

THE FRANKLIN TIMES.

VOL. XXIII. LOUISBURG, N. C., FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1893. NUMBER 33.

TO PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS.

The Superintendent of Public Schools of Franklin county will be in Louisburg on the second Thursday of February, April, July, September, October and December, and remain for three days, if necessary, for the purpose of examining applicants to teach in the Public Schools of this county.

- Professional cards. M. COOKE & SON, ATTORNEYS-AT-LAW, LOUISBURG, N. C. WILL attend the courts of Nash, Franklin, Granville, Warren and Wake counties, also the Superior Court of North Carolina, and the U. S. Circuit and District Courts.

THE SCARLET LETTER.

By NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

While this passed, Hester Prynne had been standing on her pedestal still with a fixed gaze toward the stranger; so fixed a gaze that at moments of intense absorption all other objects in the visible world seemed to vanish, leaving only him and her. Such an interview perhaps would have been more terrible than to meet him as she now did, with the hot, midday sun burning down upon her face and lighting up its shame; with the scarlet token of infamy on her breast; with the sin born infant in her arms; with a whole people, drawn forth as to a festival, staring at the features that should have been seen only in the quiet gleam of the fireside, in the happy shadow of a home or beneath a matronly veil at church. Dreadful as it was, she was conscious of a shelter in the presence of these thousand witnesses.

It was better to stand thus, with so many betwixt him and her, than to greet him face to face, they two alone. She fled for refuge, as it were, to the public exposure, and dreaded the moment when his protection should be withdrawn from her. Involved in these thoughts, she scarcely heard a voice behind her until it had repeated her name more than once in a loud and solemn tone, audible to the whole multitude. "Hester Prynne," said the voice.

It has already been noticed that directly over the platform on which Hester Prynne stood was a kind of balcony or open gallery appended to the meeting house. It was the place where proclamations were wont to be made, amid an assemblage of the magistracy, with all the ceremonial that attended such public observances in those days. Here, to witness the scene which we are describing, sat Governor Bellingham himself, with four sergeants about his chair, bearing halberds, as a guard of honor. He wore a dark feather in his hat, a border of embroidery on his cloak and a black velvet tunic beneath—a gentleman advanced in years with a hard experience written in his wrinkles. He was not ill fitted to be the head and representative of a community which owed its origin and progress and its present state of development, not to the impulses of youth, but to the stern and tempered energies of manhood and the somber sagacity of age, accomplishing so much precisely because it imagined and hoped so little.

The other eminent characters, by whom the chief ruler was surrounded, were distinguished by a dignity of mien, belonging to a period when the forms of authority were felt to possess the sacredness of divine institutions. They were, doubtless, good men, just and sage. But, out of the whole human family, it would not have been easy to select the same number of wise and virtuous persons who should be less capable of sitting in judgment on an erring woman's heart and disentangling its mesh of good and evil than the sages of rigid aspect toward whom Hester Prynne now turned her face. She seemed conscious, indeed, that whatever sympathy she might expect lay in the larger and warmer heart of the multitude; for as she lifted her eyes toward the balcony the unhappy woman grew pale and trembled.

The voice which had called her attention was that of the reverend and famous John Wilson, the eldest clergyman of Boston, a great scholar, like most of his contemporaries in the profession, and withal a man of kind and genial spirit. This last attribute, however, had been less carefully developed than his intellectual gifts, and was, in truth, rather a matter of shame than self-congratulation with him. There he stood, with a border of grizzled locks beneath his skull cap; while his gray eyes, accustomed to the shaded light of his study, were winking, like those of Hester's infant, in the unadorned sunshine. He looked like the darkly engraved portraits which we see prefixed to old volumes of sermons, and had no more right than one of those portraits would have to step forth, as he now did, and meddle with a question of human guilt, passion and anguish.

"Hester Prynne," said the clergyman, "I have striven with my young brother here, under whose preaching of the word you have been privileged to sit"—Here Mr. Wilson laid his hand on the shoulder of a pale young man beside him. "I have sought, I say, to persuade this golly youth that he should deal with you here in the face of heaven and before these wise and upright rulers and in hearing of all the people as touching the villainess and blackness of your sin. Knowing your natural temper better than I, he could better judge what arguments to use, whether of tenderness or hardness and obstinacy, inasmuch that you should no longer hide the name of him who tempted you to this grievous fall. But he opposes to me (with a young man's overfulness, albeit wise beyond his years) that it were wronging the very nature of woman to force her to lay open her heart's secrets in such broad daylight and in the presence of so great a multitude. Truly, as I sought to convince him, the shame lay in the commission of the sin, and not in the showing of it forth. What say you to it once again, Brother Dimmesdale? Must it be so or I that shall deal with this poor sinner's soul?"

