The News-Herald

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 188[illegible]

HILLSBORO. : : : OHIO

WHICH SHALL I CHOOSE?

"I have two lovers, grandmother;
One has a very handsome face;
He dresses in the finest style;
His manners have a fin shed grace;
He pla s a game of tennis well;
He knows the latest step or dance;
He's made the European tour,
And tells how things are done in France.

And when this lover comes to woo,
The house puts on a stately air:
My mother makes the finest tea;
My newest dress I have to wear;
He's such a very stylish beau;
And I am pleased and flattered, too;
But yet I wonder if through life
This kind of thing would surely do?

Not handsome is my other beau,
Our Annie calls him 'commonplace;'
He can not play a single game,
His manners have no stylish grace.
He had to study hard in youth
To win the place where now he stands;
The marks of thought are on his face,
The marks of labor on his hands.

But when he comes a-wooing me,
My father never sl ps away;
My mother does her household work.
I wear the dress of every day.
He fits into our daily life
As to my hand a fitting glove;
If you were me, my grandmother,
Which lover would you learn to love?"

"If life were a long holiday,
A song, a dance, a merry play,
Why, then your handsome, stylish beau,
Would speed it gallantly away.
But, oh, my child! if life be set
To love and duty's high commands,
A husband choose with thoughtful face
And marks of labor on his hands."
—*Lillie E. Barr, in N. Y. Ledger.*

A PATIENT WAITER.

Poor Aunt Fidelia who Never "Gave It Up."

"Be sure you sweep it clean, Lily."

"Yes, 'em. I ain't leaving a single stone on it."

"I'm 'most afraid to trust you. I think likely as not he may come today, an' not wait to write. It's so pleasant, I feel just as if somebody was comin'."

"I'm a-sweepin' it real clean, Aunt Fidelia."

"Well, be pertickler. An' you'd better sweep the sidewalk a little ways in front of the yard. I see a bit of loose stones on it yesterday."

"Yes, 'm."

The broom was taller than the child, but she was sturdy, and she wielded it with a joyful vigor. Down the narrow path between the rows of dahlias she went. Her smooth, yellow head shone in the sun. Her long, blue gingham apron whisked about her legs as she swept. The dahlias were in full bloom, and they nodded their golden and red balls gently when the child jostled them. Beyond the dahlias on either side were zinnias and candy-tuft and marigolds. The house was very small. There was only one window at the side of the front door. A curved green trellis stood against the little space of house wall on the other side, and a yellow honeysuckle climbed on it.

Fidelia Almy stood in the door with a cloth in her hand. She had been dusting the outside of the door and the threshold, rubbing off every speck punctiliously. Fidelia stood there in the morning light with her head nodding like a flower in a wind. It nodded so all the time. She had a disease of the nerves. Her yellow-gray hair was crimped and put up carefully in a little coil, with two long curls on either side. Her long, delicate face, which always had a downward droop as it nodded, had a soft polish like ivory. When Lily Almy, who was Fidelia's orphan niece, whom she was bringing up, had reached the gate with her broom, she peered down the road; then she ran back eagerly.

"O, Aunt Fidelia," she said, in a precise, slow voice which was copied from her aunt's, "there's a man comin'. Do you s'pose it's him?"

"What kind of a lookin' man?" Fidelia's head nodded faster; a bright red spot gleamed out on either cheek.

"A real handsome man. He's tall and he's got reddish whiskers. And he's got a carpet bag."

"That's the way he looks."

"O, Aunt Fidelia, do you s'pose it's him?"

"Tain't very likely to be."

"Here he is."

Fidelia ran into the house and knelt down at the parlor window, just peering over the sill. Her whole body seemed wavering like her head; her breath came in great gasps. The man, who was young and handsome, walked past.

Lily ran in. "'Twa'n't him, was it?" said she.

"I didn't much expect it was. I've always thought he'd come on a Tuesday. I've dreamed 'bout his comin' Tuesday more times than I can tell. Now I'm goin' to fix the flowers in the vases, an' then I'm goin' down to the post-office. I feel just as if I might git a letter to-day. There was one in the candle last night."

Fidelia moved, nodding, among her flowers in her front yard. She gathered up her purple calico apron, and cut the flowers into it.

"You run out into the garden an' git some sparrow-grass for green," she told Lily, "an' pick some of that striped grass under the parlor window, an' some of them spider-lilies by the fence."

