

ABILENE REFLECTOR

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COMPENSATION.

I did not think that I was old,
Albeit in my hair
I noticed that some silver threads
Were scattered here and there.
The age in which we live, they say,
Makes people prematurely gray.

Though dependent on my glances,
It gave me no surprise
Sewing and reading as I do.
Would try most people's eyes.
And half our young folks now, you know,
Wear glasses over where they go.

Rheumatic twinges might have been
A hint of age to me;
They used to be old folks' complaints,
But doctors all agree
That changes of weather tell
On young folks nowadays as well.

I know I'm getting "ways," says,
I want things plumb and true;
I like my cup of tea at noon,
My quiet corner too.
But such things come about I've found,
Where children are no more around.

But I am old, I'll tell you why:
I'm grandmother-to-day,
A fact I've seen and felt, and one
That holds undoubted sway.
Yes, grandmothers, that used to be
A name that sounded old to me.

But with such a compensation,
How blessed to be old!
A little grandchild for my own,
To love, to kiss, to hold,
A remembrance of the father tell,
All Father gives to womanhood.

Susan Nell Perry, in Good Housekeeping.

"SUSAN NIPPER."

Story of a Cow That First Caused
Discord and Then Concord.

"Uncle Smith is gone."
"Gone where?"
"Why, Kate! John means that he is dead!"
"O-h!" She tried to look sober, but smiled. It was very still.
"There, mamma—I know I'm a dunce; you needn't frown to emphasize the fact; but in a case like this, where is the use of repining?"
"When did it occur?" asked Mrs. Emalie.
"About two weeks ago. I received word yesterday that I was mentioned in the will."
"Sensible old gentleman. I think I had more mourned him, if I had known him! I hope your portion was large."
"As large as that of all the rest."
"How much?"
"Katharine! I'm disgusted with you. So will John be."
"Not a bit, mother, dear. Leave me to manage Jack. I shall have to soon, you know."
The handsome fellow beamed upon her; he had no fear of her management.
"You needn't smile, sir. It's going to be serious for you. See here," she held forth a volume with a glittering title: "How to Manage a Husband. By One of the Managers."
"Where did you get that thing?"
"Lizzy Stone sent it. She is the author, and it's making her famous."
"That doesn't matter, it sells all the same. But tell me about your legacy; what is it?"
"—A cow."
"A cow; neither more nor less."
"Was the man insane?"
"Not at all. He really hadn't much to dispose of, and he portioned it out equally."
"Humph! What did the rest get?"
"One had the cottage; another, a few bank shares; Henry, a few acres of ground. The division was fair enough. I am satisfied."
"Inheriting a cow! It's the most ridiculous thing I ever heard of!"
Off Katharine went in a gale of laughter, but presently observed that her mirth was unshared by the others.
Mrs. Emalie looked perplexed; she was practical, and any thing out of the common annoyed her. Jack seemed perfectly serene and content.
"Perhaps you would like to hear about 'Susan Nipper'?"
"And who is she, pray?"
Kate sat down beside him to listen.
"My legacy, she is a valuable Holstein."
"And why 'Susan Nipper'?"
"Because she is a registered thoroughbred. No other animal can ever bear her name."
"None in its senses would wish."
"Perhaps not. She is young; she will be more famous by and by. Even now she is worth two thousand dollars."
"John Lansing—a cow! Humph!"
"Yes, I was offered that this morning by Mr. Sampson, of Holbridge Farm."
"Well—but why didn't you take it?"
"I preferred—Susan Nipper."
"And what are you going to do with her?"
"Keep her."
"As an attraction, in the store?"
"I fancy there was sufficient method in Uncle John's madness. He knew me when a little shaver, and how I loved a farm; and was always an advocate of every one following their bent. Agriculture was my desire—a dry good; more my fact. Now, I'm going to sell out and buy some land."
Katharine was speechless with astonishment, and Mrs. Emalie prudently left the scene.
"You do not look pleased, darling."
"I am not, I assure you."
"Then I am very sorry."
He drew her close, and smoothed the pretty curls in his finger, awkward way.
"You can't be in earnest, Jack, dear."
"Never more so in my life. It is generally a trifle which turns the course of a man's life, and Uncle's legacy has turned mine. You know I have often talked of this."
"O, yes! when you are old and retired from business, I wouldn't mind that. Cousin Walter has a farm and an elegant Queen Anne house, and lots of servants. That is nice enough, and the only kind of farming which would suit me."
"You don't know, dear. Why, my sweetest dream is to see you sitting about, caring for our simple but comfortable home, with plenty of room to live, without stifling ourselves in a flat, or our own broad fields about us, and no restrictions on enjoying the grass. Then, in the winter, with a cozy sleigh and good horse to carry us over the glittering roads. Here a sleigh-ride is an extravaganza for us."
For a moment the pleasant picture her lover drew woke a mild enthusiasm in the gayly-loving heart, but it soon vanished.
"Jack I will never marry a farmer. The angry flush in the beautiful face emphasized the tone.
"Hush, Kate! not say things without thinking."
"No, I will not 'hush'! and I am thinking." She sprang up and paced the narrow parlor, whence—in true city fashion—God's daylight was excluded, her dainty white tea-gown trailing over the carpet. Finally she passed before the long mirror.
"I look like it, don't I? A farmer's wife!"
Now, Katharine Emalie was in truth a lovely girl, not a bit more vain than was good for her; just enough to make her study her own appearance to achieve the best results, and she succeeded in being always charming. She shrank from things ugly and coarse, and—well, she had seen this despised class of women times and times! She knew.
Last summer at Neversink, and the year before among the Berkshires; in those long, delightful drives, when Jack was taking his vacation with mamma and her. He would stand and gossip with the men, till every old "hayseed" in the community knew and had a kind word for him; while she would

