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Select Miscellany.

CHAMBER SCENE.

She rose from her untroubled sleep
And put away her soft brown hair,
And in tones as low and deep
As love's first whisper, breath'd a prayer
Her snow-white hands together pressed,
Her blue eyes sheltered in the lid;
And from her long and flowing dress
Escaped a bare and slender foot,
Whose shape upon the earth did press
Like a new snowflake white and mute,
And there from slumber pure and warm,
Like a young spirit fresh from heaven,
She bowed her slight and graceful form
And humbly prayed to be forgiven.

O God! if souls unsoiled as these
Need daily mercy from Thy throne—
If she upon her bended knees,
Our loveliest and our purest one—
She, with a face so clear and bright
We deem her some stray child of light—
If she, with those soft eyes of tears,
Day after day in her first years,
Must kneel and pray for grace from Thee,
What far, far deeper need have we?
How hardly, if she win not heaven,
Will our wild errors be forgiven?

THE FATAL GIFT.

BY WM. D. FOLLOCK.

Go back with me to the summer of '65.

It was the full tide, and the hour
midnight—a dark, cold night, moon-
less, but not clear, for myriad stars
glanced down upon the bay of San
Francisco in a soft, pale glow that, re-
flecting from the swelling waters,
caused a thin phosphorescent light,
rendering objects tolerably distinct.

Here, as I had often before, in re-
sponse to the promptings of a fancy
that led me to seek the solitude of the
night, alone, in sight of the dark wa-
ters I loved so well, I stood one night
upon the end of a pier that stretched
far out into the bay—the last and
loneliest of all that line the city front.

I was all alone. No sound but the
sigh of the wind, and the mournful
rise and fall of the tide upon the piles
beneath, and the dreary dripping of
the water as it fell away from the logs
at every receding swell.

Suddenly my ear detected another
yet familiar sound—steady yet stealth-
ily foot-falls close at hand. I turned
and beheld the figure of a woman
looking down in wrapt abstraction
into the water.

Startled at the possible errand of a
woman in that locality and at such an
hour, I cautiously gained my feet and
approached her. My presence was
not detected.

Glancing now furtively up and
down the pier (I stood behind her),
she hastily removed her shawl and
then her hat—both of which I per-
ceived, even in this uncertain light,
to be of rich material—dropped them
at her side, and, clasping her hands
over her eyes, made a rapid motion
forward and stood upon the very edge.
Her hands were then thrown wildly
up.

"Hold!" I said, grasping her by the
arm, "rash creature, what would you
do?"

She turned suddenly upon me, and,
grasping my wrists, held them as in
a grip of iron, while her luminous eyes,
burning with an intense light, yet ex-
hibiting no signs of surprise or fear,
looked dauntlessly into mine.

"Fool! what would you do? Be-
ware! Go; leave me. It is best," she
added in a fearful whisper, releasing
my hand and pushing me from her.

"By heavens, you shall not do this
thing!" I cried, springing again to-
ward her. But she waved me back
with a gesture so fierce and a presence
so haughty and imperious that I
paused in apprehension. I felt grow-
ing in my heart an interest for this
unknown being I could not repel. Al-
ready a fear grasped my mind that
she would accomplish her implied
purpose, and that I would be power-
less to prevent. An influence I could
not comprehend nor control prompted
me to say:

"I would save you."
A loud, wild laugh greeted this re-
mark; sharp and sudden it rang out,
and as suddenly ceased. Her form
quivered for an instant, wavered and
then sank slowly in a heap at my feet.
A strange look of terror came into
her face, and grasping my coat she
raised herself to her knees, while she
said hurriedly:

"Oh, sir, you know not what you
do. Go; leave me, ere yet you have
time—er it will be too late. It is
better for all—it is best for you."
"Who are you?" I asked, my inter-
est growing momentarily greater.

"No matter. It were death to know
—to know me."
"You have a home?" I pursued.

