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Wilmington Journal.

DAVID FULTON, EDITOR.
GOD, OUR COUNTRY, AND LIBERTY.
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THE JOURNAL.

From the Georgia Scenes.

THE HORSE-SWAP.

During the session of the Supreme Court, in the village of ——, about three weeks ago, when a number of people were collected in the principal street of the village, I observed a young man riding up and down the street, as I supposed, in a violent passion. He galloped this way, then that, and then the other; spurred his horse to one group of citizens, then to another; then dashed off at half speed, as if fleeing from danger; and, suddenly checking his horse, returned first in a pace, then in a trot, and then in a canter. While he was performing these various evolutions, he cursed, swore, whooped, screamed, and tossed himself in every attitude which man could assume on horseback. In short, he *cavorted* most magnanimously (a term which, in our tongue, expresses all that I have described, and a little more,) and seemed to be setting all creation at defiance. As I like to see all that is passing, I determined to take a position a little nearer to him, and to ascertain, if possible, what it was that affected him so sensibly.—Accordingly, I appproached a crowd before which he had stopped for a moment, and examined it with the strictest scrutiny. But I could see nothing in it that seemed to have anything to do with the cavorter. Every man appeared to be in a good humor, and all minding their own business. Not one so much as noticed the principal figure. Still he went on. After a semicolon pause, which my appearance seemed to produce (for he eyed me closely as I approached), he fetched a whoop, and swore that "he could out-swap any live man, woman, or child that ever walked these hills, or that ever straddled horseflesh since the days of old daddy Adam. Stranger," said he to me, "did you ever see the *Yallow* Blossom from Jasper?"

"No," said I, "but I have often heard of him."

"I'm the boy," continued he; "perhaps a *leetle*, jist a *leetle*, of the best man at a horse-swap that ever trod shoe-leather."

I began to feel my situation a little awkward, when I was relieved by a man somewhat advanced in years, who stepped up and began to survey the "*Yallow Blossom's*" horse with much apparent interest. This drew the rider's attention, and he turned the conversation from me to the stranger.

"Well, my old coon," said he, "do you want to swap *hosses?*"

"Why, I don't know," replied the stranger; "I believe I've got a beast I'd trade with you for that one, if you like him."

"Well, fetch up your nag, my old cock; you're jist the lark I wanted to get hold of. I am perhaps a *leetle*, jist a *leetle*, of the best man at a horse-swap that ever stole *cracklins* out of his mammy's fat gourd. Where's your *hoss?*"

"I'll bring him presently; but I want to examine your horse a little."

"Oh! look at him," said the Blossom, alighting and hitting him a cut; "look at him. He's the best piece of *hossflesh* in the thirteen united universal worlds. There's no sort o' mistake in little Bullet. He can pick up miles on his feet, and fling 'em behind him as fast as the next man's *hoss*, I don't care where he comes from. And he can keep at it as long as the sun can shine without resting."

During this harangue, little Bullet looked as if he understood it all, believed it, and was ready at any moment to verify it. He was a horse of goodly countenance, rather expressive of vigilance than fire; though an unnatural appearance of fierceness was thrown into it by the loss of his ears, which had been cropped pretty close to his head. Nature had done but little for Bullet's head and neck; but he managed, in a great measure, to hide their defects by bowing perpetually. He had obviously suffered severely for corn; but if his ribs and hip bones had not disclosed the fact, *he* never would have done it; for he was in all respects as cheerful and happy as if he commanded all the corn-cribs and fodder-stacks in Georgia. His height was about twelve hands; but as his shape partook somewhat of that of the giraffe, his haunches stood much lower.—They were short, strait, peaked, and concave. Bullet's tail, however, made amends for all his defects. All that the artist could do to beautify it had been done; and all that horse could do to compliment the artist, Bullet did. His tail was nicked in superior style, and exhibited the line of beauty in so many directions, that it could not fail to hit the most fastidious taste in some of them. From the root it dropped into a graceful feston; then rose in a handsome curve; then resumed its first direction; and then mounted suddenly upward like a cypress knee to a perpendicular of about two and a half inches. The whole had a careless and bewitching inclination to the right.—Bullet obviously knew where his beauty lay, and took all occasions to display it to the best advantage. If a stick cracked, or if any one moved suddenly about him, or coughed, or hawked, or spoke a little louder than common, up went Bullet's tail like lightning; and if the *going up* did not please, the *coming down* must of necessity, for it was as different from the other movement as was its direction. The first was a bold and rapid flight upward, usually to an angle of forty-five degrees. In this position he kept his interesting appendage until he satisfied himself that nothing in particular was to be done; when he commenced dropping it by half inches, in second beats, then in tripple time, then faster and shorter, and faster and shorter still, until it finally died away imperceptibly into its natural position. If I might compare sights to sounds, I should say its *settling* was more like the note of a locust than anything else in nature.

