The Hickman Courier.

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HICKMAN, : : KENTUCKY.

PARTING.

FROM THE LOW GERMAN.

You saw me safely up the hill,
(The day was almost spent),
And there you told me you must go:
We parted, and you went.

But I stood still and watched the woods
Glow with the setting sun,
And gazed upon the little path
That you were winding down

And there the spire amongst the trees,
Still in the sunlight gleamed,
But I turned down the other side
And oh, how dark it seemed.

In dreams, how many times since then
I've parted from you so?
My heart dwells on the hilltop yet,
And gazes down below.

—*Temple Bar.*

A CHAPTER OF ACCIDENTS.

It was as peaceful a scene as one could wish to behold on a summer Sunday morning. There was scarcely enough breeze to stir the leaves of the great elm trees to a rustle; but for the faintly wavering shadows which they cast upon the lawn, one would not have known that they moved at all. The lawn had been rolled to a Sunday smoothness; the audacious little clovers that lifted their heads there yesterday had all been snipped off, and a long-legged robin, who was hopping over it, seemed to realize his own boldness, cocked his head upon one side, looked shyly around, and uttered not a chirp. From the hen-house came a subdued cackling. The old red rooster, who was renowned for his voice, had not, since four o'clock, been heard to utter a note. There was a droning of insects which seemed not like sound, but a part of the silence.

Nicodemus, the hired man, who had just brought round the old-fashioned carryall, said it was still because it was "so tarnation hot." But Miss Eldridge and her niece Phyllis, who were going to church in the carryall, called it "a Sunday hush."

The old carryall, which had a chronic creaking in all its joints, had, by almost superhuman efforts on Nicodemus' part, been oiled into quiet. Old Bucephalus—whose knees would have been the better for oiling—stood in a drooping attitude, without sufficient energy to switch off the flies that alighted upon him. Miss Eldridge, who was about to get into the carryall, was a trim, well-preserved little woman, on the farther confines of middle age, who fairly radiated decorum. From her dove-colored bonnet to the toes of her cloth boots, she was prim. Her dove-colored crape shawl was embroidered in a stiff pattern; the nosegay of cinnamon pinks and southernwood which she carried in her lace-mitted hand was arranged on geometrical principles.

But benevolence shone from Miss Eldridge's face; one felt sure that her sympathies were not regulated by geometrical principles.

Phyllis, Miss Eldridge's niece, was eighteen, and just graduated from a young ladies' seminary. When she went away to school she was a miniature edition of Miss Eldridge; now she had blossomed out into rebellious curls and dimples and flounces and sashes. As she stepped out of the door she brought a frivolous little rustle into the Sunday hush.

Miss Eldridge looked at her with a little sigh. She smiled—Phyllis was very nice to look at, there was no denying it—but she sighed as well. There may be beauty of which one can not approve.

Suddenly there burst upon the tranquil scene the boy from the telegraph office, red-faced and panting, with a yellow envelope in his hand. The telegraph was a new institution in Greenvale, and not liberally patronized. Excitement, and a sense of the great importance of the occasion, had conspired to reduce Tommy Trueworthy, the postmistress' son, to a state of utter collapse.

Miss Eldridge took the yellow envelope with a hand that trembled. A telegram had never before come into her tranquil life. To her mind it could be nothing but an ill omen.

"It's for the squire," gasped Tommy Trueworthy.

"We will carry it to your father; come, Phyllis," said Miss Eldridge, and drew Phyllis into the house.

And Tommy Trueworthy was disgusted at his own officiousness. If he had said nothing Miss Eldridge would have opened the envelope, in her excitement, without thinking to look at the superscription, and he might have learned what his mother so much wanted to know—just who the people mentioned in the telegram were. So far she had not enjoyed telegrams as she had expected; they were so brief as to be puzzling.

In the squire's room, where he reclined on the sofa, the victim of a sprained ankle, Miss Eldridge put the telegram into his hand. She was a model of patience, but it did ruffle her to see him put on his glasses and survey the superscription for fully two minutes.

"John Eldridge, Greenvale. That means me, sure enough," said the squire.

"For pity's sake open it, papa," cried Phyllis.

With the greatest deliberation, and as much calmness as though he lived in an atmosphere of telegrams, the squire opened the envelope, and unfolded the inclosed slip of paper.

"John is very ill at Norwich. Go to him at once, for the sake of old times.

R. MASON."

Miss Eldridge drew a long breath of relief. There was nothing the matter with their young scapegrace, Jack, who was tramping in the Adirondacks, nor with brother Charlie's girls, who had gone abroad. But she reproached herself for her feeling of relief the next moment. Somebody's John was ill, and in need of help.

"Who is he, John?" she asked.

For answer, the squire slowly and deliberately read the telegram again.

"'R. Mason.' My memory is failing, Hester, as I told you the other day. I must know, but I'm blest if I can remember, who he is! 'For the sake of old times.' John must be somebody whom I knew long ago," and the squire drooped his head and knitted his brows, in the effort to recall the friends of those old times.

Between his college days and his unexpected settling down in Greenvale, to follow in the footsteps of his father, the squire had "had his fling." He had been out into that gay world which Miss Hester regarded with disapprobation and dread. Reports of his wildness had traveled to Greenvale. Miss Eldridge never favored any allusions to those old days. She felt that it was extremely doubtful whether "John" were a proper person. But still he was very ill, and in need of help. For only a moment or two did Miss Eldridge hesitate.

"You can't go, John. I think I had better," she said.

"To Norwich? Ten miles in this heat! Well, it's just like you, Hester; and I acknowledge it would be a relief to me, for my memory is so treacherous. John may be some fellow who has done me a good turn. Mason! Mason! I don't remember the name, but the telegraph operator may have made a blunder."

"John's name may not be Mason," suggested Miss Eldridge.

"Awkward for you not knowing what it is," said the squire. "But there's but one hotel in Norwich, and he's probably there, as my unknown friend doesn't specify."

"You don't know any John who has any relatives or friends in Norwich?" said Miss Eldridge, beginning to be conscious that there was a difficulty as well as unpleasantness about her undertaking.