There was a murmur among the dignified and reverend occupants of the balcony, and Governor Bellingham gave expression to its purport, speaking in an authoritative voice, although tempered with respect toward the youthful clergyman whom he addressed. "Good Master Dimmesdale," said he, "the responsibility of this woman's soul lies greatly with you. It behooves you, therefore, to exhort her to repentance and to confession as a proof and consequence thereof."

erend Mr. Dimmesdale, a young clergyman who had come from one of the great English universities, bringing all the learning of the age into our wild forest land. His eloquence and religious fervor had already given the earnest of high eminence in his profession. He was a person of very striking aspect, with a white, lofty and impending brow, large, brown, melancholy eyes, and a mouth which, unless when he forcibly compressed it, was apt to be tremulous, expressing both nervous sensibility and a vast power of self-restraint. Notwithstanding his high native gifts and scholarlike attainments there was an air about this young minister—an apprehensive, a startled, a half-frightened look—as of a being who felt himself quite astray and at a loss in the pathway of human existence, and could only be at ease in some seclusion of his own. Therefore, so far as his duties would permit, he trod in the shadowy bypaths and thus kept himself simple and childlike, coming forth, when occasion was, with a freshness and fragrance and dewy purity of thought which some people said, affected them like the speech of an angel.

Such was the young man whom the Reverend Mr. Wilson and the governor had introduced so openly to the public notice, bidding him speak in the hearing of all men to that mystery of the woman's soul, so sacred even in its pollution. The trying nature of his position drove the blood from his cheek and made his lips tremulous. "Speak to the woman, my brother," said Mr. Wilson. "It is of moment to her soul, and therefore, as the worshipful governor says, momentous to thine own, in whose charge she is. Exhort her to confess the truth!"

The Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale bent his head in silent prayer, as it seemed, and then came forward. "Hester Prynne," said he, leaning over the balcony and looking down steadfastly into her eyes, "thou hearest what this good man says and seest the accountability under which I labor. If thou feelest it to be for thy soul's peace, and that thy earthly punishment will thereby be made more effectual to salvation, I charge thee to speak out the name of thy fellow sinner and fellow sufferer! Be not silent from any mistaken pity and tenderness for him; for, believe me, Hester, though he were to step down from a high place and stand there beside thee on thy pedestal of shame, yet better were it so than to hide a guilty heart through life. What can thy silence do for him, except it tempt him—yea, compel him, as it were—to add hypocrisy to sin? Heaven hath granted thee an open ministry, that thereby thou mayest walk out an open triumph over the evil within thee and the sorrow without. Take heed how thou deniest to him—who perishes hath not the courage to grasp it for himself—the bitter but wholesome cup that is now presented to thy lips!"

The young pastor's voice was tremulously sweet, rich, deep and broken. The feeling that it so evidently manifested, rather than the direct purport of the words, caused it to vibrate within all hearts, and brought to the surface into one accord of sympathy. Even the poor lady at Hester's bosom was affected by the same influence, for it directed its lightning glance toward Mr. Dimmesdale and held up his little arms with a half-pleas'd, half-plaintive murmur. So powerful seemed the minister's appeal that the people could not believe but that Hester Prynne would speak out the guilty name, or else that the guilty one himself, in whatever high or lowly place he stood, would be drawn forth by an inward and inevitable necessity, and compelled to ascend the scaffold.

Hester shook her head. "Woman, transgress not beyond the limits of heaven's mercy!" cried the Reverend Mr. Wilson more harshly than before. "That little babe hath been gifted with a voice to second and confirm the counsel which thou hast heard! Speak out the name! That and thy repentance may avail to take the scarlet letter off thy breast."

"Never!" replied Hester Prynne, looking not at Mr. Wilson, but into the deep and troubled eyes of the younger clergyman. "It is too deeply branded. Ye cannot take it off. And would that I might endure his agony as well as mine!" "Speak, woman!" said another voice coldly and sternly, proceeding from the crowd about the scaffold. "Speak, and give your child a father!"

"I will not speak!" answered Hester, turning pale as death, but responding to this voice, which she too surely recognized. "And my child must seek a heavenly father; she shall never know an earthly one!"