Either from native sprightliness of disposition, from uncontrollable activity, or from an unconquerable habit of removing flies by the stamping of the feet, Bullet never stood still; but always kept up a gentle fly-scaring movement of his limbs, which was peculiarly interesting.

"I tell you, man," proceeded the Yellow Blossom, "he's the best live hoss that ever trod the grit of Georgia. Bob Smart knows the hoss. Come here, Bob, and mount this hoss, and show Bullet's motions." Here Bullet bristled up, and looked as if he had been hunting for Bob all day long, and had just found him. Bob sprang on his back. "Boo-oo-oo!" said Bob, with a fluttering noise of the lips; and away went Bullet, as if in a querter race, with all his beauties spread in handsome style.

"Now fetch him back," said Blossom.—Bullet turned and came in pretty much as he went out.

"Now trot him by." Bullet reduced his tail to "*customary*," sidled to the right and left airily, and exhibited at least three varieties of trot in the short space of fifty yards.

"Make him pace!" Bob commenced twitching the bridle and kicking at the same time. These inconsistent movements obviously (and most naturally) disconcerted Bullet; for it was impossible for him to learn, from them, whether he was to proceed or stand still. He started to trot, and was told that wouldn't do. He attempted a canter, and was checked again. He stopped, and was urged to go on. Bullet now rushed into the wide field of experiment, and struck out a gait of his own, that completely turned the tables upon his rider, and certainly deserved a patent. It seemed to have derived its elements from the jig, the minuet, and the cotillon. If it was not a pace, it certainly had *pace* in it, and no man would venture to call it anything else; so it passed off to the satisfaction of the owner.

"Walk him!" Bullet was now at home again; and he walked as if money was staked on him.

The stranger, whose name, I afterward learned, was Peter Ketch, having examined Bullet to his heart's content, ordered his son Neddy to go and bring up Kit. Neddy soon appeared upon Kit; a well-formed sorrel of the middle size, and in good order. His *tout ensemble* threw Bullet entirely in the shade, though a glance was sufficient to satisfy any one that Bullet had the decided advantage of him in point of intellect.

"Why, man," said Blossom, "do you bring such a hoss as that to trade for Bullet? Oh, I see you're no notion of trading."

"Ride him off, Neddy!" said Peter. Kit put off at a handsome lope.

"Trot him back!" Kit came in at a long, sweeping trot, and stopped suddenly at the crowd.

"Well," said Blossom, "let me look at him; maybe he'll do to plough."

"Examine him!" said Peter, taking hold of the bridle close to the mouth; "he's nothing but a tacky. He an't as *pretty* a horse as Bullet, I know; but he'll do. Start 'em together for a hundred and fifty *mile;* and if Kit an't twenty mile ahead of him at the coming out, any man may take Kit for nothing. But he's a monstrous mean horse, gentlemen; any man may see that. He's the scariest horse, too, you ever saw. He won't do to hunt on, no how. Stranger, will you let Neddy have your rifle to shoot off him? Lay the rifle between his ears, Neddy, and shoot at the blaze in that stump. Tell me when his head is high enough."

Ned fired, and hit the blaze; and Kit did not move a hair's breadth.

"Neddy, take a couple of sticks, and beat on that hogshead at Kit's tail."

Ned made a tremendous rattling, at which Bullet took fright, broke his bridle, and dashed off in grand style; and would have stopped all farther negotiations by going home in disgust, had not a traveller arrested him and bro't him back; but Kit did not move.

"I tell you, gentlemen," continued Peter, "he's the scariest horse you ever saw. He an't as gentle as Bullet, but he won't do any harm if you watch him. Shall I put him in a cart, gig, or wagon for you, stranger? He'll cut the same capers there he does here. He's a monstrous mean horse."

During all this time Blossom was examining him with the nicest scrutiny. Having examined his frame and limbs, he now looked at his eyes.

"He's got a curious look out of his eyes," said Blossom.

