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## The New Era

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## Poetry.

### "Skedaddle."

The shades of night were falling fast,  
As through a Southern village passed  
A youth, who bore, not over nice,  
A banner with the gay device,  
"Skedaddle!"

His hair was red; his toes, beneath,  
Peeped, like an acorn, from its sheath;  
While, with a frightened voice, he sang  
A burden strange to Yankee tongue,  
"Skedaddle!"

He saw no household fire, where he  
Might warm his tod or hominy;  
Beyond, the Cordilleras shone,  
And from his lips escaped a groan,  
"Skedaddle!"

"O, stay," a caller psson said,  
"An' on dis bosom res' your head!"  
The Octoroon she winked her eye,  
But still he answered, with a sigh,  
"Skedaddle!"

"Beware M'Clellan, Buell and Banks,—  
Beware of Halleck's deadly ranks!"  
This was the planter's last Good night;  
The champagne, for out of sight,  
"Skedaddle!"

At break of day, as several boys  
From Maine, New York, and Illinois,  
Were moving southward, in the air  
They heard these accents of despair,  
"Skedaddle!"

A chap was found, and at his side  
A bottle, showing how he died,  
Still grasping in his hand of ice,  
That banner with the strange device,  
"Skedaddle!"

There, in the twilight, thick and gray,  
Considerably played out, he lay;  
And through the vapor, gray and thick,  
A voice fell, like a rocket stick,  
"Skedaddle!"

## Story.

### Florence Emerson; or, The Young Widow.

BY VIRGINIA DE FORREST.

"Florence!" cried Jessie Lawson, bursting into her cousin's boudoir, one morning.—"Florence Emerson, Harry says you are engaged to George Langford!"

"Well, cousin, if I were, have you any objections?"

"Objections!" Why, Floy, he is old enough—

"Just thirty-nine, cousin Jessie."

Thirty-nine, and a widower with two children! But it is a mistake of Harry's; you are not really going to marry him, are you?"

"I expect so," said Florence, quietly.

"Well, I give you up. You, Florence Emerson, the belle of the season, with a large fortune; you, the beauty and heiress, with lovers, beaux, offers without end or number, to throw yourself away upon a poor widower with two children, and no fortune except in his profession! Oh, Floy, I thought you had more sense! What are you thinking of?"

"Why, Jessie, you are wasting your eloquence. George Lawson is handsome."

"Granted."

"Talented."

"Granted, again."

"He loves me!"

"So do fifty others."

"And last of all,—my strongest argument,—I love him."

"Well, I suppose you will marry him, in spite of my disapproval; so I wish you joy, and hope he'll never hold up Mrs. Langford first as a pattern to Mrs. Langford second."

"If Mrs. Langford first was a pattern for me, I will follow in her footsteps."

"Well, well; there is one comfort. Willie and Edith are very pretty children, and too young to rebel at a new mamma, I believe. How old are they, exactly, Floy?"

"Willie is four, Edith three."

"Keep you busy, the care of two such babies."

Florence Emerson and Jessie Lawson were cousins, and had, until Jessie's marriage, been almost like sisters. Jessie, who was two years the elder, was a gay, lively blonde, vain and pretty. Florence was a tall, stately beauty, with large dark eyes, black hair, and features like a Greek statue. She was an orphan, and, as Jessie said, an heiress. George Langford was a lawyer of some standing; handsome, talented, but grave and quiet in his manners; devotedly attached to Florence; but he was thirty-nine, and a widower. Jessie's sentiments were echoed by all Florence's circle of friends, when her engagement was known. She, so beautiful, young, talented and wealthy! She always was different from other girls, they said. So, after a few days, the matter ceased to be discussed, and some new wonder of the fashionable world took its place.

Florence had been married just two years, when it became necessary for Mr. Langford to go to Paris. His stay was to be very short, so he concluded not to take Florence. She was fond of home, had won the love of both children, and in return loved them fondly; and with this society, her home duties, and a promised visit, to Jessie, thought the time of her husband's absence might be made to pass pleasantly. But when the hour of departure came,—when his trunk stood waiting in the hall, and he came to say farewell,—the whole aspect of things seemed changed. Florence felt that her dearest treasure was leaving her; all looked dark, and a vague presentiment of evil filled her soul.

"Why, Florence, you are white as a corpse!" cried George, in a frightened tone. "I thought you had arranged gayeties without number to occupy you while your grave old husband was away. Cheer up, Floy; I shall be gone only a short time."

