THE ROANOKE NEWS, THURSDAY, MAY 11, 1893.

THE CUNTESSE'S DILEMMA pocket a red cotton handkerchief, clean and still folded.

sleep on account of the light which cate you to lend me your handcame through the windows and kerchief! Give it to me, sell it to curtains-that stupid Rosette had me; at no matter what price, sell forgotten to close the blinds-the it to me, I beg of you." Comtesse Valentine resolved to

air, in the substany mystery of the | in the clearing. trees, is not displeasing, even to a Parisienne; one may well wish at- kerchief in his hand, and said, in ter baying heard all the men say a drawling voice: about it to listen to the little tattle of the brits.

ring for her femme de chambre. roa l in the paths on horseback was dressed in the winking of an with gentlemen. As soon as I eye-her costume was the most hear the horses' hoofs I hide bedown the stairway with the slight until you have disappeared. You clic-clac of her heels on the steps, are pretty in a riding habit! You amid the silence of the slumbering are very pretty also in that dress habitation.

flew. She crossed the down, mix- Haven't you a handkerchief, you ing with the transparent mist the who are rich?' transparency of her skirt, sprang the flower bed she had believed herself a flower, she thought in the wood that she was a dryad. She was out of breath and delighted. Remembrances of an idyl came to her, with a desire to be its nymph or its shepherdess. Were there no longer young fauns watching in ambush behind the bushes, ready to bound, little bare feet which hasten toward the springs-she would have willingly taken off her boots as a concession to mythology—or young goatherds playing the flute while their goats crop the bitter moss?

But what charmed her above all was the coolness of the breeze. Puffs, coming from she knew not where, caressed her forehead, her eyes, her lips, her neck, imitating the furtive kisses of a somewhat cold mouth, raised her sleeves, made her corsage gape, dared to glide, hke an invisible kneeling, beneath her flying skirts. Ah! the lovely shiver, from head to foot, over all her skin yet moist with the warmth of her bed! She breathed the morning air, offered herself to the breeze with the pleasure of an opening sail, she smiled, she laughed-she sneazed!

She grew serious, for the case was grave. Surely she was catching cold; and for a lady who, with reason, was proud of her slight and delicate nose, a trifle pink toward the tip, never red-to have a red nose. just Heaven!-there is nothing more absurd than to have | ise. a cold. See what one gets by go-ing out early in the morning! It strange-after reflection-that a

"Ah! monsieur," cried Valen-That Spring morning, unable to tine, "wait an instant. I suppli-

It was a very young man, altake a walk through the woods most a child, small, puny, with a and meadows. It would be sickly look and freckles all over charming, an escapade among his face. He wore a ragged blue the wet leaves, in the high grass where diamond-like drops shone here and there. She had nothing to say against the guests of the down-at-the-heel shoes, without chateau who, without exception. strings, a miserable lad, without old or young, paid court to her doubt too weak to be employed in with the most flattering persisting the toil of the farm house or the tency, rivaling each other all day fields, and who, through fear of in singing her praises; but an hour marauders, had been charged with of solitude in the freedom of the watching sawed wood corded up

He raised his head, the hand-

bom it to listen to the little tattle I the birds. She sprang out of bed, did not there. You often pass along the abitation. She began to run because a bird this morning! You have asked me for my handkerchief! Why?

"Oh, yes!" said she, "I have over the brook, penetrated among one. Don't trouble yourselt about the tall trees; and, as when beside that. Give me yours immediately.

"I am willing," he replied, "but what shall I get in exchange?"

"Whatever you want!" "Money?"

"Yes, money. Fix the sum yourself. You have only to come to the chateau; you will be paid what you ask for."

He looked at her.

"I don't need money," said he. haste!

"If you want my handkerchief, promise to send me another, one of yours. I lodge in this hut; I can be found here all day and all night.

She did not fail to notice the singularity of this demand, though the tickling in her pink nostrils was exasperating her more and more

"Yes, yes, it's agreed! Rosette will bring you what you want this very day."

"Thank you," said he.

And he gave her the red cotton handkerchief in which, without losing a minute, she buried her nose with a little buzzing sound like that made by a wasp when it settles.

