The Witch of Cragenstone

By ANITA CLAY MUNOZ,
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sin, raise her in fear of the wrath of the Lord, an' thou hath done thy duty.' "

Josiah acquiesced by an emphatic movement of his head. "Mother," he said, recurring again to the subject of his cousin Margaret, "I ha' been thinking much on the coming home of our kinswoman. Often my mind hath dwelt upon her youth and inexperience. What knoweth she of the care of a household and the management of so many acres as are hers entirely now. I—thou"—he hesitated—"we must keep close to her, direct her endeavors, and from the first"—he raised his voice, speaking with harsh emphasis—"allow no other influence to crowd in to push ours out. On our counsel she must be taught to rely, and she must ever find us to be towers of strength upon which she may lean with confidence."

"Thou hast spoken wisely, Josiah," the dame replied. "If my memory doth serve me well, Margaret was ever an obedient child to her father, so wilt come naturally, methinks, to place reliance on her kinsfolk. Hast thought, Josiah," she continued, lowering her voice almost to a whisper and looking toward the door, "that thy cousin's lands adjoin thine and what great benefit could be derived from being master of it all?"

Taunston rose and paced rapidly up and down the dimly lighted kitchen.

"Thought! Of course I ha' thought!" he exclaimed. "For two years I have watched over everything on the Mayland farm lands, from the littlest newborn lamb to the fleetest horse, and given orders as if I were the owner there."

He drew a sharp breath.

"And now—God's pity—I must give place to a chit of a girl, who happen will bring disorder where I ha' had order and put wasteful French notions above good Puritan thrift and care."

As if the thought were intolerable to him, he gave his shoulders a despairing shrug, strode to the window and looked out long and silently over the blackened landscape in the direction of the Mayland estate. His mother sat for a time looking with sympathetic anxiety at the tall, disconsolate figure of her son. At last she observed quietly: "In doing thy duty so well thou hast grown to love those lands above all reasoning, Josiah. Methinks by every right thou shouldst be master there."

"Mother," he came and stood before her, with his hand upraised, in a state of unusual excitement, "I dreamt last night that the vessel on which Margaret Mayland sailed from Paris was lost with all on board, and my cousin, she who stands between me and the estate, for I am the next heir, as thou doth know, was gone forever. It was a dream, but for a night all was mine. I was in truth master there, and I lived. I was rich in this world's goods, busy, important, prosperous."

His pale blue eyes glittered covetously with the feeling that possessed him as he brushed his hand over his hair.

"Ha, an' were it so 'twould be well!" Mistress Taunston cried sharply, "provided, of course, it were the good Lord's will," she added piously. "But there are other ways, my son. Hast thou given consideration to the fact that Margaret will need a husband now? An' who more suitable than thou, Josiah?"

He shuffled nervously on his feet, unable to meet her glance.

"Dost think she would regard my suit with favor?" he asked. "Although an upright an' honorable man, I ha' never thought I had much attractiveness for a woman."

His mother threw up her head with a quick motion, her glance containing both pride and confidence.

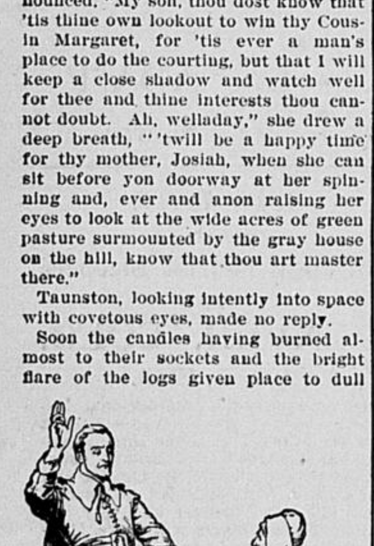
"Aye, that she will, Josiah," she announced emphatically. "Of a truth, thou'rt not oversoft with woman, but thou art so tall and doth walk about with such an air an' stride that, I ween, scarce a maid thou did set thy heart on could resist thee."

"If it be that my cousin hath an eye to her purse strings," he observed thoughtfully, "my frugal and thrifty management of her farm lands may appeal to her."

"Those facts and others to thine advantage will be placed before our kinswoman with proper judgment and skill upon her arrival," his mother announced. "My son, thou dost know that 'tis thine own lookout to win thy Cousin Margaret, for 'tis ever a man's place to do the courting, but that I will keep a close shadow and watch well for thee and thine interests thou canst not doubt. Ah, welladay," she drew a deep breath, "'twill be a happy time for thy mother, Josiah, when she can sit before yon doorway at her spinning and, ever and anon raising her eyes to look at the wide acres of green pasture surmounted by the gray house on the hill, know that thou art master there."

Taunston, looking intently into space with covetous eyes, made no reply.

Soon the candles having burned almost to their sockets and the bright flare of the logs given place to dull



He stood before her with his hand up raised.

blackness, emitting a few dying sparks, Mistress Taunston bethought herself of the lateness of the hour.

"Hetty not come in!" she exclaimed, walking to the window and looking out with impatient anxiety. "Ah, I hear her voice!"

Then throwing open the door she cried sharply: "Hetty, come in! 'Tis unseemly for a maid to be dawdling out of doors on a Sabbath evening. Thou shouldst be at thy prayers! Who is it thou hast with thee?"

"Only Simon, mother."

The merry faced little creature in her severe gray bonnet and plain dress of homespun came forward hurriedly.

"As I was returning from leaving Cynthia Camett at the gate I met Simon near the turnstile, and he ventured to walk with me. Be not angry, mother," as the woman, towering above her, frowned wrathfully, "Prithee, a little gossip with good Simon would not hurt a maid!"

