Clayton Herald.

TERMS: Two Dollars a Year, "INDEPENDENT IN EVERYTHING—NEUTRAL IN NOTHING." Invariably in Advance.

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Original Poetry.

[Written for the Clayton Herald.]

AT WHAT AGE DOTH LOVE BEGIN?

AD. VENTURE.

I would ask my little queen,—
Tell me when doth love begin?
Summers three thou hast not seen,
Little fairy, Dimple Chin.

But a miracle of sweets,
Slow approaches, sly retreats,
Shows the little Archer there
Hidden in thy curly hair.

Prythe, tell me Dimple Chin,
Where did'st learn a heart to win?—
Here the little Queen drew nigh,
Giving me this sweet reply—

"I could'nt tell you if I'd try.
Ask some younger lass than I!"

* * * * * * *

Tell, oh, tell me, wrinkled face,
If thy heart and head keep pace?
When doth hoary love grow still,
Under cold December's chill?

Is there love within thy heart?
Hast'thine early love forgot?
Can its embers burn below,
All that chill December now?

Art thou among the number,
In whose breast love doth slumber?
Tell, oh, tell me hoary head,
Is the olden love yet dead?

Tell, oh, tell me wrinkled face,
Doth heart and head still keep pace?
When doth hoary love expire?
When do frosts put out the fire?

"Ah!" the aged lips reply,
"Youth may fade and strength may die,
But of love I can't foretoken,
Ask some older sage than I."

Selected Poetry.

THE FATES.

BY FRANK FOXCROFT.

Somewhere upon the unknown shore,
Untouched by mortal tread,
Where the streams of life their waters pour,
There sit three sisters evermore,
Weaving a silken thread.

Never a fabric half so rare
Hath man or angel seen,
For the lives of men are woven there,
[illegible]
And pleasures in between.

And all the battles that we fight,
And all the tears we shed,
All our readings after light,
All our strivings for the right,
Are woven with the thread.

Oftentimes two threads they bind,
And weave them both as one,
And thus two lives are intertwined,
And heart with heart, and mind with mind,
Are thus together spun.

It is but an ancient tale
Of the mythologic lore,
But when my bravest efforts fail,
When heart is weak and strength is frail,
It thrills me all the more.

So, apart from earth's strange strife,
I sit and wonder here,
If, in the changing threads of life,
It will be my lot to call her wife,
Whom now my heart holds dear.

Selected Story.

Unforgotten Words.

A Story With An Excellent Moral.

"Have you examined the bill, James?"

"Yes, sir."

"Anything wrong?"

"I find two errors."

"Ah, let me see."

The lad handed his employer a long bill that had been placed on his desk for examination.

"Here is an error in the calculation of ten dollars, which they have made against themselves, and another of ten dollars in the footing."

"Also against themselves?"

"Yes, sir."

The merchant smiled in a way that struck the lad as peculiar.

"Twenty dollars against themselves," he remarked in a kind of pleasant surprise. "Trusty clerks they must have."

"Shall I correct the figures?"

"No, let them correct their own mistakes. We don't examine bills for other people's benefit," replied the merchant. "It will be time to rectify those errors when they find them out. All so much gain as it now stands."

The boy's delicate moral sense was shocked at so unexpecthd a remark.—He was the son of a poor widow, who had given him to understand that to be just was the duty of man.

Mr. Carman, the merchant in whose employment he had been for only a few months, was an old friend of his father, and a person in whom he reposed the highest confidence. In fact James had always looked upon him as a kind of model man; and when Mr. Carman agreed to take him in his store, he felt that great fortune was in his way.

"Let them correct their own mistakes."

These words made a strong impression on the mind of James Lewis. When first spoken by Mr. Carman, and with the meaning then involved, he felt, as we have said, shocked; but as he turned them over again in his thoughts, and connected their utterance with a person who stood so high in his mother's estimation, he began to think that perhaps the thing was fair enough in business.—Mr. Carman was hardly the man to do wrong.