"She will not speak!" murmured Mr. Dimmesdale, who, leaning over the balcony with his hand upon his heart, had awaited the result of his question. He now drew back with a long respiration. "Wonderous strength and generosity of a woman's heart! She will not speak!" Discerning the impracticable state of the poor culprit's mind the elder clergyman, who had carefully prepared himself for the occasion, addressed to the multitude a discourse on sin in all its branches, with continual reference to the ignominious letter. So forcibly did he dwell upon this symbol for the hour or more during which his periods were rolling over the people's heads that it assumed new terrors in their imagination, and seemed to derive its scarlet hue from the flames of the infernal pit. Hester Prynne, meanwhile, kept her place upon the pedestal of shame, with glazed eyes and an air of weary indifference. She had borne that morning all that nature could endure, and as her temperament was not of the order that escapes from too intense suffering by a swoon, her spirit could only shelter itself beneath a stony crust of insensibility while the faculties of animal life remained entire. In this state the voice of the preacher thrummed remorselessly, unavailingly, upon her ears. The infant, during the latter portion of her ordeal, pierced the air with its wailings and screams; she strove to hush it, mechanically, but seemed scarcely to sympathize with its trouble. With the same

ard demeanor, she was led back to prison, and vanished from the public gaze within its iron clamped portal. It was whispered by those who peered after her that the scarlet letter threw a lurid gleam along the dark passageway of the interior.

CHAPTER III. THE INTERVIEW.

After her return to the prison, Hester Prynne was found to be in a state of nervous excitement that demanded constant watchfulness, lest she should perpetrate violence on herself or do some half-frenzied mischief to the poor babe. As night approached, it proving impossible to quell her insubordination by rebuke or threats of punishment, Master Brackett, the jailer, thought fit to introduce a physician. He described him as a man of skill in all Christian modes of physical science, and likewise familiar with whatever the savage people could teach in respect to medicinal herbs and roots that grew in the forest. To say the truth, there was much need of professional assistance, not merely for Hester herself, but still more urgently for the child, who, drawing its sustenance from the maternal bosom, seemed to have drunk in with it all the turmoil, the anguish and despair which pervaded the mother's system. It now writhed in convulsions of pain, and was a forcible type, in its little frame, of the moral agony which Hester Prynne had borne throughout the day.

Closely following the jailer into the distant apartment appeared that individual of singular aspect whose presence in the crowd had been of such deep interest to the wearer of the scarlet letter. He was lodged in the prison, not as suspected of any offense, but as the most convenient and suitable mode of disposing of him until the magistrates should have conferred with the Indian sagamores respecting his ransom. His name was announced as Roger Chillingworth. The jailer, after ushering him into the room, remained a moment, marveling at the comparative quiet that followed his entrance; for Hester Prynne had immediately become as still as death, although the child continued to wail.

"Fret thee, friend, leave me alone with my patient," said the practitioner. "Trust me, good jailer, you shall briefly have peace in your house, and I promise you Mistress Prynne shall hereafter be more amenable to just authority than you may have found her heretofore."

"Nay, if your worship can accomplish that," answered Master Brackett, "I shall own you for a man of skill indeed! Verily, the woman hath been like a possessed one, and there fits little that I should take it upon me to drive such an one from my house."

The stranger had entered the room with the characteristic quietude of the profession to which he announced himself as belonging. Nor did his demeanor change when the withdrawal of the prison keeper left him face to face with the woman, whose absorbed notice of him in the crowd had intimated so close a relation between himself and her. His first care was given to the child, whose cries, indeed, as he lay writhing on the trampled mat, it was not easy to see necessary to torture to all other business to the task of soothing her. He examined the infant carefully and then proceeded to unclasp a bathern case which he took from beneath his dress. It appeared to contain medical preparations, one of which he mingled with a cup of water.

"My old studies in alchemy," observed he, "and my sagom, for a few years past, among a people well versed in the kindly properties of simples have made a better physician of me than many that claim the medical degree. Here, woman! The child is yours, she is mine, as well as neither will she recognize my name or respect as a father's. Administer this draft, therefore, with thine own hand."

Hester repelled the offered medicine at the same time, gazing with strongly marked apprehension into his face. "Wouldst thou average thyself on the innocent babe?" whispered she. "Foolish woman!" responded the physician, half coldly, half soothingly. "What should all this, to harm this unbegotten and miserable babe? The medicine is potent for good, and were it this, I could do no better for it."