watch and pity the wives, in untidy gowns and hair of "straw." She was the one of them—never! Still, there was a piece of work before her. If she was to banish "agriculture" from that obstinate Lansing head over on the sofa-pillow. Preparing to be dignified, she was disconcerted by the first remark.
"She has beautiful eyes, large and mild."
"Who, pray?"
"Susan Nipper."
"Indeed! my rival."
"Ridiculous! Katie!"
"Isn't it true?"
"Certainly it is not. I thought, at first, that I would sell her; but she looked at me—"
"And that settled the matter."
"Exactly. Depend upon it, there is a destiny, etc. I was a farmer born. I love the soil; the very odor of it is sweet to me; and to own it, to work in it, to enjoy the freedom of a life in the open fields—O! I would I have ever imprisoned myself in town so long."
"If you had not, you would not have met me!"
"True, sweetheart—another proof of destiny!—but now that I have you, I am free to live out my nature."
"I thought a wife—that is to be—had an interest in—her husband's plans. The slowness and the bluntness were irresistible. John did what any other lover would have done."
"Ah, yes! a true wife like my Kate!"
"But you have decided without consulting me!"
"Why, my dear girl, you shall settle all the details, even as to the locality; although, for your sake, I prefer Glastonbury, where your Cousin Walter lives."
"Jack, very slowly and bewitchingly, 'I am not going to marry a farmer.'"
"So you said. Pardon my contradicting you." He tried to kiss her pouting lips, but she drew back.
"No; you are in earnest—so am I. I will not be like those dreadful women."
"You can never be any thing but the sweetest in the world."
"Then you won't give up the notion?"
"I can not; it is not a notion. In such a life lies my success. We are made what we are; we can not remodel ourselves."
"Then accordingly runs in your family, and—excuse me—I am afraid of it. Though you may have had a fancy for it, you had no intention of farming till your uncle died and left you—a cow! Immediately you give up a good business—"
"And put your fortune into a pasture for your cow! I object to have my life ruined, and your fortune trampled my prejudices under her hooves. I will indulge the desires of a beautiful, mild-eyed cow! If I rightly understand, the line has now to be drawn between your wife—and this cow!"
She had risen and gone away from him, speaking with a distinct, indelible sarcasm.
"Come, darling, don't let us keep this up any longer. Of course it is to make no difference in our lives together; our wedding-day is fixed, thank God! and our home shall be ready."
"No, John. She put out her hand with a forbidding gesture, and all the color left her face. "You have chosen your life, and I choose mine; they do not lie together. Here is your ring. I wish you success and joy—of 'Susan Nipper'!"
"Sweetheart! But the slim figure ascending the stair did not turn back, and there was temper as well as obstinacy in the Lansing head," so the door was closed between them.
"Mamma, I have 'broken off' with Mr. Lansing."
"Very well, dear. Then we will go abroad for a year or two."
"They did, and for many a month neither heard or knew anything more of the would-be farmer, though Katharine wisely opined, that since he was quite free to select his own locality, it would not be Glastonbury, or any place near relatives of hers.
They had of Europe at last, for though Kate was gay, she was restless, and her mother was glad enough to improve the first suggestion to "go home." There they found a letter waiting.
"My dear Cousin Walter writes that Emily is miserable, the children and the servants running wild; and he wants us to come up for a few weeks and help him out. Are you willing?"
"It does not matter. I, too, would prefer the quiet of home, but I feel under obligations to him. He has managed my business most kindly and faithfully since your father died."
"We will go, of course."
"Mr. Emalie's hobby was scientific farming, and the Long Acres estate a magnificent one; and he who had not visited this "lion" of the county had missed a glimpse of fairy-land."
"You are not going to send those beautiful animals to a country fair?" expostulated Katharine.
"Certainly! I believe in this kind of life and all farmers, great or small, must make an exhibit of their best to encourage their neighbors."
"I should think it would discourage them to compete with your stock. It is a foregone conclusion that you will capture all the prizes."
Cousin Walter smiled; he would rather take "first premium" at the forthcoming exposition than to bank president.
"I don't know—don't know," he said, complacently rubbing his hands. "I thought I had the finest of every thing in my line; but, perfect as my herd is, there is one creature I covet."
"And what is that?"
"A beautiful Holstein-Friesian, whose record beats even my 'Maggie Darragh's.' She is owned by a long-headed chap who runs the small farm next mine."
"Why don't you buy her?"
"Can't. Have offered him four thousand, but money seems no inducement. However, she and 'Maggie's' are to compete at this fair, and if my neighbor comes out ahead—why, I'll have her, if I have to double my offer."
Katharine felt but little interest in the "Farmers' Show"; yet when the pastures of Long Acres were emptied of their splendid herds, they looked strangely lonely to her; and on the second morning of the exhibition she was quite ready to accept her cousin's invitation to visit the grounds.
"I shall have to leave you alone, though, most of the time. You see, I have so many 'entries' to look after."
"Is your neighbor's cow here?"
"His face fell. 'O, but she's a royal beauty! Not a blemish in her, and at yesterday's milking contest five quarts ahead of famous 'Maggie Darragh.' I don't know how it will be to-day, but I fear the issue."
"There is no perfect happiness, Cousin Walter, in the world, unless you, and you—enjoy a poor farmer."
"Can't be very poor and own 'Susan Nipper'!"
Kate visibly started. "Who?"
"Susan Nipper."
"Strange! I knew a cow—I mean, I heard of one—of that name."
"Why? Can't there be two?"
"No! Not in this neighborhood. Names may be similar, not identical. But the animal you—were acquainted with—may it not have been a Holstein?"
"Yes, it was."
"Then it's my neighbor's, and you'll have an opportunity to renew civilities. Was it in Holland?" The girl did not reply; she was too busy wishing herself at home.
It was a noisy, crowded place, and finding "Exhibition Hall" and the numberless tents uncomfortable, she wandered off towards the rear of the grounds, and found herself among rows of frame cattle-sheds, where were her cousin's "quarters." An attendant brought her a camp-chair, and placed her comfortably, where she was glad to rest and watch the midway milking. Now she was here, she wondered about "Susan Nipper," and wished she could see that fateful animal just once, herself unseemly. "Where is the cow that rivals 'Maggie Darragh'?"
"Behind you, miss, in that shed on the left."