A few days after James had examined the bill, a clerk from the house by which it had been rendered, called for settlement. The lad, who was present, waited to see whether Mr. Carman would speak of the error. But he made no remark. A check for the amount of the bill as rendered, was filled up and a receipt taken.

"Is that right?" James asked himself the question. His moral sense said no; but the fact that Mr. Carman had done so bewildered his mind.

"It may be the way in business," so he thought to himself—"but it don't look honest. I wouldn't have believed it of him."

Mr. Carman had a kind of way with him which won the boy's heart, and naturally tended to make him judge what ever he might do in a most favorable manner.

"I wish he had corrected that error," he said to himself a great many times when thinking in a pleasant way of Mr. Carman, and his own good fortune in having been received into his employment. "It don't look right, but it may be in the way of business."

One day he went to the bank and drew the money on a check. In counting it over he found that the teller had paid him fifty dollars too much, so he went back to the counter and told him of his mistake. The teller thanked him, and he returned to the store with the consciousness in his mind of having done right.

"The teller overpaid me fifty dollars," he said to Mr. Carman, as he handed him the money.

"Indeed," replied the latter, a light breaking over his countenance, and he hastily counted the bank bills. The light faded as the last bill left his finger.

"There's no mistake, James."

A tone of disappointment was in his voice.

"O, I gave him back the fifty dollars. Wasn't that right?"

"You simpleton!" exclaimed Mr. Carman, "don't you know that bank mistakes are never corrected? If the teller had paid you fifty dollars short he would not have made it right."

The warm blood mantled the cheek of James under this reproof.

It is often the case that more shame is felt for a blunder than a crime. In this instance he had felt a sort of mortification at having done what Mr. Carman was pleased to call a silly thing, and he made up his mind that if they should ever overpay him a thousand dollars at the bank he should bring the amount to his employer, and let him do as he pleased with the money.

"Let people look after their own mistakes," said Mr. Carman.

James Lewis pondered these thing in his heart. The impression they made was never to be forgotten.

"It may be right," he said, but he did not feel altogether satisfied.

A month after the occurrence of that bank mistake, as James counted over his weekly wages just received from Mr. Carman, he discovered that he was paid half a dollar too much.

The first impulse of his mind was to return the half dollar to his employer, and it was on his lips to say, "You gave me a half dollar too much, sir," when the unfortunate words, "Let people look after their own mistakes," flashing upon his thoughts, made him hesitate.

To hold a parley with this evil is to be overcome.

"I must think about this," said James, as he put the money in his pocket. "If it is true in one case, it is true in another. Mr. Carman don't correct mistakes that people make in his favor, and he can't complain when the rule works against himself."

But the boy was very far from being in a comfortable state. He felt that to keep a half dollar would be a dishonest act. Still he could not make up his mind to return it, at least not then.

James did not return the half dollar, but spent it for his own gratification.—After he had done this it came suddenly in his head that Mr. Carman had only been trying him, and he was filled with anxiety and alarm.

Not long after, Mr. Carman repeated the same mistake. James kept the half dollar with less hesitation.

"Let him correct his own mistakes," said he, resolutely; "that's the doctrine he acts on with other people, and he can't complain if he gets paid in the same coin he puts in circulation. I just wanted half a dollar."

From this time the fine moral sense of James Lewis was blunted. He had taken an evil counsellor into his heart, stimulated a spirit of covetousness—latent in almost every mind—which caused him to desire the possession of things beyond his ability to obtain.

James had good business qualifications, and so pleased Mr. Carman by his intelligence, industry, and tact with customers, that he advanced him rapidly, and gave him before he was eighteen years of age, the most reliable position in the store. But James had learned something more from his employer than how to do business well. He had learned to be dishonest. He had never forgotten the first lesson he had received in this bad science, he had acted not only in two instances, but in a hundred, and almost always to the injury of Mr. Carman. He had long since given up waiting for mistakes to be made in his favor, but originated them in the varied and complicated transactions in which he was trusted implicitly, for it had never occurred to Mr. Carman that his failure to be just to the letter might prove a snare to this young man.