"None."
"A mother?"
"No."
Her manner had changed. She sat
now perfectly quiet and possessed,
with her face averted. In the interval
of silence that followed I had time to

look more closely at her. Her pres-
ence was one of high refinement; the
figure large, well rounded and appar-
ently superbly handsome. She was
dressed entirely in black, and around
her wrists were broad bands of velvet
and on a finger of her left hand which
rested in her lap glittered a solitary
diamond. My eye wandered to her
head. It was shapely and small, and
covered with a mass of black hair,
rolled up in coils. There was a nobles-
s about her that captivated me,
and without reason or apparent mo-
tive I had conceived for her a pas-
sion at once instantaneous and intense.
It was with a feeling of eager yet sup-
pressed emotion that I said: "Will
you come with me?"

"Turning her face slowly around
she gazed into my eyes steadfastly.
Then the stern features relaxed, the
small mouth radiated into a smile,
the eyes, large, lustrous black orbs,
twinkled and scintillated like stars;
the lips parted, disclosing small, white,
glittering teeth. In a low voice she
answered:

"Man is an unreasoning creature.
You know me not. I may be an angel
or a devil."

"Angel or devil!" I cried, velle-
mently, "I love you! What matters
Come!"

"It is destiny," she said, rising, re-
suming her hat and shawl, wrapping
the latter around her, throwing one
end over her shoulder, "are you cer-
tain of what you say?"

"Certain," I responded.

"Then lead the way!" She took
my arm, and together we walked back
over the pier into the city.

We were finally married. For the
better security of my "prize"—as I
loved to speak of her—I took a house
far out from the heart of the city. It
was a model home—thanks to my
ample means—and not a thing that
heart could wish for or eye covet, but
what I placed there.

A year passed in the quiet of repose
for we had no company, each day
binding more firmly the chain that
held me a willing slave to her side.
Beautiful and proudly glorious, she
was the embodiment of refined accom-
plishment, and my chief delight was
to sit, evening after evening, at her
side and listen to the uncompre-
hensible music of her voice in conver-
sation. I asked no questions, but little
by little I became conscious of a
knowledge of her past history—of a
little child deserted by unnatural pa-
rents, thrown on the charity of the
world; of a brief home at an orphan
asylum; of a rich but eccentric old man
who, attracted by her peculiar beauty,
took a fancy to and adopted her; of
years at school, and finally a brilliant
season in society in her Eastern home,
somewhere on the Delaware. Then her
adopted father came to California, and
for many years lived a secluded and
miserly life, allowing her no com-
pany nor to become acquainted with
any one, treating her, though kindly,
as a prisoner, till at last she grew des-
perate and determined to end her
miserable life.

I made no attempt to find this ad-
opted father. I did not want to see him,
and was secretly glad she had none to
claim her; no relatives. We were
very happy; at least she seemed to be
so, yet there were times when a sus-
picion flashed through my mind that
she was not so happy as she would
have me believe.

Subsequent inquiry proved my sus-
picion well grounded. Her spirits
were drooping she said, and she need-
ed company.

Therefore my little home was
never empty. A select few of my
friends I introduced to her, and these
brought others, till there was never an
evening that she had no company.

Some peculiar fascination made the
men her abject slaves and all women
her friends. But an eager glance of
her eye, and the object of her atten-
tion sprang to his feet to obey—to sus-
ticipate, if possible—her slightest wish;
and when, as sometimes happened,
two approached her at the same time,
the most extravagant scramble was
the result. I looked on these things
with indifference, proud of my wife,
and anticipating no harm.

Among the constant visitors were
two young men, cousins, the son and
nephew of a New Orleans banker, out
here in California on a pleasure trip,
and who came to me with letters from
a few of my old friends there.

To these Geraldine gave her espe-
cial attention, and, as I thought for
my sake, treated them with extrava-
gant kindness. And thus the time
slipped away for six months more.

It was a beautiful summer's evening
—warm and pleasant, the sky serene
and soft, and the slight breeze was
freighted with sweet odors. The busi-
ness of the day had been irksome
and kept me late, and it was with a
glad heart and a sigh of relief that I
drove rapidly homeward, my mind
filled with the anticipation of that
pleasure and delight I always experi-

enced when we met, even after one
day's absence—the pleasures of a de-
lightful home and the association of a
woman to whom my soul, my very
existence was wedded. I approached
the house, but there was no welcom-
ing light—all was dark and still. A
tinge of apprehension crept to my
heart. Something had happened. I
sprang from the buggy and entered
the house. The door was unlocked.
I called loudly for the servant, but
she was gone! Lighting the gas, I
approached the table and discovered
a note addressed to myself in the fa-
miliar handwriting of my wife. I
opened it and read:

FRANK: On a mission of life and death,
God help George and Charlie. If not
back when you receive this, inquire for
me at Mrs. M.—s.