The little white-painted mantel-shelf in Fidelia's parlor was like an altar, upon which she daily heaped floral offerings. And who knows what fair deity in bright clouds she saw when she made her sacrifices!

Fidelia had only two vases, tall gilt and white china ones, with scrolling tops; these stood finely in the center, holding their drooping nosegays. Beside these were broken china bowls, cream jugs without handles, tumblers, wineglasses, saucers, and one smart china mug with "Friendship's Offering" in gold letters. Slightly withered flowers were in all of them. Fidelia threw them out, and filled all the vessels with fresh ones. The green asparagus sprays brushed the shelf, the striped grass overtopped the gay flowers.

"There!" said Fidelia. "Now I'm goin' to the post-office."

"If anybody comes, I'll ask him in here, an' tell him you'll be right back, sha'n't I?" said Lily.

"Tell him I'll be back in jest a few minutes, an' give him the big rockin'-chair."

The post-office was a mile away, in the corner of a country store. Twice a day, year out and year in, Fidelia journeyed thither.

"It's only Fidelia Almy," people said, looking out of their windows, as the poor solitary figure with its nodding head went by through summer suns and winter winds.

Once in a while they hailed her. "See if there's any thing for me, won't you, Fidelia?"

At last it was an understood thing that Fidelia should carry the mail to the dozen families between her house and the post-office. She often had her black worked bag filled up with letters, but there was never one of her own. Fidelia Almy never had a letter.

"That woman's been comin' here the last thirty years," the postmaster told a stranger one day, "an' she 'ain't never had a letter sence I've been here, an' I don't believe she ever did before."

Fidelia used to come in a little before the mail was distributed, and sit on an old settee near the door, waiting. Her face at those times had a wild, strained look; but after the letters were all in the boxes, it settled back into its old expression, and she traveled away with her bag of other people's letters, nodding patiently.

On her route was one young girl who had a lover in a neighboring town. Her letters came regularly. She used to watch for Fidelia, and run to meet her, her pretty face all blushes. Fidelia always had the letter separated from the others and ready for her. She always smiled when she held it out. "They keep a-comin'," she said one day, "an' there don't seem to be no end to it. But if I was you, Louisa, I'd try an' git him to settle over here, if you ain't married before long. There's slips, an' it ain't always safe trustin' to letters."

The girl told her lover what Fidelia had said, with tender laughter and happy pity. "Poor thing," she said. "She had a beau, you know, Willy, and he went away thirty years ago, and ever since then she's been looking for a letter from him, and she's kind of cracked over it. And she's afraid it'll turn out the same way with me."

Then she and her sweetheart laughed together at the idea of this sad, foolish destiny for this pretty, courageous young thing.

To-day Fidelia, with her black broadcloth bag, worked on one side with a wreath and on the other with a bunch of flowers, walked slowly to the office and back. As the years went on she walked slower. This double journey of hers seemed to tire her more. Once in a while she would sit down and rest on the stone wall. The clumps of dusty way-side flowers, meadow-sweet and tansy stood around her; over her head was the blue sky. But she clutched her black letter-bag, and nodded her drooping head, and never looked up. Her sky was elsewhere. When she came in sight of her own house, Lily, who was watching at the gate, came running to meet her.

"O, Aunt Fidelia," said she, "Aunt Sally's in there."

"Did she take off her shoes an' let you brush 'em before she went in?"

"She wouldn't. She went right straight in. She jest laughed when I asked her to take her shoes off. An', Aunt Fidelia, she's done somethin' else. I couldn't help it."

"What?"

"She's been eatin' some of Mr. Lennox's plum cake up. I couldn't stop her, Aunt Fidelia. I told her she musn't."

"You didn't say nothin' 'bout Mr. Lennox, did you?"

"No, I didn't, Aunt Fidelia. O, did you get a letter?"

"No; I didn't much think I would to-day. O dear! there's Sally eatin' cake right in the front entry."

A stout old woman, with a piece of cake in her hand, stood in the front door as Fidelia and Lily came up between the dahlias.

"How d'ye do, Fidelia," cried she warmly.

"Pretty well, thank you. How do you do, Sally?" Fidelia answered. She shook hands and looked at the other with a sort of meek uneasiness. "Hadn't you just as soon step out here whilst you're eatin' that cake," asked she timidly. "I've just swept the entry."

