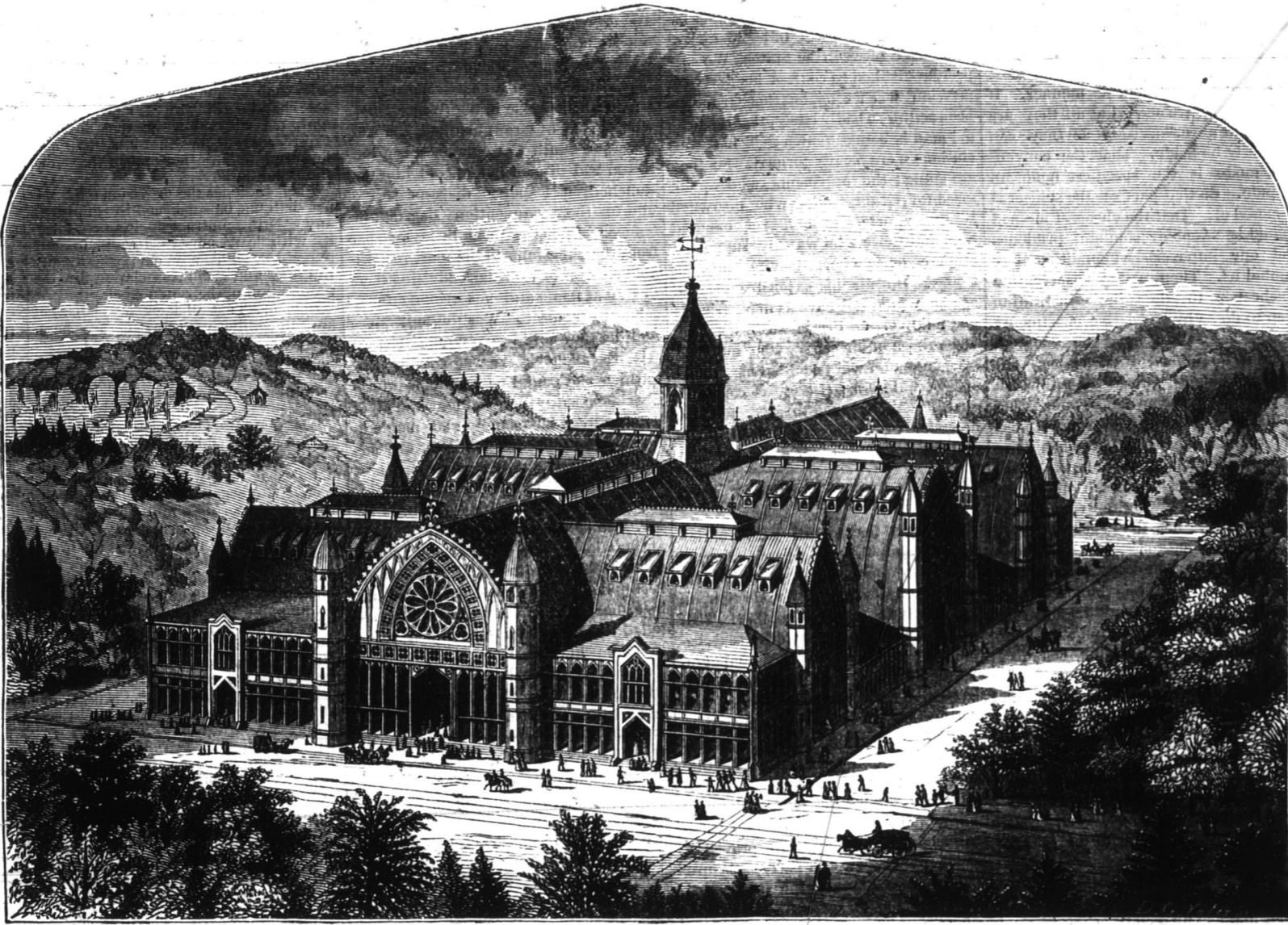


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CENTENNIAL EXPOSITION OF 1876.—THE AGRICULTURAL BUILDING.