James grew sharp, cunning, and skillful; always on the alert; always bright and ready to meet any approaches toward a discovery of his wrong doing by his employer, who held him in the highest regard.

Thus it went on until James was in his twentieth year, when the merchant had his suspicions aroused by a letter that spoke of the young man as not keeping the most respectable company, as spending money too freely for a clerk on a moderate salary.

Before this time James had removed his mother into a pleasant house, for which he paid a rent of four hundred dollars, his salary was eight hundred, but he deceived his mother by telling her it was fifteen hundred. Every comfort that she needed was fully supplied, and she was beginning to feel that after a long and painful struggle with the world her happier days had come.

James was at his desk when the letter was received by Mr. Carman. He looked at his employer and saw him change countenance suddenly. He read it over twice, and James saw that the contents produced disturbance. Mr. Carman glanced toward the desk, and their eyes met; it was only for a moment, but the look that James received made his heart stop beating.

There was something about the movements of Mr. Carman for the rest of the day that troubled the young man. It was plain to him that suspicion had been aroused by that letter. O, how bitterly now did he repent in dread of discovery and punishment, the evil of which he had been guilty.

"You are not well this evening," said Mrs. Lewis, as she looked at her son's changed face across the tea table.

"My head aches."

"Perhaps the tea will make you feel better.

"I'll lie down on the sofa in the parlor for a short time."

Mrs. Lewis followed him into the parlor in a little while, and sitting down on the sofa, on which he was laying, placed her lion in the said his head. The touch of [illegible] agony.

"Do you feel better?" asked Mrs. Lewis. He had remained sometime with her hand on his forehead.

"Not much," he replied, and rising as he spoke he added, "I think a walk in the open air would do me good!"

"Don't go out, James," said Mrs. Lewis, a troubled feeling coming into her heart.

"I'll only walk a few squares."

And James went from the parlor and into the street.

"There is something more than headache the matter with him," thought Mrs. Lewis.

For half an hour James walked without any purpose in his mind beyond the escape of his mother. At last his walk brought him to Mr. Carman's store, and in passing he was surprised to see a light within.

"What can this mean?" he asked himself, a new fear creeping, with shuddering impulse, into his heart.

He listened at the doors and windows, but he could hear nothing.

"There's something wrong," he said "what can it be? If this should be discovered, what will be the end of it?—Ruin! ruin! My poor mother."

The wretched young man hastened on, and walked the streets for two hours when he returned home. His mother met him when he entered, and with unconsoled anxiety asked him if he was better. He said yes, but in a manner that only increased the trouble she already felt, and passed on to his room.

In the morning, the strange altered face of James, as he met his mother at the breakfast table, struck alarm into her heart. He was silent at the table; the door bell rung loudly. The sound startled James and he turned his head to listen in a nervous way.

"Who is it?" asked Mrs. Lewis.

"A gentleman who wishes to see Mr. James," replied the girl.

James rose instantly and went out into the hall shutting the door as he did so. Mrs. Lewis sat watching her son's return. She heard him coming back in a few moments; but he did not enter the dining-room. Then he returned along the hall to the street door, and she heard it shut. All was silent. Starting up she ran into the passage. But James was not there. He was gone again with the person who called.

"The young villian shall lie in the bed he has made for himself!" exclaimed Mr. Carman in his bitter indignation.

And he made the exposure completely. On the trial he showed an eager desire to have him convicted, and presented such an array of evidence that the jury could not give any other verdict than guilty.

Ah, that was a sad going away! Mr. Carman was half the night in examining the account of James, and found frauds of over six thousand dollars. Blindly indignant, he sent an officer to arrest him in the morning; it was with this officer he went away from his mother—*never to return.*

The poor mother was in court, audible in the silence that followed came her convulsed sobs upon the air.

The presiding judge addressed the culprit, and asked if he had anything to say why the sentence of the law should not be pronounced against him, and all eyes were turned upon the pale agitated young man, who arose with an effort, and leaned against the railing by which he stood, as if needing support.