"No; I ain't goin' to step out there an inch," said the other, mumbling the cake vigorously between her old jaws. "If you ain't the worst old maid, Fidelia! 'Ain't seen all the sister you've got in the world for a year, an' wantin' her to go out doors to eat a piece of cake. Hard work to git the cake, too."

"It don't make any difference," said Fidelia. "I'm real kind o' used up every time I sweep nowadays, that's all."

"Better stop sweepin', then; there ain't no need of so much fussin'. It's more'n half that's got your nerves all out of kilter—sweepin' and scrubbin' from mornin' till night, an' wantin' folks to take off their shoes before they come in, as if they was goin' into a heathen temple. Well, I ain't goin' to waste all my breath scoldin' when I've come over to see you. How air you now, Fidelia?"

"It's 'bout the same as ever." Fidelia, following her sister into the parlor stooped slyly to pick up some crumbs which had fallen on the entry floor.

"Just as shaky, ain't you? Why, Fidelia Almy, what in creation have you got this room rigged up so fur?"

"Rigged up how?"

"Why, every thing covered up this way. What hev you got this old sheet over the carpet fur?"

"It was fadin' dreadfully."

"Fadin! Good land! If you 'ain't got every chair sewed up in caliker, an' the pictures in old piller-cases, an'—— Fidelia Almy, if you 'ain't got the solar lamp a-settin' in a little bag!"

"The gilt was gittin' real kind o' tarnished."

"Tarnished! An' every single thing on the table—the chiner card-basket an' Mrs. Hemans's Poems pinned up in a white rag! Good land! Well, I've always heard tell that there was two kinds of old maids—old maids an' consarned old maids—an' I guess you're one of the last sort. Why, what air you cuttin' on so fur?"

Fidelia gathered up all her trembling meekness and weakness into a show of dignity. "Things are all fadin' an wearin' out, an' I want to keep 'em decent as long as I last. I ain't got no money to buy any more. I 'ain't got no husband nor sons to do fur me, like you, an' I've got to take care of things if I hev any thing. An'—I'm goin' to."

Her sister laughed. "Well, good land! I don't care. Cover up your things if you want to. There ain't no need of your gittin' riled. But this room does look enough to make a cat laugh. All them flowers on the mantel, an' all those white things. I declare, Fidelia Almy, it does look jest as if 'twas laid out. Well, we won't talk no more about it. I'm goin' out to hev a cup of tea. I put the teapot on, an' started the fire."

Poor Fidelia had a distressing day with her visiting sister. All her prim household arrangements were examined and commented on. Not a closet nor bureau drawer escaped inspection. When the guest departed at length, the woman and the child looked at each other with relief.

"Ain't you glad she's gone?" asked Lily. She had been pink with indignation all day.

"Hush, child; you mustn't. She's my sister, an' I'm always glad to see her, if she's a little tryin' sometimes."

"She wanted you to take the covers off an' let the things git all spoiled before Mr. Lennox comes, didn't she?"

"She don't know nothin' about that."

"Are you goin' to make another plum-cake to-night, Aunt Fidelia?"

"I don't know. I guess we'd better sweep first."

The two worked hard and late that night. They swept every inch of floor which that profane dusty foot had trod. The child helped eagerly. She was Fidelia's confidante, and she repaid her confidence with the sweetest faith and sympathy. Nothing could exceed her innocent trust in Fidelia's pathetic story and pathetic hopes. This sad human experience was her fairy tale of childhood. That recreant lover, Ansel Lennox, who had left his sweetheart for California thirty years ago, and promised falsely to write and return, was her fairy prince. Her bright imagination pictured him beautiful as a god.

"He was about as handsome a young man as you ever see," said poor Fidelia. And a young Apollo towered up before Lily's credulous eyes. The lapse of thirty years affected the imagination of neither; but Lily used to look at her aunt reflectively some times.

"I wish you could have some medicine to make you stop shakin' before that handsome Mr. Lennox comes," she said once.

"I'm in hopes that medicine I'm takin' will stop it," said Fidelia. "I think, mebbe, it's a little better now. I'm glad I thought to put that catnip in; it makes it a good deal more quietin'."

On a narrow ledge of shelf behind Fidelia's kitchen sink stood always a blue quart bottle of medicine. She prepared it herself from roots and herbs. She experimented and added new ingredients, and swallowed it with a touching faith that it would cure her. Beside this bottle stood another of sage tea; that was for her hair. She used it plentifully every day in the hope that it would stop the gray hairs coming, and bring back the fine color. Fidelia used to have pretty golden hair.