"Can't for the life of me remember that I ever have had a friend named John. It's a common enough name, but I can't think just now of any man that I ever knew named John!"

"Never mind," said Miss Eldridge soothingly, for the squire's bewilderment was beginning to develop an irritability to which he was constitutionally subject. "I shall probably be able to tell you all about him, so that you will remember him, when I come back."

"Going to take Phyllis with you, a'n't you?" said the squire.

"I suppose I must. I don't like to go alone, and there is no one else," said Miss Eldridge, but she showed a feeling of dismay at the prospect.

To guard Phyllis was the great object of her life, and, with the world so very different from what it had been when she was a girl, it seemed to her a duty attended with great difficulties. This "John" was very likely to be a roaring lion, seeking whom he might devour; still, if he was one of the friends of the squire's wild days, he must be old now, and, being very ill, as well, there was some chance that he would not devour Phyllis before her eyes.

Nicodemus, the hired man, manifested great surprise when he was told that he was to drive Miss Eldridge and Miss Phyllis to Norwich, even while the church bells were ringing. Such a desecration of the Sabbath had never been known before in his twenty years' experience of the family.

"It's a long road to Norwich," said Nicodemus, who was privileged to speak his mind on all occasions; "but then, Parson Godfrey's prayers are middlin' long, too," and he heaved a sigh that sounded like an expression of relief, evidently concluding that the length of road was the lesser evil of the two.

Miss Eldridge looked severe disapprobation, but she said nothing. Nicodemus had an eel-like slipperyness under rebuke, and she had ceased to waste her efforts. But reflections upon ministers were, to Miss Eldridge, the most trying form which Nicodemus' ungodliness took. She had a special reverence and regard for ministers. She had been betrothed to one in her youth, and had given him up to devote herself and her worldly goods to her brother, after he had squandered his own patrimony in riotous living, and it had been a life-long sorrow to her. She meant to guard Phyllis from sorrows. It was the dearest wish of her heart that Phyllis should marry a minister. She was not conscious of any intention to attempt to interfere with the decrees of Providence, but if a frivolous minded young man should appear upon Phyllis' horizon—as, alas! was only too likely, for was not Phyllis calculated to draw such, as a candle draws a moth?—she did mean to use all her energy to put him to rout.

As Bucephalus trudged perseveringly over the long road to Norwich, Nicodemus indulged in some further remarks.

"That was a powerful discourse that Parson Godfrey give us last Sunday mornin', about the man with the one talent. I ha'n't seemed to be able to get it out of mind sence," said he, with a deeply meditative expression of countenance.

"I'm very glad that it impressed you, Nicodemus," said Miss Eldridge, with a radiant face. Here was at last a hopeful sign in Nicodemus!

"Been thinkin' of it ever sence," said Nicodemus. "Parson Godfrey, he made out that every man has his talent, even if 'tis a leetle mite of a one, and I calkilate 'tis so, only he don't allus seem to get the lay of it exactly. I've been runnin' of an idea that mine wa'n't diggin' the sile and doin' chores. I wisht I had'n't never put my hard airnin's into that tarnal rock-heap of a farm over to Stony Crick. My tarlent is for luck. There never was such a feller for findin' things, and guessin' things, as I be. If I'd a put my money into lottery tickets"——

"O Nicodemus!" exclaimed Miss Eldridge.

Her tone of horror did not seem to affect Nicodemus in the least degree.

"Well, now, Miss Eldridge, there's a man over here to Norwich has made his fortin' out of a lottery. Give ten dollars for a ticket and drew fifteen thousand dollars in cash. I tell you Norwich is lively over it! Jim Shattuck did cobblin' by odd jobs. Don't s'pose he's known half the time where he was goin' to git the next meal of victuals. He found somebody's purse and got ten dollars reward for it. He hadn't a suit of clothes to his back, but he bought the lottery ticket; had sense enough to know that his tarlent was luck, you see."

Miss Eldridge, actuated by a stern sense of duty, delivered a long moral and religious discourse upon the sin of gambling, to which Nicodemus listened with rapt attention, and remarked calmly, when she had finished:

"Yes, there is them that thinks lotteries is sinful, but it kind of seems to me that when a man's got a tarlent that way, it's accordin' to scripter for him to use it."

Miss Eldridge sighed heavily, and abandoned her attempt. Clearly Nicodemus had not a "tarlent" for morality.

By this time they had reached the one hotel which Norwich boasted, and Miss Eldridge had the landlord summoned to the carriage.

"Have you a gentleman here who is very ill?" she asked him.

"The feller that got hurt is here," said the landlord. "Got thrown off the train. Caught his boot-heel somehow, and hit his head on a rock. He don't seem to know much of anything yet, but the doctor says he's likely to get well if he has careful nursing. I got old Mrs Plummer to take care of him. She used to be a first rate nurse, but she's gettin' old."

"Do you know what his name is?" asked Miss Eldridge.

"No, we can't seem to find out. He don't know enough to tell, and there was nothing about him to give us any clew except the initials J. L. C. on his pocket-book."

"J. L. C. It was probably John," thought Miss Eldridge. The telegram had said ill, and had not said anything about an accident, but messages were arranged with a view to employing the fewest words possible, and the man was certainly ill at present.

"Is there any other man in Norwich lying very ill?" said Miss Eldridge, who liked to be sure.

"Not that I know of. Norwich is a terrible healthy place. Nobody pindlin' here, but the doctors, as a general thing," said the landlord, facetiously.

"Then I think this gentleman who has been injured is a friend of my brother," said Miss Eldridge; "and we would like to do all that we can for him."

"I'm sure I'm glad, ma'am. He needs friends," said the landlord, brightening in a manner that might have suggested to a cynical mind relief concerning his prospects of having the stranger's bill paid. "Mr. —— What did you say his name was, Miss Eldridge?"

"I didn't say," said Miss Eldridge, curtly. Then her gentle soul reproaching her, she hastened to add, with a rising color, "I really don't know anything but his first name. My brother has not seen him—at least, he thinks not—for a long time."

