

The Native Virginian.

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Voluntary communications, containing interesting or important news, solicited from any quarter.

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The Farm and Garden.

WHY ORCHARDS DETERIORATE.

Fruit trees, like everything else whose sustenance is derived from the earth, are subject to decay, but by improper management they are often killed before their natural productive power is half exhausted.

AGRICOLA.

A CURTAIN LECTURE.

"Smith, I want to talk to you a while, and I want you to listen while I do it. You want to go to sleep, but I don't—I am not one of the sleepy kind."

POULTRY ON THE FARM.

Mr. Mechi, an eminent agriculturalist, writes as follows on poultry: "Nothing pays better on a farm than good stock of poultry properly managed."

MATRIMONIAL DICTIONARY.

Dear is a term of endearment, usually employed before strangers. It is meant to imply affection. It is sometimes used at home, yet is generally received with suspicion.

POTATO ROT—HOW TO STOP IT.

At a late meeting of the Institute Farmer's Club, New York, James Warren, Monroe Iowa, read an essay on the cultivation of the potato.

BY BAGBY & STOFFER.

Patriæ fannus, igne alieno, lacerator.

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VOLUME I.

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Poetical.

LITTLE FEET.

Two little feet, so small that both may nestle in one cradling hand— Two tender feet upon the untrod border Of life's mysterious land!

In April's fragrant days— How can they walk among the briery tangles Edging the world's rough way?

These white-rose feet along the doubtful future— Must bear a woman's load: Alas! since woman has the heaviest burden, And walks the hardest road.

Love, for a while, will make the path before them— All dainty, smooth, and fair— Will call away the brambles, letting only The roses blossom there.

But when the mother's watchful eyes are shrouded— Away from sight of men, And these dear feet are left without her guiding— Who shall direct them then?

How will they be allured, betrayed, deluded, Poor little untaught feet! Into what dreary mazes will they wander, What dangers will they meet?

Will they get stumbling blindly in the darkness— Of sorrow's fearful shades? Or find the upland slopes of Peace and Beauty.

Whose sunlight never shades? Will they get toiling up ambition's summit, The toiling world above? Or in some nameless vale securely sheltered, Walk side by side with love?

Some feet there be which walk life's track unwounded, Which find but pleasant ways; Some hearts there be to which this life is only A round of happy days.

But they are few. Far more there are who wander— Without a hope or friend— Who find their journey full of pains or losses, And long to reach the end.

How shall it be with her, the tender stranger, Fair faced and gentle eyed, Before whose unstained feet the world's rude highway Stretches so strange and wide?

Ah! who may read the future? For our darling We crave all blessings sweet— And pray that He who feeds the crying ravens Will guide the baby feet.

Selected Tale.

"OUR GAL."

I must write it. If nobody ever reads a line of it, I must, while it is all new and fresh in my mind, write out the history of the last two weeks, and the description of our gal, as Harry calls her.

Our gal first made her appearance in the house two weeks ago last Monday, and I hailed her broad face and stout figure with hearty welcome. Little did I realize—but to begin at the beginning.

I was—I am a very young housekeeper, yet theoretically I do know something of the arts and sciences therewith appertaining. I was married about two years ago, but have always boarded until now; and when started in my pretty house, with two girls and everything new, I fancied that clock-work would be a mere wandering vagrant compared to the regularity of my proceeding.

'Twas on a Sunday morning, as the song says, that my troubles began. I was dressing for church, when my chambermaid came up with a rueful countenance.

'If you please, Mrs. Harvey, I'm going.' 'Going!' I exclaimed, 'where?' 'To leave, ma'am. Home. I've got a spell of neuralgia coming on, and I'm going home to lay by.'

'But you can lie down here if you are sick.' 'Well, ma'am, I ain't to say sick, exactly, but I'm fixing for a turn.' 'A turn?' 'Yes. I have neuralgia in spells, and I always feel 'em coming.'

Words were vain. Go she would, and go she did. I went into the kitchen to explain to the cook that she must do double duty for a time. She was a perfect termyant, and to my utter amazement she wheeled around with the cry: 'Gone! Jane gone! Will you get another girl?' 'Certainly.' 'To-day?' 'How can I get another girl on Sunday?'

'And to-morrow wash-day! Well, I am not going to stay to do all the work. You'll either get another girl early to-morrow, or I'll leave.'