"Gossip on the Lord's day! Light and trifling talk on a Sabbath night!" her mother cried in stern rebuke. "And think not that sounds of thy wicked laughter did not reach mine ears! To thy room, hussy! Nay, let the candle remain," as Hetty lifted one from the table. "In darkness canst thou better put thy mind on thy prayers and ask the Lord's forgiveness for thy sins!"

Then shutting the door with intentional violence upon the retreating form of the young farmer she fastened the wooden bolts securely for the night.

CHAPTER II.

JOSIAH TAUNSTON spent the next day at the market place and having made good bargains and fair exchanges rode up to his door rapidly, with an expression on his countenance more complacent and less severe than usual.

"Ho, there!" he called.

To his surprise the door remained unopened, and, listening, he heard no sounds of life within.

"Mother, open, an' thou art there," he cried, "for I would have a word with thee before I ride farther to speak wi' Simon Kempster on the price o' wool."

At this juncture a man, one of the farm laborers, came rushing from the back of the house.

"The good dame an' thy sister ha' taken their departure long since," he announced, evidently pleased to be the bearer of important tidings. "They did go to the Mayland farm, master, to meet thy cousin, who hath arrived."

With an exclamation of surprise Josiah sprang from his horse, threw the reins to the man and, turning suddenly to hide the dark flush that spread over his face at the first shock of the news, lifted the latch and, entering the house, proceeded at once to his chamber, from whence he emerged an hour later much changed in appearance. The stains and dust of travel had been carefully removed from his person, a fresh linen ruff of dazzling whiteness was about his neck, and in place of his common riding clothes he wore his church going suit of black cloth finely woven and but lately made by the village tailor.

Taking the footpath that led through the meadows, he walked with long strides in the direction of the road that wound its way from the village past the Mayland farmhouse. A slight fear lest his absence from home at the time of his cousin's arrival would be held against him as seeming neglect caused him some anxiety, and he was framing suitable words of excuse and explanation as he walked along when his meditation was interrupted by the sudden appearance of a young woman at the corner of the roadway. She had evidently been running, for over her flushed face and tumbling yellow hair a broad hat of black velvet, with a sweeping white feather, hung off at the back in reckless abandon, and she held the long skirts of her scarlet riding habit, richly trimmed with silver braiding, high above her quilted petticoat. So excited was she and intent upon her chase that she was quite regardless of appearance or of the fact that the small ankles, neatly covered with red silk hose, were exposed above her low shoes to the cold and disapproving gaze of the man approaching. Just then a small dog scuttled past Josiah breathless and panting from a long run.

"Oh, catch her, good sir—catch Biddy!" the girl cried shrilly. "The poor dog will take a fit from fright! That stupid Giles, to let her out in this strange place when I was not about! Move, man! An' thou canst put thy hand on her!"

Thus sharply commanded, Josiah came to his senses and, making a sudden and effective dive, caught the exhausted animal and, carrying it to the young woman, put it into her arms, saying with his customary seriousness, "Margaret Mayland, for as such I recognize thee, I give thee greeting and do declare that thou art welcome to thy home."

At once she extended her hand cordially, and her lips parted in a smile of pleasure.

"An' is 't really Josiah?" she asked brightly. "At first glance, with thy sober face and black suit, good cousin, methought thou wert the preacher."

"And thou wouldst have called to the preacher, a man of God, to catch thy dog, Margaret?" regarding her with a look of quiet reproof.

"Aye, that would I," she answered carelessly. "I' faith, in my opinion the better the man the better the deed. But to continue the subject, Josiah, at the second glance I remembered thee at once."

She stepped back a pace or two and, shading her eyes from the slanting rays of the setting sun by tilting her hat well down over her face, regarded him with a pert air of critical interest.

"After all, thou'rt not much changed except that thou doth look more careworn, and 'tis apparent that thou hast grown older," she said. Then, seeing that the expression in his eyes did not soften, added, "But happen, cousin, thou wouldst be better pleased, as is the fashion of all the men, an' I were to tell thee thou wert grown good looking."

She laughed a low, rippling laugh of amusement.

Josiah, finding her levity not to his liking and having a lurking suspicion that she was amusing herself at his expense, answered resentfully and with an air of offended dignity.

"That thou wouldst so misjudge me as to presume that I would desire praise for my personal appearance I can understand, for after thy years of living in that wicked city of Paris, where all the men are fops or coxcombs, with no thought above decking their bodies with tawdry raiment, willing and eager to bend their backs and mouth and grin in pleased acknowledgment of a woman's compliment, thou has thought that all men were made in the same fashion."

The young mistress of the Mayland farm, who had listened to her cousin's words with an air of bewildered surprise, now cried airily: "Oh, fie on thee, Josiah, for a long face! To talk so of my bonny Paris! Forsooth, an thou wert to go there for a spell thou wouldst lose the somber look thou hast caught from all the people hereabout and gain much for thine appearance, I do assure thee."

Although this was said with a smiling coquetry that took the sting out of the words, a red flush mounted to Josiah's forehead.

"Peace, Margaret," he said, "and take-not upon thyself—but at best a sinful mortal—to criticise the work of God. That I am made in my Master's image doth suffice for me, and the care—from what I judge at sight of thee—that thou dost give to thy body I prefer to give to the salvation of my soul."

He paused for a reply; but, none coming, he continued: "Ere I met thee I was on my way to thy house. Shall we walk there together?"