It was awkward and embarrassing even where the landlord was concerned; what it would be with the stranger himself Miss Eldridge, with her small knowledge of the world, trembled to think.

"The doctor said he must be kept perfectly quiet, but he don't seem to notice anything, anyway," said the landlord, ushering Miss Eldridge into the sick-room, and entering after her, on tiptoe.

With her first glance at the figure on the bed Miss Eldridge's doubts and embarrassment all vanished. It looked so white and hushed, so far removed from all petty jars and discords, and, as she was afterward heard to say, "The man had such a fine and noble face, one was so moved to sympathy one could think of nothing else." He was a young man, under thirty, and of a refined and high-bred type.

Who and what could he be? Miss Eldridge wished that her brother could have remembered. Probably the son of one of his old friends. But that mattered little. The thing to be done was to save him. Only tenderest care and attention would do that. Miss Eldridge had not been devoted to the suffering of Greenvale for twenty years not to be experienced in such signs of danger as were to be seen in this face. She was at heart a Sister Dora, and she felt deeply grateful to the Providence that had brought her to his bedside. From the moment when the young man opened his eyes, and looked at her, without consciousness, but with—or so she fancied—an expression of appeal, Miss Eldridge was resolved that she would save his life if utter devotion could achieve that end. She would have done as much, undoubtedly, if he had been the most repulsive and degraded of human creatures, but it is doubtful whether she would have felt the same zeal.

"A man with that face must lead a noble life, and be of use to humanity," she said to herself.

She cast a glance at the nurse, a torpid-looking old woman, dozing in her chair by the window, and went down-stairs with a decided step.

At the door the landlord and Nicodemus were talking together.

"You don't say so, now? If that ain't a streak of luck that I should kind of get mixed up with him so!" Nicodemus exclaimed.

"But he ain't much better than a dead man," said the landlord.

"You'd better believe he'll come round lively enough when Miss Eldridge takes hold of him. They always do. Nobody ever thinks of dyin' with her a-doctorin' of 'em. Folks in this world can be ginerally divided into them that fetches things to pass, and then that don't. Miss Eldridge, she's one of them that does. If ever you hear of me joinin' the church 't won't be Parson Godfrey's doin's, not by a long chalk—he gives me the fust idea I ever got from him in my life last Sunday, and that wa'n't exactly what you could call sperrituoal—it'll be Miss Eldridge's. Die? Don't you believe it! He'll be able to talk business inside of a fortnight."

Only the last few words of this discourse came to Miss Eldridge's ears, and that made so little impression that she did not think of it again until weeks afterward.

"I shall stay here," she said to Nicodemus; "and I will give you a list of things that I want sent over. I shall keep Phyllis with me for the present."

The latter point Miss Eldridge had carefully considered, as she came down stairs. She shrank from staying there alone, and certainly it would not be exposing Phyllis to any danger to keep her. Nothing could be less like a ravening wolf than this young man in his present state.

So Miss Eldridge and her niece established themselves in the Norwich hotel, and devoted themselves to nursing back to conscious life and health this stranger of whom they knew nothing except that his name was John and that he was in some way connected with some mysterious old friend of the squire.

For more than a week the issue was doubtful. The patient was delirious, and in a high fever. But one morning, after the first long and refreshing sleep he had had, he looked calmly up into Phyllis's face, as she stood fanning him, and said, interrogatingly:

"You are an angel?"

"O, dear no," said Phyllis, blushing and dimpling.

Owing to Miss Eldridge's vigilance nobody had ever said that to her before.

It was a striking fact that, although she blushed and dimpled, and said "O, dear no," Miss Phyllis regarded the remark as a strong proof of returning intelligence, and, strange to say, she did not repeat it to her aunt.

And, apparently, she was right, for, from that time, he began to mend rapidly, and soon the day came for which Miss Eldridge had longed—he was able to be moved to the squire's house at Greenvale. The hotel at Norwich was a comfortless and noisy abode. Miss Eldridge felt that the quiet and seclusion of Greenvale would do her patient more good than anything else could.

The mystery concerning him had not been solved. He had asked where he was, had remembered the accident that had befallen him, and had inquired who was taking care of him; but Miss Eldridge had bidden him not to talk or try to think, and he had obeyed with the docility that comes of physical weakness.

It was not until he was comfortably settled in the squire's house, and had recovered from the fatigue of the journey, that Miss Eldridge would answer his questions as to the reason of her seeking him, and showing him such kindness.

The squire, who was confident that if his memory for names had failed, his memory for faces had not, declared that he had never seen the young man before, and he was so puzzled about the matter that he gave Miss Eldridge no peace until she told the young man of the telegram.

"I am certainly John, but who R. Mason is I do not know, nor how anybody at a distance could possibly know what had happened to me. I am really afraid that I am an impostor. I have become possessed of your care and kindness by false pretences. Let me make all the amends in my power by telling you at once who I am."

"It does not matter in the least. We are more glad to be able to help a stranger," said Miss Eldridge hastily, her tender heart sorely troubled by the young man's look of distress. "You really must not talk about it at all until you are stronger."

Several times in the course of the next week the young man reverted to the topic; but always to be checked by Miss Eldridge. It wounded her sense of delicacy that he should feel obliged to give an account of himself, and, for herself, she was quite willing to take him upon trust. Moreover, practical and prim spinster as she was, she enjoyed the little touch of mystery. She did not acknowledge that to herself, but it had its effect.

She did not take as good care of Phyllis as she ought to have done; she acknowledged that afterward with deep penitence. Phyllis read and sang to him through the long days of his convalescence. Miss Eldridge or the nurse was always present, and there was very little talking. He was a remarkably reserved and quiet young man. Miss Eldridge could not see that it made any difference to him whether Phyllis or she was his entertainer. And as for Phyllis, she seemed to regard it as rather a bore to devote herself to him.

