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Miscellany.

From the Olive Branch.

THE TWO PURSES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE SMUGGLER'S CHILD," "HIGHWAYMAN," &c.

Boston, the Athens of America, the Yankee city, the city of Notions—most of my readers doubtless know from personal observation, to be thus appropriately named. The first title, she well merits in consideration of the liberal encouragement of literature and the fine arts, the second too, for the peculiar genius and character of her population, and though we may look upon the backwoodsman of New England as the real specimen of the Yankee, the native Bostonian is the acknowledged representative of the tribe (if I may so speak) abroad; and the third title is merited from the fact of the never-tiring inventive genius of its inhabitants. Possessing a population of nearly an hundred and twenty thousand, she is yet free in a great measure, compared with her sister cities in the Union, from the horde of vices and evil customs that prevail at the South and West. The gambler here accomplishes his purpose in secret; there are no public billiard rooms, no masquerade balls, or resorts of infamy, and though all these evils exist in a greater or less degree as in all largely populated places, yet are they so hidden as not to come before the eye of innocence, or tempt those who do not take the preliminary steps to vice.

Boston, courteous reader, the Yankee city of Massachusetts Bay, shall be the locale of our tale. There is a portion of the West part of the town here as in London, occupied by the more opulent of the inhabitants, being in the immediate neighborhood of the noble park, or Common as it is called, which is unsurpassed in extent and beauty by any grounds of a similar character in the country. Within its iron enclosure, there is room for the famed park of New York city, and the battery attached, and you might throw in a few of the largest squares that ornament the Quaker city of brotherly love, and yet find room for the silvery lake that now ornaments its centre, and plenty of space for promenading. The vicinity is the aristocratic section of the city. You will not find this spirit of pride or aristocracy to consist of the same ingredients as constitutes that grade of society in the old country; there, birth almost alone establishes the claim to distinction, while here, that most potent agent, money, is all powerful. Ah, in this boasted free country, gold is the leveller of all ranks, forming for itself a Kingdom from out a Republic, which it rules with a rod of iron, though in this Yankee city, genius and intellect are far more readily appreciated than in other parts of the State.

It was a cold winter's night, and the wind whistled shrill through the bare limbs of the giant trees that lined the Mall. The ground was covered with snow upon whose sparkling surface the light of the moon fell with dazzling splendor, studying the encrusted ground with brilliant diamonds. As the old South clock struck nine, a young man close wrapped in his cloak, sought the shade of one of the large trees in the park, from whence he watched the coming of numerous carriage loads of gaily dressed people of both sexes, who entered one of the princely houses in Beacon street. Through the richly stained glass windows, the gorgeous light issued in a steady flood, accompanied by the thrilling tones of music from a full band; the house illuminated at every point seemed crowded with gay and happy spirits. The stranger still contemplated this scene—his cloak, which until now, had enveloped the lower part of his features had fallen, discovering a face of striking manly beauty; a full dark eye with arching brows, and short curling hair as dark as the raven's plumage, set off to great advantage his Grecian style of feature—a becoming moustache curled about his mouth, giving a decided and classical appearance to the whole face.—The Naval button upon his cap showed him to belong to that branch of our National defence.

"Shall I enter," said he thoughtfully to

himself, "and feast my eyes upon charms I can never possess? Hard fate that I should be so bound by the iron chains of low birth and poverty. Yet am I a man, and have a soul as noble as the best of them. We will see," he said, and crossing over to the gay scene, he entered the hall. He cast off his overshoes, handed his cloak and cap to a servant, and, unannounced, mingled with the beauty and fashion that thronged the rooms. Gradually making his way among the crowd, he sought a group in whose centre stood a bright and beautiful being, the queen in loveliness of that brilliant assembly. The "blooms" of the west end thronged about her, seeking for an approving glance from those dreamy blue eyes; half abstracted she answered or spoke upon the topics of conversation without apparent interest.—Suddenly, she started, and blushing deeply, dropped a half courtesy in token of recognition to some one without the group. Her eyes no longer languid, now sparkled with animation, and as our naval friend entered the group about her, she laid her tiny gloved hand within his, saying,

"Welcome, Ferris, we feared your sailing orders had taken you to sea this bleak weather."

"We should not have lifted anchor without first paying tribute to our queen," was the gallant reply.

A titter ran through the circle of exclusives, at his appearance among them, but when the lady approved there was no room for complaint.

"Curse his familiarity," said one young fellow to another, "what pretensions can he have here?"

"And Miss H— called him by his given name too," said another, "rather familiar that, wonder what the old man would say to it?"