Katharine glanced furtively over her shoulder. What if "her rival's" owner should be present?
But he was not, and she ventured to approach and gaze upon her enemy. Here, too, the milking had just been accomplished, and she found herself listening to the discussions of "the judges."
She fancied that there was something a little strange about "Susan's" attendant; he was evidently indifferent to the success of his side, and—she thought he needed watching.
"Where is the owner?" asked one gentleman decorated by a "badge."
"Couldn't come to-day," replied the employee, carelessly.
"No man—that to leave a creature like that in unattended hands," said another. "That fellow doesn't understand his business; her yield falls below 'Maggie Darragh's,' yet she's by all odds the finest cow I have ever imprisoned myself in town so long."
They did, and for many a month neither heard or knew anything more of the would-be farmer, though Katharine wisely opined, that since he was quite free to select his own locality, it would not be Glastonbury, or any place near relatives of hers.
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STONE IMPLEMENTS.

Many of Them Still Used in Virginia and Other Southern States.

All over our country we find many interesting relics of the Indians. Stone spearheads, arrowheads, hammers, chisels, knives, scrapers, etc., together with pottery, some of burned or baked clay, some cut from soft stone, as slate, steatite, etc. Similar remnants of the so-called stone age are found in nearly every portion of the globe, and, besides their interest as curious survivals of a by-gone time, they aid us toward a discovery of the prehistoric man. It is hardly of less interest, or of less historic or scientific value, to note how the stone age still survives among us to no little extent.