Lily teased her to make the sage tea stronger. "You've been usin' it a dreadful long time, Aunt Fidelia," she said, "an' your hair's just as gray as 'twas before."

"Takes quite a long time before you can see any difference," said Fidelia.

Many a summer morning when the dew was heavy, she and Lily used to steal out early and bathe their faces in it. Fidelia said it would make people rosy and keep away the wrinkles.

"It works better on me than it does on you, don't it?" asked pink and white Lily, innocently, once. The two were out in the shining white field together. The morning lit up Lily as it did the flowers. Her eyes had lovely blue sparkles in them; her yellow hair, ruffled by the wind glittered as radiantly between one and the light as the cobweb lines across the grasses. She looked wonderingly at her aunt, with her nodding gray head plunging her little yellow hands into the dewy green things. Those dull tints and white hairs and wrinkles showed forth so plainly in the clear light that even the child's charming faith was disturbed a little. Would the dew ever make this old creature pretty again?

But—"You can't expect it to work in a minute," replied Fidelia, cheerfully. And Lily was satisfied.

"I guess it'll work by the time Mr. Lennox comes," she said.

Fidelia was always neat and trim in her appearance; her hair was always carefully arranged and her shoes tidy; but summer and winter she wore one sort of gown—a purple calico. She had a fine black silk hung away in the closet up-stairs. She had one or two good woolens and some delicate cambrics. There was even one white muslin, with some lace in neck and sleeves, hanging there. But she never wore one of them. Her sister scolded her for it and other people wondered. Fidelia's child-confidante alone knew the reason why. This poor, nodding enchanted princess was saving her gay attire till the prince returned and the enchantment ceased and she was beautiful again.

"You mustn't say nothin' about it," Fidelia had said; "but I ain't goin' to put on them good dresses an' tag 'em right out. Mebbe the time'll come when I'll want 'em more."

"Mr. Lennox 'll think that black silk is beautiful," said Lily, "an' that white muslin."

"I had that jest after he went away, an' I 'ain't never put it on. I thought I wouldn't; muslin don't look half so nice after the new look gits off it."

So Lily waited all through her childhood. She watched her aunt start forth on her daily pilgrimages to the post-office, with the confident expectation that one of these days she would return with a letter from Mr. Lennox. She regarded that sacred loaf of plum-cake which was always kept on hand, and believed that he might appear to dispose of it at any moment. She had the sincerest faith that the time was coming when the herb medicine would quiet poor Fidelia's tremulous head, when the sage tea would turn all the gray hairs gold, and the dew would make her yellow, seamy cheeks smooth and rosy, when she would put on that magnificent black silk or that dainty girlish muslin and sit in the parlor with Mr. Lennox, and have the covers off the chairs, and the mantel-piece blooming with flowers. So the child and the woman lived happily with their beautiful chimera, until gradually he vanished into thin air for one of them.

Lily could not have told when the conviction first seized her that Mr. Lennox would never write, would never come; that Aunt Fidelia's gray hair would never turn gold, nor her faded cheeks be rosy; that her nodding head would nodd until she was dead. It was hardly until she was a woman herself, and had a lover of her own. It is possible that he gave the final overthrow to her faith, that it had not entirely vanished before. She told him all about Mr. Lennox. She scarcely looked upon it as a secret to be kept now. She had ascertained that many people were acquainted with Fidelia Almy's poor romance, except in its minor details.

So Lily told her lover. "Good Lord!" he said. "How long is it since he went?"

"Forty years now," said Lily. They were walking home from meeting one Sunday night.

"Forty years! Why there ain't any more chance of hearing any thing from him—Did he have any folks here?"

"No. He was a clerk in a store here. He fell in love with Aunt Fidelia, and went off to California to get some more money before he got married."

"Didn't anybody ever hear any thing from him?"

"Aunt Fidelia always said not; but Aunt Sally told me once that she knew well enough that he got married out there right after he went away; she said she heard it pretty straight. She never had any patience with Aunt Fidelia. If she'd known half the things— Poor Aunt Fidelia! She's getting worse lately. She goes to the post-office Sundays. I can't stop her. Every single Sunday, before meeting, down she goes."

"Why, she can't get in."