Margaret Mayland, looking at the cold, dispassionate face of the man confronting her, with its sharp features and deep set eyes, felt a slight sinking at her heart, and the smile on her bright face faded, her manners becoming at once less friendly and more distant. Turning to go, she said: "Aye, come with me, Josiah, and welcome. Thy good mother and Hetty have but just left after spending a pleasant hour with me, and already sweet Hetty hath found a place in my heart."

Josiah regarded her soberly, letting his glance rest on her brilliant hued riding dress significantly.

"That my sister hath some trifling faults I do admit," he said. "But she is ever an obedient maid, God fearing, pure minded and modest, setting an example of propriety that would, I wot, be of benefit to many older and more experienced in the world than she."

They had reached the entrance of the driveway that led to the Mayland house. Margaret, stepping inside, hastily drew the gates together after her and, leaning over the railing, said, with an attempt at a smile: "Of a sudden a great weariness hath fallen upon me. Wouldst think me rude and without good manners, cousin, if I were to ask thee to excuse me from further converse today? I find that my strength is greatly spent by the long ride up the mountain, and I would rest awhile. I' truth I am overdone," she concluded.

Taunston, concealing his disappointment, said, with a forced air of pleasantry that sat ill upon him: "He who cometh late must take, perforce, what is left, Margaret, and I regret, as one having taken thy place on thy farm for so many months, representing thee in all business matters, that I was not here upon thine arrival to give thee a proper welcoming. But as thou'rt aweary and rest is what thou doth need I will go on my way to leave thee undisturbed. God be with thee, Margaret."

He proceeded a few steps, then paused, addressing her seriously:

"Cousin, at prayer time tonight I shall offer thanks to God for thy safe conduct through a perilous journey."

"Thank thee, and farewell, Josiah." Turning hastily, Margaret Mayland went with swift steps toward the house.

Out on the road Taunston continued on his way with slow strides, his head bent over his breast in thoughtful meditation.

"Worse, far worse, than I expected," he muttered. "Much devil's work to be undone! Our cousin hath a comely face enough, and methought after my first words of admonition she appeared more gentle and less hoidenish in her manner, and so silent was she toward the last I doubt not that my speech impressed her. A good example, constant correction and much sound advice is what a woman so young and worldly minded doth require."

Reaching a rising eminence, he paused at the top and looked back at the Mayland estate, with its broad acres stretching far before him in all the glory of their spring beauty, illuminated by the rays of the setting sun. "Ah!" He drew a sharp breath unconsciously of admiration and longing.

"Never before hath my duty to the Lord been placed so fully before me as in this my self imposed task of leading mine erring young cousin into the paths of wisdom and righteousness," he said after a few moments' thought, slowly and with solemn emphasis.

CHAPTER III.

THE next morning the sun rose dazzling in its radiance above the peaks of Cragenstone, shedding a luster over the village. On the Mayland farm all nature was astir. Thrifty robins dotted the green grass, conspicuously displaying their red breasts as they sought their morning meal in the soft damp earth, larks thrilled gayly, and the nightingale poured forth its sweet high notes in joyous exaltation.

Yellow crocus flowers lifted their faces timidly to the sun, and gentle breezes stirred the branches of the trees. Now were heard the voices of the men and maids as they milked the cows or drove them out to pasture, and the noisy bleating of the sheep and lambs, huddling together and running out through the open gates to spread themselves over the fields, added increasing activity to the early morning scene.

In a room of the Mayland homestead above the broad staircase that led to it Margaret Mayland, exhausted by the fatigue of her long journey, lay sleeping, undisturbed by the noises out of doors.

Through the deep silled latticed window a ray of sun poured in, then softly touched the closed eyelids; another kissed the arched red lips, and a third, as if it recognized its kind, fell suddenly on the wealth of golden hair on the pillow. One arm was thrown in careless abandon over her head, and her gown of white linen, falling open at the throat, disclosed a finely wrought chain of gold resting upon it, from which was suspended a small cross of the same metal. The cock under the window crowed lustily once, twice. Mistress Mayland stirred, then, sighing wearily, arranged her head more comfortably upon the pillows and slept on peacefully.

The sun had reached a higher point in the heavens, and it was well on in the day, according to the early risers of Cragenstone, when Margaret Mayland, now fully dressed, descended the staircase and entered the dining room, a small, cozy affair that was but a continuation of the long hall, curtained off at the sides with dark tapestries and a huge screen set up in the middle for a partition. Mr. Mayland, the father of the present occupant of the house, having had French blood in his veins through his mother's side, had not taken kindly to the plain furnishings, high backed chairs, wooden benches and bare white sanded floors of his more simple minded neighbors and had purchased from time to time bright stuffs, works of art and tufted chairs and couches, so that his home presented an air of comfort and elegance not to be found elsewhere on that bleak mountain.

As Margaret entered the only occupant of the room was an elderly woman, having the appearance of being more than a common serving woman, who was spreading a white cloth on a table, idly humming a little tune as she did so.

"A good day, Elsbeth. Prithee, sing!" she exclaimed, with affected astonishment. "Then thou doth like thy new surroundings."

"An' thou, Margaret?"

"Ah, welladay, I cannot tell thee yet," she answered, with a sigh. "But I own to great depression this morn-

"Where thou art, sweet Margaret, I am happy."

ing, Elsbeth, and feelings of strangeness and loneliness lie heavy on my heart."

She walked to the window and, resting her arms on the deep sill, looked out of doors discontentedly, unconscious of the graceful appearance she made in the French morning gown of pink poplin that fitted loosely to her rounded figure and fell in long folds to the floor.