Here in Virginia, for instance, many people still scald their slaughtered hogs in hogheads or barrels, as our barbarian progenitors boiled their meat in skins, by heating stones and putting them into the water until it is hot enough for the purpose. The stones ordinarily used in this way are roundish, hard and very heavy black or brown modules, sometimes called "negro heads," or iron stones, although they are compressed lava upheaved in strata through cravices in the rock crust of the earth at remote periods of geological time.

We sometimes encounter stones that are hollowed out in the center, often to a socket, and these not infrequently are treasured by their finders as an ancient Indian stone for mashing or grinding corn, with the aid of a stone pestle; yet they are nothing more or less, for the most part, than discarded stones once used by our rural brethren for their gates to swing upon—many gates in all parts of the Commonwealth being still thus pivoted.

Many a housewife in remote country regions still has her stone weights, more or less rough, but honest. Wherever the old Kentucky rifle lingers there is likely to be found still a set of soapstone bullet moulds; our log cabins yet have rough stone and clay chimneys, where they are not of mud and sticks; in many a humble household, a thin rock not always smooth, is the utensil for baking corn bread, and the stone "mash tray" is familiar to all our country boys. The stone pipe, beloved by many of our old folks and by no few white folks. Whenever soapstone, or steatite, is found not only the stone pipe, but many other articles supposed to be archaic, are still manufactured, and put to service by the ingenious and thrifty. In such localities stone pans, stone troughs for children, etc., are still common. Some day they will be dug up and attributed to the Indians, or even to their predecessors. A little inquiry and investigation would show much more of the stone age still here than we have reverted to.

It is not rare to see stone sinkers in use for lines and nets in fishing; the flint is not yet superseded wholly by the match; there are two clocks in the land yet run by stone weights; stone hovels, with dirt roofs, are not unknown in our mountains; the colored ruffian, and sometimes the white one, carries a stone in a stocking, along with his razor, when on the warpath; many a cider press and tobacco press are still made effective by stones swung at the end of their lever; and our small boys are all in their stone age whenever they can give their natures full and free play.

We are not so far off from the stone age man as some imagine; many of the implements and relics supposed to be prehistoric, and doubtless so in many cases, have their modern duplicates, and in some instances are all in use among us. Professor and Dr. James C. Southall, of Virginia, has written a book to prove the recent origin of man, and Dr. Arthur Mitchell, of Scotland, has published a very interesting work to illustrate how the past and present are identical in many things; and so we may conclude that, as there is nothing new under the sun, so there is nothing very old beneath that luminary.—*Petersburg (Va.) Index-Appal.*

COSTLY LEGISLATION.

Cost of Getting a Railway Bill Through the English Parliament.

Few of the outside public can have any idea of the enormous cost of getting a railway bill through Parliament. The Parliamentary surveying and engineering costs of the Kendal & Windermere Company, amounted to a trifle over two per cent. on the whole expenditure on the line. Of Parliamentary cost the Brighton railway averaged £4,806 per mile; Manchester and Birmingham, £5,190; Blackwell, £14,414. These figures are almost beyond belief, when we consider that some English lines in favorable positions cost altogether only £10,000 per mile. The Brighton line for two sessions fought a desperate battle against several other companies, and when its bill came before the committee the expenses of counsel and witnesses amounted to over £1,000 a day, and the discussion of the measure lasted fifty days.

The solicitor's bill of the Southeastern railway contained 10,000 folios, occupying twelve months in taxation, and amounted to £240,000! One company found such difficulty in getting their bill through its preliminary stages that at last, when they had reached the long-desired last stage, they had already spent nearly a million of money, and this simply for obtaining the privilege of making the railway. Of the terrible costs which have been incurred only to lead to ultimate failure, one instance will be sufficient. The discussion upon the Stone and Rugby bills lasted sixty-six sitting days from February till August, 1839; and in the year 1840 the measure was defeated, after having resulted in a loss of £146,000 to its unhappy promoters. It is needless to say that such enormous expenditure cripples many a railway and prevents its share-holders from ever earning good dividends. The ceaseless energy, untiring perseverance and neat diplomacy which have to be shown in pushing a railway bill to successful issue are almost beyond belief; but it is much to be desired that some means should be discovered of keeping down the expenses which so often go far to ruin a line even before it has begun working.—*Railway Press.*

FARM AND FIRESIDE.

Remove the seeds when feeding pumpkins to cows. They do harm by acting as a strong diuretic.

—A sure and safe way to remove grease spots from silk is to rub the spot quickly with brown paper. The friction will soon draw out the grease.

—If you will be as pleasant and as anxious to please in your home as you are in the company of your neighbors, you may have one of the happiest homes in the world.