"I know it. She just tries the door and comes back again."

"Why, dear, she's crazy, ain't she?"

"No, she ain't crazy; she's rational enough about every thing else. All the way I can put it is, she's just been pointed one way all her life, and going one way, and now she's getting nearer the end of the road she's pointed sharper and she's going faster. She's had a hard time. I'm going to do all I can for her, anyhow. I'll help her get ready for Mr. Lennox as long as she lives."

Fidelia took great delight in Lily's love affair. All that seemed to trouble her was the suspicion that the young man might leave town and the pair be brought to letter writing.

"You mind, Lily," she would say; "don't you let Valentine settle anywhere else before you're married. If you do, you'll have to come to writin' letters, an' letters ain't to be depended on. There's slips. You'd git sick of waitin' the way I have. I ain't minded it much; but you're young, an' it would be different."

When Valentine Rowe did find employment in a town fifty miles away, poor Fidelia seemed to have taken on herself a double burden of suspense. In those days she was much too early for the mails, and waited, breathless, in the office for hours. When she got a letter for Lily she went home radiant; she seemed to forget her own disappointment. Lily's letters came regularly for a long time. Valentine came to see her occasionally, too. Then, one day, when Lily expected a letter, it did not come. Her aunt dragged herself home feebly.

"It ain't come, Lily," said she. "The trouble's begun. You poor child, how air you goin' through with it?"

Lily laughed. "Why, Aunt Fidelia!" said she, "what are you worrying for? I haven't missed a letter before. Something happened so Valentine couldn't write Sunday, that's all. It don't trouble me a mite."

However, even Lily was troubled at length. Weeks went by and no letter came from Valentine Rowe. Fidelia tottered home despondent day after day. The girl had a brave heart, but she began to shudder, watching her. She felt as if she were looking into her own destiny.

"I'm going to write to Valentine," she said suddenly, one day, after Fidelia had returned from her bootless journey.

Fidelia looked at her fiercely. "Lily Almy," said she, "whatever else you do, don't you do that. Don't you force yourself on any feller, when there's a chance you ain't wanted. Don't you do anything that ain't modest. You'd better live the way I've done."

"He may be sick," said Lily, pitifully.

"The folks he's with would write. Don't you write a word. I didn't write. An' mebbe you'll hear to-morrow. I guess we'd better sweep the parlor to-day."

This new anxiety seemed to wear on Fidelia more than her own had done. She now talked more about Valentine Rowe than Mr. Lennox. Her faith in Lily's case did not seem as active as in her own.

"I wouldn't go down to the post-office, seems to me," Lily said one morning—Fidelia tottered going out the door; "you don't look fit to. I'll go by-an'-by."

"I can go well enough," said Fidelia, in her feeble, shrill voice. "You ain't goin' to begin as long as I can help it." And she crawled slowly out of the yard between the rows of dahlias, and down the road, her head nodding, her flabby black bag hanging at her side. That was the last time she ever went to the post-office. That day she returned with her patient, disappointed heart for the last time. When poor Fidelia Almy left her little house again she went riding, lying quietly, her nodding head still forever. She had passed out of that strong wind of Providence which had tossed her so hard, into the eternal calm. She rode past the post-office on her way to the little green graveyard, and never knew nor cared whether there was a letter for her or not. But the bell tolled, and the summer air was soft and sweet, and the little funeral train passed by; and may be there was one among the fair, wide possibilities of heaven.

The first day on which Fidelia gave up going to the post-office, Lily began going in her stead. In the morning Fidelia looked up at her pitifully from her pillow, when she found that she could not rise.

"You'll have to go to the office, Lily," she whispered; "an' you'd better hurry, or you'll be late for the mail."

That was the constant cry to which the poor girl had to listen. It was always: "Hurry, hurry, or you'll be late for the mail."

Lily was a sweet, healthy young thing, but the contagion of this strained faith and expectation seemed to seize upon her in her daily tramps to the post-office. Sometimes, going along the road, she could hardly believe herself not to be the veritable Fidelia Almy, living life over again, beginning a new watch for her lost lover's letter. She put her hand to her head to see if it nodded. She kept whispering to herself: "Hurry, hurry, or you'll be late for the mail."

Fidelia lay ill a week before she died, and the week had nearly gone, when Lily flew home from the office one night, jubilant. She ran in to the sick woman. "O, Aunt Fidelia!" she cried, "the letter's come!"