CENTENNIAL EXPOSITION OF 1876.

The Agricultural Building.

One of the most impressive sections of the Centennial Exposition, in view of the interests of the great West, and of the class so powerfully represented in the present day by the Grange organization, will certainly be the "Palace of the Patrons of Husbandry," as it might appropriately be designated, but which in the nomenclature of the Centennial Commissioners is simply

THE AGRICULTURAL BUILDING.

This fine structure, having in its immediate vicinity a stock yard, with divisions for horses, cattle, sheep and swine, and poultry houses, will be located north of the Conservatory and on the east side of Belmont Avenue. The ground plan of this department, covering an area of about ten acres, is a parallelogram of 540 by 820 feet; constructed chiefly of wood and glass, it will consist of a long nave crossed by three transepts, both nave and transepts being constituted of truss arches of a Gothic style. This is intended for the reception of every kind of agricultural and dairy implements and utensils, except of course such as are properly included in the machinery department. Such an exhibition aided, as it will be, by the fraternal feeling which now exists among the farming profession, cannot fail to inspire a lively interest in the present, and be productive of substantial benefit in the future. There will also be arranged in this section specimens of grain, and products generally, which, considering the wide area and capabilities of the soil, should insure a national display of vast importance, and place the Agricultural interests of this country in a position to compare favorably with other developments of the national progress during the past century. The Farming fraternity should certainly take a lively, earnest, and liberal interest in making this department in particular, and the Centennial Exposition in general, an undoubted and proud success.

An eminently effective method of identifying the Agricultural interests with the culmination of the Celebration would be a mass convention of "Grange delegates" from every State in the Union, meeting in Philadelphia on the Fourth of July, 1876, and proceeding in a body to this section of the Exposition. Such a demonstration, and fraternal meeting, would be in accord with the spirit of the order, and the assemblage of Patrons of Husbandry, representing every variety of soil-cultivator from Maine to Texas, would be in itself an imposing and interesting national spectacle.

A series of experiments have lately been made by the Russian government with reference to the use of electricity for the head light of locomotives, a battery of forty-eight elements making everything distinct on the railway track to a distance of more than thirteen hundred feet.

DEACON OSGOOD'S HELP.

BY MARY M. COLBY.

The new minister was spending the afternoon at Deacon Osgood's. He came to Lynton, a small town in Pennsylvania, in February, and now it was June, and this was the first afternoon he had spent with the Deacon and his family.

Della Osgood looked very pretty in a drab mohair with a tiny bouquet of violets at her throat, and Mrs. Osgood looked very motherly and pleasant in her black alpaca and ruffled white apron and Johnnie Osgood (age five) tried to look as a deacon's son should, and the minister ought to have passed a very pleasant afternoon there, but he did not.

The first Sunday he preached in Lynton, and every Sunday since, he had seen some one in the Deacon's pew whom he did not see in the Deacon's parlor. She was a young woman with sad eyes and a face whereon he had never seen a smile. He had tried all the afternoon to find out who she was, without seeming curious, (he was young and unmarried, you know) and had failed. This was why he had not enjoyed his visit as well as he ought to have done.

At five o'clock Mrs. Osgood left the room, and soon after called Della out to help her get tea, and the minister was alone with Johnnie.

"So you are Johnnie Osgood, are you?" said the minister to him.

"Won't you come here and see me?"

"I can see you from here," answered Johnnie.

"I hope you are a good little boy?" said the minister smiling. "You ought to be, for you have a good father and mother. Don't you think so?"

"Oh I don't know. I want to run away, but they won't let me. My Pap talks as if he never was a little boy. What do you think? This afternoon 'fore you come, he told me if I said 'bully' while you was here he'd flog me. Was you ever a little boy?"

"Oh, yes," answered the minister.

"Ain't my sister Della pretty though?" was his next question.

"Very," said the minister.