'You'll leave now, in the shortest space of time it takes to go from here to the door,' cried Harry from the sitting room, where he had overheard us.

ples, and short cakes for supper; which we ate with the dinner at 6 o'clock. It was late enough when we cleared up, but at last all was done but one thing. Harry was in the bath room refreshing himself, when I discovered that the coal was all gone. I hated to call him down for he had worked hard all day; so I took the scuttle and went down into the cellar myself, laughing to think how he would scold when he knew it. I am a wee woman, and not over strong, but I filled the big scuttle, and tugging away with both hands, started up-stairs.

I was at the top, my labor nearly over, when somehow—I cannot tell how—I lost my balance. I reeled over, and the heavy thing came with me down to the bottom of the stairs. I felt it crushing my foot. I heard Harry's call, then faintly. I know now, though I did not then, how he lifted me in his strong arms and carried me up-stairs, and the touch of the cold water which he poured over me is the next thing which I remember. As soon as I was conscious and able to speak, I let him go for a doctor, regretting that mother and Lou were both out of town for the summer.

Well, well; it was a weary night; no time to scold, Harry said, so he petted, nursed, and tended me, till my heart ached with its fullness of love and gratitude. Morning found me, my fractured ankle in a box, lying helpless in bed, and Harry promised to send me a girl immediately. So after all this long pretence I come to our gal. Oh, I must tell you how Harry made me a slice of buttered toast for breakfast, by buttering the bread on both sides, and then toasting it.

It was about nine o'clock when my new girl came. Harry had given her a night-latch key, so she entered and came up to my door. Her knock was the first peculiarity that startled me.— One rap, loud as a pistol shot, and as abrupt.

'Come in.' With a sweep the door flew back, and in the spaces stood my new acquisition. Stop a moment! I must describe her. She was very tall, very robust, and very ugly. Her thick black hair grew low on her forehead, and her complexion was uniformly red. Her features were very large, and her mouth full of her only beauty, white, even teeth. Still, the face was far from stupid. The mouth, though large, was flexible and expressive, and the big black eyes promised intelligence. But, oh, how can I describe her ways, as Harry calls them? She stood for an instant perfectly motionless, and then she swept in a low, and really not ingracious courtesy.

'Madame,' she said in a deep voice, 'your most obedient.' 'You are obedient?' I said, questionably. 'Your humble servant.' 'This was not 'getting' on a bit; so I said— 'You are the girl, Mr. Harvey sent from the intelligence office?' 'I am that woman,' said she with a flourishing of her shawl; 'and here is my certificate of merit, and she took a paper from her pocket. Advancing with a step, a stop, another step, and stop, until she reached my bed side, she handed me the paper with a low bow, and then stepping back three steps, she stood waiting for me to read it with her hands clasped and drooping, and her head bent as if it were her death warrant.

It was a written, properly worded note from her former mistress, certifying that she was honest and capable, and I had really no choice but to keep her; so I told her to find her room, lay off her bonnet, and then come to my again. I was half afraid of her. She was not drunk, with those clear black eyes shining so brightly, but her manner actually savored of insanity. However, I was helpless, and then Harry would come as early as he could, and I could endure to wait.

'Tell me your name,' I said, as she came in with the stride and stop. 'My name is Mary,' she said, in a tone so deep that it seemed to come from the very toes of her garters.

'Well, Mary, first put the room in order before the doctor comes.' Oh, if words could only picture that scene! Fancy this tall, large, ugly woman, armed (I used the word in its full sense) with a duster charging at the furniture as if she were stabbing her mortal enemy to the heart. She struck the comb in the brush as if she were saying, 'Die traitor!' and piled up the books as if they were fagots for a funeral pyre. She gave the curtain a sweep with her hand, as if she were putting best tapestry for a royal procession, and dashed the chairs down in their places like a magnificent bandit spurning a tyrant in his power.

But when she came to the invalid she was gentle, almost caressing in her manner, propping me up comfortably, making the bed at once easy and handsome, and stroking my hair and dress with a perfect perception of my safe condition. And when she dashed out of the room, I forgave the air with which she returned and presented a tray to me, for the sake of its contents. Such delicious tea and toast, and such perfection of poached eggs, were an apology for any eccentricity of manner. I was thinking gratefully of my own comfort, and watching her hang up my clothes in the closet in her own style, when the bell rang. Like lightning she closed the closet door, caught up the tray, and rushed down stairs. From my open door I could hear the following conversation, which I must say rather astonished even me, already prepared for any

eccentricity. Dr. Holbrook was my visitor and of course his first question was— 'How is Mrs. Harvey this morning?' In a voice that was the concentrated essence of about one dozen tragedies, my extraordinary servant replied— 'What man art thou?' 'Is the woman crazy?' cried the doctor.