"What sense does that painting represent?" enquired a lady friend at this moment, of Anne H—.

"I think it is an Italian picture," replied the fair girl.

"Spanish, I should say," observed he who first questioned the appearance of Ferris.

"Evidently Spanish," said another ex-quite, "though I regret to differ from Miss H—."

"You err," said Ferris, turning to the two gentlemen, "the lady is right. It is an Italian scene as you will discover by a closer examination of the costume of the figures."

"Pray, do you establish yourself as an umpire in this case," retorted one of those who had pronounced the piece to be a Spanish scene.

"I contend that you are wrong," said the other, seeking some cause for difference, and desiring to "show up" the unpretending Lieutenant.

"Pardon me ladies," said Ferris taking no notice of the insult from the speakers, "I saw that painting in the studio of Isola at Genoa, a few years since, and know from its author that it represents a street scene of that Italian city, otherwise I should not have spoken."

"Ah! you have great advantage over us all, in having travelled so extensively Mr. Harvard," said Anne H— desirous to restore good feeling.

The gay scenes of the night wore on, several times had Ferris Harvard completely put at fault the shallow-brained fops about him, placing them in anything but an enviable light, while the eloquent lips of the princely creature he loved, told him that at least he was not indifferent to her.

Ferris Harvard was a Lieutenant in the Navy, and depended entirely upon his pay as an officer to support a widowed mother and younger sister, to both of whom he was devotedly attached. His father, a self-made man, had once been a successful merchant, who sailed and freighted some of the heaviest tonned vessels that left the port of Boston, but misfortune and sickness overtook him, and he sunk into his grave, leaving his only son to protect his mother and sister from the wants and ills of life. Ferris had enjoyed a liberal education, and having entered the navy as a midshipman, had risen in the shortest possible time to a Lieutenantcy, by reason of his superior acquirements and good conduct. His profession had led him to all

parts of the world, and he had carefully improved his advantages—though constrained by reason of his limited means to the practice of the most rigid economy.

He had met with the only daughter of Harris H—, one of the most wealthy and aristocratic citizens of Boston, at a fete given on board the ship to which he belonged, and had immediately become enamored of her, but he well knew in his own heart that the difference in their fortunes formed an insurmountable barrier to his wishes. He had been a casual visitor for several months subsequent to the time our story commences, at the house of the H— family. He had never told his love to Anne in words, but his soul had constantly spoken through his eyes, and the reader knows the response.

"I must think of her no more," said Ferris to himself, "if I am thus sneered at by her friends for merely offering her ordinary civilities, with what contempt would he austere parent receive a proposition for her hand, from one so poor and unknown?"

Harris H— was indeed a stern old man, and yet he was said to be kind to the poor, giving freely of his bounty for the relief of the needy. Still was he a strange man; he seldom spoke to those about him, yet he evinced the warmest love for his only child, and Anne too loved her father with an ardent affection. His delight was to pore over his library, living as it were in the fellowship of the old Philosophers. On several occasions, when Ferris was at his house and engaged in conversation with Anne, he had observed the old man's eye bent sternly upon him, when his heart would sink within him and he would awake to a reality of his situation.

Ferris was one evening in Beacon st. at the house of Mr. H—, where, spite of the cold reception he received from those he generally met there, he still enjoyed himself in the belief that Anne was not indifferent as to his regard. He had been relating to her by her request, his experience with different national characters with whom he had met, speaking of their peculiarities, and describing the various scenic effects of different countries. Anne sat near a sweet scented geranium whose leaves she was most industriously engaged in destroying. As there occurred a pause in the conversation, Ferris bending close to her ear, said,

"Anne, will you pluck me that rose as a token of affection, you must know how ardent is mine for you, or stop, dearest, if behind it blows the Candy Tuft, you know the mystic language of both—will you choose and give me one?"

"Hush! Hush! Ferris," said the blushing, trembling girl, handing him the rose.

This passed at a moment when the attention of the company present was drawn to some engaging object. Never before had Ferris received any evidence of Anne's love, save from her tell-tale eyes. The flower was placed next to his heart, and he left the apartment. He had proceeded but a few steps from the house when he was accosted by a poor mendicant clothed in rags, who was exposed at that late hour of the night to the inclemency of the season.

"Pray, sir," said the beggar to Ferris, "can you give me a trifle? I am nearly starved and chilled through by this night air."

