

One Old Maid

By LEE MITCHELL

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During a certain period, lasting about three years, if any one had asked what was the chief feature of the village of Harpersville he would have been told that it was gossip and scandal. It had come to such a point at last that hardly any two families were in speaking terms, and a number of people had sold out and moved away in disgust.

The social state of affairs could not have been much worse when the Rev. Henry Bates received a call to fill the pulpit of one of the two churches. He was a man of thirty and single, and he promised to be popular. It wasn't a month, however, before there were stories floating around to his detriment. He had come from the west, and it was said that his congregation had been pleased to get rid of him, and there were other statements and innuendoes calculated to make his position uncomfortable.

There is more or less gossip in every village in the land, but as to who starts it is always one of those things that can't be found out. Mrs. White hears it from Mrs. Black, and Mrs. Black from Mrs. Green, and Mrs. Green from Mrs. Brown, and so it goes, and the fountainhead is seldom located.

When the Rev. Bates came to find out what a hotbed he had got into he cut short his sermons to do a little outside work. When he came to delve into the situation he was more than astonished. There was just one single woman left in Harpersville who hadn't been talked about by her detractors, and she was an old maid named Sarah Lee. She was not only an old maid,



she made it pretty plain that she was willing to be his and would do her best to make life happy for him. When he closed the conversation by saying that he was engaged to a lady in the west he was almost turned out of doors, and Miss Lee started three or four new stories about him.

The pastor felt sure that he had struck the keynote, however, and a week or two later he was writing a letter to an acquaintance in his former parish. The man he wrote to was not a church member. He was an old bachelor who paid pew rent, contributed to the heat, attended Sunday school picnics and let it go at that. The pastor had once talked with him on the subject of matrimony and had been given to understand that there had been no marriage because the right woman had not been found.

"Referring to a subject once discussed between us," wrote the Rev. Bates, "let me say that there is a young woman resident here who seems to have many of the qualifications to fit her for wifehood—that is, she has the best of health, is worth several thousand dollars, and she has assured me that she would do her best to make a husband happy. Were you to pay me a visit and meet her she might prove to be the one you long have sought. Did you not know my radical ideas on the subject of race suicide? I should not have mentioned this matter to you. While I mentioned that the lady had money, it was only incidentally, and that fact will have no undue influence, I trust."

Ten days later James Perkins appeared in Harpersville as an old acquaintance and the guest of the clergyman. The Rev. Bates did not boast of being a hustler, but within twenty-four hours he had introduced his guest to Miss Lee. Mr. Perkins had no reputation as a hustler, but within forty-eight hours he was speaking words of flattery that made the old maid smile like a June day. She couldn't forgive what she had come to believe was her privilege, however. She told Mrs. Jackson, and Mrs. Jackson told Mrs. Taylor, and Mrs. Taylor told Mrs. Beebe and the rest of the town that she believed Mr. Perkins had had two wives and killed them both by smothering them with a pillow. The story reached the parsonage and the ears of the guest within a day, and the guest was wroth, but the good pastor sat down with him and argued.

"James, the gossip of women is as the breeze that blows. Give it no heed. I incidentally learned today that the exact amount of wealth possessed by Miss Lee is about \$12,000, and all in bonds drawing fair interest. I am also assured that she is a great worker in her own house, has no extravagant habits and that she would have no objection to a home in the great and boundless west. Perhaps I should not have mentioned the exact sum of money, but I know you will receive it as only incidental, James—only incidental. If there is a marriage I hope and trust it may be founded on love alone. I shall be busy with my sermon tonight, and should you desire to call on Miss Lee I shall not miss you for a couple of hours."

There was no hustling on the part of the Rev. Bates or James Perkins, but two weeks after his arrival in Harpersville Mr. Perkins entered the minister's study one evening with a hand smile and an extended hand and said: "My dear old friend, congratulate me. I am the happiest man in the state." "Has—has something happened?" "Something has, Sarah has promised to be mine, and she has set the marriage day for only six weeks ahead. How glad I ever thank you for bringing us together?"