Fidelia had not raised herself for days, but she sat up now erect. All her failing forces seemed to gather themselves up and flash and beat, now the lifeward wind for them blew. The color came into her cheeks, her eyes shone triumphant. "Ansel's—letter!"

Lily sobbed right out in the midst of her joy: "O, poor Aunt Fidelia! poor Aunt Fidelia! I didn't think—I forgot. I was awful cruel. It's a letter from Valentine. He's been sick. The folks wrote, but they put on the wrong State—Massachusetts instead of Vermont. He's comin' right home, an' he's goin' to stay. He's goin' to settle here. Poor Aunt Fidelia! I didn't think."

Fidelia lay back on her pillow. "You dear child," she whispered, "you won't have to."

Valentine Rowe came the morning of the day on which she died. She demanded to see him eagerly.

"You're a-goin' to settle here, ain't you?" she asked him. "Don't you go away again before you're married; don't you do it. It ain't safe trustin' to letters; there's slips."

The young man looked down at her with tears in his honest eyes. "I'll settle here sure," said he. "Don't you worry. I'll promise you."

Fidelia looked up at him, and shut her eyes peacefully. "The dear child!" she murmured.

Along the middle of the afternoon she called Lily. She wanted her to put her head down, so she could tell her something.

"Them dresses," she whispered, "up-stairs. You'd better take 'em an' use 'em. You can make that white one over for a weddin' dress. An' you'd better take the covers off the things in the parlor when you're married, an'—eat the plum-cake."

Near sunset she called Lily again. "It's time for the evenin' mail," she whispered. "It's time for it. You'd better hurry, or you'll be late. I shouldn't be—a bit—surprised if the letter came to-night."

Lily broke down and cried. "O, dear, poor aunty!" she sobbed. The awful pitifulness of it all seemed to overwhelm her suddenly. She could keep up no longer.

But Fidelia did not seem to notice it. She went on talking. "Ansel Lennox—promised he'd write when he went away, an' he said he'd come again. It's time for the evenin' mail. You'd better hurry, or you'll be late. He—promised he'd write, an'"—she looked up at Lily suddenly; a look of triumphant resolution came into her poor face—"*I ain't goin' to give it up yet.*"—*Mary E. Wilkins, in Harper's Bazar.*

FARM PAINTING.

Five Questions and Answers of Practical and Every-Day Value.

1. How shall a farmer paint a buggy? how a wagon?

I do not think, as a rule, that it will be wise for farmers to paint their carriages themselves. Such work requires special materials and more skill in the manipulation of tools than the farmer passesses or could profitably develop, and it occurs so infrequently that the farmer can easily afford to pay the carriage maker a few dollars for this purpose. Moreover, a spirit of helpfulness and consideration for other industries which the farmer, in common with other men, should always entertain, will incline him to do this.

Wagons are in more common use, and should be kept well painted. The paints used are made of white lead, linseed oil, japan and turpentine, with the addition of such coloring pigments as may be selected. Indian red makes a good durable color for running gear. Bright reds are sometimes used, though I do not much admire them. Straw or buff color is good. It may be made of lead and ochre. For coloring lead, I think the oil colors of standard makes will be found more satisfactory than dry color, as the latter has to be ground thoroughly before it can be applied with a brush. Brown is a good color for boxes. Green has been used to a great extent, and is not a bad color. Blue sometimes looks well. Yellow and English vermillion, or blue and green will make good colors for striping boxes, if the farmer is disposed to add th s finish. The inside of the boxes should be painted with Venetian red and linseed oil, one or two coats. A coat of good coach varnish is desirable for the better grades of work. It can, perhaps, be omitted on old wagons, if necessary to save expense.

Good linseed oil paints are the best for this work, with enough turpentine or japan mixed in to make it dry readily. For priming coats no dryer should be used, and very little in either of the finishing coats. There is a tendency to the use of bright colors on buildings, which I do not think wise for farm buildings especially, and I am inclined to think their popularity will be of short duration. Drabs and stone colors are the best and most enduring, in my opinion, and always look well on farm houses, with their surroundings of meadows and trees. I like to see the trimming color lighter than the body, though custom has long sanctioned the reverse of this. The trimmings usually project beyond the sid ng, and stand out more prominently in the light. To give them a higher color is therefore more in conformity with nature.