One day Miss Eldridge suddenly awoke to the fact that she had been vaguely wishing it were otherwise! Was she really so attracted by this utter stranger that she would be willing that Phyllis should fall in love with him? Miss Eldridge took herself sternly to task for such an unprincipled emotion. And yet he did not seem altogether unlike a minister. She resolved she would no longer blind herself to her duty. The young man should be allowed, encouraged, to give an account of himself. Miss Eldridge went out to walk to calm her perturbed mind and reflect upon the situation, when she encountered Nicodemus. Twice already had Nicodemus expressed an earnest desire to have an interview with the invalid. Miss Eldridge had set it down as that curiosity to which the rural mind in general, and Nicodemus' in particular, was prone, but to-day Nicodemus was so persistent that it struck her as improbable that his motive could be merely curiosity.

"What do you want to see Mr. Conroy for, Nicodemus?" she said.

"Well, you see, ma'am, it's a little matter of business," said Nicodemus, looking downcast but determined. "There's something in his line that I want to buy."

"What is his line?" was on Miss Eldridge's surprised tongue, but she checked its utterance. What she would not hear from her patient himself she could not allow Nicodemus to tell her.

"It's something that I suppose you wouldn't approve of, though you don't seem to think there's nothin' out of the way about him. I want to find out all about that lottery that he's runnin', and, if it seems all fair and square as they say it is, I want to buy a ticket."

"Nicodemus, what are you talking about?" exclaimed Miss Eldridge, in horrified accents.

"Didn't you know, now, that he was a lottery feller? That's what the landlord over to Norwich said, that he didn't believe you knew it, for anybody would most as quick take him for a parson by his looks, but I told him you wa'n't one that went to work with your eyes shet, commonly. I kind of wonder that he didn't speak out, and tell his business, but mebbe he got an inklin' that you didn't set much by lotteries. Ever sence I heard Parson Godfrey's sermon about the one tarlent I've been makin' up my mind to buy a lottery ticket, and it does seem to me real kind of providential that he should be hove off them cars right in my way, so to speak, for he can tell me all about it, and they do say the International Colossal Gift Enterprise, as he calls it, is all square. That sounds real genteel and moral now, jest as he looks, don't it. There's church members over to Norwich has got tickets in it. They say he's got a real persuadin' manner."

No more did Miss Eldridge wait to hear. With head erect, and a mien that boded ill to evil doers, she was marching toward the house.

She had been imposed upon! The stranger whom she had watched and tended and brought back from the gates of death was a wicked man, guilty of the immorality which she despised almost more than any other. She had been basely deceived! And yet, had he not tried to tell her "all about himself," as he expressed it, more than once, and she had stopped him? What sentimental folly that had been! Miss Eldridge's anger was transferred from the young man to herself, as she reflected. And Phyllis! How culpable had been her carelessness in that respect! What was to be done? The invalid was not yet able to leave his room. She could scarcely turn him away. The squire's ideas of hospitality would not have permitted that, if he had proved to be an escaped burglar. But Phyllis must go at once! Miss Eldridge went in search of her.

"Phyllis, I think that this would be a good time for you to visit Cousin Cornelia. She is very lonely, and the change might do you good," she said.

"I don't need to have any good done me. I am very well," said Phyllis, with a little pout.

Cousin Cornelia was elderly, an invalid, and prim; so prim that Phyllis was wont to declare that Aunt Hester in comparison with her was "frisky."

"We may have guests later. There is nothing to keep you at home now," pursued Miss Eldridge.

"N—no," faltered Phyllis.

"You had better go on the early train to-morrow, and stay a week," said Miss Eldridge, in a tone which Phyllis understood as meaning that from that decision there was no appeal.

Phyllis devoted herself to preparations for her journey for the rest of the day, and Miss Eldridge was not obliged, as she had feared, to resort to manœuvring to keep her away from the dangerous society of the invalid—the "lottery feller!"

But in the evening Phyllis suddenly turned upon her aunt, with a little air of defiance, and announced that she must go and bid good-bye to Mr. Conroy, since she was to go away so early in the morning.

Miss Eldridge, who had foreseen this contingency, thought it was wiser to yield than to resist, and forced herself to say "O, yes," in a calm and matter-of-course way.

But she followed Phyllis up-stairs in two minutes. The door of the invalid's room was ajar, and out to Miss Eldridge's ears there floated a most alarming sound. Did some one say, in a very low tone, with a pleading accent, "Phyllis!" or had the wind played her a trick? It must have been the wind, for, when she went in, there sat the nurse bolt upright and attentive, not napping as was her wont, and Phyllis was coming out, looking very calm and demure; and she could not have been in the room more than two minutes.

Nevertheless, Miss Eldridge heaved a deep sigh of relief when Phyllis was fairly off the next morning.

It happened that the first remark which her patient made to her that morning was that it was time for him to go. He was well enough now to be moved without danger, and he need no longer trespass on her kindness.

Miss Eldridge made no remonstrance whatever. Her manner had become suddenly cold and repellent in the extreme. Inwardly she was struggling with the doubt whether it was her duty to labor with the young man upon the sinfulness of his course of life, or whether delicacy forbade her to do so, since he was her guest, and under great obligations to her. She satisfied her conscience by the severe manner until just as he was leaving—looking, Miss Eldridge thought, sufficiently guilty and embarrassed to prove that he was not utterly hardened—she put into his hand a little tract entitled "The Way of the Transgressor," and when he diffidently expressed the hope that he might some time be able to make some return for her kindness, she replied earnestly:

"You can repay me, Mr. Conroy, by turning from your immoral way of life, by which you are leading others to ruin."

Then she turned away, and closed the door. The dark flush that rose to the young man's brow convinced her that he was not without shame, and she cherished some hope that her words might not be wholly without effect.

At all events she had done her duty, and he was gone; only to the next village, where he had secured comfortable quarters, but he would never venture to trouble them again, and Phyllis might safely come home. The squire, still confined to the house by a sprained ankle, troubled himself very little about the matter, though still puzzled over the telegram, and declared that he would yet find out what it meant.

Phyllis seemed to find her stay with Cousin Cornelia more tolerable than usual for she remained three weeks, and when she came home she had apparently forgotten all about Mr. Conroy.