'Lay not that flattering unctious to your soul!' cried Mary. 'M'm—'you—'said the doctor, musingly. Then in his own cheery, brisk tones he added: 'You are the new servant, I suppose?' 'Sir, I will serve my mistress till chill death shall part us from each other.'

'I'm. Well, now, in plain English, go tell her I am here.' 'I go, and it is done!' was the reply, and with the slow stride and halt I heard her cross the entry. She was soon at my door. 'Madam, the Doctor waits!' she said, standing with one arm out in a grand attitude.

'Let him come up,' I said, choking with laughter. She went down again. 'Sir, from my mistress I have lately to bid you welcome, and implore you to ascend. She waits within your chamber for your coming.'

Is it to be wondered at that the Doctor found his patient in perfect convulsions of laughter, or that he joined her in her merriment. 'Where did you find that treasure?' he asked. 'Harry sent her from the office.'

'Stage-struck, evidently, though where she picked up the fifth-cut actress manner remains to be seen.' 'The professional part of his visit over the Doctor stayed for a chat. We were warmly discussing the news of the day, when when! the door flew open, and in stalked Mary, and announced, with a swing of her arm.

'The butcher, madam!' I saw the doctor's eyes twinkle, but he began to write in his memorandum book with intense gravity. 'Well, Mary, I said, 'he is not waiting?' 'The dinner waits,' she replied. 'Shall I prepare the viands as my own judgment shall direct, or will your inclination dictate to me?' 'Cook them up as you will, but have a good dinner for Mr. Harvey at two o'clock.'

'Between the strokes 'twill wait his appetite.' And with another sweeping courtesy, she left the room, the door as usual, after her exit, standing wide open.

She was as good as her word. Without any orders from me, she took it for granted that Harry would dine up stairs, and set the table out in my room. I was beginning to let my keen sense of ludicrous triumph over pain and weariness, and I watched her, straggling the laugh, until she was down stairs. To see her stab the potatoes and behold the celery was a perfect treat, and the air of a martyr preparing poison, with which she poured out the water, was perfect. Harry was evidently prepared for fun, for he watched her as keenly as I did.

Not one mouthful would she bring to me until she had made it as dainty as could be; mashing my potatoes with the movement of a saint crushing vipers, and buttering my bread in a manner that fairly transformed the knife into a dagger. Yet the moment she brought it to me, all the affection dropped, and no mother could have been more naturally tender. Evidently, with all her nonsense, she was kind hearted.

It took but one day to find that we had secured a perfect treasure. Her cooking was exquisite enough for a palace of an epicure; she was neat to a nicety, and I soon found her punctual and trustworthy. Her attention to myself was touching in its watchful kindness. Sometimes when the pain was very severe, and I could only lie suffering and helpless, her large hands would smooth my hair softly, and her voice became almost musical in its low murmuring of 'poor child!' I think her large, strong frame, and consciousness of physical superiority to me in my tiny form and helpless state, roused all the motherly tenderness in her nature, and she lavished it upon me freely.

I often questioned her about her former places; discovered by my utter amazement that she was never in a theatre, never saw or read a play, and was entirely innocent of novel reading. I had become used to her manner, and no longer feared she was insane, when one evening my gravity gave way utterly, and for the first time I laughed in her face. She had been arranging my bed and self for the night and was just leaving the room, holding in one hand an empty pitcher and in the other my wrapper. Suddenly a drunken man in the street called out, with a yell that really was startling, though by no means mysterious.

Like a flash, Mary struck an attitude. One foot advanced, her body thrown slightly forward, the pitcher held out and the wrapper waved aloft, she cried out in a voice of perfect terror: 'Gracious heavings! What hideous screams is those?' Gravity was gone. I fairly screamed with laughter, and her motionless attitude and wondering face only increased the fun.

