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The National is located within fifty yards of the State House, it is the most convenient, attractive and pleasant headquarters for members of the Legislature in the city. Terms are low to suit the times, fare unassisted, attention and accommodations the best.

Saloon and Billiards

In basement. Two of the best tables in the City, for the use of guests, free of charge. Dec. 12th, 1876.

Poetry.

I WOULD NOT, IF I COULD.

I would not dig my pas-
Up from its grave of wistfulness and re-
gret;
Up from its hopes—which glimmered
but to set
Its dreams, that could not last.

Yet I can look before
And profit by the lessons sadly learned
As children, plying with the learned,
turned,
And tempt a glow no more.

I would not, if I could,
Live over again this dark, uncertain
life.

This slipping backward in the daily
strife
Of reaching after good.

Yet I can know how weak
Are all below, and so sweet charity
Will cling, and grow about each form I
see.

And thus to me will speak:
I would not open out
The half-healed wounds of other years
long fled,
Twere better they were numbered with
the dead—
Better than fear or doubt.

Yet I can truly say,
Let the dead past bury the dead. We go
So swiftly onward, to life's sun-set glow—
And then there is no day!

Life is too short to waste
In vain repetitions or in weak re-sets;
The strongest heart endures and never
rests.

Our joys it may not taste.
And he who clings on
Bravely and firm in the allotted way,
Gaining new strength with every dark-
ened ray,
Shall surely reach the dawn.

And so I would not flit
Up from the grave the shadows of my
past;
The clouds that all my sky once overcast
Into the night may drift.

For there's enough to fill
Each hour and moment of the days to
come;
Then wherefore woo the shadows to our
house:
The valleys to our hill?

Happy at last.

"I do wish, Marguerite, you'd listen to common sense," said Mrs. Dale.

Mrs. Dale was sitting by a table opposite to a rose-tinted window, whence a lovely summer landscape stretched itself away—green meadows, braided with the silver band of a tiny river, and clusters of woods seeming to lean against the sky.

She was a widow who had not yet lost all the fair round outlines of her girlish beauty, of the luxuriant auburn braids of her yet unsilvered hair.

And Marguerite, her lovely daughter, sat on the other side of the table, the slanting sunlight touching her golden tresses, and her dazzling complexion seeming purer and more like a newly blossomed sweet pea than ever, by contrast with her light dress.

Well, mamma," Marguerite Dale spoke almost recklessly, "what would you have me do?"

"Mr. Alcotte has proposed to you?"

"Yes."

Marguerite's hand involuntarily closed over the open letter lying in her lap, while she turned her face suddenly away, as if the glow of the noon sunlight hurt her eyes.

"And you actually intend to refuse him?" persisted Mrs. Dale.

Marguerite shuddered slightly.

Then rising, she crossed to her mother's side, and placing her hand on the back of her chair, looked down into the upturned face.

"Mamma, would you have me marry a man whom I do not love?"

"My dear, my dear," reasoned the mother, "this idea of yours is purely visionary. True happiness is founded solely on esteem."

"Mamma, that's nonsense!"

"Marguerite!"

"Well, mamma, it is. And I am not going to barter away the gold of my heart for any such dry leaves of theory. I love one man only—and that is Geoffrey Rossmore. And I will never marry any one else."

"But, Marguerite, dear"—Mrs. Dale was half-frightened by the vehemence of her daughter's manner—"Geoffrey Rossmore is dead."

"Two, or even half a dozen, persons, have survived a dozen shipwrecks than that. And I know—oh, mamma, I feel it in my soul that he is not not dead: My heart would not beat as it beats now were there not an answering throbb to it somewhere in the wide world."

"Then where is he? How do you account for this long—and unbroken—silence on his part?" demanded Mrs. Dale.

"I don't account for it, mamma—I only trust."

"Marguerite," pleaded her mother, "he has forgotten you, even if he is still alive. Give him up. Provenge on the vanity pride and spirit."

But Marguerite resolutely shook her head.

"My daughter, went on Mrs. Dale, "Mr. Alcotte is your uncle's friend. One reason of my coming to your uncle's house this summer was to afford you this golden opportunity. Here lies at your feet—wealth, ease, a luxurious home for your mother, as well as yourself!"

"Mamma, I would rather go out working by the day," interrupted Marguerite.

"Work, then, ungratefully girl!" burst out Mrs. Dale, angrily. "For I certainly shall no longer remain a pensioner on Col. Dale's bounty, since you have contemptuously spurned his best friend from you. Sew—sew—sew—whatever you desire, you best. Something it is necessary for you to do, and that quickly."

Marguerite turned, pale and silent, and went to her uncle's room.

Colonel Dale was bending, absently over some letters—he looked up with a start as Marguerite entered.

"Well, Peggy," he said, caressingly, for his pretty-niece was rather a favorite with him, "have you come to tell me you will be Fernand Alcotte's wife?"

"No, uncle," answered Marguerite firmly.

"Why not?" demanded the old man.

"I do not love him."