Ferris after a few moments conversation with the beggar, for his was not the heart to turn away from the sufferings of a fellow creature, was convinced of his worthiness, and handing him his purse containing five or six dollars, he urged him to seek immediate shelter and food. The beggar blessed him and passed on.

A few nights subsequent to this, the occasion on which Ferris had received from Anne, an acknowledgment of her affection for him, in the beautiful language of Florida's Kingdom, he was again at her father's house. Mrs. H—, Anne's mother received him as she did most of her company, with a somewhat constrained and distant welcome. Being a woman of no conversational powers, she always retired early, conducting her converse with society in the most formal manner. Ferris was much surprised that Mr. H— had taken no particular notice of his intimacy at his house, for he very seldom saw him, and when he did so, he would see the old

man's eyes bent sternly upon him in any thing but a friendly or inviting spirit. In this dilemma he was at a loss what course to pursue; heretofore he had despaired of ever gaining Anne's acknowledgment of affection for him, and now that he had so happily succeeded in this object, he was equally distant from the goal of his happiness, for his better judgment told him that the consent of her parents to their union could never be obtained. On this occasion he had taken his leave as usual, when he was met by the beggar of the former night, who again solicited alms, declaring that he could find no other to assist him, and that the money he had before bestowed upon him, had been expended for food and rent of a miserable cellar where he lodged.

Again Ferris placed his purse in the poor man's hands, at the same time telling him that he was himself poor and constrained to the practice of rigid economy in the support of those dependent upon him.—He left the beggar and passed on his way, happy in having contributed to the alleviation of human suffering.

Not long subsequent to this, Ferris calling one evening at the house of Mr. H—, fortunately found Anne and her father alone, the former engaged upon a piece of embroidery, of a new pattern, and the latter poring over a volume of ancient philosophy. On his entrance, the old gentleman took no further apparent notice of him than an inclination of the head and a "good evening, sir." He took a chair by Anne's side and told her of his love in low but ardent tones, begging of her permission to speak to her father upon the subject.

"Oh, he will not hear a word of the matter I am sure," said the sorrowful girl, "no longer since than yesterday, he spoke to me relative to a connection with R—, but I can never love but one, Ferris," said the blue eyed beauty, giving him her hand.

Ferris could bear this suspense no longer, in fact, the hint relative to her alliance with another, spurred him on to action. He proceeded boldly to that part of the room where Mr. H— sat, and after a few introductory remarks, said,

"You have doubtless observed, sir, my intimacy in your family for more than a year past, and must have ascribed it to some motive, from the fact that you have not objected to my attentions to your daughter, I have been led to hope that it might not be wholly against your wishes. May I ask, sir, with due respect, your opinion in the matter?"

"I have often seen you here" replied Mr. H—, "and have found no reason to object to your visits, sir."

"Indeed sir, you are very kind, I have neither fortune nor high rank to offer your daughter, but still, emboldened by ardent love, I now ask you for her hand."

The old gentleman laid by his book, and removing his spectacles, asked,

"Does the lady sanction this request?"

"She does."

"Have you thought well of your proposal?"

"I have."

"And you ask—?"

"Your daughter's hand."

"It is yours," said the old man.

Ferris sprang astonished to his feet saying, "I hardly know how to receive your kindness sir, I had looked for different treatment."

"Listen, young man," said the father. "Do you think I should have allowed you to become intimate in my family without first knowing your character? Do you think I should have given you this precious child (and as he spoke he placed her hand in Ferris's) to you before I had proved you? No sir, out of Anne's many suitors from the wealthy and the high in society, I long since selected you as the only one in whom I could feel confidence. The world calls me a cold, calculating man, perhaps I am so—but I had a duty to perform to him who had intrusted me with the happiness of this blessed child—I have endeavored to discharge that trust faithfully; the dictates of pride have been counterbalanced by a desire for my child's future happiness. I chose you first, she has since voluntarily done so. I know your life and habits, your means and pros-

pects—you need tell me nothing. With your wife you will receive an ample fortune—the dutiful son, and affectionate brother cannot but make a kind husband. But, stay," said the old man, "I will be with you in a moment," and he left the lovers together.

Ferris folded his betrothed in his arms in an ecstasy of joy at this unexpected happiness—"The story of your marriage with R—, was only to try your heart then, and thicken the plot?" said Ferris to his blushing girl.

At this moment the door opened, and the old beggar whom Ferris had twice relieved, entered the apartment. Stepping up to Ferris he solicited charity. Annie recoiled at first at the dejected appearance and poverty-stricken looks of the intruder, while Ferris asked in astonishment, how he had gained an entrance into the house. In a moment the figure rose to a stately height, and casting off the disguise it had worn, discovered the person of Anne's father!