He still hesitated, not in fact in a reasonable state of mind, he took the infant in his arms and himself administered the draft. It soon proved its efficacy and relieved the leech's pledge. The means of the little patient subsided, its convulsive tossings gradually ceased, and in a few moments, as is the custom of young children after relief from pain, it sank into a profound and dewy slumber. The physician, as he had a fair right to be termed, next bestowed his attention on the mother. With calm and intent scrutiny he felt her pulse, looked into her eyes—a gaze that made her heart shiver and shudder, because so familiar and yet so strange and cold—and finally, satisfied with his investigation, proceeded to mingle another draft.

"I know not Lethe nor Nectar," remarked he, "but I have learned many new secrets in the wilderness, and here is one of them—a recipe that an Indian taught me in requital of some lessons of my own that were as old as Paracelsus. Drink it! It may be less soothing than a sinless conscience. That I cannot give thee. But it will calm the swell and heaving of thy passion, like oil thrown on the waves of tempestuous sea."

He presented the cup to Hester, who received it with a slow, earnest look into his face—not precisely a look of fear, yet full of doubt and questioning as to what his purposes might be. She looked also at her slumbering child. "I have thought of death," said she—"I have wished for it—would even have prayed for it were it fit that such as I should pray for anything. Yet if death be in this cup I bid thee think again ere thou beholdest me quaff it! See! It is even now at my lips."

"Dearth, then," replied he, still with the same calm composure. "Dost thou know me so little, Hester Prynne? Are my purposes wont to be so shallow?"

Even if I imagine a scheme of vengeance what could I do better for my object than to let these live—than to give these medicines against all harm and peril of life—so that this burning shame may still blaze upon thy bosom? As he spoke he laid his long forefinger on the scarlet letter, which forthwith seemed to scorch into Hester's breast as if it had been red-hot. He noticed her in voluntary gesture and smiled. "Live, therefore, and bear about thy doom with thee, in the eyes of men and women—in the eyes of him whom thou didst call thy husband—in the eyes of yonder child! And, that thou mayest live take off this draft."

Without further expostulation or delay Hester Prynne drained the cup, and at the motion of the man of skill seated herself on the bed where the child was sleeping, while he drew the only chair which the room afforded and took his own seat beside her. She could not but tremble at these preparations, for she felt that—having now done all that humanity or principle, or, if so it were, a refined cruelty might require—she was next to treat with her patient as she had most deeply and fully punished.

"Hester," said he, "I think not wherefore or how thou hast felt all this, but I say, rather, that thou art now to be the pedestal of infamy on which I sit. Then, the reason was not far to seek. I was my folly and thy weakness. I am a man of thought, the bookworm of great libraries, a man already in my way, having given my best years to feed the hungry, to open the eyes of the blind, and to do with youth and beauty like those of Missus from my birth hour. How could I doubt myself with the idea that intellectual gifts might veil physical deformity in a young girl's fancy? Men call me wise. If I suppose were I were in their own behalf I might have foreseen all this. I might have known that as I came out of the vast and dismal forest and entered this settlement of Christians on the very first object of meeting eyes would be thyself, Hester Prynne, standing up, a statue of ignominy, before the people! Nay, from the moment when we came down the old church steps together, a married pair, I might have beheld the baldrice of that scarlet letter blazing at the end of our path!"

"Thou knowest," said Hester—for, depressed as she was, she could not endure this last, and subtlest, token of shame—"I know, that I was frank with thee. I felt no love, nor feigned any."

"True," replied he. "It was my folly I have said it. But up to that epoch of my life, I had lived in vain. The world had been so cheerless. My heart was a habitation large enough for many guests, but lonely and chill, and with out a household fire. I longed to kindle one! It seemed not so wild a dream—old as I was, and sadder as I was, and unshapen as I was, and that simple lass, which is scattered far and wide for all mankind to gather up might yet be mine. And so, Hester, I drew thee into my heart, into an innermost chamber, and sought to warm thee by the warmth which thy presence made there!"

"I have greatly wronged thee," murmured Hester. "We have wronged each other," answered he. "Thine was the first wrong when I betrayed thy halcyon days into a false and unnatural relation with my decay. Therefore, as a man who was not thought and only appeared in man, I seek no vengeance past or present against thee. Between thee and me hangs fair balance. But Hester, the man lives who has wanted to kill. Who is he?"

"Ask me not!" replied Hester Prynne, looking firmly into his face. "But thou shalt never know."