2. How paint a house and barn?

Paint for rough barns may be of a much cheaper variety than that used for dwellings. What are known as iron ore paints are cheap and very durable. An article called "creosote paint" and "creosote stain" is good, and also cheap. I have known of ochreous earths which are to be found in some localities being mixed with skimmed milk and applied to barns, and it would last for years. Milk is one of the best of the very cheap vehicles for mixing paint.

3. How is paint mixed?

The mixing of paint is a simple process, but it requires great care and skill to get the proportions of materials right and thoroughly incorporated. For the painting of buildings oil paint with base of white lead is the best, with the addition of a little turpentine and the oil color for tinting to the desired shade. There are a few brands of paint prepared for the brush which the farmer can use more economically, perhaps, than he can mix them himself. For fine painting on wagons, etc., he may require japan colors, which are also to be had ready to use, after thinning with a little turpentine.

4. Should paint be applied thick or thin, and at what intervals should the coats follow each other?

Paint is best applied thin for ordinary painting, with a greater number of coats if necessary, as the common propensity to peel and blister is less likely to manifest itself in paint so applied. No paint should be applied to a damp surface, for the water contained in the wood will in time escape, and in so doing will blister the paint which imprisons it. When one coat of paint is thoroughly dry, another may be applied.

5. How can brushes be kept from becoming hard?

To keep paint brushes, suspend them in water, a water tight box or a pail, allowing the water to come just over the lower part of the binding. In winter throw a handful of salt in the water to keep it from freezing. Brushes which are seldom used may be thoroughly cleaned with turpentine or benzine and put away dry. Before being used they should be soaked in water a short time, so as to tighten the bristles and prevent their pulling out.—*Cor. Ohio Farmer.*

—Warm Gingerbread: One cup each of sugar, molasses, butter and "loppered" milk or cream, four and a half cups of flour, one teaspoonful of soda, sifted twice with the flour, one tablespoonful of ginger, one teaspoonful of mixed mace and cinnamon, three eggs; beat together molasses, sugar, butter and spices until they are very light; put in the milk, beaten eggs and finally flour. Stir vigorously for five minutes and bake in a "card." Break instead of cutting it and eat with iced milk as an accompaniment.—*Boston Budget.*

THE INDUSTRIAL WORLD.

—Oliver Dalrymple states that he will put in 31,000 acres of crops next season in Dakota.

—All the cannon foundries in Europe are overrun with orders and working day and night.

—A large whale fishery is being established on the west end of Vancouver Island, British Columbia.

—Farmers of Kansas say that the acreage of fall wheat will be greater this year than ever before in the history of the State.

—There are 4,008,907 farms in the United States, Illinois having the largest number, 255,741, and Rhode Island the smallest, 6,216.

—Labor is in demand in shops and mills supplying railway appliances. The railroad companies are the heaviest buyers of products of iron and steel and lumber, and their orders at the present time are at least double the volume at any preceding date.—*Pittsburgh Post.*

—The invention of the valve motion for the steam engine is credited to a boy. The power loom was the invention of a farmer's boy who had never seen a factory and had no tools but a jack-knife, and whose father broke up the first model he made.

—Persons who are undertaking to raise carp in artificial ponds must be careful to keep other kinds of fish as well as aquatic animals and turtles out of them. During the past summer the young carp in many places have been destroyed by the above named creatures.—*Chicago Times.*

—Peanuts of good size and quality were raised this year in New York, Ohio and Southern Michigan. The yield was not as large as in the Southern States, and there is little promise that the crop will be a paying one for the market. Still, it is likely that in a few years the boys on most northern farms will raise their own peanuts.—*N. Y. Times.*

—A large building has just been completed near the Housatonic track, in Canaan, Conn., for the manufacture of granulated milk. This is a new process invented and patented by Robert Ellin, the milk being preserved in granules appearing not unlike white granulated sugar. This is the first manufactory of the kind in the country.—*Hartford Post.*

—Two of the largest castings in the world are said to be at Nara and Kamakura, Japan, the one at the latter place being forty-seven feet high, and the other at Nara being fifty-three and three-fourths feet from the base to the crown of its head. The statue at Nara is supposed to have been erected in the eighth century, but it was destroyed and recast 700 years ago. In endeavoring to recast it several mishaps occurred, and when at last success came, some thousand tons of charcoal had been used.