"But she's the dumbest thing? The other night I wanted her to do my sums in division for me, and she couldn't do one of 'em, do you b'lieve? I made Melissa do 'em."

"Who is Melissa?"

"Why, she's our help. You've seen her. She sits in our seat in church, next to Pap. There's the bell, I'm going to get," and Johnnie disappeared through the open door, and was not seen again until after the blessing was asked at the well filled table.

After tea the Deacon turned to the minister and said:

"Mr. Ridgely, it is our custom to have family worship immediately after tea. I shall be glad to have you conduct it to-night."

The minister assented, and the Deacon raised his voice and called:

"Melissa?"

Just then Johnnie was seen going slyly to the window.

"Johnnie!" said his mother, reprovingly.

"John," said his father, sternly, "where are you going sir?"

"I'm going to get," answered Johnnie, as he slid quickly out of the window and rolled over on the fresh, green grass. Then Melissa entered, and the Deacon introduced her to the minister.

"Mr. Ridgely," he said, "this is our—ahem!—this is Miss Melissa Perry, Melissa, this is Mr. Ridgely."

The minister held the little hard blown hand in his moment and looked at the sweet, pale face, meek like the master's, and as clearly pale as a white morning-glory, and into the sad blue eyes. Then he motioned her to a chair next to him, and opened the Bible. He read a few verses of one of the "sweet old chapters," and then they sang a hymn. Melissa did not sing. She sat very still and listened, but she only heard two lines:

"Breathe, oh, breathe thy living spirit into every troubled breast."

Then the minister prayed, and when they rose from their knees, the room was dusky with shadows, but he was certain that there were tears on Melissa's cheeks, and somehow his heart ached for her.

"Surely they treat her kindly?" he thought as they went from the dining-room to the parlor; "they are a Christian family." He was puzzled, and when a few moments later he heard the rattling of china and glass in the next room, he involuntarily glanced at Della's hands; they were too white, too soft, to be pretty, he thought.

Melissa cleared the table in the dark and wept quietly all the while. Poor child! she was so disappointed. She had been in a little tremor of happiness all the morning, for she thought Mrs. Osgood would certainly invite her into the parlor a few moments to get acquainted with the minister, and after dinner she went to her room and put on a delicate lilac muslin dress, with a tiny lace frill, in the neck and sleeves; but at three o'clock Mrs. Osgood came into the kitchen and told her to go and put on a dark calico, for she must mix biscuits for supper, and she would spoil the muslin. Of course there was no parlor for her after that, and she was rather surprised when they called her in to prayers.

While she was washing the dishes Johnnie came stealing into the kitchen on tiptoe.

"Are they through praying, Melissa? What you crying 'bout? Did you break a dish?"

"No, Johnnie," she answered.

"Did you burn your finger, then?" he asked anxiously, with his fat little face upturned to hers. "If you did I'll wash the dishes, every one of 'em, and you can wipe 'em, Melissa."

She declined his offer of help, but he staid with her until the minister went away and by steady coaxing found out the reason why she wept.

Mr. Ridgely walked slowly home

from the Deacon's. He boarded with an aged widow, and he knew by the dim light burning in the parlor when he reached there, that she had retired. He was too restless to study or to sleep so he walked up and down the little garden in the starlight, with his hands clasped behind him in the style peculiar to ministers in thought. There were a great many roses blooming in the widow's garden. The soft night air was laden with their perfume, and they made him think of Melissa. Of course there was no resemblance between the flowers and Deacon Osgood's "help," for she was white and drooping like a lily, and they were in full, rich bloom; but she was pure like them, and sweet, like their breath, and they made him think of her. With the thought of her came a memory of what his old Aunt said to him the night before he came to Lynton.

"Judson," she said in her broad English, "you're going away with the grace of God in your heart; you've got the old Ridgely muscle, and the marrow of the spirit is in your bones, and your feet are well shod, but you lack one thing, you need a helpmate. Aye, my boy, you're not complete. You'll find it out some day, and when you do, follow the leadings of your heart. You've got an honest Ridgely heart, my boy, and it'll not lead you amiss."