On a Sunday morning, about a week after Phyllis' return, Miss Eldridge announced, at the breakfast table, her intention of driving to Fernivale, an adjoining town, to church. She had heard that a nephew of Reverend John Lyman, who had preached at Fernivale thirty years before, was to occupy the pulpit. Reverend John Lyman was the lover of Miss Eldridge's youth. She could not now mention his name without a little flutter, and a fleeting blush, although he had married another woman, and had been dead for twenty years.

Phyllis, with a queer little smile dimpling about her mouth, said she wanted to go too, and Nicodemus, who had become strangely shy and quiet in Miss Eldridge's presence, drove them.

It was a Sunday morning very like the one on which they had driven to Norwich, and they all thought of it, but even Nicodemus the garrulous did not speak of it.

Miss Eldridge walked into church with downcast eyes and great primness, but when she sat down in the pew, and raised her eyes to the pulpit, she started violently; anybody less dignified than Miss Eldridge might be said to have jumped. Looking calmly down at her from the pulpit, in a clergyman's black gown, stood her late guest and patient, "the lottery feller!"

If Miss Eldridge had not all her lifetime bade defiance to nerves she would have fainted at the shock. She cast a hurried glance at Phyllis. That young woman looked perfectly demure and unmoved, except for a queer little dimpling about her mouth, and a heightened color.

Miss Eldridge could not listen to the sermon. That dreadful title of the tract she had given him—"The Way of the Transgressor"—and the still more dreadful parting words which she had addressed to him, rang in her ears!

She hurried out as soon as the service was over.

"Aunt Hester, don't you think he might expect us to—to stop, and speak to him?" faltered Phyllis, when they were in the carriage.

"I couldn't, Phyllis! I made a great mistake. I wronged him very much. I don't know whether he would speak to me."

"O, yes, indeed he would. He knows all about it," cried Phyllis, eagerly.

"Knows all about it?" gasped Miss Eldridge.

"Yes, I told him. I knew you would want me to, he felt so dreadfully; and—and—he and I are—are—if you and papa are willing"——

"Phyllis Eldridge, how did this state of affairs come about?" demanded Miss Eldridge.

"He never said a word to me while he was at our house, Aunt Hester, or only just one word!"

"Ah! it wasn't the wind that whispered 'Phyllis,'" thought Miss Eldridge.

"But he felt so badly about your changed manner that he wrote to me to ask what it meant. I couldn't tell him, and so he wrote again and again! When I came home Nicodemus told me you thought he was the agent of a lottery, and of course I had to write to tell him!"

Miss Eldridge tried to be severe. Phyllis had certainly behaved most improperly, but the young man was a minister, and he was John Lyman's nephew. Her gratification at the state of affairs was too great to be concealed. But with Nicodemus it was easy to be severe.

"How did it happen that you told me such a story?" she asked him.

"Well, you see they was expectin' the lottery feller over to Norwich, and when the young man came along they all run of an idea that't was him. Never found out that 'twa'n't till the lottery feller himself turned up about ten days ago."

"Why didn't you tell me of your mistake then?" asked Miss Eldridge, sternly.

"Well, I thought mebbe 'twas best to let bygones be bygones, seein' I heard he was a parson, and the lottery fellow turned out a cheat, and cleared out with my money. I ha'n't felt much like talkin' about it. But there, I never expected to get any good out of Parson Godfrey, and I ha'n't!"

"Papa has unraveled the mystery of the telegram. He told me this morning," said Phyllis, "it was intended for 'John Eldridge, Greenville, Conn.,' instead of Mass. It was a mistake of the telegraph operator. What strange happenings there have been."

"Happenings are the Lord's plans. I hope He'll never allow me to interfere with them any more than He has now!" said Miss Eldridge fervently.—*Elizabeth Bigelow, in Ballou's Monthly.*

Cost of Selling State Secrets in Germany.

The remarkable trial which has been in progress for several days at Leipsic before the Supreme Court of the German Empire had ended in the manner at which our Berlin correspondent hinted. Both of the prisoners have been found guilty. Captain Hentsch, as the chief criminal, has been sentenced to nine years' penal servitude; Kraszewski, as second in guilt, is to be confined for three years and a half in a fortress. The trial is worth the while studying, if only for the side light which it throws upon the relations between Germany and some of her neighbors. The offense for which Hentsch and Kraszewski are to suffer is that they sold to foreign governments military secrets which, in the interest of the German Empire, ought not to have been disclosed. Perhaps every complete criminal code ought to provide for this offense; but it is, in all probability, unknown to our law. Were a clerk from our war office to divulge military secrets he would escape severe punishment; his offense would entail at most expulsion, unless he were foolish enough to purloin some document and lay himself open to the charge of theft. but in legislating for a military State, such as Germany, a different course has been taken. The German criminal code contains minute and stringent provisions as to the offense of giving in time of war information relating to fortresses, movements of troops or plans of campaigns. It also makes it an offense to communicate, even in time of peace, matters which it is for the interest of the empire should not be divulged to a foreign power. This prohibition is elastic and comprehensive. It enabled Prince Bismarck to ruin Count Arnim on the ground that in his pamphlet, "Pro Nihily," he published secrets officially intrusted to him; and it has been brought to bear with equal success against Captain Hentsch and Kraszewski. That they had infringed this provision of the criminal code admitted of little doubt. The former had exceptional opportunities for prying into the secrets of the grand general staff. Once an officer in the Prussian army, and afterwards employed in the telegraph office at Berlin, he was well acquainted with officers of high rank in the army, and he possessed considerable reputation as a writer on military subjects. Kraszewski, the other prisoner, is a man of mark. He would be remarkable in the history of literature if only because he had written some 300 volumes, including about 200 novels. A fertile and successful novelist, poet, historian and critic, he had endeared himself to all Poles by his long continued services to their national literature; and they will learn with deep regret that he is convicted of playing a part in the intrigue which has been the subject of investigation before the supreme court. The counsel for the prosecution did not distinctly explain what motives had led a man of letters, advanced in years, whose interest in politics had been chiefly platonic, to engage in the hazardous game of the conspirators; but the evidence was clear as to his guilt.—*London Times.*

—Paul Mayo, of Lausanne, Switzerland, has discovered that the wings of the common fly vibrate at the rate of 330 strokes per second, while the musquito makes his wings go at the rate of 2,000 strokes per second.