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Something like a smile appeared at the corners of the pastor's mouth; but, of course, he let it spread no further. When he found that the happy couple were to go west to live he tendered his hearty congratulations and likewise offered up his thanks mentally. The carriage came off, the old maid became a wife, and Harpersville knew her no more. Then the calm that settled down was indeed blessed—no more gossip, no slander, no lying; in place of them, peace, harmony and contentment. And if the conscience of the Rev. Bates ever pricked him he had but to say to himself: "Isn't it better to marry off one old maid than to have a thousand people made unhappy?"

The Volley Over the Grave.
The firing of a volley by soldiers over the grave of a dead comrade is a survival of a very ancient custom. In days gone by, when superstition was practically universal, it was generally believed that making a noise kept away evil spirits, and the passing bell came into vogue for that reason. When firearms were invented volley firing was substituted for the passing bell, the belief being that the sound of battle would be more efficacious in the case of a soldier.

Her Dear Friend.
Miss Knick-Ethel is to be married next month, and she says Walter wants to board, as he thinks she needs a rest. Miss Knick—She does need a rest, considering the way she ran after him, but I didn't know he knew it—Woman's Home Companion.

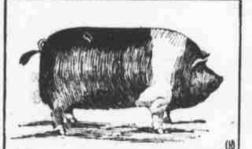
KEEPING THE SWINE HEALTHY

Expert Lawson Purdy Tells How to Improve Them.

It is the custom in many states for farmers to throw the manure from the horse stalls into the pigpen. Where such is thrown in at once it is liable to heat. If the pigs are compelled to sleep in this heating manure and then get out into the cold air they are apt to have rheumatism, says a writer in the Farm Journal. Their owner will ask: "What kills my pigs? They seem to have lost the use of their legs." If but little manure is thrown into the pen at once the pigs can generally spread it about and keep it from heating, but some people do not clean out the box-stalls for several days or weeks at a time. Pigs should not be compelled to sleep in manure of any kind. Better give them a nest place by itself with nothing in it but dry straw.

Dipping Hogs.
J. M. Gray of Wakeuda, Mo., a successful farmer and stockman, thinks there is no excuse for what is known as hog cholera. He says that the old adage of the preventive being better than the cure stands good with the hog raisers. "I am one of the kind that lost many hogs from the so-called cholera," said Mr. Gray. "But I have adopted the dipping plan, and since I put that in force I have not had a sick hog on the place. The hog needs some sanitary care, just the same as any other animal or human being for that matter, in order to keep him healthy and free from disease. It is not a costly treatment either, but no other expenditure on the farm will bring back any such big returns as dipping the hogs. I dip them whether there is any sign of cholera around the country or not. It kills the lice, cleans the hogs and keeps them in a healthy condition and immune from disease. I spray the pens also and find that works well, as it kills all odors and aids in the sanitary work in handling hogs."—Drovers' Telegram.

The Hardy Hampshire.
Writing of the Hampshire hog in the American Cultivator, E. C. Stone says: "The Hampshire easily attains the weight of 300 pounds at twelve months old, and there is more meat and lard in those 300 pounds than in any other hog and always the choice among butchers. While the list will long be



CHAMPION BARROW.

retained by many of the breeders as the most fashionable color, there are also those who try to run their herds pure blacks. An ideal color is made up much as one may fancy, but the 'color craze' should not exclude worthy animals that are off 'color,' save where spots occur. The breeding of blacks is an absolute necessity where the listed hogs begin to show too much white, so as to narrow the belt. 'Off colors' can be brought back in a few careful crosses, such as breeding animals with too much white to blacks, or vice versa. A black sow that stripes her pigs well should be retained in the 'harem,' as also one with too much white. Use the knife freely on all 'runts' or other suspicious characters, taking care to wipe out all blood that produces spotted pigs and consign them to the fattening pen.

"As a cross on other breeds for producing a hog for the market, aside from imparting new blood, vigor and muscular action, they transmit other characteristics more marked and more distinct than any other breed, and for this purpose alone they are of great value."

Value of a Good Boar.
A little circumstance happened here last season that changed several farmers who had always thought a grade boar was good enough. A neighbor of mine had always used a grade. He was always careful to buy a good individual sired by a registered boar. He had a fairly good bunch of grade sows that had raised him a litter of pigs each, but they were uneven and did not fatten readily. I told him I was confident that if he would breed those sows to a good registered boar, with a good pedigree back of him, he would more than save the price of the boar on the first bunch of pigs. He finally purchased a pig from me, giving me, as he said, more for it than he ever paid for two before. He sold his fat hogs, the get of this boar, last winter, and one day he came over and said: "Branch, guess what the boar did for me. He sired me a bunch of pigs that topped the Kansas City market, and that is what I have never done before. No grades for me."—C. E. Branch in Western Swine Breeder.