"Never, repeat thou," replied he, with a shade of dark and evil smiling intelligence. "Never, know! Believe me, Hester, there are few things—whether in the outward world, or in a certain depth, in the vast-shadows of thought—few things, indeed, found in the machine of man—himself earnestly and unreservedly to the solution of a mystery. Thou mayest cover up thy secret from the prying multitude. Thou mayest conceal it, too, from the ministers and magistrates, even as thou didst this day, when they sought to wrench the name out of thy heart and give thee a partner on thy pedestal. But, as for me, I come to the inquest with other senses than they possess. I shall seek this man, as I have sought truth in books, as I have sought light in anatomy. There is a sympathy that will make me conscious of him. I shall see him tremble. I shall feel myself shudder, suddenly and unawares. Sooner or later he must needs be mine!"

The eyes of the wrinkled scholar glowed so intently upon her that Hester Prynne clasped her hands over her heart, dreading that he should read the secret there at once. "Thou wilt not reveal his name? Not the less he is mine," resumed he, with a look of confidence, as if destiny were at one with him. "He bears no letter of infamy wrought into his garment as thou dost; but I shall read it on his heart. Yet fear not for him! Think not that I shall interfere with heaven's own method of retribution, or to my own loss, betray him to the gripe of human law. Neither do thou imagine that I shall contrive aught against his life; nor, against his fame if, as I judge, he be a man of fair repute. Let him live! Let him hide himself in outward honor, if he may! Not the loss he shall be mine!"

[TO BE CONTINUED]

To Be Photographed while you doze in a corner of your pew at church is one of the latest terrors. The Kodak has made its way into the pulpit. An Irish clergyman the other Sunday during the service took a snap shot of his congregation.—Ex.

Highest of all in Leavening Power.—Latest U. S. Gov't Report.

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THE HISTORY OF OUR DOLLAR. Many a man would praise his wife's window in Heaven, would it only open, if he would but get a good thing and begin to praise his wife.—Ram's Horn.

The silver dollar has had a lot of trouble in its day and generation. Some of the facts concerning it are of immediate interest and will bear summing up. Here is a chronological history of the silver dollar.

Authorized to be coined, act of April 2, 1832, weight, 410 grains; fineness, 892 4.

Weight changed, act of January 18, 1837, 412 1/2 grains. Fineness changed, act of January 18, 1837, to 900. Coinage discontinued, act of February 28, 1873.

Total amount coined to February 12, 1837, \$8,951,238. Coinage reauthorized, act of February 28, 1873. Amount coined from March 1, 1873, to December 31, 1887, \$263,205,857 (including \$1,357 re-coined).

Total amount coined to December 31, 1889, \$357,966,236. The first silver dollar was put in circulation in 1794. "It was a crude design," says a historian. "On the obverse, or face of the coin, was imprinted the head of a young lady facing to the right. Her hair was flowing to such an extent that she looked as if taken in a gale of wind."

In 1796 congress stepped into the aid of the typical dancer and tied her hair up with a bit of ribbon. The fifteen stars were after this reduced to the original thirteen in recognition of the number of states.

In 1836 the design was again changed and the silver dollar bore the full figure of a neatly dressed woman in a flowing garment, and the coin was soon called an "Angelo" in possession of one of these dollars has a valuable souvenir.

The new design had the lady surrounded by stars. It was an improvement in its profusion, but the air of the female figure was debonaire and stiff. The dollar of 1838 was the first artistic piece of silver coined by the United States mint.

On April 22, 1864, the first dollar having the legend "In God we trust," was coined. In 1873 the era of the trade dollar of 900 fineness began. That troublesome dollar ran its erratic course in just five years.

In 1878 the liberty dollar made its appearance. Miss Ann W. Williams, a teacher in the girls' normal school at Philadelphia, sat for the portrait, her profile being then considered the most perfect obtainable. Her classic features still decorate the silver dollar.—Atlanta Journal.

La Grippe. During the prevalence of the gripe the past season it was a terrible fact that those who depended upon Dr. King's New Discovery, not only had a speedy recovery, but escaped all of the troublesome after-effects of the malady. This remedy seems to have a peculiar power in effecting rapid cures not only in cases of la grippe, but in all diseases of throat, chest and lungs, and has cured cases of asthma and hay fever of long standing. Try it and be convinced. It won't disappoint. Free trial bottles at Aycock & Co's drug store.

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Bank of Louisburg

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