Why did the roses make him think of English? Why did the thought of her bring his Aunt's words to his mind? He certainly could not have loved her when he had only spoken to her once, did you say? No, I suppose not. I believe it isn't called love in the beginning.

Johnnie and the minister became very intimate after that night. Johnnie liked him because he had once been a little boy, and he often went to the widow's to visit him. He told him about Melissa's crying the night he was at their house to tea, and he also told him that she had a lot of books in her bedroom that used to belong to her father—he guessed there was as many as five hundred, altogether.

One day the minister plucked two or three posies, a rose and a few geranium leaves from the widow's flower-bed and sent the wee bouquet to Melissa by Johnnie. Johnnie told him the next day that she kissed it after she thought he was out of the room, but he peeped through a crack in the door, and saw her do it. He went to the Deacon's father—he guessed there was as many as five hundred, altogether.

One night when none of the family were at prayer-meeting but herself and the Deacon, he undertook to go home with her alone, but before they had gone two squares the Deacon came puffing up to them, and talked "new pulpit" until they reached the gate.

By the last of September the minister, like everything else, had ceased to be new. Martha Janson had tried to get him, but failed; Amarantha Peabody had tried, and failed; Fannie Gauss had tried, and failed, and he was looked upon as belonging to "the church."

But he was not the church's. He was

not his own. Next to the Master he loved and served, he belonged to Melissa Perry. But he did not know it then.

One bright October day the knowledge came to him with its burden of sweet hopes and trembling fears. Would Melissa take what belongs to her, he wondered. How could he ever find out? The Lord through the mouth of Johnnie Osgood told him how.

One morning he went to the widow's and stayed with the minister until the clock struck twelve, when he caught up his hat and started for home.

"Stay and eat dinner with me, Johnnie," said the minister.

"I can't," said Johnnie. "I have to get, I have to wipe the dinner dishes for Melissa, she's going to the butter-woman's this afternoon. Why don't you go and see her?"

"I will," said the minister.

Johnnie meant the butter-woman, but the minister meant Melissa.

He went to the butter-woman's (she was a member of his church), and had been there an hour when Melissa came. She wore a dark calico dress and carried a bright tin pail on her arm. On her way out to the house (it was more than a mile from the town), she saw a little bunch of scarlet berries lying in the road. There was no bush near them; they were alone in their warm, bright beauty, and she picked them up and fastened them in her dress at the neck, wondering where they came from—just as the minister had often wondered where she came from. The minister saw the berries, and he forgot whether her dress was a calico one or not.

After she purchased the butter she took the tin pail on her arm again and went out at the kitchen door. The minister saw her go and he went out at the front door and soon overtook her and insisted on carrying her pail. They talked in a general way until they reached a bit of a woods through which they had to go, and then he persuaded her to sit down by him on an old log and rest. Something—perhaps it was the bright day or the independent autumn air—made her forget that she was Deacon Osgood's "help" and she talked unrestrainedly and with an intelligence that surprised him. At last with delicate tact he led her to talk about herself and she told him how her parents were both buried in one day leaving her penniless and friendless, and how she had been bound to Deacon Osgood until she was eighteen years old.

"They are kind to you are they not?" he asked.

"Yes, they are kind, but—" and she stopped abruptly.

"But what? Tell me all about it," he said encouragingly.

"They do not care for me," she answered with great tears in her violet eyes. "They do not love me—and nothing can live without care and love," she added.

The minister's heart was swelling under his coat but he kept very calm.

"How old are you?" he asked quietly.

"I am nineteen."

"Why not leave them? You are not obliged to stay."

"I have no home, no place to go to," she answered sadly.

"Come to me," said the minister. She looked at him wonderingly a moment, then she understood and went to him.

When she lifted her head from its nest in his gray coat, her eyes were glowing, and the sweet, pale face was beautified, transfigured.