—A San Francisco paper says there are about 250 lepers in that city, and the number is increasing. It also declares that San Francisco has become the dumping ground for Asiatic lepers.

Bird Maidens.

The pretty superstition which abounds in peri fairy mythology that at certain times fairies put off their vesture and change their forms to those of swans, doves or other birds, is very probably one of those "primitive myths, the common heritage of the whole Aryan race," although it is found current in nearly all parts of the world. The forms which these beautiful imaginary beings assume are, of course, different in different countries. In the Faro Islands, says Thorpe, in his "Northern Mythology," "the superstition is current that the seal casts off its skin every night, assumes the human form, and dances and amuses itself like a human being until it resumes its skin and again becomes a seal. It once happened that a man passing during one of these transformations and seeing the skin took possession of it, when the seal, which was a female, not finding her skin to creep into, was obliged to continue in a human form, and being a comely person, the man made her his wife, had several children by her, and they lived happily together until, after a lapse of several years, she chanced to find her hidden skin, which she could not refrain from creeping into, and so became a seal again." A similar notion prevailed among the people of Shetland regarding mermaids, who, it seems, from Hibbert, are not naturally "flesh fishified" at their lower extremities, but resemble human beings, only far more beautiful, and dwell in the depth of the ocean in halls of pearl and coral. "When they wish to visit the upper world they put on the ham or garb of some fish, but woe to those who lose their ham, for then are all hopes of return annihilated, and they must stay where they are. * * * It has happened that earthly men have married mermaids, have taken possession of their ham, and thus got them into their power."* It is the same story everywhere: in a Russian folk tale the hero discovers on the sea shore twelve birds, which turn into beautiful maidens; he steals the shift of the eldest and marries her. According to the Persian romance of Hasan Banoo and Bahram Ghoor (of the Wild Ass), the royal hero obtains his fairy bride in the same manner. King Bahram, having been carried away by the Div Sefid, or White Demon, to the mountains of Kaf, which are the boundaries of the world, he is left in a magnificent palace, and after examining all its wonders his senses are overcome by slumber.

"And while sleep possessed him, the fluttering of flying doves sounded in his ears, and, opening his eyes, he saw four doves sitting on a dome of gold, each of them as large as sheep and in color like green emeralds; and the King was astonished at the sight of them. The doves flew off and lighted on the edge of the lake, and out of every dove came a peri, at whose beauty the reason was confused; and they put off their dress on the banks of the lake. Now, there was one of these young beauties fair as the child of a houri, and when the King fell upon her beauty he loved and yearned toward her with a thousand hearts; he fainted at the sight of her grace and loveliness. After some time he came again to himself and saw that they had put down their dress on the banks of the lake, and were swimming and disporting themselves therein. Now the King had heard from the White Div that if a portion of the garment on the body of a peri be in the power of any one, she cannot escape from his power. Wherefore, as softly as he could, he stole toward the dress of the youngest peri, and when he had possessed himself of it he hid himself in a cluster of roses. The fairies went on with their sport in the water till the youngest peri said to the others: 'They say the Div Sefid has brought here a King of the race of men, and that for grace and beauty his like was never seen among mankind; let us assume our dove form again, when we go out of the water, and go and look on him from a distance.' Then said another: 'It is even as thou sayest; there is not his like among the sons of men. Now we are young, and God forbid the King's heart should incline to one of us and we be unable to return his affection.' The youngest sister said: 'Sister, thou hast spoken rightly, and I myself have had a very troubled dream concerning him.' 'But,' said the others again, 'when we are disguised in the form of doves he may think what he pleases.' So they all three came out of the water and sat in the same tree where they had before. But the youngest missed her dress, and she drew a cold sigh and cried: 'Ah, sisters, did I not tell you I had a troubled dream? See, here is the meaning of my dream.' Then they all took flight and left her with a troubled heart and weeping eyes. The King, seeing this, came from the hiding place he had chosen and made his salaam to her, and she, beholding the beauty of King Bahram, inclined towards him and loved his loveliness with a hundred thousand hearts." The Prince and the peri are duly married, and afterward borne by afrits to the capital of Persia.

In the "Thousand and One Nights," Hasan of Basra discovers ten beautiful birds alight on the shore of a lake, and, having divested themselves of their plumage, plunge into the water as women. They are the daughters of a powerful genie. Hasan contrives to steal the feathers of the youngest and prettiest of the damsels, and having married her takes her to his own country. Several years afterwards she discovered where he had concealed her feathers, and during his absence she puts them on and escapes to the land of the genii.

The notion of bird maidens is very common in Indian fictions. One example will be sufficient. According to the Santhali folkrale of Toria the Goatherd, the lovely daughters of the Sun were wont to bathe in a river, on the banks of which Toria fed his goats. Toria, having often beheld them swimming in the water, fell in love with one of them, and, having taken possession of her upper garment, she had no alternative but to follow him to his house and become his wife.

Stealing the clothes of human damsels while bathing is an ancient stratagem, and was, doubtless, often practiced in our own country in more primitive times. In the Indian work entitled "Press Sagur," we read that Sir Khrisnu (who is represented as an incarnation of Vishnu) purloined the garments of a party of pretty cowherdesses, who were bathing in the River Arghun, and carried them to the top of a kunduna tree. When the damsels discovered their loss, they set up loud lamentations, and, espying Krishnu in his hiding place, earnestly begged him to restore their clothes, which he refused to do except upon the condition that they should come out of the water one by one and claim their garments. He chooses a wife from among them. A similar trick is recorded of the pre-Islamite Arabian poet, Prince Imriolkias, according to the notice prefixed to Sir William Jones' translations of his famous "Moalaka (or prize poem,) so called because it had the honor of being suspended in the Temple at Mecca.

