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## THE GLEANER

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**CHOSEN.**  
Geraldine Spencer was the only daughter of the well-known Col. Huber. Spencer one of the wealthiest planters of Mississippi. The Col. was a fiery blooded gentleman of the old school in those days, "before the war," of which we are speaking. His grandfather was an intimate and trusted friend of Washington.

His father was a brigadier general in the last war with Great Britain, and the Colonel himself was a graduate of West Point and one of the most dashing and daring officers under "Old Rough and Ready," in the picnic of a war which we had with Mexico a generation ago. Col. Spencer was a leader in some of the most daring exploits south of the Rio Grande. He was complimented more than once in the official dispatches, and a brilliant military career—that is as the state of the country permitted—was before him had he chosen to adopt the military profession; but though the colonel would have preferred fighting to eating, he resigned his commission in the army, and went home to his plantation in Mississippi. He knew that a horde of hungry young officers were clamoring and clatter, clawing for positions in the army, and he preferred they should have them, especially as he saw a prospect of a lengthy peace before the country; a period of idleness for the army, which would fret such a high son as his to death.

He perceived all this, we say, and went back to his plantation on the Mississippi, and devoted himself to his family.

The latter consisted of his only son and daughter. Hubert, named of course, after himself, was in his second year at West Point; the wife was dead long ago; and Geraldine presided over his household.

One reason why, perhaps, there was such a strong affection between father and daughter was because they were so much alike. She was high spirited, as independent and as proud as he. She was as beautiful as an houri, with her wealth of jet black waving hair, her brilliant complexion, her marvelous eye-bright matches figure, her patrician features, and her wonderful grace of voice and manner.

Geraldine had numberless admirers and devotees. Many from the north where she had spent a couple of years, and her own sunny south produced myriads, but she seemed to care for none of them.

The Colonel used to chide her at times for the repeated snubbings she gave her callers, without regard to their social position and standing. She would leave them at any time and go with her father on a tramp through the woods or on fishing in the river.

After all, there is nothing so captivating in a pretty woman—or any woman—that matter—as an absolute independence of character, an independence which preserves one's self respect at all times, and humbles the pride of the proudest of the lords of creation. It is just that sort of a woman that all men are most anxious to secure for a prize.

One summer afternoon Geraldine and her father were sitting in the shade of the long, low porch which extended in front of their house. The Colonel was smoking his cigar, and the daughter, who was richly dressed, was gently rocking back and forth, and looking off at the ye low Mississippi, along which a high decked steamer was laboriously plowing its way.

A close observer would have seen that the beautiful daughter had some serious trouble on her mind. She was uneasy and restless. The swaying of her chair was fitful and uneven. Sometimes she smiled of the fragrant sprig of magnolia in her hand in a nervous way, and her lustre eyes seemed to be brighter—and more flashing than usual.

But the colonel noticed nothing; for he knew the superb pose of his daughter so well, that he did not believe anything short of an earthquake could disturb it. So he continued placidly smoking his cigar, while his paper rested idly in his lap, and he looked off toward the Mississippi. Suddenly he rose up. "Where is Sidney?" he abruptly asked.

"With my whole heart and soul!" There was a fervency, a depth of feeling, in this exclamation, accompanied by the flushed cheeks, the sparkling eye and tremulous hand that rested in the palm of her father, which spoke her soul's earnestness. "Well, if that's the case," said Col. Spencer, throwing away his cigar, "all I've got to say is you are both confounded simpletons if you don't get married—here!"

This was a consent with considerable emphasis. Poor Geraldine! the proud, brave girl broke down at last. She knew it would be a terrible sacrifice for her father to yield her to another, and she held the gravest doubts of ever receiving his assent; but he gave it so promptly and willingly that she could only throw her arms about his neck and murmur between her sobs—

"You are the best father that ever lived and I hate to leave you." "Never mind about that," he replied, soothingly, "I know it will be your happiness to do so. I could never forgive myself if I stood in your way. I shall fix you in a house to suit myself, and then I shall live with you about five fifths of the time. If either or both undertake to interfere with me, I shall put you both out of the house."

"Then happy Geraldine gave her father another hug, and seemed loath to leave him; but he said: "Come, daughter; Sydney, I know, is waiting for your answer. Go and tell him. I hope he will feel better." "I know he will," was the laughing utterance of Geraldine, as she slipped away.

Sydney Williams was but a short distance off. As the father turned his head to follow his daughter, he saw the man's head, covered with its huge, curly wig, resting upon his arms, as though he were asleep though that was hardly possible under the circumstance.

As Geraldine passed beyond she caught sight of her lover, and turned abruptly and approached him so softly that he did not hear her. He had thrown his head forward on his arms, resting on the stand, and he formed a strange figure in his English suit of a former generation.

Sydney moved as though it were a fly, and then she laughed in a low, soft, merry way, which caused him to raise his head and look longingly at the beautiful face. "Oh, speak!" he gasped, "has he consented?" The poor fellow's whole soul was in the question, and she saw how cruel it was to keep him in suspense.

"He says he thinks we will be simpletons if we don't marry each other." Sydney caught her in his arms, and it may be said the contract was sealed then and there. The young man was always partial to the sweet perfume of the magnolia, but now since it is associated so intimately with his winning the love of his heart, there is nothing in the world of a vegetable nature to which he is so partial as a sprig of magnolia.