'Go down, Mary, or you will kill me!' I gasped at last. Apparently unconscious of the cause of my merriment, she went slowly from

the room, waving alternately the pitcher and the wrapper. To see her flourishing the dust brush would strike terror to the heart of the most daring spider; and no words of mine can describe the frantic energy with which she punches pillows, or the grim satisfaction on her face at the expiring agonies of a spot of dirt she rubs out of existence. The funny part of all is her perfect stolid unconsciousness of doing anything out of the way.

Harry found out the explanation.— She had lived for ten years with a retired actress and actor, who wished to bury the knowledge of their past life, and who never mentioned the stage.— Retaining in private life the attitudes and tones of their old profession, they had made it a kind of sport to burlesque the passions they so often imitated, and poor Mary had unconsciously fallen into the habit of copying their peculiarities. When they left for Europe she found her way into the intelligence office, where Harry secured her. Long, long may she remain 'Our Gal.'

ORANGE AND ITS ATTRACTIONS.—No 4.

In the extreme Southern corner of the county, at the intersection of the O. & A. R. Road with the Va. Central, is situated the village of Gordonsville. Prior to the extension of the Central R. Road to this point, it was an uninviting hamlet and the ground now occupied by the town proper, was covered by a dense forest. Within a few years past its growth has been marvellous.— Buildings spring up as if by magic— town lots are in demand at advanced prices, and it is fast assuming in appearance the proportions of a respectable inland town. In addition to its peculiar attractions, so much appreciated by hungry travellers, the enterprise of its citizens is worthy of commendation. Besides the various capacious buildings of the R. Road Companies, it contains several Churches, two flourishing schools, male and female, Hotels, an extensive Machine and Implement Factory, a Tannery, a Steam Engine with Saw, Grist, Plaster and Bone Mill attached—all doing a large and remunerative business. The number of mercantile houses, large and small, would seem out of proportion to the population of the place and the requirements of the surrounding country. But the existing novel relations of society have produced corresponding changes in the course of trade. The heavy transactions of the past between proprietors and city merchants, in the purchase of supplies for their dependents, is now substituted by a direct trade between the dependents themselves and village or country merchants—whether advantageously to some of the parties or not may be questioned. The trade in grain from this and the adjacent counties is rapidly increasing and giving importance to the place in a commercial point of view.

Within a short distance is the dwelling now owned by Mr. Baker, formerly the residence of the celebrated blind Preacher, James Waddell, and still nearer and almost in sight, the grove in which stood the unpretending country Church so graphically and eloquently described by Mr. Wirt in the British Spy. This simple structure made classic by its associations, has been rudely if not sacrificially torn down, and its hallowed remains now constitute the frame work of a secular building in the town.

The lands in this vicinity vary in quality and complexion—the transition from grey to red is sudden. The McAdam road leading to Somerset very soon strikes the red land, and in this direction the handsome estate of Robert Taylor Esq., Greenwood, first attracts the notice of the traveller. The spacious mansion located in the outer suburbs of the town on a gentle elevation and its pleasing surroundings depict the genial hospitality that reigns within. The whole or a part of this desirable estate can be purchased on reasonable terms.

On the opposite side of the graceful mountain slope and adjoining Greenwood, is Rockland, the beautiful summer residence of R. B. Haxall Esq., of Richmond. This fine estate embraces about 1000 acres of superior land in the centre of the red land district, and in improvement and high culture ranks with the foremost in Piedmont Va. Its appointments are complete—its embellishments tasteful and its fine thoroughbred and trotting stock—its short horns and Cotswolds attest its productive qualities. A most valuable and desirable portion of this estate can be purchased.

Farther on and in part partaking of the chocolate district about Somerset, is Frescati, the residence of the late distinguished jurist and statesman, P. P. Barbour. This valuable property so happily located, now belongs to minors in a remote part of the State, and is, as usual in such cases, falling into decay, notwithstanding its natural fertility and capability of high improvement. Near by and on either side of the road and tributary to Gordonsville, are many large and fine estates, combining every desirable quality and capable of division into smaller farms each retaining equal advantages with the whole.

Returning to the village and following the line of the O. & A. R. Road to Madison Run—a distance of five miles—a soil entirely different from any before described meets the eye. It is less fertile but possesses high merit. Beneath it, lies a rich bed of limestone, readily accessible, and when prepared and applied in proper quantities, it may be

large or small, its productive qualities may be greatly increased. It is a friable grey soil, easily cultivated and admirably adapted to the cultivated and indigenous grasses. The fine meadows of this district are proverbial. These lands are owned chiefly by the Messrs Scott and Cowherd, who are not unwilling to dispose of desirable farms. The R. Road passes through them, affording a ready and convenient market for the surplus timber and fuel which abound on either side, and which at the present market value would probably reimburse the cost of purchase.