"Will it please your honors," he said; "to direct my prosecutor to come a little nearer, so that I can look at him and your honors at the same time?"

Mr. Carman was directed to come forward to where the boy stood. James looked at him steadily for a few moments, and turned to the judges.

"What I have to say to your honors is this" (he spoke calmly and distinctly) "and it may in a degree extenuate, though it cannot excuse my crime."

"I went to that man's store an innocent boy; and if he had been an honest man, I would not have stood before you to day as a guilty criminal!"

Mr. Carman appealed to the court for protection against an allegation of such an outrageous character; but he was peremtorily ordered to be silent. James then continued in a firm and steady voice:

"Only a few weeks after I went into his employment, I examined a bill by his direction, and discovered an error of twenty dollars."

The face of Mr. Carman crimsoned.

"You remember it, I see," remarked James, "and I shall have cause to remember it while I live. The error was in favor of Mr. Carman. I asked if I should correct the figures, and he answered: "No, let them correct their own mistakes, we don't examine bills for other people's benefit."

"It was my first lesson in dishonesty. I saw the bill, and Mr. Cameron take twenty dollars that was not his own. It seemed such a wrong thing. But soon after he called me a simpleton for handing back a fifty dollar bill to the teller of a bank which he had overpaid me on a check, and then—"

"May I ask the protection of the court?" asked Mr. Carman.

"Is it true what the lad says?" asked the judge.

Mr. Cameron hesitated and looked confused. All eyes were on his face, and the judge and jury, lawyers and spectators felt certain that he was really guilty of leading the young man astray.

"Not long afterwards," resumed Lewis, "in receiving my wages, I found that Mr. Carman had paid me fifty cents too much. I was about to give it back to him when I remembered his remarks about letting people correct their own mistakes and said to myself: 'Let him correct his own error,' and dishonestly kept the money. Again the thing happened, and again I kept the money that did not of right belong to me. This was the beginning of evil, and here I am.—If he had shown any mercy I would not have made any defence."

The young man covered up his face with his hands and sat down overpowered with his feelings. His mother who was near him, sobbed aloud, and bending over, laid her hand on his head saying:

"My poor boy! my poor boy!"

There were few eyes in the court undimmed. In the silence that followed, Mr. Carman spoke out:

"Is my character to be thus blasted on the word of a criminal, your honors? Is this right?"

"Your solemn oath, sir, that this charge is untrue," said the judge, "will place you in the right."

It was the unhappy boy's only opportunity, and the court felt bound in humanity to hear what he had to say.

James Lowis stood up again instantly, and turned his white face and dark piercing eyes upon Mr. Carman.

"Let him take this oath if he dare!" he exclaimed.

Mr. Carman consulted with his counsel and withdrew.

After a brief conference with his associates, the presiding judge said, addressing the criminal exclaimed:

"In consideration of your youth, and the temptation to which in tender years you were unhappily subjected, the court gives you the slightest punishment—one year's imprisonment. But, let me solemnly warn you against any further steps in the way you have taken.—Crime can have no valid excuse. It is in the sight of God and man, and leads only to suffering. When you come forth again after your brief incarceration, may it be with the resolution to die rather than commit crime."

And the curtain fell on that sad scene in the boy's life. When it was lifted again, and he came forth from prison a year afterward, his mother was dead. From the day her pale face faded from the court room, he never looked upon her again. Ten years afterwards a man was reading a newspaper in a far western town. He had a calm, serious face, and looked like one who had known suffering and trial.

"Brought to justice at last?" he said to himself, as the blood came into his face; "convicted on the charge of opon insolvency, and sent to the State prison. So much for the man who gave me the first lesson in ill doing. But, thank God, the other lessons have been remembered.

"When you come forth again," said the judge, "may it be with a resolution to die rather than commit a crime!" and I have kept this injunction in my heart ever since; and God helping me, I will keep it to the end."

ALE causes many ale-ins, (ailings.)

A Ghost Discovered.