The astonishment of the lovers can hardly be conceived.

"I determined," said the father, addressing Ferris, "after I had otherwise proved your character, to test one virtue, which of all others is the greatest. Charity. Had you failed in that you would also have failed with me in this purpose of marriage. You were waiting in the balance and not found wanting; here sir, is your first purse, it contained six dollars when you gave it to the poor beggar on the street—it now contains a check for six thousand, and here is the second which contained five dollars which is now also multiplied by thousands. Nay," said the old man, as Ferris was about to speak, "there is no need of explanation, it is a fair business transaction."

This was of course, all a mystery to Anne, but when explained added still more to her love for her future husband.

Ferris and Anne were soon married, and one stately mansion on Beacon street, still serves for a home for mother, sister, wife and all. Gossip said (and gossip said truly for once) that old Mr. H., having money enough, had not sought to add more to the fortune he should leave his child, by forming for her an alliance with gold, but had sought and found what was far more valuable, true merit.

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three—but the greatest of these is CHARITY."

Jenny's New Year's Sleigh Ride.

BY E. W. DEWEES.

Everybody said young Blackwood was in love with pretty Jenny Lea. So, also, said his long continued, particular attentions—so said his manner—so said his eyes, but so did not say his tongue.

It was very provoking, for he had every reason to hope. Jenny's shy, pretty manner, told him almost as plainly as words—"Speak, and I am yours for asking." But Mr. Blackwood did not speak, and what was worse, dog-in-the-manger-like, he kept others away from what he did not seem to be disposed to enjoy himself.—His brow would grow black as a thunder cloud, did any other young man so much as dare to speak to his Jenny—for anyone but himself to ask her to dance, was an unheard of temerity. He arrogated to himself, the exclusive right of waiting upon her—of directing her—yes, sometimes of scolding her.

Yet with all this assumption of supremacy, my lord had never deigned to declare his love—never offered his hand; no engagement whatever existed between them. Every one thought it strange, and Jenny pouted a little, and in her inmost heart, thought so too.

Now Jenny had plenty of spirit in general, and this made it all the more vexatious, that she should be so meekly tame and patient in this particular case. It was annoying to a looker-on, to see her so imposed upon, and lorded over by one who had not the shadow of a right to control her.

The fact is—and I may as well confess it—the poor little thing was so much in love, that she did not know how to manage at all.

So things went on, and so perhaps, they

might have been going on to this day, but all at once—I know not whether from some hint from a friend, or that Jenny's native spirit was at last aroused—certain it is, that a great and notable change came over her manner.

A charming sleighing excursion had been projected for the approaching New Year's day. About ten gentlemen, and as many ladies, were to make up the party. They were to ride about fifteen miles into the country—have a supper and a dance, and then return to the city by moonlight. As each gentleman was to provide his own vehicle, and take a lady, there was an eager competition for the honor of escorting favorite belles. Young Blackwood, with his usual nonchalance, was in no haste to secure Jenny's companionship, but in his own good time condescended to say to her, carelessly,

"Jenny you will ride with me, of course."

"Thank you," said Jenny, "but Mr. Collins has already been so kind as to ask me."

"Eh? what?" cried Blackwood, starting, and scarcely believing that he heard aright—"you don't mean that you are going with him?"

"Certainly."

Young Blackwood turned on his heel, and walked away. He felt himself an indignant and ill used man. The shocking bad temper into which he fell was far from being sweetened by finding in his dilatoriness that he had procured the honor of escorting a young lady, worthy, doubtless, but somewhat faded, and very silly—the last choice of all who were to be of the party.

New Year's day arrived, bright and propitious, the snow in excellent order for sleighing.

It had been arranged that the whole party should assemble at a certain rendezvous, so as to set out together, and as the appointed time approached, one gay sleigh after another, might be seen whirling to the spot. The prancing horses, covered with silver bells—the bells' merry jingle—the various colors of the ladies' plaids and dresses—the rich fur robes, with their white linings, and better still, the joyous, rosy faces, and the sound of ringing laughter, made up an inspiring and brilliant scene.

One countenance only, looked out of keeping with the gay occasion. It was our poor Blackwood's, as he sat gloomy and taciturn beside his elderly companion. His eye glanced furtively towards Mr. Collins' sleigh; he saw Jenny's face, bright and fresh as a rose—he heard her gaily laugh at some witticism of her companion, he saw that companion's glance of admiration, and he grew ten times more gloomy and taciturn than before. I am afraid poor Miss Moody found him very dull, and that the ride was as intolerable to her as it was to him.