—A new metal, called by the inventor, Albert Assman, of Rahway, N. J., "Assayme," is produced by a special treatment of tin. It has all the good qualities of the latter, can be pressed into any shape, or cast into statuary, or used for plate ware of any description. A beautiful bronze color can be given to the metal, or any shade from bronze to a silver color; and as it does not in the least corrode, it is specially valuable as a silver solder. It melts at a temperature of 432 degrees, or eighteen degrees less than tin.

PUNGENT PARAGRAPHS.

—Women are so fond of trimmings and finery that they even have their tempers ruffled once in a while.

—You can get a pretty good idea of a man's character by noting how he acts toward his poor relations.—*New Haven News.*

—Some men are so penurious that they keep everything they get hold of, except the Ten Commandments.—*Cedartown (Ga.) Advertiser.*

—A Burlington girl, who is a great talker, says that it is better to be engaged in conversation than not at all.—*Burlington Free Press.*

—He (at the beginning of the third act)—"How spicy the play is getting." She (who sat alone between the acts)—"I should say so!"—*Life.*

—Polite passenger (in street car)—"Will you take this seat, madam?" Madam—"Thank ——" Polite passenger—"Pray don't, madam. I'm subject to fits."—*N. Y. Sun.*

—Let a parent teach his child to obey, and he will give him the most precious lessons that can be given to a child. Obedience is the grandest thing in the world to begin with.—*N. Y. Ledger.*

—Lady to servant—"Have you a recommendation from your last place?" Servant to lady—"Yes, but I'll not show it yer till I see the one ye have from your last girl."—*Chicago Tribune.*

—Mrs. Swellington Jones—"Really, my dear, you owe it to your friends to get a new dress suit." Mr. Swellington Jones—"Well, if I do, I shall have to owe it to my tailor."—*Harper's Weekly.*

—People's ideas of musical excellence vary. We wot of a hand organ who never visits a certain street because every house therein has an active piano. To quote his own words: "Eet shocks my nerva."—*Boston Transcript.*

—Young man—"I want to ask you a question." Widower—"All right, ask away." Y. M.—"You have been married three times; tell me me which wife did you love most?" W.—"You bite three sour apples, one after the other, and then tell me which is the sweetest."—*Texas Siftings.*

—Mrs. Hendricks, the landlady (at Sunday dinner)—"I am not feeling at all well to-day, and I am becoming conscious of the fact that I am not as strong as I used to be." Dumley (sympathetically)—"One never appreciates good health until one has lost it. If you are not feeling strong, Mrs. Hendricks, perhaps I had better carve the turkey."—*N. Y. Sun.*

—A young lady was sitting with her lover in a charmingly decorated recess. On her knee was a diminutive niece. In an adjoining room, with the door open, were the rest of the company. Says the little niece, in a jealous and very audible voice: "Auntie, kiss me, too." I leave you to imagine what had happened. "You should say twice, Ethel, dear; two is not grammar," was the immediate rejoinder. Clever girl, that!—*The Critic.*

—Chestnut Bells.—

Hear the tinkle of the bells—
Chestnut bells.
What a world of ancient gags their melody foretells.
How they ting, ting, ting,
Through the super-heated air,
While you'd give most any thing
If you only could fling
Something at the "John-mule" there—
As he chimes, oh mes, chimes,
On the bell a dozen times;
And a hundred rousing cuss-words from your heaving bosom swells,
At the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
At the jingling of the blasted "chestnut" bells.
—*Puck.*

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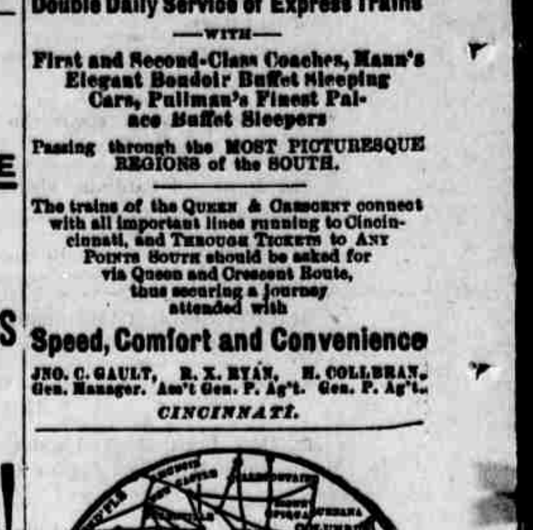

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