"Hast had no misgivings, Elsbeth, that a life of unusual dullness doth lie before us?"

"Where thou art, sweet Margaret, I am happy," the woman replied gently, "whether 'tis at thine aunt's at Paris, where I sewed thy frocks and cared for thee, or here in thine own home, where thou art come to be the mistress. Ever do I find my best contentment at thy side, for, sweet, hast thou not been mine to watch over since thy mother died?"

Margaret, accustomed to the woman's fondness, made no reply, but came and took a seat at the table in thoughtful silence while Elsbeth busied herself about her, pouring a cup of milk, breaking eggs into a saucer and placing the plate of hot bread within easy reaching distance.

"But for thee, sweet," she observed, "happen the Mayland farm will prove more quiet than thou'lt like."

"And Cragenstone!" exclaimed Margaret. "What doleful people here abide! How long and solemn their faces have grown, and with what serious demeanor they do stalk about! Why, Elsbeth, one short walk with my good Cousin Josiah near gave me the megrims! Prithee must we all the time be quoting Scripture or thinking of our prayers?"

"Naught is changed," the woman replied. "I' the five years of the different life in Paris thou hast forgotten; that is all. To my mind thine aunt received us with the same cold smile she gave us when we rode away."

Margaret shrugged her shoulders and threw out her hand in a manner that suggested the Frenchwoman. "How gloomy they looked in the plain gray clothes they wore as they stood around the door, erect and solemn, to receive me. But, withal, weary and nervous with the homecoming as I was, my quick eye failed not to see two things—admiring love on the bright face of my sweet cousin Hetty Taunston and stern disapproval of my crimson riding dress on the countenance of her mother. Mayhap I shall prove too worldly for their quiet tastes. Dost think so, Elsbeth?"

The woman touched Margaret's sunny hair caressingly.

"Thou'rt so bonny, sweet, so fair, so good, that all must love thee who know thee," she said. "And as thy ways are good ways I wot thy neighbors and thy kinsfolk must grow accustomed to them."

Margaret rested her hand lightly on old Elsbeth's shoulder. "And thou lovest me and Godfrey," she said, blushing softly. "I care not for the others. That much is so much that it doth suffice me."

A light footstep was heard in the hallway.

"Am I come too soon?" Hetty Taunston in a black cotton frock, with a white kerchief folded neatly over her bosom, entered the room.

"Methought mother would ne'or be done finding chores for me to do," she said poutingly. "First there was the linen to spread on the grass for bleaching; then the ewers to be filled at the brook, my lesson in embroidery and the Bible teaching. And, oh," with a sigh, "so many other occupations did occur to mother's mind that I grew quite restless, for all the time my thoughts were over here with thee, Margaret."

"Poor, much abused Hetty!" Margaret, arising from the table, pinched her cousin's cheek affectionately. "And so thou hast kept thy word to come early to see what came from Paris! Prithee, cousin, mayhap in some corner of those boxes lieth a gift for thee."

Hetty's eyes sparkled with pleased anticipation.

"'Tis not a ribbon, Margaret?" she asked eagerly. "The thought occurred to me once to write an' ask thee to bring me a pink one. Say it's a ribbon, Margaret," she entreated.

"Forsooth, 'tis better than a paltry pink ribbon, little Hetty. Come and see. But of many ribbons thou canst have thy choice."

The room overhead was filled with open boxes. Thrown over the big four posted bed were gowns of gorgeous colors, and strewn about were stuffs and fabrics of the latest weave from the looms of Paris—ribbons, satin shoes, dainty linens and laces. At the sight of so much finery Hetty's face flushed. She drew her breath sharply and, pausing just inside the doorway, clasped her hands together in an ecstasy of admiration and delight.

"An' thou didst bring all this from Paris, Margaret?" she asked at last.

"All from Paris, the fairest city in the world, Hetty."

"Oh, I would go there!" the girl cried earnestly. "Doth every maid wear clothes like yonder on the bed?"

She approached and, slipping her hand under a ruffle of fine silk, raised it tenderly, almost reverently.

"Nay, not all, simple Hetty. But the fashions there are excellent, and fine dressing doth rule paramount. My good Aunt Jane was heedful that I brought the latest patterns with me lest I should grow old fashioned in this country place. And, forsooth," Margaret added gayly, "I have a love of dress on mine own account."

Hetty, who had been observing her cousin's loose morning dress with curious interest, suddenly drew back, an expression of surprise and fear spreading over her features.

"Margaret! Thou wearest a cross!" she exclaimed, with pale lips. "Hast turned papist, cousin?"

Margaret smiled faintly.

"Nay, Hetty, think not so, and take that look of horror from thy face. This emblem"—lifting the cross in her hand and regarding it affectionately—"is but the parting gift of my friend, Hulda Manning, who was so good, whose soul was so fair that God took her to himself."

Hetty continued to regard the cross with looks of aversion and dislike. "Take it off, dear Margaret," she entreated. "Such papist signs will be a curse to thee! Cousin, 'tis near to idol worship!"

Margaret shook her head reprovingly. "'Tis thine education doth make thee think these things, Puritan Hetty. Why, cousin, the day before she passed away to heaven my Hulda with weak hands clasped this chain about my neck, asking me to wear it for all time in memory of our true friendship. This did I promise her that I would do. A curse?" she repeated reproachfully. "Nay, cousin, from one so near to heaven more like 'twill prove a blessing."

For a moment Margaret was silent. Then she added, "So recent hath been my bereavement and within such a short time have these hands wiped the tears from the anguished mother's eyes that the subject pains me."