"Oh yes, sir," said Peter, "just as blind as a bat. Blind horses always have clear eyes. Make a motion at his eyes, if you please, sir."

Blossom did so, and Kit threw up his head rather as if something picked him under the chin than as if fearing a blow. Blossom repeated the experiment, and Kit jerked back in considerable astonishment.

"Stone blind, you see, gentlemen," proceeded Peter; "but he's just as good to travel of a dark night as if he had eyes."

"Blame my buttons," said Blossom, "if I like them eyes."

"No," said Peter, "nor I neither. I'd rather have 'em made of diamonds; but they'll do, if they don't show as much white as Bullet's."

"Well," said Blossom, "make a pass at me."

"No," said Peter; "you made the banter, now make your pass."

"Well, I'm never afraid to price my hosses. You must give me twenty-five dollars boot."

"Oh, certainly; say fifty, and my saddle and bridle in. Here, Neddy, my son, take away daddy's hoss."

"Well," said Blossom, "I've made my pass, now make yours."

"I'm for short talk in a horse-swap, and therefore always tell a gentleman at once what I mean to to do. You must give me ten dollars."

Blossom swore absolutely, roundly, and profanely, that he never would give boot.

"Well," said Peter, "I didn't care about trading; but you cut such high shines, that I thought I'd like to back you out, and I've done it. Gentlemen, you see I've brought him to a hack."

"Come, old man," said Blossom. "I've been joking with you. I begin to think you do want to trade; therefore, give me five dollars and take Bullet. I'd rather lose ten dollars any time than not make a trade, though I hate to fling away a good hoss."

"Well," said Peter, "I'll be as clever as you are. Just put the five dollars on Bullet's back, and hand him over; it's a trade."

Blossom swore again, as roundly as before, that he would not give boot; and, said he, "Bullet wouldn't hold five dollars on his back, no how. But, as I bantered you, if you say an even swap, here's at you."

"I told you," said Peter, "I'd be as clever as you, therefore, here goes two dollars more, just for trade sake. Give me three dollars, and it's a bargain."

Blossom repeated his former assertion; and here the parties stood for a long time, and the by-standers (for many were now collected) began to taunt both parties. After some time, however, it was pretty unanimously decided that the old man had backed Blossom out.

At length Blossom swore he "never would be backed out for three dollars after bantering a man;" and, accordingly, they closed the trade.

"Now," said Blossom, as he handed Peter the three dollars, "I'm a man that, when he makes a bad trade, makes the most of it until he can make a better. I'm for no rues and after-claps."

"That's just my way," said Peter; "I never goes to law to mend my bargains."

"Ah, you're the kind of boy I love to trade with. Here's your hoss, old man. Take the saddle and bridle off him, and I'll strip yours; but lift up the blanket easy from Bullet's back, for he's a mighty tender backed hoss."

The old man removed the saddle, but the blanket stuck fast. He attempted to raise it, and Bullet bowed himself, switched his tail, danced a little, and gave signs of biting.

"Don't hurt him, old man," said Blossom, archly; "take it off easy. I am, perhaps, a leetle of the best man at a horse-swap that ever catched a coon."

Peter continued to pull at the blanket more and more roughly, and Bullet became more and more *cavortish:* insomuch that, when the blanket came off, he had reached the *kicking* point in good earnest.

The removal of the blanket disclosed a sore on Bullet's back-bone that seemed to have defied all medical skill. It measured six full inches in length and four in breadth, and had as many features as Bullet had motions. My heart sickened at the sight; and I felt that the brute who had been riding him in that situation deserved the halter.

The prevailing feeling, however, was that of mirth. The laugh became loud and general at the old man's expense, and rustic witticisms were liberally bestowed upon him and his late purchase. These Blossom continued to provoke by various remarks He asked the old man "if he thought Bullet would let five dollars lie on his back." He declared most seriously that he had owned that horse three months, and had never discovered before that he had a sore back, "or he never should have thought of trading him," &c., &c.

The old man bore it with the most philosophic composure. He evinced no astonishment at his late discovery, and made no replies.—But his son Neddy had not disciplined his feelings quite so well. His eyes opened wider and wider from the first to the last pull of the blanket; and when the whole sore burst upon his view, astonishment and fright seemed to contend for the mastery of his countenance. As the blanket disappeared, he stuck his hands in his breeches pockets, heaved a deep sigh, and lapsed into a profound revery, from which he was only roused by the cuts of his father. He bore them as long as he could; and, when he could contain himself no longer, he began, with a certain wildness of expression which gave a peculiar interest to what he uttered: "His back's mighty bad off; but dod drot my soul if he's put it to daddy as bad as he thinks he has, for old Kit's both blind and *deef*, I'll be dod drot if he eint."