Give the Foals Water.
It is as necessary that the foals have an abundance of pure water as it is to feed them liberally, says Horse Breeder. They should be watered at least three times every day and should be given plenty of time to drink. The stalls should be well ventilated and well lighted. The man who attempts to raise colts in a damp, dark place will not find the business profitable. When it is possible to do so have the stalls on the south side of the building and furnished with glass windows that will admit the sunlight, but so securely protected that the glass cannot be reached by the colts.

TAX LAWS OF OHIO

Expert Lawson Purdy Tells How to Improve Them.

Too Many Constitutional Provisions Work Injury—Special Taxes Breed Extravagance.

Perhaps no single individual knows more about the taxation evils of the several states than Mr. Lawson Purdy, president of the Department of Taxes and Assessments of the city of New York. Mr. Purdy has given the subject of taxation a lifetime of study. In discussing Improved Tax Laws for Ohio, Mr. Purdy said: "From an economic standpoint the general property tax for state purposes, although an exceedingly crude plan, worked fairly well under such conditions as prevailed in Ohio in 1851, when the constitution was adopted. Then there were no railroads and practically no other public service corporations, no great franchise values, comparatively little and other paper evidences of the ownership of things or of an interest in things. The urban population was a comparatively small factor in state affairs and city problems had assumed little relative importance. With the growth of cities and the great increase in the value of urban land, the distribution of the state burden under the general property tax became more and more unjust. In a primitive community, as in the poorer rural counties today, land has very little value, and the property interests of those communities are chiefly in personal property and improvements on land. "When all state revenue is obtained from special taxes laid at unvarying rates, there is no elasticity, and a way in which the revenue can be adjusted to the needs. This breeds extravagance, to which the recent expenditure of \$9,000,000 on decorating and furnishing the state capitol of Pennsylvania is a witness.

"During the last 12 years in the state of New York we have had an extensive experience with what happens when an attempt is made to obtain all state revenue by special taxes. In 1894 New York still relied mainly for state revenue upon the general property tax. In that year the total



LAWSON PURDY of New York.

state revenue was about \$13,000,000, of which one-third came from special taxes. In 1906 the state revenue exceeded \$27,000,000, all of it from special taxes. Now, plans are being made for increasing the state revenue to \$35,000,000, and it seems probable that that amount will be needed; this means an increase in the expenditure almost three times as great as it was 12 years ago.

"Constitutions are taken off the shelf and dusted when the minority wants to overturn the popular will. Everything about taxation in a constitution is full of cases brought to prevent the collection of taxes on the ground of their constitutionality under such constitutions as that of Ohio. Where a state constitution is silent as to taxation, only the Federal Constitution must be obeyed. Perhaps few persons realize the adequacy of the Constitution of the United States to guarantee our fundamental rights. Those rights should be protected by a constitution, but when a constitutional convention attempts to impose its notions of taxation upon the present and succeeding generations it commits an impertinence if not a crime. The Federal Constitution protects citizens of other states from the unequal taxation of their property or business by any state; prevents interference with interstate commerce; prohibits the taxation by a state of property outside the jurisdiction of the state and restrains all states from taxing one person more than another under like circumstances. How can men desire greater protection from themselves.

"The provisions of the Constitution of Ohio relating to taxation were adopted in 1851, at a time when it began to be the fashion to put whole codes of laws into the constitution. "The Ohio Constitution is so bad that any thought and effort now expended on improving the tax system of Ohio without amending its Constitution is practically wasted. It is tied down to a theory abandoned everywhere else in the world, and proven here in the United States by over a century of experience to be the most debauching, oppressive and stupid theory that was ever devised. The Constitution of Ohio declares that all real and personal property shall be taxed by a uniform rate at its true value in money. It provides a rule which is utterly and absolutely impossible to enforce, and which if it could be enforced would produce the most abominable injustice that was ever perpetrated."

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