What could have happened? George
Williams and Charlie Waits were my
young friends from New Orleans, and
Mrs. M. was the lady with whom they
were making their temporary home.

Hastily folding the note and plac-
ing it in my pocket, I picked up my
glove and turned to put out the gas,
when my eye fell upon an object, di-
rectly facing me, on the opposite side
of the table, that fairly made my blood
run cold and paralyzed my hand.

The first and only thing I saw
was two lurid sparks of fire,
burning with an intense and steady
glow. Gradually the sparks took
shape, and I made out a pair of eyes.
Slowly the phenomenon developed—
from eyes it grew to a face, then a
long, flowing snow-white beard; a
broad-brimmed hat rested above the
forehead, pushed back on the head,
from under which unkempt, and strug-
gling in all directions, appeared a
mass of white-hair. Below the waist
the body was obscured by the table;
but resting on the table were two
gnarled fists, doubled and clenched
hard.

The eyes snapped. I recovered
motion, and, jumping back with a
bound, exclaimed: "Heavens and
earth! What are you?"

A low chuckling, the effect of which
is simply indescribable, was the only
response, the squat form shaking all
over, and the head moving from side
to side. Thank God, it was alive—it
was human at least. Instantly com-
prehending it to be some tramp, and
remembering my errand, I impatiently
ordered it out of the house. Dropp-
ing its head forward, and leering at
me with a terrible frown, the object
spoke in deep, sonorous tones:

"Frank Melton, give me back my
daughter!"

I thought him crazy, so replied
somewhat softly:

"Come, come, old man, I have no
daughter of yours."

"Liar!" he yelled, bounding over
the table and grasping me by the arm.
"Give me my daughter—give me my
Mildred—Mildred Tennis—my little
tiger."

I gave an involuntary start. Gerald-
ine's early history flashed to my
mind instantly. And this was the
old man who adopted her? I turned
a wondering gaze upon him.

"Ha, ha, ha!" he chuckled. "You
understand—you understand."

"Understand what, you old fool?"
I said, roughly throwing him from me.
"The lady you refer to is my wife."

"Your wife?" he said, moving again
toward me, with a cat-like tread and
surveying me all over critically.
"How long?"

"A year and a half," I answered in-
voluntarily.

"You are her third husband," he
said quickly, "One died by his own
hand, and the other was drowned."

I was like one in a dream; the room
swam round, and the hideous little
old man seemed to grow and expand,
until he filled all the space, while his
voice rang in my ears as the ringing
of a thousand bells. In this condition
I heard him say:

"Ha! you do not know her. Mildred
is beautiful—Mildred is grand. All
men love her, but to love her is death.
Beware! She will kill you. Ha, ha!"

That infernal chuckle sank as a
knife into my heart. I tried to rouse
myself, and finally succeeded, and with
a feeling of murder in my mind for
this fiend, I turned to face him, but
he was gone. The room was empty,
and cold perspiration stood upon my
face. I sank into a chair to think,
but I could not. The whole thing
was a mixed up jumble, and I finally
concluded it must have been a dream,
a shadow or a presentment of evil,
and to substantiate this theory Ger-
aldine's note, which I had remember-
ed putting into my pocket, I found
upon the table, opened.

I read it again, and, this time fold-
ing it securely, I placed it in my
pocket. Filled with the most dis-
tressing apprehensions, tortured by
an all-powerful love and infatuation
that rendered me wild to behold my
wife, and burdened with an unutter-
able gloom I could not shake off, I
abruptly left the house, and drove
recklessly through the streets back o-

the city and to the house of Mrs. M.—
Arriving there, I was met by that
lady's tear-stained and horror-stricken
face at the door.

"Good God, Mr. Melton!" she ex-
claimed, as if frightened at my pres-
ence.

"Speak," I said, with calm desper-
ation, advancing into the hall. "What
has happened?"

"Oh, how can I tell you?" she wail-
ed, as she sank to the floor.