At Madison Run, on the land of Mr. Wm. C. Scott, immediately on the R. Road, Iron Ore is found, but to what extent it exists and of what value must be determined by future investigation. Inexhaustible quarries of fine building stone and marble of excellent quality exist in the adjacent cliffs of the little stream which gives name to the Station. Copious springs of Lime and Freestone water abound throughout this district, whose streams combining with those from the contiguous red lands, form the North branch of the Pamunkey. This beautiful valley with its romantic scenery needs only development. Its locality, its soil and general advantages render it highly desirable, and few sections if any, can offer stronger inducements, to those wishing to invest in farming lands.

AGRICOLA.

AGRICOLA. The truth is, the farmer asks too much of his soil; wants it to impart vigor and fruitfulness to from fifty to eighty trees to the acre, besides giving him a crop of corn and potatoes amply. To secure the last he cuts the thousands of fibres of his trees with the plow, and then wonders why his orchard decays and dies prematurely?— This is bad policy and poor practice. Do not ask too much from the soil. Give it a chance to nourish and sustain one product to a full development, rather than by a multiplication of them, to secure stunted samples of immature ones. The earth, properly manured and tilled, is munificent in its gifts to man, but when over-taxed by a multitude of exactions its response to his labors will be feeble and unsatisfactory. —Rural New Yorker.

POULTRY ON THE FARM.

Mr. Mechi, an eminent agriculturalist, writes as follows on poultry: "Nothing pays better on a farm than good stock of poultry properly managed. With them everything is turned to account; and not a kernel, wild seed, or insect, escapes their scrutinizing eye. Their industrious claws are ever at work, uncovering reefs for appropriation every hidden but consumable substance. Fowls must have free access to chalk or lime to form the shells of their eggs, and grit or gravel to grind the food of their gizzard. They luxuriate on grass and clover, which are a necessity for them; and in winter they like mangold or weeds. They must have access to plenty of pure water.— The quality of eggs depends upon the quality of the food. They, like ourselves, like shade in summer, and warm sheltered corners in winter. They must have access to shelter in wet weather. Fowls will not be long healthy on the same ground or yards—the earth gets tainted; therefore to prevent disease, lime and salt your yards and their pastures once a year, say in autumn, when the rain will wash it well in and sweeten the surface.— Broods of chickens never do better with us than on the grassy brows or patches abutting upon the growing crops, either of corn or pulse, into which they run either for insects or for shelter.— Your male birds should be often changed, say at least once in two years, and they should be young and vigorous.— Breeding in and in will not do any more than it will with animals. I consider winged game, poultry and birds, the farmer's riches. My poultry have access at all times to my fields. Fowls are very useful in clearing off flies, I have been amused at seeing their way, and quick manner of taking flies from reposing bullocks and sheep, much to their comfort.

POTATO ROT—HOW TO STOP IT.

At a late meeting of the Institute Farmer's Club, New York, James Warren, Monroe Iowa, read an essay on the cultivation of the potato. This naturally brought in the subject of the rot, which he attributed to carelessness in not selecting seed from such hills as produce fully ripened potato balls. The absence of these, on a potato vine, is a sure sign of immaturity, and although these potatoes will germinate and produce others, the yield will diminish yearly, become diseased from weakness and finally die out from exhaustion. To bring back the potato to its former productiveness, the seed must be selected from those hills or stalk producing balls and these only. In this way the tendency to rot will be checked and the old fashioned productiveness will be restored. This is a sensible view of the subject, and probably a correct one. Vitiating seed will naturally be followed by an immature and diseased progeny. Plant only perfect tubers, and the potato disease, it is assumed, will soon be among the things of the past. —Richmond Farmer.

A Little subcarbonate or potass of soda will keep milk sweet in summer, for some time.

The "sugar wedding," thirty days after marriage is the latest. —Exchange.

The minister who boasted of preaching without notes don't wish to be understood to refer to green-baet.

I hope this hand is not counterfeit—said a lover ashe was trying with his sweetheart's fingers. "The best way to find out is to ring it," was the neat reply.