*In the Nibelungenlied, Sir Hagan seeing a bevy of mermaids ("wise women") disporting in the waters of the Danube, seizes upon their raiment, in order to compel them to disclose his fate and that of his companions. "The raiment of the mermaids," remarked Lettsom, the translator, in a note, "seems to have been the swan raiment worn by the Valkyries, or Choosers of the Slain, which enables its wearers to assume the shape of swans, or at least to fly away. Hagan had therefore good ground to begin with laying hands on the water nymphs." * * * In the traditions respecting Voeund, Wieland or Wayland Smith, that hero captures a wife by a similar stratagem."—*Glasgow Herald.*

FARM AND FIRESIDE.

—Examine your bushes for insects, and endeavor to destroy as many of them as possible.

—Ventilation, and plenty of it at this season is very essential, not only in the stables, but also in the barn.

—Continue to improve your stock, make it better every year, and ten to one your soil will follow suit.—*Chicago Journal.*

—Color taken out of dark colored goods with acid may be restored by the application of liquid ammonia.—*Cleveland Leader.*

—Bad cookery in short is working as much mischief as bad whisky, and is doing more to perpetuate the use of the latter than is generally supposed.—*Toronto Globe.*

—Giving salt to animals is often neglected, and yet it is as important as watering or feeding, for upon it depends the health and productive capacity of the stock.—*Boston Globe.*

—Vinegar pie: One egg, one heaping tablespoon of flour, one teacup of sugar; beat all well together, and add one tablespoon sharp vinegar, and one teacup of cold water; flavor with nutmeg and bake with two crusts.—*Troy Times.*

—The *Rural World* says that it is one of the few facts that are patent to all who know anything of the business that by the creamery system the hogs that may be raised from the skimmed milk, after the cream has paid a higher price than the butter made thereof, will pay all the expenses of a dairy farm save only the feed.

—Half a dollar in the value of each ton of hay made can be easily made or lost by the difference in the time of cutting and the manner of curing. This may seem a small amount to the individual farmer, but in the aggregate it makes a difference of $18,000,000 for or against the farmers, the value of the hay crop being exceeded only by that of corn and wheat.—*Prairie Farmer.*

—Horns are weapons of offense; their absence denotes domesticity and docility; consequently thrift, productiveness and fertility. Their absence insures comfort and convenience in handling, yarding, stabling, feeding and shipping. Their absence insures against a large proportion of the casualties on a stock farm. This is the experience of nearly all who have handled polled cattle, and there are facts, to deny which is to call white black.—*Massachusetts Ploughman.*

—Delicious fritters may have stale bread for the foundation; if care is taken in removing any or all of the crust that is dark brown fritters will be light colored and very inviting in appearance. Eggs are a good addition in the proportion of four eggs to one quart of sweet milk; a saltspoonful of salt, and four or five slices of bread are also required. The bread should be soaking in the milk for two hours. It can be broken into small bits, and then it will not be lumpy.—*N. Y. Post.*

—Nothing is more distressing to a sick person, who is not quite ill enough to fill up all worldly thoughts, than to have the doctor at his morning call find the room disarranged and the patient in a night dress, not fresh and neat in appearance. It should be the first care of the one in charge of the house to see that this state of things shall not exist. As long as the room must be attended to at some time during the day, why not do it when the greatest amount of comfort would result from it?—*Detroit Post.*

Varieties of Food for Stock.

The majority of farmers are not familiar with the terms now used to classify the different qualities of food for stock, for they do not take kindly to such expressions as "albuminoids," "carbo hydrates," etc. Yet, after all, the modes of expression are simple and embody nearly all the constituent elements that enter into foods grown upon the farm for stock feeding. Some foods are fat producing, such as corn, while others promote the development of muscle, bone and nerves, such as clover. All foods are classified under appropriate heads, each ranking in proportion to its nitrogen, carbon and mineral ash. Thus, in order to arrange together those foods that are nitrogenous or muscle-producing, the term "albuminoids" is employed because the nitrogen is nearly always in combination in the shape of albumen. The "carbo-hydrates," or heat producing substances are those rich in starch and sugar, and as starch and sugar both contain a large proportion of carbon, and also large quantities of oxygen and hydrogen (water), the term applied illustrates the value of the food as well as its composition. The base of all the nitrogenous foods is protein. When we know that certain foods contain fibrin, gelatin, albumen or casein, which are found in all animal and vegetable organizations, the fact that nitrogen is present is made plain, because that element is necessary in such substances; and when we understand that foods contain starch, gum, sugar and oils, it is apparent that they must of necessity contain carbon.

In feeding to animals the farmer, by his knowledge of the difference between flesh-forming foods and those that form fat, is enabled to so combine the different foods as to provide for all their wants. Knowing that the "albuminoids" or nitrogenous foods produce muscle (lean meat) and milk, in order to allow for heat and fat he must balance the foods for the purpose of avoiding too much of the one kind and not enough of the other. On an average the proportion of nitrogenous food to the carbonaceous, is as one to six; or rather he should add six times as much of the carbonaceous as he does of the nitrogenous. The conditions, however affect the proportions; for if an animal is highly exercised, as is the case with working horses, the nitrogen may be increased and the carbon diminished; but if the weather is very cold, the proportion of carbonaceous matter, on the contrary, should be increased. By a knowledge of the composition of different foods, the farmer who feeds for milk will regulate the material allowed to his animals according to its quality and not quantity, as is frequently the case. In fattening his animals he will use the fat-forming foods, allowing only so much nitrogenous matter as may be necessary for the existence of the animal.

It is also economical to feed only as much as may be required. If too much carbonaceous material be fed to an animal the excess will be a loss, for the reason that the animal will assimilate and appropriate only the actual amount necessary for the purposes required by the system; and even when the farmer feeds liberally of carbonaceous material he will starve his animals if they do not receive nitrogenous food. Hence we often notice that on some farms where the stock is liberally provided with certain kinds of food that the animals are not thrifty, the young ones do not grow, and the farmer is annoyed at the unsatisfactory results of what he supposes is good management, when the cause is a lack of perhaps only a single element, which, in connection with a less quantity of the kind of food given, would produce a radical change.