A sergeant of police stepped into
the hall from a side room. Advancing
over the prostrate form, I inquired
of him, "What has happened?"

"A murder or suicide, I don't know
which. I have sent for the Coroner."

I advanced to enter. The sergeant
placed his hand on my breast.

"Relative, sir?" he questioned.

"Yes."

He stepped aside and I entered the
room. I was conscious of no emotion
in fact, of any feeling whatever. I
was calm. My pulse beat regularly,
for I could hear my heart-throbs in
the stillness of that room. On a door
resting on chairs were stretched two
figures, stark and still in outline un-
der the covering. Turning down the
sheet I recognized my young friends.
Both had bullet wounds in the head—
one over the right eye, the other
directly in the center of the forehead.
Then I received my first shock. I
felt my heart give one great bound,
and then lie still; my limbs trembled
under me, and I clutched at the chair
to prevent myself falling. The move-
ment displaced the chair. The door,
deprived of its support, yielded, quiv-
ered an instant, and then came down
with a crash—the stark forms seemed
animated with sudden life and rolled
over on the floor, and there lay ex-
posed and ghastly.

Overcome with horror, I fell in a
swoon beside them.

When I regained consciousness I
encountered a crowd of white faces
standing about me with the exception
of Mrs. M., all strangers. I glanced
around—the dead were removed.

Turning to Mrs. M., I asked:

"What was the cause of this?"

Her lips trembled. I saw the name
of my wife forming upon them, and
I interrupted:

"Where is she?"

In answer she handed me a sealed
envelope directed to myself. I know
the writing. I broke the seal and
read its contents—the room faded.

"How I broke out of that
house I never knew."

The moon was at the full, and
beamed from the very center of the
heavens, the hour midnight, and I
again stood on the pier. I shall not
tell you how I felt, for I dare not re-
call it—though that I was looking for
Geraldine.

A boat was tied close at hand. I
descended into it. Swiftly I pulled
out into the shining waters, desper-
ately, for an hour. In my agony I
called out:

"Geraldine! Geraldine!"

As if in answer to my summons, a
dark object arose to the surface to the
left of the bow. Slowly a white face
emerged; I looked down and saw—
MY WIFE. As I gazed she swiftly
faded away, like a dream, into the
dark waters—and I was alone.

This is the letter:

My own, my beloved husband—When
you read this I shall be at rest. God pity
me. Death claims no truer victim.
This day I saw a tragedy that has driven
me wild; two human beings, whom my
terrible fatality enthralled whom I
loved as brothers, fell by their own rash
hands. I could not prevent it, though
I strove to, God knows, with all my
power. . . . I bring only death
and disaster wherever I go. Friends
come to me and fall away blasted, as
dead leaves. Earth contains nothing
but misery—there is a curse upon me.
For your own sake I leave you,
believing in my heart that my memory
—for to you it has been the knowledge
of what has happened. Farewell, fare-
well! Could I kiss you but once—only
once—linger in your arms for one
moment now, I would be content. With
my dying breath I bless you, and pray
that you may be happy, or failing in
that, you may come to your unhappy
and lost wife.

GERALDINE.

"Pa, who is Mr. Rye?" asked a
five-year-old son one evening, right in
the height of the festivities.

"I don't know such a gentleman,"
said the parent.

"Yes, you do," rejoined the little
shaver, "for I heard you tell a gentle-
man in the library last night that you
loved 'good old rye'; now tell me
where he lives?"

An awful pause followed, and an
awful whipping came afterwards,
when the party was over.

A man approached Hon. Thomas
A. Hendricks the other day, and said
something about "second place." Friends
jumped in and caught Mr. Hendricks
before he could draw his pistol, and the man was saved.

A TENNESSEE ROMANCE.

[Cincinnati Commercial.]

