. 6."

Of all the wicked looking houses in Cupidon Terrace, No. 6 was, it seemed to me, the wickedest. The round eye which formed its stair-case window winked viciously in the sun-light, and in the garden was a little grating, as though for the purpose of reconnaisance before the admittance, which was a little grating to me. The drawing room shutters were closed. This latter circumstance gave me some satisfaction, since it might signify that Mr. Merrington was dead; but a glance at the gay attire of the servant girl who answered my summons cut away the ground of consolation. "Is Mrs. R within?" inquired I with a tone of indifference.

"Well—yes, sir—but you can't see her just at present. Mr. Merrington has a great objection to"—

"Confound Mr. Merrington!" cried I, pushing my way in. I wish to see my wife."

"Oh, your wife is it, sir?" replied the maid with a giggle. "Then, of course you can go up, if you please, although it's as much as my place is worth. You will find them in the drawing-room.

"What! there!" exclaimed I passionately, pointing to the closed windows.

"Yes, of course, sir! That's the room they always sit in."

"They always sit in? Then this sort of thing must have been going on for years!"

I cleared the two little flights of stairs in a couple of bounds, and hurled open the drawing room door like a catapult.

I found myself in a large apartment darkened, indeed, upon one side, but well lit by a huge window (invisible from the front of the house) at its northern end. In the centre of the room was raised a structure, hung with purple, and rather resembling a scaffold decorated for the execution of royalty, and upon the scaffold sat my wife in an uncomfortable attitude, and with an expression of countenance that she only wears upon those ceremonious occasions which demand what are called "company manners." Between her and the window stood a gentleman with moustaches, and a velvet coat, at an easel, and evidently painting her portrait. He elevated his eyebrows at my peculiar mode of entering the room, and looked towards my wife as if for an explanation of the phenomenon.

"It is only my husband, Mr. Merrington," returned she. "O John, I am so sorry that you found me out, for I had meant my picture to be a pleasant surprise to you upon your birthday next week. This was to be my last sitting but one; and nobody knows the trouble I have taken to keep you ignorant of my coming here. That stupid Emily Jane must have let it out."

"No, my dear," said I, "I discovered the fact for myself, through the telegraph; and really, I—I couldn't help coming down to see how the picture was getting on. It was so very kind of you. And, dear me, Mr. Merrington, what a charming likeness!"

"Well, it's not in a very good light, you see," rejoined he deprecatingly. "Not having a room with a sky-light, I am obliged to block up these windows, and manage how I can. It makes the house dark, and, I am afraid caused you to stumble at the drawing-room door."

"Yes," said I, "that was just it; I very nearly came in head first. I—I only thought I'd look in on my way to the city. I won't interrupt you another moment; and indeed, I have myself no time to lose."

I gave the maid five shillings and, thinking it would be more likely to insure her silence, a chuck under the chin. Then I wrote to Peabody, from Bunhill Row, where my place of business is situated, to tell him I would not make a fool of him any longer; but the fact was, that during the last few weeks, I had been making my wife sit for her picture, which he was to come and pass his judgment on as soon as it was finished; there was a question as to whether the flower in her hair was an improvement or not.

But I knew that Emily Jane would tell Anna Marie all about it. However, nothing was said until my birthday arrived, and with it the portrait, for which the dear creature had saved up her pin money, and put herself to the greatest inconvenience. I declare my heart smote me for my base suspicions, when I looked upon that honest face, which had never worn paint before. Upon that day she said: "By the bye, John, when that telegraph arrived for me from Mr. Merrington, it didn't make you jealous, at all, did it?"

"Oh, dear, no, my darling! Jealous of you? Impossible! Not, of course, that you are not beautiful enough to make all the world fall in love with you; but I never dreamed of such a thing."

"That's all right, John," said she, kissing me; but there was a wicked twinkle in her kind eyes, as she added, dryly: "I am glad to hear you say that, for, do you know, my dear, I almost thought you were just a little jealous."—*Chamber's Journal.*

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