"The devil he is," said Blossom.

"Yes, dod drot my soul if he *eint*. You walk him, and see if he *eint*. His eyes don't look like it; but he'd *jist as leve go agin* the house with you, or in a ditch, as any how.—Now you go try him." The laugh was now turned on Blossom; and many rushed to test the fidellity of the little boy's report. A few experiments established its truth beyond controversy.

"Neddy," said the old man, "you oughtn't to try and make people discontented with their things. Stranger, don't mind what the little boy says. If you can only get Kit rid of them little failings, you'll find him all sorts of a horse. You are a *leetle* the best man at horse-swap that ever I got hold of; but don't fool away Kit. Come, Neddy, my son, let's be moving; the stranger seems to be getting snappish."

HALL.

A Lesson for Scolding Wives.—"And I dare say you have scolded your wife very often, Newman," said I, once.

Old Newman looked down, and his wife took up the reply—

"Never to signify—and if he has, I deserved it!"

"And I dare say, if the truth were told, you have scolded him quite as often."

"Nay," said the old woman, with a beauty of kindness which all the poetry in the world cannot excel, "How can a wife scold her good man, who has been working for her and her little ones all the day? It may do for a man to be peevish, for it is he who bears the crosses of the world; but who should make him forget them but his own wife? And she had best, for her own sake—for nobody can scold much when the scolding is all on one side."

Geography: First Class.—Teacher. "What is Texas bounded by?" *Scholar.*—"By annexation on the East, by Indian treaties on the West, by nothing particular on the North, and by the Halls of the Montezumas on the South." *Teacher.*—"What are its products?" *Scholar.* "Bowie-knives, rifles, revolving pistols; and in summer, pecans and horned frogs." *Teacher.*—"Good! The school's dismissed."

N. O. Deltu.

Existence is only felt to be valuable while it is necessary to some one dear to us. The moment we become aware that our death would leave no aching void in a human heart, the charm is gone.

A NIGHT OF YEARS.

BY GRACE GREENWOOD.

My Reader—I have sat some minutes, with my pen suspended in air above my paper. I have been debating a delicate point—I am in a position. You will perhaps recollect that one of Fanny Forest's exquisite sketches was entitled "Lucy Dutton."

Now, it happens the *real name* of the heroine of the "ower true tale," which I am about to do myself the honor of relating to you, was no other than Lucy Dutton. Shall I rob her of her birthright—compel her to wear a *nom de guerre*, because my sister-authoress accidentally gave the true name to one of her ideal creations? Shall I sacrifice truth to delicacy? that's the question. "No?" You said no, did you not? Then Lucy, Lucy Dutton, let it be.

Some forty years since, in the interior of my beautiful native State, New York, lived the father of our heroine, an honest and respectable farmer. He had but two children—Lucy, a noble girl of nineteen, and Ellen, a year or two younger. The first named was winning, rather than strikingly beautiful. Under a manner observable for its seriousness, and non-like serenity, were concealed an impassionate nature, and a heart of the deepest capacity for loving. She was remarkable from her earliest childhood for a voice of thrilling and haunting sweetness.

Ellen Dutton was the brilliant antipode of her sister; a "born beauty," whose prerogative of prettiness was to have her irresponsible own way, in all things, and at all times. An indulgent father, a weak mother, and an idolizing sister, had all unconsciously contributed to the ruin of a nature not at the first remarkable for strength or generosity.

Where, in all God's creatures, is heartlessness so seemingly unnatural—is selfishness so detestable, as in a beautiful woman!

Lucy possessed a fine intellect, and as her parents were well reared New Englanders, she and her sister were far better educated than other girls of their station, in that then half settled portion of the country. In those days, many engaged in school teaching, from the honor and pleasure which it afforded, rather than from necessity. Thus, a few months previous to the commencement of our sketch, Lucy Dutton left for the first time her fireside circle, to take charge of a school, some twenty miles from her native town.

For some while, her letters home were expressive only of the happy contentment which sprang from the consciousness of active usefulness, of receiving, while imparting good. But anon there came a change; then were those records for home characterized by fitful gayety, or dreary sadness; indefinable hopes and fears seemed striving for supremacy in the writer's troubled little heart. Lucy *loved*, but scarcely acknowledged it to herself, while she knew not that she was loved; so for a time that beautiful second birth of woman's nature was like a warm sunrise struggling with the cold mists of morning.