—In putting away summer lawns and muslins it is best not to starch them, as it rots cotton when long in it. Wash and dry thoroughly and roll away till spring time.

—The average farmer can not see where his "independence" comes in when he has to work hard all summer to pay the interest which falls due on his mortgage in the winter.

—It is of no advantage for an animal to be a "small eater." In order to produce largely the animal should consume as much food as possible, and always have a good appetite.

—Cows lying out in the pasture or open barnyard through chilly nights will entail a loss in diminished milk-yield of far greater amount than the cost of keeping them under shelter at night and during cold storms. After the frosts come pasture should be supplemented by liberal rations of bran, ground oats, or other feed.

—Never grow trees of different kinds together until satisfied one does not injure the other, as is frequently the case when plums are grown near peaches, thus inducing the curculio to sometimes attack the latter. A single wild-cherry tree near an apple orchard will provide a harboring place for caterpillars, which finally injure the apple orchard.

—Those who sow wheat after corn should move lively or they will be too late. Fall plowing for spring crops should be done at once, except on land infested with foul grasses, which ought not to be touched until just before freezing up. While waiting don't forget to provide plenty of good fuel for winter, and thus increase the independence of the household.—*N. Y. Independent.*

—A very handsome window lambrequin is of plush; cut a piece the required depth, and width of window. At some distance from each end make a deep perpendicular slash, and draw the portion between the slashes—which should be a little shorter than the ends—from the left end and lift high at the right edge by folding in it three upturning plaits, tacking securely. Fasten a bow of ribbon over the plaits and finish the edge of lambrequin with plush braid. On the end pieces embroider a spray of flowers. Line with silesia, satteen or canton flannel.—*The Housewife.*

STRAW ON THE FARM.

Its Usefulness and Value in the Shape of Bedding and Manure.

There is considerable diversity of opinion as to the value of straw on the dairy farm. That it has a value not to be despised is conceded by all, but yet the practice differs very much in the methods of handling it. At the extreme East we find the farmer husbanding it with almost as much care as he does the grain that comes from it. He not only preserves it dry and in good condition, but runs it through the cutting box, mixes the ground feed with it and feeds it to the cows in but little excess in amount with the quantity of hay or other stover that is fed in the same manner.

While it may not be necessary or even economical in the Western farmer to pay quite so much attention to the straw of the farm that his contemporary of the East does, yet it is safe to say he in most cases underrates its value when properly handled. We believe the old practice of burning the straw has been entirely done away with on the dairy farm even at the extreme West, but allowing it to rot in large stacks when threshed at some distance from the stable is still too often the practice.

It is a common thing for book-writers to tell us the relative value of straw as compared with good hay, but these tables are often misleading from the fact that one straw is not like another straw, especially in feeding value. The straw that has become too ripe or the one that is too immature are alike almost worthless for feeding purposes, while the one that was cut at the proper time has a great deal of good in it. Then the straws of different grains have not the same feeding value. Oats and rye make an indifferent feed compared with the straw of wheat and barley. Especially do we recommend this latter article. The farm practice of cutting barley in rather an immature state to prevent the grain from shelling out in the field conduces greatly to the feeding value of the straw. The only serious objection to the use of barley straw lies in the villanous habit the little burrs have of getting in the eyes of the cows, but they rarely do any serious harm if let alone. The men who handle the straw are more apt to suffer from this burr nuisance.

We must not overlook the usefulness of straw on the farm in the shape of bedding and manure. There can be nothing better to put under the cows than dry straw, and when we consider its manurial value it will pay to haul it from a considerable distance, even when a fair price has to be paid for it.

The great trouble with straw is its extreme bulk compared with its weight. This objection can only be overcome by ingenuity on the part of the dairyman. There are many devices for loading and unloading it that remove the bulk objection in a large measure, while the rack for hauling it may be made nearly double the size for other purposes. Baling it is yet too expensive on the farm, and it is to be hoped that some method of handling it much better than any now in practice will soon be invented. One thing is certain and that is that whatever trouble there may be in handling straw it is far too valuable to be allowed to rot in the field, and no man should allow these monuments to his lack of enterprise to rear themselves in his fields and tell his neighbors how shiftless he is.—*American Dairyman.*

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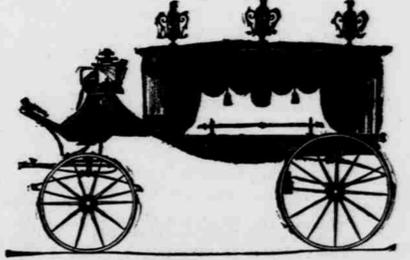
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