Then she turned away suddenly, as if to end the matter, walked to the bed and, lifting a dress of sheerest linen from the white counterpane, cut in the latest fashion, with the skirt made full with countless lace trimmed ruffles to the waist, the bodice low at the neck and sleeveless, gayly bedecked with knots and streamers of azure ribbon, said, "Wouldst like this for thy wedding frock, dear Hetty?"

The girl turned red, then white. Tears of pleasure filled her eyes. She could not speak.

"Throw off that grim black dress that doth enshroud thee," Margaret cried gayly, "and let us see the effect of a French frock on thy pretty figure. First I shall comb thy hair high on thy head and put a bunch of feathers at the top. I wot the style will become thee, Hetty, as thou'rt not tall. Methinks thou'lt see a vast improvement in thy looks."

After much brushing and combing, twisting and turning, happy laughter and flattering comment, the little Puritan maid was changed into a fashionable woman of the world. With her full white skirts trailing after her, she paced up and down before the mirror in an ecstasy of delight, holding her head high, as if she were a queen and the bunch of feathers set so high above it a royal crown of gold.

Margaret, standing away from her to see the effect, was amazed at the sight of her cousin's enhanced beauty.

"I' truth thou'rt pretty, Hetty," she said, "an' the frock adds to thee mightily. Hadst e'er a lover, cousin?" she added as an afterthought.

The red color in Hetty's cheeks grew deeper, spreading to the roots of her hair as she turned away.

"Thou hast!" Margaret exclaimed, laughing merrily. "I know it by thy blushes! What long faced wight hereabout hath dared to love my Hetty?"

"Who talks of lovers?" asked a stern voice.

Both girls started violently with surprise at the unexpected sound, and, turning, they saw Mistress Taunston, grim and severe, standing at the threshold.

"And, Hetty Taunston, take off that wicked garb thou hast put on!" she exclaimed. "Hath no shame, maid, that thou doth wear that sinful dress to show thy naked breast and arms? Learn now, so that thou'lt not forget it, that such wicked vanities are but the first stepping stones the devil doth lay down to pave the way to eternal punishment. Dost wish to burn forever, thou vain maid?"

"'Tis Margaret's gift to me from Paris," Hetty faltered as she began with nervous haste to undo the fastenings.

Margaret regarded the older woman with a glance that expressed both indignation and astonishment.

"Prithee, good aunt," she remonstrated, "speak not so harshly to poor Hetty, who is so young and fair that 'tis but natural she should take pleasure in her beauty."

"Hetty had ever an unseemly desire for gay clothing," her aunt replied stiffly, the expression on her face remaining stern and angry. "Her besetting sin and folly is wordly vanity; so it is my duty as her mother to scourge it out of her so that she may become a decorous and decent woman. Margaret, my son Josiah awaits thee below in the withdrawing room. He would render to thee thine accounts, and a fair and just steward I trow thou wilt find he hath been, fair niece."

Mrs. Taunston put her rough, toil worn hand on Margaret's shoulder. "I advise thee to heed Josiah's counsel, for, although of mine own son I say it, he is a godly man of much honor and virtue. 'Twere well for so young a maid as thou to take his counsel in all things pertaining to the management of thine estate, to learn to rely on his assistance, to depend on him, and thine aunt doth promise thee that thou wilt find withal profit, freedom from care and much happiness as a consequence."

"Thank thee, good aunt," Margaret replied civilly. "As Josiah is below, I will see him at once, as methinks so faithful a steward should not be kept waiting. When thou hast changed frocks, Hetty, I will see thee again. Wilt thou come with me, aunt?"

"Nay, Margaret," she answered hastily, "thou hadst best see thy cousin alone."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Three Days He Didn't Like.

Lord Burleigh once said: "Though I think no day amiss to undertake any good enterprise or business in hand, yet have I observed three Mondays unlucky—the first Monday in April, when Cain was born and his brother Abel was slain; the second Monday in August, which day Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed; the last Monday in December, which day Judas was born, who betrayed Christ."

A Present.

Kifter—That's a nice umbrella you've got. Lifter—Yes; it was a present. Kifter—Indeed! Who gave it to you? Lifter—Nobody gave it to me, but it has an inscription on it showing that it was "presented to John F. Jones," whoever he is.

An Unpleasant Reminder.

Mrs. Blank—That girl in the next flat keeps drumming the tune I was playing the night you proposed to me. Mr. Blank—I know it! As I've said fifty times before, I wish she'd move!—Detroit Free Press.

LACQUER WORK.

It Is Seen In Its Perfection Only In China and Japan.

Lacquer work is seen in its perfection only in China and Japan. The Chinese master of the art, who alone holds many of its secrets, lives and works in Peking. Miss Eliza Scidmore, in the Chicago Tribune, writes of a visit to his shop. In that dry climate away from the sea there are more difficulties in managing the lacquer than in Japan, but this expert in his stone floored, heavy walled and roofed house manages to maintain an even temperature and to get moisture into the air by constant sprinkling.

Mixed lacquers—thick, sticky liquids like honey or molasses—are kept in covered crocks or bowls, and the workmen apply them with thin blades or brushes that distribute thin, even washes over the wooden foundation of the object that is being coated.

The surface of a box, for example, is coated over with dark green lacquer and put away to dry in a dark cupboard, the sides of which are constantly sprinkled with water. After drying for a day in the moist air another coat is applied, and it is again put into the damp cupboard to dry. This continues until the object has been coated fifty times with the dark green lacquer.