But one day brought a letter which could not soon be forgotten in the home of the absent one—a letter traced by a hand that trembled in sympathy with a heart tumultuous with happiness. Lucy had been wooed and won, and she but waited her parent's approval of her choice, the betrothed of young Edwin W——, a man of excellent family and standing in the town where she had been teaching. The father and mother accorded their sanction with many blessings; and Lucy's next letter promised a speedy visit from the lovers.

To such natures as Lucy's, what an absorbing, and yet what a revealing of self is a first passion—what a profligality of giving—what an incalculable wealth of receiving—what a breaking up is there of the deep waters of the soul, and how Heaven descends in a sudden star shower upon life. If there is a season when an angel may look with intense and fearful interest upon her moral sister, 'tis when she beholds her heart pass from the bud-like innocence and freshness of girlhood, and taking to its very core the fervid light of love, glow and crimson into perfect womanhood.

At last the plighted lovers came, and welcomes and festivals awaited them. Mr. W—— gave entire satisfaction to father, mother, and even to the enacting "beauty." He was a handsome man, with some pretensions to fashion, but in manner, and apparently in character, the opposite of his betrothed.

It was decided that Lucy should not again leave home, until after her marriage, which at the request of the ardent lover, was to be celebrated with two months, and on the coming birth-day of the bride. It was therefore arranged that Ellen should return with Mr. W——, to M——, to take charge of her sister's school for the remainder of the term.

The birth-day had come. It had been ushered in by a May morning of surpassing loveliness—the busy hours had borne away, and now it was nigh sunset, and neither the bridegroom nor Ellen, the first bridesmaid, had appeared. Yet in her neat little chamber sat Lucy, nothing doubting, nothing fearing. She was already clad in a simple white muslin, and her few bridal adornments lay on the table by her side. Maria Allen, her second bridesmaid, a bright eyed affectionate hearted girl, her chosen friend from childhood, was arranging to a more graceful fall, the wealth of light ringlets which swept her snowy neck. To the anxious inquiries of her companion, respecting the absent ones, Lucy ever smiled quietly and replied:

"Oh, something has happened to detain them a while—we heard from them the other day and all was well. They will be here by-and-by—never fear."

Evening came, the guests were all assembled, and yet the "bridegroom tarried." There were whisperings, surmises and wonderings, and a shadow of anxiety occasionally passed over the fair face of the bride-elect. At last, a carriage drove rather slowly to the door.—"They are come!" cried many voices, and the next moment the belated bridegroom and Ellen entered. In reply to the hurried and confused inquiries of all around him, Mr. W—— muttered something about "unavoidable delay," and stepping to the side-board, tossed off a glass of wine, another, and another. The company stood silent with amazement. Finally a rough old farmer exclaimed, "Better late than never, young man—so lead out the bride."

W—— strode hastily across the room, placed himself by *Ellen*, and took her hand in his! Then, without daring to meet the eye of any about him, he said:

"I wish to make an explanation—I am under the painful necessity—that is, I have the pleasure to announce that *I am already married.* The lady whom I hold by the hand is my wife.

Then, turning in an apologetical manner to Mr. and Mrs. Dutton, he added, "I found that I had never loved, until I knew your second daughter."

And Lucy? She heard all with strange calmness, then walked steadily forward and confronted her betrayer! Terrible as pale Nemesis herself, she stood before them, and her look pierced like a keen cold blade into their false hearts. As though to assure herself of the dread reality of the vision, she laid her hand on Ellen's shoulder, and let it glide down her arm—but she touched not Edwin. As those cold fingers met hers, the unhappy wife first gazed full into her sister's face; and as she marked the ghastly pallor of the cheek, the dilated nostrils—the quivering lip and the intensely mournful eyes, she covered her own face with her hands, and burst into tears, while her young husband, awed by the terrible silence of her he had wronged, gasped for breath, and staggered back against the wall. Then Lucy clasped her hands on her forehead, first gave voice to her anguish and despair in one fearful cry, which could but ring forever through the souls of that guilty pair, and fell in a deathlike swoon at their feet.

After the insensible girl had been removed to her chamber, a stormy scene ensued in the room beneath. The parents and guests were alike enraged against W——; but the tears and prayers of his young wife, the petted beauty and spoiled child, at last softened somewhat the anger of the parents, and an opportunity for an explanation was accorded to the offenders.