My father, who was an old naval captain, met with an untimely death at sea. He was in command of his ship when he was caught in a severe gale off the coast of Syria; a heavy sea was rolling, and as he stood near the companion-ladder, he was thrown violently down, breaking his leg in two places. The shock of amputation was too great for his system, and he died shortly after the operation.

I was then serving in the Channel Fleet, but I obtained leave of absence and hurried to Devenport, where my mother resided. After my poor father's affairs were settled she took a great dislike to the sea. The sight or sound of it, the appearance of sailors in the street or the firing of a salute, served to remind her most acutely of the loss she had sustained. Of course it was decided that she should leave town, but where to wend her steps she knew not.

She herself had no choice of a neighborhood, so we had nothing to do but to look out for an eligible house in some inland town. Soon the following advertisement caught our attention:

TO BE LET ON LEASE, IN A SMALL Market town, near a railway station, a six-roomed house, in good repair, with large garden back and front. Rent moderate, owing to peculiar circumstances.

I applied where I was directed, and was informed that the cottage was situated in Burnside, Derbyshire, and that it might be viewed on further application. I should say that the letter also stated that the rent would be only eight pounds if taken for fourteen years.

I hastened to the place, saw the cottage, was delighted with its appearance and situation, and then sought for information as to the "peculiar circumstances" under which so charming a little house was to be let for so trifling a rent.

After some general reasons for leaving, which I ventured to hint could hardly be called peculiar, the lady—the outgoing tenant—confessed that she had recently taken the house for fourteen years, but had found it was haunted, or at least, most unaccountable sounds were heard at midnight, causing her much uneasiness, and, at length, becoming a source of great alarm to her daughters, who were but young girls.—The lady herself, I should say, was a widow.

I offered to try and find out for her the cause of the strange noises, and even then take the house, perhaps at a higher rental; but she said that if I liked to risk the finding out and putting a stop to them, I should have the cottage at the rate named; for she said it had been left her by a person of whom she knew but little, and that therefore the rent, though small, would be some addition to her income.

I agreed to take the house at once, for it was empty, and I proposed sleeping in it the same night.

The lady had not removed all her furniture, so she kindly made me up a bed in the back parlor and placed there also an armed-chair. A fire was lit; I provided myself with the materials for a good supper, and locked myself in the house at ten o'clock.

Of course no one ever heard of a respectable ghost appearing before midnight, so that I had two hours before I should test the truth of the report I had heard. I made a hearty supper—there was something material in that, and if the conflict about to be was one of spirit *versus* matter, I felt that I would not go into battle on an empty stomach. To keep my head clear, and not allow it to run riot in imagination, picturing all the possible forms that might appear, and recalling all that I had heard or read about phantom shapes, I took my books and worked out a ship's course. But I soon gave it up; it was unmanly to be doing this in order to keep off fear; so I shut my books, lit my pipe, and gave free run to my thoughts.

As was natural, they soon turned to my poor father's death, to my mother's sorrow, and to other events which happened about that time that tended to make me low-spirited. I tried to avoid such thoughts, but that was the way to bring them to my mind. I tried to recall some of the more exciting scenes of my life. I endeavored to carry back my thoughts to the roving, happy days of childhood, and forward to the promotions from the Admiralty, among which my name might figure; but it all came to this, that I was endeavoring not to think of present position, and miserably failing in the effort.

Looking at my watch, and finding it wanted but ten minutes to twelve, I mixed myself another glass of grog, and waited with anxiety the hour of midnight.

Sure enough then, within a minute or two of that hour, I heard a rumbling noise, like the approach of a carriage that got louder and louder, and which seemed to proceed from down-stairs. I was making my way there when I distinctly heard the clanking of a chain, but by the time I got into the kitchen the sound appeared to be receding, till at length it died away. A bell hung in the back kitchen was ringing gently, as if a woman's hand held the bell-rope.

On coming out from the kitchen, I was surprised to find that two doors, one belonging to the pantry, and the other to a large closet were open, both of which I had shut, after having examined the insides, when I first came into the house.