The general outline of the design which is to be raised in relief above the dark ground is drawn, and the groundwork carved over with fine wave and geometrical designs. Then successive coats of red lacquer are applied, and gradually little islands of scarlet appear above the green level.

Eighty coats of red lacquer are put in and dried, and then the outlines of the flowers or figures are sketched on and the relief ornament carved out. Slowly and patiently the Chinese workmen chip away and cut away into the quarter inch of red substance, which is only about as hard as cheese. As the thin little chisel cuts under a tiny flower until it rests in relief upon green leaves one admires the skill and sure touch that work out all the exquisite modeling of the delicate petals. Even a tiny tray no larger than the palm of one's hand represents six months of work with its 200 coatings and its slow, careful carving.

A Scotch Superstition.

There used to be and may be yet a superstition in Scotland to the effect that one fights death by putting pigeons at a sick person's feet and that a husband can get rid of his wife if he will only build a dovecot. Miss Constance Gordon Cumming in her book of "Memories" tells of a Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonstown who annoyed his wife, whom he hated, by trying the latter remedy. Miss Cumming says: "Whatever hope Sir Robert may have entertained of expediting the death of Dame Agnes, he failed signally, though he succeeded in making her life so miserable that she left Gordonstown and went with two of her sons to live at Pitgaveny, beside the Loch of Stynie, whereupon her loving spouse devised a very remarkable means to avoid being compelled to make her an allowance for aliment. As he sat down to every meal he sent a servant to Lady Gordon's deserted apartments to summon her. Thus was Lady Gordon 'called to her meals!' When at length he was legally compelled to grant her maintenance he assigned to her use the produce of certain outlying fields, on the verge of which (or, as the old record says, 'on Lady Gordon's extremities') he built one of his great dovecots with intent that the hungry birds should feed at her expense."

Getting Even With a Creditor.

There is a story told about a western man who now wears the title of judge. A certain man had a twenty-five dollar claim against the judge, who was then only an attorney, and had dunned the judge for payment until it became monotonous to hear the reply: "I haven't the money now, but expect to have soon. I will pay you as soon as I can." So one day he told the judge that he proposed to sue and put the claim into a judgment. "That will do you no good," the judge replied, "for I haven't a thing that you can levy on, and it will only make costs." The man did not care for that, as it would be some satisfaction to have a judgment. The judge remarked, "You will have to hire a lawyer to sue for you; now, let me have it and I will go down to court and confess judgment and save the bother of a trial." The man handed over the I O U, and the judge went to court and confessed judgment for $25 and costs, as he agreed to do. Then he sent in a bill to his creditor for $50 for attorney's fee and concluded that he was even at least, to which the creditor agreed after recovering his breath.

Elephants In the Forest.

"In certain regions of Africa," writes an old hunter, "elephants are still numerous. This is particularly the case in the country lying between the Victoria and Albert lakes, which is very hilly and covered by much forest. Their tracks are visible everywhere, although they themselves are but rarely seen. The damage done by elephants to these forests is incredible. I have more than once come upon spots where these huge beasts would appear to have held a kind of elephant carnival, apparently for no other purpose than that of wanton destruction. A large area covering many acres would be completely stripped of trees, nothing but jagged stumps, sticking up a few feet from the ground, remaining of what had once been thick forest. Masses of large trees would be uprooted and hurled about in every direction, many of them being tossed bodily to a long distance from their original position. In many cases the entire foliage would remain intact, showing plainly that food could not have been the primary object of this wholesale destruction."

THE DIAMOND TREE.

A Plant Whereon It Is Alleged the Precious Stones Grow.

"I haven't a diamond tree," said the jeweler. "Smith, over the way there, has one, though. At least, so I've been told."

"What is a diamond tree?"

"It is a tree where diamonds grow, of course."

"No; seriously. What is it?"

The jeweler smiled.

"Well," he said, "a diamond tree is a swindle, a very profitable swindle, and one that can be carried on forever with mighty little risk of detection. I'll explain it to you.

"I am a jeweler and you bring me a diamond ring for repairs. I take the diamond out of your ring and put back in its place a similar diamond that is a little, a very little, smaller. You naturally don't discover the trick that has been played on you.

"The same day a brooch is brought to me, and since the central stone of the brooch is a little larger than your diamond, I get rid of yours and keep the bigger gem. In this way, four or five times in one day, I make diamond exchanges, keeping always a better stone than I part with.

"On good diamond trees diamonds as small as pin heads have been known to grow to the size of peas in two days. A good tree, too, won't have only one diamond growing on it at a time. A dozen stones or more will be simultaneously increasing in size and value as the days pass."—Chicago Chronicle.

MATCHING SHADES.

Not to Purchase and Use the Goods, but to Dodge Them.

Before trying to match the sample of silk the clerk asked:

"Is this a piece of something you want or something you don't want?"

"Something I want, of course," replied the customer, with asperity. "You don't suppose, do you, that I would go to all this trouble for a thing I can't use?"

"Some folk do," said the clerk. "I've met a number of them. The first woman I ever saw with that kind of bee in her bonnet had a square inch of blue silk that she wanted me to match. The scrap of silk was so small that it was hard to make comparisons, but after hauling down half the blue bolts on the shelves and running to the door several times to test the color in broad daylight I found the exact shade.

" 'How many yards do you want, madam?' I asked.

" 'Oh,' said the woman, 'I don't want any. Almost any other piece will do. That particular shade is very unbecoming. I just wanted to make sure that I don't get it, that's all.' "

The customer laughed. "What did you say?" she asked.