It was over at last, however: and now, having all assembled in the large, cheerful, old country house, and having partaken of a good, warm, bountiful country supper, laid in a room where glowed a bright, hospitable wood fire, arrangements were being made for the promised, and eagerly expected dance.

On repairing to the dancing room, where most of the company had assembled, Mr. Blackwood's eye glanced in search of Jenny; she was not there, and conjecturing that some adjustment of her dress detained her up stairs, he sauntered up and down the hall, nervously waiting for her.

The fact is, that he had determined to make his peace with her, by the presentation of a propitiatory bouquet. He had procured a very rare and beautiful one in the city, and had, by taking infinite pains to protect it from the frost, succeeded in bringing it thither unharmed.

Jenny soon came tripping gaily down the stairs. Blackwood in his heart thought her the sweetest and loveliest creature in the world, and that he would give his right hand to win one of her old smiles.—With a timidity quite new to him, he presented his flowers, and begged the honor of her hand for the first dance.

Jenny carelessly thanked him—"She was engaged to Mr. Collins."

"Might he hope for the next then?"

"No, she was engaged to Mr. Summers."

"Or the next?"

"She had promised Mr. Howell."

Young Blackwood bit his lip, and his old ill-humor returned; he went into the dancing-room, and sat sullenly in a corner, chewing the end of his bitter fancy, and meditating on what he thought his flagrant wrongs.

He watched Jenny, gay and brilliant, dancing with first one gentleman, and then another—laughing and chatting merrily all the time. In truth, the gentleman, pleased to see her once more released from her thralldom, crowded around her, and paid her so much attention, that she was really the belle of the evening. Blackwood's jealous eye saw every thing—he saw his own bouquet thrown carelessly aside, while another, presented by he knew not whom—Mr. Collins, perhaps—was carried constantly in her hand, and carefully cherished; he noted every glance of admiration directed to her—he observed every smile she bestowed.

"By George," he muttered, at last, between his teeth—"there's not a man in the room who is not in love with her!—and she—the coquette—the flirt—the little jill—I do believe she returns their affection!"

This absurd generalization of his jealousy, might have opened the eyes of a cooler man, but Blackwood was most beside himself with apprehension, lest the precious treasure, he had come, by some strange mental process to consider his own, should be stolen from him. He felt the untenability of his claims upon her—he was alarmed beyond reason by her change of manners.

If, he thought, she had at last grown tired of him, (he felt sure she had loved him once), if she were thinking of some one else, what remained for him, but to throw himself into the river, or go crazy, for life had lost every charm for him.

The thought of her riding home with Mr. Collins was wormwood to him. He dwelt upon it till the idea became insupportable—he must do something to prevent it. Accordingly, he went to the gentleman who had been voted master of ceremonies, and who happened to be a particular friend of his, and said, as carelessly as he could,

"Harwood, my good fellow, you must do something for me—I'll do as much for you another time. Manage it so that Collins shall give up his partner to me when we go home. I have a particular reason for wishing it."

"Impossible, my dear Blackwood; what a strange request. Collins will never consent—the prettiest girl of the party, too."

"That's it—that's it," returned the agonized lover—he'll be making love to her on the way home—and—oh! he'll offer himself—men are so hasty about these things sometimes—and she'll accept him, and—then I'm wretched for life—that's all!"

"I see—I see," returned his friend, smiling. "Well, I'll try what I can do for you."

"How Harwood managed it, does not appear, but his good offices were successful. Mr. Collins meekly took his place beside poor Miss Moody."

Blackwood, highly elated, handed Jenny to his vehicle—sprang in after her, and off they sat at a furious rate.

Little would it become me as a delicate and high-minded historian to pry into and report the secrets of that tete-a-tete sleigh ride. I shall only state what all the world knows—that notwithstanding the speed with which they started, their sleigh was the last to reach home; and the next day it was no secret in B— that Jenny Lea was engaged to be married to young Mr. Blackwood.

In conclusion, I would merely add, for the consolation of those innocent and inexperienced young lady readers, who may be displeased with the conclusion of my story, and inclined to pity my poor heroine, condemned to such a morose, tyrannical Blue-Beard of a husband, that married ladies will perhaps take a different view of the case.

I leave it for them to conjecture, however, whether it is probable, that the girl who had learned how to manage her lover, was likely to forget the art when he became her husband.

Freedom and reason, make us men; freedom without reason, makes us beasts.