I entered the pantry and the closet, but without finding any clue to the solution of the mystery. On going back to the parlor I was still further surprised to find that the hearth-brush, that I had left standing by the side of the fire-place, was thrown down; and that my pipe, which I had left upright on the mantle piece against the wall, was broken in two pieces. There were no indications of anything further having happened in the room; my unfinished grog remained *in statu quo*, as did the few few other things on the table.

I made up the fire, sat down before it, and began to account for these remarkable occurrences. One hypothesis after another was proposed and then giving up, till at last being fatigued, and feeling that as midnight was now over there would be no repetition of the noises, I got into bed and soon fell asleep, and remained quite undisturbed. In the morning I hurried to inform the lady of my night's adventure. I could see that she was secretly well pleased that her experience had been mine also. In broad daylight I felt assured that the cause of noises was to be sought in the world of matter rather than spirits, and was to be found from without, rather than from within the house.

The situation of the house was an all-important consideration, and suggested a line of inquiry which terminated satisfactorily.

A railway went through the town, and not far from the house was the beginning of the tunnel. Having fancied that this might lead to the solution of the mystery, I went to the station and learned that recently a large quantity of earth had fallen away in the tunnel, at a spot close to the house, the foundations of which had thereby become exposed. I learned also that at five minutes to twelve at night, a heavy luggage train started for London, which arrived opposite the house in about five minutes; that the train was started from the town laden with local manufactures, which would account for its punctuality, and also for the noises being heard so exactly at midnight; passengor trains being so much lighter, together with the fact that in the daytime other noises around would prevent attention being drawn to the peculiar sounds.

The night following the discovery I went to the house just before [illegible] arranged the pipe and brush as before, and went down to the kitchen. At the usual time the train came thundering along, and just as it went by the house the engine driver, by arrangement, sounded his whistle. Simultaneously the chain clanked, the bell tinkled, and I saw the doors open. These were not fastened, so that the shaking of the house caused them to open, as they were hung a little on the incline. In the kitchen cupboard there was a chain hanging loosely against the wall, and resting on an old dish-cover that had been left there. In the parlor I found the brush and pipe prostrated.

Being quite satisfied, I left the house, and slept comfortably at the hotel.

Next morning I waited on the lady and informed her of my solution. She was much pleased, and at first refused to let the cottage on any other terms than those she had at first named; but at my pressing solicitation she consented that I should become her tenant at a slightly increased rental.

Even better than obtaining a comfortable little cottage at a low rent, was the acquaintanceship thus formed, which proved very valuable to my mother.

I should have added that when the tunnel was repaired, the shaking was hardly felt at all, and the noises were scarcely heard.

[Written for the Clayton Herald.]

THE MONOTONY OF LIFE.

BY MONITOR.

The general character of life is that of monotony. Whether we regard the life of man, with highly cultured intellect, or the life of the feathered songster as he warbles his shrill notes from tree to tree, making hills and valleys ring with sweetest melody, or the life of the beasts as they lazily graze in "meadows green," or even that of the vegetable world, as it lives and dies through the change of seasons, we are struck by the same remarkable fact that life, to all appearances, is a monotonous succession of scenes and events—all but incidental. We often wonder how the interest is kept up. We mingle in the same scenes to-day that engaged our attention yesterday and the days preceding. We never tire of going to bed at night, and we are very sorry when we have cause to tire of getting up in the morning. We never weary, except with regret, of breakfasting, dining, and supping, and yet these actions are repeated three hundred and sixty five times in the year, with renewed excitement on every succeeding occasion. We take off our clothes once every day and we put them on every day. We do this at nearly the same hour, in daily succession, and when health is good the pleasure derived from so doing is not marred by the repetition of the act; for the ebbing and flowing of our bodily sensations prepares us, without effort on our part, for all the vicissitudes of our existence. When hungry, food is agreeable; when weary, rest or sleep is a treat; when warm, the cool air is refreshing; when cold, the pleasure derived from a cheerful fireside is delicious. The excitement is kept up by contrasts; and we purchase the enjoyment of one feeling by encouraging the reverse. With health and youth and prosperity we should never be weary. It is age, weakness, and poverty that prepares us for death; and even that comes easy to most men at last, like a sleep, and the heaviness of the heart gives even the last sleep a welcome.—Every heart knows its own sorrows, and every bosom is acquainted with its own throbbings. Amid the toils and disappointments of this monotonous life many sad countenances are lighted up with a forced smile, and many crushed spirits are longing to be gone to where there are joys and employments ever varying and ever new, because ever enlarging and increasing. Blessed are they who shall be found ready when the change comes.