"I'd rather not tell," said the clerk. "Anyhow, since then I have been cautious. Before matching a sample now I inquire as politely as possible into a customer's intentions. If it's a case of 'don't want' I don't hurt myself matching the shade."—New York Press.

FACTS ABOUT TIME.

How the Elusive Moments Have Been Viewed by Many Writers.

Time is hard to define. According to the best poets time has a heavy foot, a tooth, a forelock and breakable legs. It travels in divers paces; it ambles, trots, gallops, runs, rolls and stands still. It has whips; it crops roses. So far it seems like a horse. But it has a forefinger; also a reckless hand that writes wrinkles. This explodes the horse theory. Furthermore, time flies; hence "a bird of a time." Time is money. Being also a bird, time is a gold eagle, perhaps. Money is the root of all evil, and procrastination is the thief of time. Therefore procrastination is (1) a chicken thief, (2) a good thing.

The wickedness of time is beyond question. It is vindictive. "I wasted time," mourns King Richard, "and now doth time waste me." Time waits for no man. Time shall throw a dart at thee. Time robs us of our joys. Time will tell. Time is unthinking. Time presses its debtors. The time is out of joint, and well may it be, considering what a nuisance it is.

Time is a sea, a sandy bea[illegible], a shoal and an abysm. [illegible] whirligig, which seems od[illegible] we recall that time is quiet as a nun. Time is good, bad, high, fine, rough, hot, Christmas, spring, waltz, common and lovely. Among good times may be mentioned quitting time and dinner time.—Newark News.

Lowell and Mahaffy.

James Russell Lowell and Professor Mahaffy met for the first time at a friend's house in Birmingham, England, and talked together for four hours. When Lowell drove away in the carriage he exclaimed to his host, "Well, that's one of the most delightful fellows I ever met, and I don't mind if you tell him so!" The friend did so, and Mahaffy received the compliment with equal grace and modesty. "Poor Lowell!" he exclaimed. "To think that he can never have met an Irishman before!"

The Kicker.

" 'Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast,' " quoted the young lady with a simper as she seated herself at the piano.

"That may be," muttered a savage bachelor, "but there are some of us in this crowd who are civilized and deserve a little consideration."

H. L. Main,
Hopkinton, Iowa.

Oxfords and Sandals

We have just received the most complete line of Oxfords and Sandals ever before offered in Hopkinton. These are eastern styles and up-to-date in every respect. Come in and examine them and you will be pleased.

H. L. MAIN,
Hopkinton, Iowa.

"DO IT TO-DAY!"

"And to think that ten months ago I looked like this! I owe it to German Syrup."

¶The time-worn injunction, "Never put off 'til to-morrow what you can do today," is now generally presented in this form: "Do it to-day!" That is the terse advice we want to give you about that hacking cough or demoralizing cold with which you have been struggling for several days, perhaps weeks. ¶Take some reliable remedy for it TO-DAY—and let that remedy be Dr. Boschee's German Syrup, which has been in use for over thirty-five years. A few doses of it will undoubtedly relieve your cough or cold, and its continued use for a few days will cure you completely. ¶No matter how deep-seated your cough, even if dread consumption has attacked your lungs, German Syrup will surely effect a cure—as it has done before in thousands of apparently hopeless cases of lung trouble. ¶New trial bottles, 25c; regular size, 75c. At all druggists.

For sale by ANDERS & PHILIPP.

RAILROAD Time Cards.

Manchester & Oneida Ry.

TIME TABLE.

Train No. 2 leaves Manchester at 5:15 a. m. arrives at Oneida at 6:05 a.m. Connects with west bound C. G. W. No. 5. Returning leaves Oneida at 5:40 a.m arrives at Manchester at 6:05 a. m

Train No. 4, leaves Manchester at 7:15 a. m arrives at Oneida at 7:45 a. m., connects with east bound C. G. W. No 6. Returning leaves Oneida at 7:50 a. m., arrives at Manchester at 8:20 a. m.

Train No. 6, leaves Manchester at 8:45 a. m., arrives at Oneida at 9:24 a. m. Connects with the north bound C. M. & St. P., No. 22. Returning leaves Oneida at 9:25, arrives at Manchester at 9:50 a. m.

Train No. 8, leaves Manchester at 2:00 p. m. arrives at Oneida at 2:30 p. m. connects with C. G. W., No. 4, east bound, and No. 9, west bound Returning leaves Oneida at 3:22 p. m. arrives at Manchester at 3:45 p m.

Train No 10, leaves Manchester at 4:45 p. m. arrives at Oneida at 5:15 p. m. Connects with south bound C. M. & St. P., No. 21. Returning leaves Oneida at 5:25 p. m., arrives at Manchester 5:45 p. m.

J. L. KELSEY,
Gen. Traffic Manager.

Through tickets for sale at Manchester to all points in North America.

—TRAINS WILL STOP ONLY AT—

Belknaps Crossing, Platform at Quaker Mill Switch, Franklin Street Crossing, Sly's Crossing, Miller's Crossing, Twin Crossing, Westbrook's Crossing.

ILLINOIS CENTRAL R. R.

TIME TABLE.

Main Line Passenger Trains.

WEST BOUND	MAIN LINE	EAST BOUND
No 1* 12:13 a m	..Fast Train..	No 2* 8:42 a m
No 3* 2:18 pm.	Thro Express..	No 4* 3:16 p m
No 33 †6:05 p m	....Clipper....	No 34†9:00 a m
No 5 †9:00a m	Local Express	No 6† 8:40 p m
No 93† 2:00 p m.	.Way Freight.	No 94 11:45 a m

CEDAR RAPIDS BRANCH.