GALATIN, TENN., May 20.—In one
of the most aristocratic neighborhoods
in this county, some eight miles from
Galatin, resides a family proud of
their genealogy, and in princely cir-
cumstances. Scarcely five miles away
resides another family, equally as
wealthy and aristocratic. For a quar-
ter of a century the heads of these
two powerful families have been at
war. On several occasions the "code"
has been consulted and only the in-
tervention of mutual friends prevent-
ed their misunderstandings from be-
ing settled by its terms ago. Each
thinks the other has done him great
wrong. Each cherishes in his bosom
eternal hatred towards the other, and
there is no abating it. Both of these
gentlemen have nice intellectual fami-
lies. One has a son, the other a
daughter. They were reared, though
in the same neighborhood, entirely
strangers. Both had been off at
school for several years. Both re-
turned home in the early part of the
summer of 1877 full blown graduates.
They met several weeks afterward at
a neighborhood picnic, and looked
upon each other for the first time.
The young man beheld the wonderful
beauty of the fair one with a feeling
we know not how to describe. He
sought her acquaintance, which was
granted, and the youthful and blush-
ing, though handsome pair, strolled
off alone, and seated themselves upon
the velvet sod beneath the spreading
trees.

"Two congenial hearts had met,
And were one forevermore."

Their superior education fitted them
for the society of none but them-
selves. In flaming words, full of elo-
quent meaning, the young man
pledged his love and asked her's in
return. She gave him in return all
he asked, and in so doing the inimit-
able ripple of her voice made music to
the sweet sentiments of her soul, the
harmony of which fell upon his too
welcome ears as pure, as soft, as gentle
as flakes of feathered snow, and
completely

"Lapped him in soft Lydian airs;
In notes with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out;
With wanton head and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes run-
ning.

During this time the fathers of the
lovers were looking on, neither know-
ing with whom his child was associat-
ing, and both had expressed them-
selves complimentary to the "fine
looking couple." On inquiry the situ-
ation was explained to them. They
both became frantic with rage and
left the picnic thoroughly disgusted
with the idea of their children asso-
ciating with such stock. The severe
criticism that each one of the lovers
received from their parents that night
may well be imagined. It was such
at least as to call a pall of darkness
over the bright path of life which they
had so beautifully pictured a few
hours before.

The old folks gave themselves no
further trouble about the matter,
thinking, of course that their children
would never be guilty of keeping such
company again. But the young folks
did not think so. They arranged
another meeting and resolved to mar-
ry. They both knew if their parents
found it out they would be disinher-
ited so they resolved to keep it a secret
if possible.

It was a beautiful moonlight night
in October, 1877, that the determined
lovers stole out from the grand old
mansion of the young bride's father,
and getting into a buggy, quietly
drove some two miles away, where
they met a friend and a justice of the
peace, who had procured the license,
and they were surely and solemnly
joined in the bonds of matrimony, but
in the open air at the dead hour of
night. Of course, no woman but the
bride was present, or the secret would
have been out long ago. The lady
returned to her home, the young man
to his. How often, when and where
they met, nobody knows but them-
selves.

They had been married two years
and seven months, when a beautiful
blue-eyed baby was born. Of course
concealment was no longer possible
and disclosure was made to the antag-
onistic parents. What did they do?
Why they made up and became the
warmest and happiest parents.

Another painful tragedy has taken
place. On last Friday afternoon, at 2
o'clock, Mr. Lucien Pourciau shot,
and almost instantly killed George
Vignes. Pourciau immediately sur-
rendered himself to the proper au-
thorities, and on Wednesday had a
preliminary examination before Judge
Bouanchaud, and was bailed in two
thousand dollars for his appearance
before District Court. Both parties
are natives of this part and related
to some of our best people. The sad
occurrence is deplored by every one.
Pointe Coupee Pelican.

A SLIGHT MISTAKE.

A countryman walked into one of
the leading wholesale and retail dry
goods and millinery establishments
on West Fourth street recently, and,
after looking around a while with
mingled astonishment and delight,
picked up a lady's handsome cape
and said:

"That's all-fired fine goods for the
money."

The clerk said it was certainly very
cheap and a very excellent quality of
goods, at the same time wondering
how the stranger knew the price of
the article without asking.

"Goods is 'way down, an' that's a
fact," continued the countryman, "but
blessed if I can see how a thing like
that can be built for twice the money,"
and he examined the delicately
wrought garment with much curiosity.

"Goods never were so low as they
are now," explained the clerk, "and
besides, we import such enormous
quantities of them that we can sell
them at the lowest possible figure."