A sorry explanation it proved. The gentleman affirmed that the first sight of Ellen's lovely face had weakened the empire of her plainer sister over his affections. Frequent interviews had completed the conquest of his loyalty; but he had been held in check by *honor*, and never told his love, until when on his way to espouse another, in an unguarded moment, he had revealed it, and the avowal had called forth an answering acknowledgment from Ellen.

They had thought it best, in order "to save pain to Lucy," and prevent opposition from her—and to secure their own happiness, to be married before their arrival at C——.

Lucy remained insensible for some hours When she revived and had apparently regained her consciousness, she still maintained her strange silence. This continued for many weeks, and when it partially passed away, her friends saw, with inexpressible grief, that her reason had fled—*she was hopelessly insane!* But her madness was of a mild and harmless nature. She was gentle and peaceable as ever, but sighed frequently, and seemed burdened with some great sorrow which she could not herself comprehend. She had one peculiarity, which all who knew her in after years must recollect;—this was a wild fear and careful avoidance of *men*. She also seemed possessed by the spirit of *unrest*. She could not, she would not be confined, but was constantly escaping from her friends, and going they knew not whither.

While her parents lived, they, by their watchful care, and unwearying efforts, in some measure controlled this sad propensity; but when they died, their stricken child became a wanderer, homeless, friendless and forlorn.

Through laughing springs, and rosy summers, and golden autumns, and tempestuous winters, it was tramp, tramp,—no rest for her of the crushed heart and the crazed brain.

I remember her as she was in my early childhood, toward the last of her weary pilgrimage. As my father and my elder brothers were frequently absent, and as my mother never closed her heart or her door on the unfortunate, "Crazy Lucy," often spent an hour or two by our fire-side. Her appearance was very singular. Her gown was always patched with many colors, and her shawl, or mantle, worn and torn, until it was *all* open work and fringe. The remainder of her miserable wardrobe she carried in a bundle, on her arm, and sometimes she had a number of parcels of old rags, dried herbs, &c.

In the season of flowers, her tattered bonnet was profusely decorated with those which she gathered in the wood, or by the way side. Her love for these and her sweet voice were all that were left her of the bloom and music of existence. Yet no,—her meek and child-like *piety* still lingered. Her God had not forsaken her; down into the chaos of her spirit, the smile of His love yet gleamed faintly—in the waste garden of her heart she still heard His voice at eventide, and she was not "afraid." Her Bible went with her every where,—a torn and soiled volume, but as holy still, and it may be as dearly cherished, my reader, as the gorgeous copy now lying on your table, bound in "purple and gold," and with the gilding untarnished upon its delicate leaves.

I remember to have heard my mother relate a touching little incident connected with one of Lucy's brief visits to us.

The poor creature once laid her hand on the curly head of one of my brothers, and asked of him, his name. "William Edwin," he replied, with a timid, upward glance. She caught away her hand, and sighing heavily, said, as though thinking aloud, 'I knew an Edwin once, and he made me broken-hearted.'

This was the only instance in which she was ever known to revert to the sad event which had desolated her life.

* * * * *

Thirty years from the time of the commencement of this mournful history, on a bleak autumnal evening, a rough country wagon drove into the village of C——. It stopped at the alms house, an attenuated form was lifted out, and carried in; and the wagon rumbled away. *Thus was Lucy Dutton brought to her native home to die.*

She had been in a decline for some months, and the miraculous strength which had so long sustained her in her weary wandering, at last forsook her utterly. Her sister had died some time before, and the widowed husband had soon after removed with his family to the far West;—so Lucy had no friend no home but the alms-house.

But they were very kind to her there. The matron, a true woman, whose soft heart even the hourly contemplation of human misery could not harden, gave herself with unwearying devotion to the care of the quiet sufferer. With the eye of Christian faith, she watched the shattered bark of that life, as borne down the tide of time it neared the great deep of eternity, with an interest of intense as though it were a royal galley.

One day, about a week from the time of her arrival, Lucy appared to suffer greatly, and those about her release almost impatiently; but at night she was evidently better, and, for the first time, slept tranquilly until morning. The matron who was by her bedside when she awoke was startled by the clear and earnest gaze which met her own,—but she smiled, and bade the invalid good morning!" Lucy looked bewildered, but the voice seemed to reassure her and exclaimed;

"Oh, what a long, long night this has been!" Then glancing around inquiringly, she added.