It is important then, in order to derive the best results from feeding animals, that the farmer thoroughly understand the quality of the material used. Its feeding value depends upon the proportion of those elements best adapted to the purposes in view, and unless a perfect knowledge of the composition of feeding stuffs is gained by the farmer he will feed at a loss and derive but little benefit from his stock.

—*Farm, Field and Fireside.*

The British Army.

The British army just now closely resembles that commanded by the illustrious Bombastes Furioso; it grows more and more like a skeleton day by day. Its sources of supply from causes still somewhat obscure are all but closed. Recruiting is nearly at a standstill. Every regiment on the regular establishment is below its strength. As for the militia, taking it in the aggregate, it is already short some 30,000 men, and the deficit is daily increasing. —*Exchange.*

—Japan has at present 155 miles of railway, of which 117 miles belong to the government.

For Half a Life-time.

Mrs. John Gemmell, Milroy, Miflin Co., Pa., in the Spring of 1864 injured her spine and partial paralysis ensued. For nearly twenty years she was unable to walk. In the Spring of 1883, she was advised to use St. Jacobs Oil, the great conqueror of pain. The first application gave instantaneous relief. Before the second bottle was exhausted she was able to walk and is cured.

THE man who called another a dog, apologized by saying he did not do it purposely.—*Gouverneur Herald.*

CURE OF PAIN IN BACK AND STIFF NECK.

104 ADELPHI STREET, BROOKLYN, N. Y., February 20, 1884.

I have had pain in my back for years and it troubled me night and day. I could get no relief, not even for an hour. At last, hearing so much of ALLCOCK'S PLASTERS, I tried two. In three hours the pain began to decrease; in twelve hours I was entirely relieved. I continued wearing the Plasters a week, and was entirely cured. I also used them for a stiff neck, which ALLCOCK'S PLASTERS cured in four hours.

N. A. MULLAY.

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This is to certify that I have been troubled with lumbago for a long time, and have tried everything, and could not get relief until I used ALLCOCK'S POROUS PLASTERS.

I have also used BRANDRETH'S PILLS in my family for the last five years for biliousness, and would have no other, as they give me the best satisfaction.

M. VREELAND.

AFTER all, the bean pole is more useful to this country than the North Pole.—*Philadelphia Chronicle.*

LADIES of all ages who suffer from loss of appetite, from imperfect digestion, low spirits and nervous debility, may have health renewed and life extended by the use of Mrs. Lydia E. Pinkham's remedies for all complaints specially incident to the female constitution. We not only have a living faith in Mrs. Pinkham, but we are assured that her remedies are at once most agreeable and efficacious.

"I DO business on a large scale," said the public weigher, "but I don't give it a weigh."—*Boston Star.*

ERYSIPELAS, Ringworm, Carbuncles, Boils and Pimples cured with Papillon Skin Cure. Try it.

"OUT on the fly!" is now the cry of the infuriated bald-headed citizen.—*Lowell Citizen.*

Farmers' Folly.

Some farmers adhere, even against the full light of fact and discovery, to the old fashioned folly of coloring butter with carrots, annatto, and inferior substances, notwithstanding the splendid record made by the Improved Butter Color, prepared by Wells, Richardson & Co., Burlington, Vt. At scores of the *best* agricultural Fairs it has received the highest award over all competitors.

"SOLED again," remarked the cobbler, as he repaired an old pair of boots.—*Boston Post.*

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And of greater value than fine gold is a great tonic and renovator like Kidney-Wort. It expels all poisonous humors from the blood, tones up the system and by acting directly on the most important organs of the body stimulates them to healthy action and restores health. It has effected many marvelous cures and for all Kidney diseases and other kindred troubles it is an invaluable remedy.

IF a dog knows a good thing when he sees it, will he seize it when he nose it?—*Portland Transcript.*

"$10,000 would not purchase from me what Swift's Specific has done for me. It cured me of Rheumatism caused by malaria."
ARCHIE THOMAS, Springfield, Tenn.

GETTING sun-struck is a rather summary fashion of disposing of a man.—*Merchant Traveler.*

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A WARM day for the ladies—Fry day.—*N. Y. Mail.*

IF your breath is offensive, your nostrils fetid and filled with putrid matter, and you are rapidly becoming consumptive, use Papillon Catarrh Cure; you will be purified and permanently cured.

A BUSINESS that is run into the ground—Artesian well boring.—*N. Y. Journal.*

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FLIRTING on pleasure-yachts is a marry-time custom.—*Philadelphia Call.*

PISO'S CURE for Consumption is not only pleasant to take, but it is sure to cure.

A SIGN of good breeding—Getting the prize in a dog-show.—*Philadelphia Call.*

IF afflicted with Sore Eyes, use Dr. Isaac Thompson's Eye Water. Druggists sell it. 25c.

IT is still a question of considerable doubt which a woman can do best—drive a hen or talk politics.

IT is said that glue is used in the cheaper grades of ice-cream. That is ice-cream "with a stick in it."

NO MATTER if the piano is a grand or upright, it sometimes furnishes some downright bad music.

THE vice that never sticks to young people, though they are more exposed to it than any other—Advice.—*The Judge.*

A VICTIM of chicken-stealing says that he is a good deal like a base-ball player because he is frequently out on a fowl.

CONTEMPT of court—The small boy who hangs around the parlor and makes faces at his big sister's beau.—*N. O. City Item.*

A SENSIBLE shoemaker will never offend his milkman by presenting him with a pair of pumps.

A YOUNG lady up town has hair so long that it sweeps the floor, but the young lady is not at all like her hair.—*Merchant Traveler.*

AS A rule the eye is no more a criterion of character than a single hair is of the strength of the butter in which it is found. —*N. Y. Journal.*

WE heard of a man the other day who was said to be mean enough to steal a coat of paint. But he can't equal the party who tried to steal a dog's pants.—*Oil City Derrick.* Or a law suit.—*Boston Post.*

THE woman of the period don't mind getting late to an express train, but it is when the mail train leaves her that she wails.—*The Hatchet.*

A NEW ENGLAND poet has written a bird poem entitled "Chirrup? Chirrup!" yet he would get mad if any one should call him a chirrup-odist.—*Philadelphia Call.*

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