HOLMESBURG, PA.,
July 12th, 1869.

Moral of a pair of Stockings.

The following was written by a distinguished literary lady, of Troy, N. Y., and sent to a learned Judge of New Haven, on the eve of his marriage:

DEAR COUSIN:—Herewith you will receive a pair of woolen stockings, knit by my own hands; and be assured, dear cox, that my friendship for you is as warm as the material, active as the finger-work, and generous as the donation. But I consider this present as peculiarly appropriate on the occasion of your marriage. You will remark in the first place, that there are two individuals united in one pair, who are to walk side by side, guarding against coldness, and giving comfort as long as they last. The thread of their texture is mixed, and so alas! is the thread of life. In these, however, the white is made to predominate, expressing my desire and confidence that thus it will be with the color of your existence. No black is used, for I believe your lives will be wholly free from the black passions of wrath and jealousy. The darkest color here is blue, which is excellent when we do not make it too blue. Other appropriate thoughts arise in my mind regarding these stockings.

The most indifferent subjects, when viewed by the mind in a suitable frame, may furnish instructive inferences, as

"The iron dogs, the fuel and tongs,
The bellows that have leathern lungs:
The firewood, ashes, and the smoke,
Do all to righteousness provoke."

On to the subject. You will perceive that the tops of the stockings (by which I suppose courtship to be represented) are seamed, and by means of seaming are drawn into a snarl; but afterwards comes a time when the whole is made plain, and continues so to the end and final toeing off. By this I wish to take occasion to congratulate yourself that you are now through with seaming, and have come to plain reality.

Again, as the whole of these comely stockings was not made at once, but by the addition of one little stitch after another, put in with skill and discretion, until the whole presents the fair and equal piece of work which you see, so life does not consist of one great action, but millions of little ones combined; and so may it be with your lives. No stitch dropped when duties are to be performed, no wielding made where bad principles are to be reproved, or economy to be preserved; neither seaming nor narrowing where truth and generosity are in question.

Thus, every stitch of life made right and set in the right place, none either too large or too small, too tight or too loose; thus you many keep on your smooth and even course, making existence one fair and consistent piece, until, together, having passed the heel, you come to the very toe of life, and, in the final narrowing off the evil of this emblematical pair of companions and comforting associates, nothing appears but white, the token of innocence and peace, of purity and light. May you, like these stockings, the final stich being dropped and the work completed, go together from the place where you were formed, to a happier state of existence—a present from earth to heaven.

Hoping that these stocking and admonitions may meet a civil reception, I remain in the true blue friendship, seemly, yet without seeming yours,

FROM TOP TO TOE.

"IN BETTER CIRCUMSTANCES,"—Henry Ward Beecher says:

"It is true that men do not know how to value health till they lose it." It is the same with wealth. One says, "Sir, I have not always been as you see me now. I have been in better circumstances." Perhaps so; but I do not consider, madam, that you were in better circumstances. Because you once wore silk and now you wear calico. Pride and vanity dressed in silk, are not half so prosperous as meekness and gentleness dressed in the plainest garb, yea, in sackcloth."

THE line of conduct chosen by a young man during the five years from fifteen to twenty, will, almost in every instance, determine his character in after life. As he is then careful or careless, prudent or imprudent, industrious or indolent, truthful or dissimulating, intelligent or ignorant, temperate or dissolute, so will he be in after years, and it needs no prophet to cast his horoscope, or calculate his chance in life.