"Where am I?—and who are you? I do not know you."

A wild surmise flashed across the mind of the matron—*the long lost reason of the wanderer had returned!* But the good woman replied calmly and soothingly:

"Why, you are among your friends and you will know me presently."

"Then may be you know Edwin and Ellen." rejoined the invalid; "have they come? Oh I had such a terrible dream! I dreamed that they were married! Only think, *Ellen* married to Edwin!—its strange I should dream *that.*"

"My poor Lucy." said the matron, with a gush of tears "that was not a dream—'twas all true."

"All true cried the invalid, "then Edwin must be *untrue*—and that cannot be, for he loved me—we loved each other well, and Ellen is my *sister*. Let me see them, I will go to them!"

She endeavored to raise herself, but fell back on the pillow.

"Why what does this mean?" said she "What makes me so week?"

Just then, her eye fell on her hand! She gazed on it in blank amazement.

"Something is the matter with my sight," she said smiling faintingly, "for my hand looks to me like an old woman's."

"And so it is," said the matron, gently, and so is mine; and yet we had fair, plump hands when young. Dear Lucy do you not know me? I am Maria Allen, I was to have been your bridesmaid?"

I can no more—I will not make the vain attempt to give in detail all that revealing—to reduce to inexpressive words the dread sublimity of that hopeless sorrow.

To the wretched Lucy the last thirty years were all as though they had never been. Of not a scene, not an incident, had she the slightest remembrance since the night when the recreant lover and the traitoress sister stood before her and made their terrible announcement.

The kind matron paused frequently in the sad narration of her poor friend's madness and wanderings but the invalid would say with fearful calmness, "go on, go on," though the beaded drops of agony stood thick upon her forehead.

When she asked for her sister, the matron replied—

"She has gone before you and your father also."

"And my mother?" said Lucy, her face lit with sickly ray of hope.

"Your mother has been dead for *twenty years.*"

"*Dead!* All gone! Alone, old, dying! Oh, God, my cup of bitterness is full!" And she wept aloud.

Her friend, bending over her, and mingling tears with hers, said affectionately:

"But you know who drank that cup before you."

Lucy looked up with bewildered expression, and the matron added:

"The Lord Jesus, you remember him."

A look like sunlight breaking through a cloud—a look which only saints may wear—irradiated the tearful face of a dying woman, as she replied:

"Oh, yes, I knew and loved Him *before I fell asleep.*"

The man of God was called. A few who had known Lucy in her early days came also There was much reverential wondering and weeping around her death-bed. Then rose the voice of prayer. At first her lips moved as her weak spirit joined in that fervent appeal—then they grew still, and poor Lucy was dead—dead in her gray haired youth!

But those who had gazed upon that placid face, and remembered her harmless life and her patient suffering, doubted not that the morn of an eternal day had broken on her NIGHT OF YEARS.

WHAT A PAIR OF ANDIRONS COST.

FROM THE PLEDGE AND STANDARD.

'Peter,' said my uncle, knocking the ashes from his pipe, and laying it on the corner of the mantle piece, and then fixing his eyes on the andirons, 'Peter those andirons cost me one thousand dollars!'

'Dear me!' exclaimed my aunt.

'Oh, father!' exclaimed the girls.

'Impossible!' said I.

'True, every word true. One thousand did I say?—yes—two thousand—full two thousand dollars.'

'Well, well,' said my aunt, folding up her knitting for the night, 'I should like to know what you are talking about.'

My uncle bent forward and planted his hands firmly on his parted knees, and with a deliberate air, which showed no doubt of his being able to prove his assertion, he began:

'Well, you see, a good many years ago, we had a pair of common old andirons. Your cousin Letty says one day, 'father, don't you think those old andirons are getting too shabby?' Shabby or not, I thought they would hold the wood up as nicely as if they were made of gold. So I paid no attention to Letty. I was afraid she was growing proud. Soon after that, Peter,' continued my uncle, 'your aunt took it up—'

'There it goes,' interrupted my aunt, 'you can't get along without dragging me in.'

'Your aunt took it up, Peter, and she said 'our neighbors could afford brass andirons, and were no better off than we were.' And she said 'Letty and her sister Jane were just getting old enough to see company, and the stingy looking old andirons might hurt their market.' I knew that women will have their own way, and there was no use in objecting, and so I got the andirons.'