"Well," said Colonel Dale, intently watching her, "and why don't you love him? Are you still thinking of that never-to-do-well, Geoffrey Rossmore, who was shipwrecked six months ago?"

"Yes, uncle," despairingly cried out Marguerite. "I am still thinking of him. I am his affianced wife, and I will be faithful to him as long as I live."

"Then you are a fool," slowly uttered Colonel Dale, a savage frown knitting his brows.

"Uncle," went on Marguerite, unheeding his last remark, "will you help me to get a renovation?"

"No," thundered the irate old man, "I won't!"

That was the end, of course, of their easy-going life at Dalewood place.

Mrs. Dale and Marguerite went into cheap lodgings.

Mrs. Dale spent her time, like Niobe, "all tears."

Marguerite toiled from place to place in search of any work which might keep starvation from their door.

And in the midst of all this Mr. Alcotte renewed his offer.

Mrs. Dale brightened visibly.

"Oh, Marguerite, you never will refuse him a second time?"

"Mamma," said Marguerite, "I have not changed my mind in any respect. I would rather starve than sell myself for gold!"

"Very well," said Mrs. Dale, setting her teeth together. "I have endured the consequences of your caprices long enough. I will go back to Dalewood. Your uncle offers me a home."

"Good said," said Uncle Dale, when the mother arrived at Dalewood. "There is nothing like extreme measures. She can't hold out long now. We shall have her back here eating 'humble pie' in less than a month."

But there was more resource and resolution in Marguerite's character than either her mother or her uncle gave her credit for.

One morning she was asked by a gentleman if she would accept a situation.

"Give me something to do," said she despairingly: "I don't care what it is."

"Will you go abroad as companion to a crazy lady?" dubiously inquired the other. "Good salary, but troublesome. The lady's mother goes with her, too but"

"Yes," said Marguerite, "I will go."

Mrs. Gerard knew nothing about traveling—Miss Gerard was possessed with a general idea that a regiment of soldiers was following her to the ocean's end—and between them both her little heroine had but a sorry time of it.

But she persevered, smiling as her heart were not growing faint within her.

It was the day for the coming of the vessel, and the three ladies had come on board—Mrs. Gerard nervous and flustered, Miss Gerard perpetually watching an opportunity to escape the vigilance of her guardians, and Marguerite worn and wearied with the cares of packing.

"Here's a mistake," cried Mrs. Gerard. "I thought that we had engaged No. 14."

"So we did," said Marguerite.

"And here's the officer says No. 14 was taken a month ago, and there's some mistake, and we shall have to go in a dark, stuffy little room under the wheel. Oh dear, oh dear!"

"I am sorry, ma'am," said the officer, "but it is the only state-room left. Perhaps however, the gentleman who has engaged No. 14 might be willing to give it up to the ladies?"

"Dear Marguerite do ask him," said Mrs. Gerard, bursting into teels tears.

Marguerite hesitated.

It was not a pleasant mission, but there seemed no alternative.

Conducted by the stewardess, she knocked at the door of No. 14, one of the best cabins on board.

"If you please sir," said the voluble woman "here's three ladies—as supposed they were to have 14, and there's only 6 left, as there's no ventilation and only two single berths, and it you mind changing?"

The state-room door opened.

A tall figure darkened its expanse, and Marguerite dropped her traveling shawl with a low cry.

"Geoffrey! oh Geoffrey!"

"Marguerite is it possible that this you?"

"Yes," said Marguerite, recalling herself. "I am going to Italy."

His face blanched.

"On your wedding tour, I suppose?" said he. "I have heard of Mr. Alcotte's devotion."

"No," answered Marguerite, quietly; "as companion to two ladies. I am seeking my own living now, Geoffrey. Uncle has turned me out of doors, and even mama has left me."

"Why?"

The word escaped like a fluttering bird from between his closed lips.

"Because I have refused to marry Mr. Alcotte. Who is he, I was true to the man who, it seems, has forgotten me."

"Never Marguerite!" he cried. "My treasure—my love, listen, and you yourself will confess that I am guiltless of blame."

And then still standing in the state-room door Geoffrey Rossmore told her of his shipwreck and marvelous escape in one of the ships battered boats of the long fever that ensued and his slow homeward progress.

He had written more than once, it seemed, but his letters, entrusted to careless messengers, had never reached their destination.

"And when I reached England," he concluded, "I heard that Fernand Alcotte was your accepted lover.

What could I do but shrink from beholding you, and resolve that my inappropriate presence should never mar your prospects?"

"Oh, Geoffrey!"

"Ah, dearest, you have never suffered the pangs of jealousy. And when, at last, the bequest of a distant cousin placed me abroad, I decided to leave this country forever. And thus it happens that I engaged a passage in this vessel."

"But, Geoffrey"—with a smile and blush—"you—you will not go now?"

"Not if you will stay in England with me," said Mr. Rossmore.

Mrs. and Miss Gerard went to Italy without a maid and had No. 14 all to themselves.

Colonel Dale and his sister-in-law have concluded that it is useless to enter the lists against love; and Mr. and Mrs. Geoffrey are happy at last.