Valentine got off with her fear. Destiny spared her the disaster of catching a cold! But amid the joy of not having a red nose she took care not to forget her prom-

would have been so easy for her peasant should have preferred d. And the evil was certain; of money. Good! He had, without doubt, taken it into his head to make a present to some girl of the neighboring village with whom he was in love! Well, no matter; a pretty perfumed hand-kerchief of valenciennes, with a crown embroidered on it, was brought by Rosette to the young lad of the forest, and the Comtesse thought no more of the matter.



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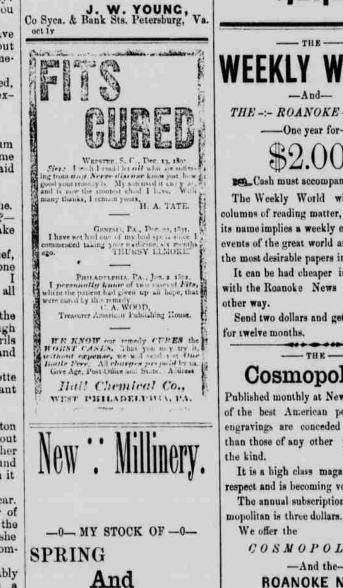
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s. would have an influenza which would last the whole week; she felt in her nostrils a continuous, maddening, insupportable tick-

ling.

A cold! She have a cold like an ugly woman! While stamping her foot on the grass and moss from which the dew scattered like a shower of diamonds, she hunted in her pocket. Ill-luck heaped on ill-luck! She had dressed herself with such haste, she had come out so quickly, that she had forgotten to get a handkerchief! Now the little tickling at the tip of her nose had become sharper. There was nothing to be said; she must blow her nose, must blow it that very instant, and as she had walked very rapidly, then run, she was at least a good league from the bureau in Portugal wood in which so many perfumed, crest snowwhite cambrics lay, one upon the other, like the wings of loving doves.

Fate brings us to the hardest extremities! Valentine thought of her underskirt, edged with valenciennes! But to lift up her underskirt in open day, in the country -great Heaven' She could never make up her mind to do that. Some one would certainly pass at the very moment she had raised the light material to her nose. she would be surprised in that ridiculous attitude, and that would be enough to make her die of shame. No, no, never! Rather-rather what? What means should she employ? How was she to get out of her embarrassing situation?

Ach! ach! that continual tickling!

Valentine tore off a leaf. The leaf, too slight, too slippery, got away from her, obstinately refused to render the unforeseen service which was exacted of it. Valentine picked a flower; the flower, applied to her sensitive nostrils, seemed only to redouble the intolerable tickling. In truth, an extraordinary thing was about to happen.

Some one, a peasant, seated at the low door of a forest hut, had just meezed and drawn from his twins."

One evening, when she was walking in the wood, not alone, but with her head bent toward the shoulder of the man she loved, she noticed between the branches a tiny point of light. She stopped and recognized the forest hut. Curious, she approached.

She saw, through the half-open door, the puny lad sitting on the door, bent over and holding in his clusped hands something light and white, which he sometimes kissed, and with which he occasionally wiped his eyes, which were full of tears.

At the sound of footsteps on the moss he gave a start, arose and with all speed hid the handkerchief beneath his blouse, against his flesh; then he blew out MOL his candle, left the hut without speaking, as if he knew not that any one was there, and plunged into the forest, which was very dark and very melancholy.

Fulfilled the Prophecy.

"I hear that Jack Mawkins is going to marry Miss Hopkins, the clothier's daughter.'

"Well, I'm not surprised. I always said he'd marry a tailor-made girl."

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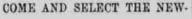
What Was Loft

"The only thing left now," said the counsel to his client, "is the Judge's charge." "How much is it likely to be?"

asked the client anxiously. Saved by a Little Child.

"How is it that Jenkins's baby cured him of drinking?"





EST NOVELTIES.

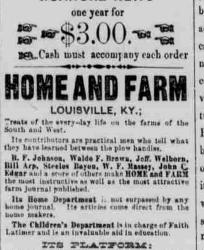
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