Sliding further along the counter,
the rural delegate picked up a rich
opera cloak, and after admiring it
for some time, and without asking
whether it was \$1 or \$75, said he be-
lieved it was the cheapest piece of
goods he had ever laid his eyes on.

"I know a little gal," said he, with a
sly wink at the salesman, "that'll
just lay 'em out in that shawl. Wrap
'er up, and tie it with a red string, an'
the money's yours."

The salesman tied the package with
a red string, as directed, and laid it
down by the counter, as the coun-
tryman shoved over a handful of coin.

"There's only ninety-nine cents
here," said the clerk, as he counted
the last copper into his hand.

"Well, how much did you suppose
there was there?"

"I want \$12.50," said the clerk.

The countryman uttered a prolonged
whistle, and then asked:

"Isn't this a ninety-nine cent store?"

"Not by a jugful it isn't. This is
— & Co.'s importing and
jobbing establishment, one of the
largest—"

But the countryman was gone. The
parcel had dropped from his nerveless
grasp. He reached the sidewalk, and
looking up at the big ninety-nine
which indicated the number, re-
marked:

"All I've got to say is if this ain't
a ninety-nine cent shobang, they'd
better take in their sign!"—Cincinnati
Enquirer.

HE GOT A CHECK.

He wasn't a man who could be
classed with tramps, but yet he was
shabby, untidy and dead broke. "You
see, my dear man," he explained to a
Griswold street lawyer, "I come from
an excellent family, have worn dia-
monds and broadcloth, and am in my
present fix simply because my father
wouldn't let me wed the girl I love
and I ran away. I have concluded to
return to him and ask his forgiveness
and marry the heiress he has picked
out for me. I need only five dollars.
As soon as I return to Troy I will for-
ward to you a cluster diamond pin as
a present. That's the style of a clothes-
pin I am."

The lawyer sat right down and
wrote him a check for five dollars, and
he wouldn't even let the repentant
young man return thanks for it. No.
If he could do a fellow man a good
turn he was only too glad to do so.
What was life worth living for but for
his chances to make others happy?

"Just so—Heaven bless you—look
out for the diamond pin," said the
young man, as he left the office for the
bank.

One minute before he presented the
check he was all smiles. One minute
after the cashier had the paper a
voice was heard saying:

"Tom Collins! Who in the deuce
is Tom Collins? He has no money
here! You'd jump out of this or I'll
have you in the cooler in about three
minutes."

The young man jumped. As he
went out he saw the lawyer across the
street, but he never smiled. He plac-
ed the check on the walk, spit on it,
and descended into a barber-shop,
and asked if they knew any citizen who
wanted a competent man to take care
of a dog, and do the marketing for the
kitchen.—Detroit Free Press.

"Give me a kiss, my charming Sal,"
A lover said to a blue-eyed gal;
"I won't," said she, "you lazy elf,
Screw up your mouth and help your-
self."

DOG-ISH ADVERTISEMENT.—A Ken-
tucky editor advertises as follows:
"Wanted at this office, a bull-dog,
of any color except pumpkin and
milk, of respectable size, snub nose,
cropped ears, abbreviated continen-
tal, and bad disposition—who can
come when called with a raw beef
steak and will bite the man who spits
tobacco juice on the stove, and steals
the exchanges."

DON'T WANT ANY MORE VOTES.

There is a woman out in Joliet, Ill.,
with a few emphatic ideas on the
topics which agitate the bosoms of a
portion of her sex, and she talks in
this way: "I just don't believe in
these new women notions. I have
raised six boys—four of them vote
now, and the others will soon be old
enough. Then I will have six votes.
Now these good-for-nothing women
who have fooled their time away and
never raised a single boy, come
around and want every woman to vote
for herself. I don't believe in such
nonsense. I have raised my six boys
and am going to have every one vote
for me. Those women who go lectur-
ing around the country instead of
raising boys, have no business to vote
anyway. And when they say that
they are just as good as I am, and a
right to vote for themselves, if they
have no boys to do so for them, it is
not true. If they are as smart as I am,
why did they not raise boys to vote
for them? I tell you I do not intend
to be cheated out of my six votes by
any such good-for-nothing folks. I
guess the world would come to a
pretty pass, in a short time, if the
women all took to goin'