The other night a man came to Little Rock and began to exhibit the moon through a tripod. Old Mack, the colored fisherman, came up and listened very intently to the exhibitor as he explained the peculiarities of the stars. Pretty soon he left, and after a while returned with a stove pipe mounted on a step ladder.

"Heeb's whar yer ken see de moon an' de seven stars for half price," he began. "De plantation nigger whar would rob his wife an' children by gibben ten cents tar look at de moon through dat man's scope, when he ken look through mine for a nicker, oughter be reated for slander. Come right up. See de moon boss? any five cents. Gimmy er a nicker, boy, an' see Jubitan an' his gran-mudder, de moon. Here, lady, take a look. Ssy, John, play me a couple of chunes on dat mouf harp." John began playing, and the people left the striped telescope and came over to the stove pipe observatory. The outraged exhibitor finally came over and asked:

"What are you doing?" "Zibitan' de planita." "I pay my license to the city, and I don't want you to come around with your stove pipe and step ladder." "Well, ef yer pays der chunes in dat yer pays 'nough for boff ob us. Come up, gentlemen an' see de planter Satan. John, gin me a nudder chune. Yer's

moon eyed, aint yer?" "Ssy!" "Ssy yourself. Come up an' see de moon. Play stroug, John." "I say."

"Yer's done said hit. Give us a waltze, John?" "I'm going down the street, and if you follow me I'll hurt you." "Ise got a right ter zibit de moon anywhar in dis town; Ise a citizen. Ise a gwine ter use yer for a advertistiu' card. If yer doan like de situation; discharge yerself!"

"Yer's done said, said. Giu tis a strong chune, John." "Just then a merchant came up and exclaimed: "If you don't bring me step ladder back, I'll have you arrested."

"I'll fetch it back, boss. Ef dis town aint got no interest in science, hit aint no coupmint of mine. Ef de folkes is determined ter grow up in darkness, de hem ob my garments is free from stain." It has always been thus. Galileo experienced a similar trouble.—Little Rock Gazette.

### A FOCUS OF INDUSTRY.

Altoona, in the heart of the Alleghenies, is a town created by a railroad, and it is a striking example of what a newly industrial community can be made. It is the work shop and center of equipment and administration of the Pennsylvania Railroad. The road, with its connection employs 50,000 hands, of whom 3,000 are always at work here, making and repairing the various parts of this gigantic machine of transportation. There are forty acres of car, and machine shops where 100 locomotives are built and 20 repaired every year. Some of these engines weigh forty tons each. The car shops use up 8,000,000 feet of lumber a year; and make 4,000 freight cars and 100 passenger cars costing from \$625 to \$3,500 each, every year. The railroad company has a very perfect chemists' laboratory and testing establishment in which so very interesting and critical experiments have been successfully carried out and in connection with this, or supplementary to it, is a school for the education of young men specially for duties connected with the business of railroading. This school promises to become one of the most valuable adjuncts to this great business in the near future. The entire town affords one of the most striking and beautiful instances of organized and systematic industry which the world can show.

### A SOLDIER'S PROPORTION.

A young officer was dancing in a set of Lancers in a crowded dressing-room; with an extreme pretty girl, to whom he made himself most agreeable. After the dance was over he took her to a chary and, seating himself beside her, began to mourn his celibacy.

"It is exceedingly easy to remedy that," said she. "I don't think so at all, in fact, I do not know a girl who would marry me."

She laughed and replied: "Just go and ask some one here to-night, and I venture to say you will be accepted by the first."

"Ah! I am not sure of that. But will you—take me?" "With pleasure." And a few months later they were married.

### COULDN'TER DOLES.

A Galveston datkey has returned from a business trip to the interior of the State very much disgusted. "Didn't you receive any offers to pick cotton?" asked a friend. "Yes, which as dey was: A man offered me one-third ob de amount I pick-d; and when I looked at de field I saw for myself dat when it was all picked it wouldn't amount to one-third; so I left for home."

"You was in luck dat he didn't fool yer." "You bet I was, Sandy. My refmetic is all what added me. I tell yer, all send yer children to school."—Galveston News.

### "HURRY UP ANYHOW."

A boy with a business look in his eye recently entered a dry goods store on Monroe Avenue, Detroit, and said his mother had sent him for sixty spoons of No. 1 thread. "Don't you mean one spoon of No. 60 thread?" inquired the clerk after puzzling over the matter.

"Maybe that's it," dubiously responded the boy. "I guess you'd better go back home and find out." The boy departed but returned in a moment with a satisfied look around his mouth as explained:

"Say, it won't make a bit of difference which way we have it, for mother said you're to charge it anyhow." "Statistics prove that a man who is knocked about in the world lives longer than one whose life is one of ease and comfort." There are exceptions of course. For instance, we read of women who died suddenly in a shower of spite drivers. Firmly he got a kick that lifted him clear over the side of the wagon; had his head run into a bank by the roadside where he dwindled down into a heap like a gum shoe discouraged by a street car, and mummified as he rubbed his en-sanguinated nose.

"Who'er blazes!" ever thought the cat-iron man'd gone around with steam up an' disfigured as a blazed old Quaker. It is the old, old story with some new clothes on. A man came in from the county with an old shot-gun lying in the bottom of his wagon. He tied his team to a post on Main street, and, walking to the rear of the wagon, caught the gun by the muzzle and pulled it out. An hour later he had sold it for two dollars, and before night was in the station-house, with a half dozen "drunk and disorderly" charges booked against him. The papers may preach until they are hoarse, but people will never learn how to handle fire arms.—Modern Argo.

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