'The price of them was four dollars and a half—'

'Ah, that's more like it,' cried my aunt; 'I thought you said two thousand dollars.'

'My dear, I wish you would not interrupt me. Four and a half. Well, the first night after we had got them, as we all sat by the warm fire talking over the matter, Letty called my attention to the hearth, the stones of which were cracked and uneven. The hearth was entirely out of keeping with the new andirons, and I thought I might as well have it replaced first as last. The next day a mason was sent for to examine it. He came in my absence, and when I returned home your aunt and cousins all beset me at once, to have a marble slab. The mason had convinced them the hearth would not look decent without a marble slab, and they put their heads together—'

'La, me!' exclaimed my aunt, 'there was no putting any heads together about it. The hearth was a real old worn out thing, not fit for a pig-pen.'

'They put their heads together, Peter, as I was saying, and continued till I got a marble hearth, which cost me twenty dollars. Yes, twenty dollars, at least. Then I thought I was done with expenses, but I thought wrong. Pretty soon I began to hear sly hints thrown out about the brick-work around the fire-place not corresponding with the hearth. I stood out for a month or two against your aunt and the girls, but they at length got the better of me, and I was forced to have marble instead of brick. And then the old wooden mantel-piece was so out of character that it was necessary to have a marble one. The cost of all this was nearly one hundred dollars. And now that the spirit of improvement had got a start, there was no stopping place. The new marble mantel put to shame the old white-washed walls, and they must be painted, of course, and to prepare them for paint, sundry repairs were necessary. While this was going on, your aunt and the girls appeared to be quite satisfied, and when it was done, they had no idea the old parlor could be made to look so spruce. But this was only a short respite. The old rag carpet began to raise a dust, and I found there would be no peace—'

'Now, my dear!' said the old lady, with a pleasing smile, accompanied with a partial rotation of the head—

'Now, father!' exclaimed the girls—

''Till I got a new carpet. That again shamed the old furniture, and it had to be turned out and replaced with new. Now, Peter, count up, my lad—twenty dollars for the hearth, and one hundred for the mantel-piece, and thirty for repairs. What does that make?'

'One hundred and fifty, uncle.'

'Well, fifty for paper and paint—'

'Two hundred.'

'Then fifty for a carpet, and one hundred at least for furniture'—

'Three hundred and fifty.'

'Ahem! There's that clock, too, and the blinds—fifty more'—

'Four hundred exactly.'

My aunt and cousins winked at each other.

'Now,' continued my uncle, 'so much for this one room. No sooner was the room finished, than the complaints came from all quarters, about the dining room and entry. Long before this I had surrendered at discretion, and handed in my submission. The dining-room cost four hundred more. What does that count, Peter?'

'Eight hundred, uncle.'

'Then the chambers—at least four hundred to make them rhyme with the down stairs.'

'Twelve hundred.'

'The outside of the house had to be repaired and painted, of course. Add two hundred for that.'

'Fourteen hundred.'

'Then there must be a piazza in front—that cost two hundred.'

'Sixteen hundred.'

Here aunt began to yawn, Letty to poke the fire, and Jane to twirl over the leaves of a book.

'A new carriage came next, Peter, that cost two hundred dollars.'

'Eighteen hundred.'

'Then there was a lawn to be laid out and neatly fenced—a servant to be hired—parties given occasionally—bonnets and dresses at double the former cost, and a hundred other little expenses in keeping with the new order of things. And all this grew out of those very andirons. Yes, Peter, I was entirely within bounds when I said two thousand dollars.'

The opposition was silenced. My aunt immediately rose and guessed it was bed time. I was left alone with my uncle, who was not inclined to drop the subject. He was a persevering man, and never gave up what he undertook, till he had done the work thoroughly. So he brought out his books and accounts, and set about making an exact estimate of the expenses. He kept me up till after midnight, before he got through. His conclusion was that the pair of andirons cost him *twenty-four hundred and fifty dollars!*

THE MAN WHO KISSED THE THREE GIRLS.

A young man who boarded at a house in the country, where were several city damsels, who seemed to imagine that men are terrible creatures, whom it was an unpardonable sin to look at, was one afternoon accosted by an acquaintance, and asked what he thought of the young ladies with whom he boarded? He replied that they were very shy and reserved.

"So they are," returned the other, "and so much so that no gentleman could get near enough to tell the color of their eyes."

"That they may be," said the boarder, "yet I will stake a million that I can kiss them all