A man with the most lonesome expression that an artist ever conjured up for canvas, halted at an eating stand on the Central Market yesterday and said:

"My good woman, I have been robbed of eight thousand dollars and misery."

"Poor man!" she promptly sighed.

"Yes, robbed of eight thousand dollars, and I am a hundred miles from home and hungry and penniless."

"And you want something to eat?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"You shall have it. Sit right down here."

He sat down and she gave him some coffee, a piece of meat and a biscuit. When he had finished eating, he said:

"Madame, did you really believe my story?"

"No, sir," she answered.

"You thought I lied did you?"

"I knew you did."

"But you gave me food."

"So did I. My boy found a dog yesterday and gave him more than he could eat. I simply gave you what was left, to save filling up the wastebasket."

"Madame," began the man, as his mouth commenced to draw around, "madam, I—I don't see whether I'm ahead of the dog or the dog ahead of me on this thing, but I know you're ahead of both, and I feel sick. You played it well, and if there is any dying declaration in my case, I won't mix you in. Bye-bye, old gal—I'm failing fast."—*Detroit Free Press.*

A RAT IN A BUSTLE.—But for the pluck of a young and pretty woman the other morning there would have been an exciting scene in a local train on one of our railroads.

The blustering condition of the morning made people do their clothing with an unusual degree of alacrity.

The young lady referred to took the train, and having settled herself in a seat commenced to review a hastily-made toilet.

Feeling something move behind her she gave an indignant look at the young man who occupied the seat with her supposing that he had placed his hand upon the ground sacred to the latest style of bustle. A crawling sensation quickly convinced her that something other than a human hand was threading the mysterious mazes of the garments beneath her red petticoat.

She followed the object with her hand until it made a semicircle around her body and then seized it. Had the young man dared he would have assisted her, but those striped stockings that had just cost seventy-five cents, were not to be profaned by a man's rude touch. Pale as death the young lady whispered to him to raise the window quickly. He did so, and supposing that she might have eaten something for her breakfast that did not agree with her, instantly hopped out of the car. Scarcely had he gone, so, when, with her other hand, she drew forth a huge rat and slung him into the middle of next July. The animal had probably got into the early hours of a very cold morning.—*Pec Dee Bee.*

ZEB VANCE STOVE.

"All honors are attended with disadvantages." The uses which are made of Gov. Vance's name and face are as curious as they are numerous.

They have "Zeb Vance" cigars with the picture of the statesman on the box. There are bank checks with the benign countenance of the Governor adorning the upper corner.

There's a beverage called "Zeb Vance Whiskey." Four thousand dogs wag their respective tails at the call of "Zeb," and should there be a resurrection day for dogs, as many more would rise up and claim the title.

There are others still, but the latest is a cooking stove which is now being cast as the "Zeb Vance" and which will be received by H. T. Butler in this city at an early day. It will also be decorated with the picture in cast iron.

Give us a rest.—*Charlotte Observer.*

A HORSED NEGRO.—A colored man who had two genuine horns on his face, from Martin county, N. C., passed through here on last Saturday on his way to New York, where he intends to go on exhibition.

The sight was truly novel and excited the curiosity of all our citizens, both learned and the unlearned.

Some of them were doubting Thomases, and could not believe them until they had put their hands on them and felt for themselves.—*Franklin (Va) Tribune.*

There are two periods in every man's life when he feels, deep down in the heart, that if the earth was to open and swallow him up it would be a pleasure to him. One is when he steals up stairs with the old man's razor to take his first shave, and the other is the first Sunday in a high hat.

Danbury News: The telephone will be the death of the present telegraph line—that is, all the wires will have to be buried under ground, or the wicked girls will climb the poles and hear what the boys are talking about in the great offices.

A piece of coral five inches high, six inches in diameter at the top and two at the base, was recently taken from the submarine cable at Port Darwin, Australia. The cable was four years old.

A farmer in the pine lands near Hammond, about 60 miles from New Orleans, on the Jackson Railroad, last year made 400 gallons of cane syrup (10 barrels) on one acre, and sold it for \$300.

The scheme for employing female ticket-sellers on the railways of England has failed, passengers having made love to them kept the crowd away.

There are seven live insurance companies in the city of New York. This number embraces good, bad and indifferent.

The city belle who tried to drive a cow over the bars indulged in high-heeled "shoes." We are sorry to say that the aforesaid is a pun.

Perfected claims 1,000 feet above sea level have been found on N. C. Irvin's ranch in the Rocky mountains.

The "Gath"ometer of Bohemia does not believe in the sharp points of paragraphs. He is always point blank.— *Herald.*

It is surprising how quickly bakers' loaves shrink when the price of flour rises even the slightest.

A Pennsylvania company has built a bullet-proof passenger car for use on a Cuban railroad.

The Danvers (Mass.) hospital will cost \$3,300 for each patient. This is a rather a steep building.

Mobile discovered a two-hundred-pound frog. It was singing jaguar.

In times of domestic war prepare for a piece of your wife's mind.

The postage stamp was first used in 1840, and originated in England.