North Bound —Arrive—	Bet Cedar Rpds and Manchester	South Bound —Leave—
No.306 6:00p.m	..†Passenger..	No.305 9:10 a.m
No 334 8.40a.m	..†Passenger..	No.335 6:20 p.m
No. 360 1:00p.m	....†Freight....	No.360 3:30 p.m

All above trains carry passengers.
*Daily.
†Daily ExceptSunday.
H. G. PIERCE, Station Agt.

No. 5 Runs to Sioux City only.
No. 3 Runs to Omaha only.
No. 1 has connections to Omaha, Sioux City and Sioux Falls and No. 2 from same points.

CHICAGO GREAT WESTERN RY.

"The Maple Leaf Route."

Time card, Oneida, Iowa.

Chicago Special, Daily, Going East.....7:47 a.m
Day Express daily.....2:39 p.m
Way Freight daily ex. Sunday.....11:20 a m
Going West, North and South.
Way Freight, daily ex. Sunday.....11:20 a.m
Day Express daily.....:16 p.m
St Paul & Kansas City Exp, daily.....5:31 a.m
For information and tickets apply to
C. A. Robinson, Agent, Oneida.

INVESTMEMTS IN SOUTHERN LANDS

Such investments are not speculative. The South is not a new country. Market and shipping facilities are adequate and first class. The climate is mild and favorable. Notwithstanding these and other advantages, southern lands are selling for prices far below their real value, and at present prices net large returns on the investment. For a free set of circulars Nos. 1 to 10, inclusive, concerning the possibilities of lands in Kentucky, West Tennessee, Mississippi and Louisiana, on and near the Illinois Central Railroad, for homeseekers and investors, address the undersigned.
J. F. MERRY,
Ass't Gen'Pass'r Agent I. C. R. R.
Dubuque, Io[wa].

Compound Vapor and Sha poo Baths.

Baths

Vapor and Shampoo.

Most all [illegible] eases are cau[illegible] by poisonous [illegible] retions, wh[illegible] clog the whe[illegible] of NATURE. The name [illegible] the symt[illegible] may be differ[illegible] but the cause [illegible] disease can [illegible] ually be tr[illegible] to the imperfect action of the milli[illegible] of pores of the human body. A bath [illegible] accordance with scientific requi[illegible] ments is the best preventative a[illegible] remedy known. The methods empl[illegible] ed by me are the most scientific ev[illegible] invented or discovered for dispelli[illegible] disease. Results tell the story. Gi[illegible] me a trial. This is the Conant syste[illegible] of baths. A competent lady attenda[illegible] in charge of the ladies department. Office and bath rooms on Frank[illegible] street, opposite Globe Hotel.
6t G. D. GATE[S]

Why do you fret and grumble,
Why don't you take a tumble,
Use Beacom's Picnic Pills,
They will drive away your ills
Try them. 25 cents. All druggists. 50t[illegible]

Illinois Central Excursion Rates.

Excursion tickets will be sold by the Illinois Central, to the points, and at rates, as follows.

SUMMER TOURIST RATES.

Tickets on sale daily during the summer months to St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minn., Hot Springs and Deadwood, So. Dak.; Denver, Colorado Springs Pueblo, and Glenwood Springs, Colo.; Ogden and Salt Lake City, Utah and many other Summer Resorts both East a[nd] West, limited to Oct. 31st. Also to Yellowstone Park, limited to ninety days. Write for rates.

FARE AND ONE-THIRD ON CERTIF[I]CATE PLAN.

Cedar Falls, Ia., Iowa State Normal Summer School, June 10, July 21. Tickets on sale on certain dates.

ONE FARE PLUS $2.00.

Home-seekers' Excursions, West, South, South-east and South west.

Tickets on sale the first and third Tuesday of each month until October. To certain points in Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota, North Dakota, Canada and the Northwestern States. Tickets will be sold every Tuesday until October 31st. Niagara Falls, N. Y. Annual Meeting Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, June 20-23.
Toronto, Ont., Triennial International Sunday School Convention, June 20-27.
Baltimore, Md., International Convention United Society of Christian Endeavor, July 5-10.
Buffalo N. Y., Meeting Grand Lodge, B. P. O. Elks, July 11-13.

ONE FARE PLUS 50 CENTS.

Milwaukee, Wis., Head Camp Modern Woodmen of America, June 17-24.

LESS THAN ONE FARE.

Portland, Ore., San Francisco, Los Angeles and San Diego, Cal.—Lewis & Clark Centennial Exposition at Portland, and other meetings at above points. Tickets on sale on certain dates every month until and including September, limited to ninety days for return, not to exceed November 30th. Write for rates and illustrated folders about the Portland Exposition.

Denver, Colo.—International Epworth League Convention, July 5-9. Through Tourist Sleepers to Denver July 3rd. Write for circulars quoting rates and giving particulars, also folders descriptive of Denver and other Colorado resorts.

For particulars as to dates of sale, rates, etc., apply to any Illinois Central Ticket Agent, or address the undersigned.
J. F. MERRY,
Asst. Gen'l Pass. Agent
Dubuque, Iowa.

SUMMER EXCURSION RAT[ES]

Via the M. & O. to Summer T[ourist] Points, North, East, South and [West].

Commencing June 1st and continuing daily thereafter until September 30, 1905, the M. and Oneida Ry. Co. will sell round trip summer tourist tickets good to return until October 31st at greatly reduced rates with stop over privileges on nearly all roads. For further information call on or address the undersigned at Manchester Iowa.
J. L. Kelsey,
Traffic Mgr.