"Where did you get that bunch of berries?" he asked, touching it caressingly, as a little gleam of sunlight looked through an opening in the trees and feasted a moment on its warmth and brightness.

"I found it lying alone in the road and I took it up—as you have taken me," she answered softly.

The bright hints that were gathering in the west warned her that supper time was approaching, and the minister took the pail of butter from its resting place at the end of the log, and they were soon at the Deacon's gate. The Deacon was in the barn-yard feeding the fowls and the minister went out there. Melissa went to the kitchen. Johnnie sat on the steps with a piece of apple pie in his hand and she bent down and softly kissed his brown cheeks.

"Have you been a courtin' Melissa?" he asked, looking at her wonderingly.

"I bet you have, 'cause your eyes look just like Della's when Tom Higgs comes to see her."

Melissa laughed and went in the house.

"How are you, Mr. Ridgely," said the Deacon as the minister entered the barn-yard. "It has been a fine day, sir, a very fine day. How is the new pulpit getting on?"

"I have not been in the church to-day," answered the minister almost impatiently. "I came to ask you Deacon—that is to speak with you about Miss Perry."

"About Melissa," asked the Deacon with surprise.

"About Melissa," answered the minister.

"Mr. Ridgely," said the Deacon with a lengthening face. "I have tried to do my duty by that girl. I pray for her morning and night at family worship, and I have several times prayed with her alone for more than three quarters of an hour at a time. I never let a Sunday pass without speaking to her about the concerns of her soul and yet she remains indifferent. She is growing hardened, and lately I have noticed—"

"You have noticed nothing of the kind," interrupted the minister. Then he said abruptly: "Deacon, I have asked Miss Perry to be my wife, and as she has been a member of your family for several years I feel that it is my duty to acquaint you—"

"Your wife!" exclaimed the astonished Deacon. "Why Mr. Ridgely, she is my help my bound girl."

"She is the daughter of the late Maxwell Perry," said the minister, quietly.

"But, sir, what will the church say?"

"I really do not know," answered the minister in a tone that meant "I really do not care."

"She is from a good family," continued the Deacon, "but she is not a church member, and I fear the congregation—"

"I have thought of accepting a call to the Bloomingtown church," said the minister slyly.

"Oh, no, no!" cried the alarmed Deacon. "You must not think of leaving us, Mr. Ridgely. The church has never been in so prosperous a condition, spiritually and temporarily. Don't speak of your leaving, Mr. Ridgely. As to your marrying Melissa, I am perfectly willing. I only thought—but there is the supper bell. Come up to the house."

Words fail to describe the amazement of the Lyntonians when they knew for a surety that their minister intended to marry Deacon Osgood's help. A few—among whom were Marissa Samson and Amarantha Peabody—hinted that he had better resign, but they were ordered to keep their hints to themselves by the more sensible ones, who when they recovered from the shock, went to work to find a parsonage. They decided upon a cottage opposite the church, for which they paid the sum of two thousand dollars.

The wedding took place Christmas morning in the church. The minister took his bride to his aunt's for a week's visit, and when they returned to Lynton the congregation had forgotten that Mrs. Judson Ridgely was once a bound girl and received her with open arms. They have never regretted their minister's choice.

Study to be Quiet.

A calm, peaceful frame of mind is what comparatively few persons have. Even trifling annoyances excite and disturb them. There are those, however, a happy few, who possess their souls in tranquil patience and unflinching equanimity. They behave and quiet themselves "as a child is weaned from its mother." They are so far weaned from creature comforts, by merging their wills in God's will, they take whatever comes, resigned and pleased. Though provoked they keep their temper, though tried they complain not. We should make it a part of our religion so to do.

"I dare no more fret," said John Wesley, "than to curse and swear."

And relative to persons of a contrary spirit, with whom he has frequently forced to come in contact, he observes:

"To have persons at my ears murmuring and fretting at everything is like tearing the flesh from my bones. By the grace of God I am discontented at nothing. I see God on the throne and ruling all things."