"Oh, George, I did not realize it till now! What can I do without you?"

"You will visit Jessie, take Willie and Edith into the country, and—and—oh, you had a whole list of pleasures arranged. The carriage is here. Good bye, Florence."

Florence tried to speak, but the words died on her lips. She grasped his hand, while her eyes filled with tears, and then let him go.

All her pleasures were forgotten as she watched the carriage rolling from the door, and she only remembered how lonely she would be without him. She looked back upon two years of such perfect happiness—that it seemed less like reality than a pleasant dream. Long she stood at the window watching, as if she expected him to return; but the voices of the children roused her, and she stifled her own grief, and went to amuse and comfort them. Willie thought papa was 'real unkind' not to take them; while Edith clung close to Florence, and hoped papa would be safe on the 'deep water.'

Jessie Lawson and Florence Langford were seated in the piazza of the pleasant country house they had hired for the season, conversing. Edith and Willie were romping with Rover on the grass, while ever and anon their clear, joyous laughter would make the ladies turn and smile.

"I forgive you now, Floy, for marrying George," said Jessie, fondly. "I think that, if he had asked me, and I could

have looked into the future, I should have done just as you did."

At that instant Jessie felt a hand laid on her shoulder, and, looking up, saw her husband. His face was very grave, and his whole manner betokened that something serious had troubled him.

"Jessie," he said, in a low tone, 'come into the parlor; I want to speak with you.'

"He is jealous," whispered Jessie to Florence as she rose to obey. "Now for a matrimonial lecture."

"Come, the John, Jessie, and Henry, when they entered the parlor. 'I do not wish Florence to hear what I have to say now. Poor Floy! we must break it gently to her.'

"Why, Harry, what is the matter? George—"

"Yes. The Eagle, the vessel, he sailed in, was wrecked, and but few escaped; a vessel going to Calcutta took a few of the passengers, but the rest were lost. George Langford's name is among the missing."

Harry had forgot the open window, and was startled to see Florence now standing in front of it. She was cold and pale as marble; her hands were tightly clenched, her teeth set, and her whole frame rigid and motionless. Harry sprang to her side, and took her hand to lead her in. The touch broke her stupor, and, with a slight shudder, she fell fainting to the ground.

For weeks Florence Langford lay between life and death; fever and delirium succeeded her death-like trance, and her life was despaired of. A strong constitution, however, triumphed, and she recovered; but oh, how altered! The pale, thin face, seen now under a close widow's cap, was so wan and sad that few would have recognized the once blooming Florence.

Her sole comfort, now, seemed to lie in the children,—his children. She would hardly allow them out of her sight, and her whole time was spent in instructing and amusing them.

Florence Langford had been a widow just one year. It was a bright summer's day, and she sat in the same little parlor where she had first heard of her husband's loss. Willie and Edith were seated on the floor beside her, blowing soap-bubbles. Florence sat watching their innocent delight as the sun shone on the pretty globes, and reflected prismatic colors in them, and then her thoughts flew back over the last three years. Sadder and sadder grew the pale face, until Willie noticed it, and, leaving his play, went softly to her side; Edith knelt beside him, with her face laid caressingly against Florence's hand.

"Tell us about papa," whispered Willie. "When is papa coming back?" asked Edith. "He stays so long."

"Hush, Edith," said Willie. "Papa is never coming back; he is dead."

But Edith shook her head. She had always maintained that, as papa went away in a carriage, and said he would come back, and bring them pretty toys from Paris, he could not be dead.

Florence drew Edith upon her lap, and, throwing her arm around Willie, the three talked about papa for an hour; how much longer they would have remained in that position I cannot tell.—Jessie interrupted them; her whole face was beaming with joy.

"Floy!" she whispered, kneeling on the stool at her cousin's feet, and untying her cap, 'take this off for a minute.'

"Why, Jessie?" asked Florence, suffering her to remove it.

"Because it is stiff and unbecoming," said Jessie, who was loosening Floy's hair, and twisting it over her fingers into its old curls. "You must never wear it again."

"Dear Jessie, give it back to me. I shall always wear it."

"But I say you shall never put it on again. Dear Florence, a widow's cap is needless now!"

"Jessie," cried Florence, starting up, and looking eagerly into her cousin's face, while she trembled violently, 'what do you mean?'

"Can you bear the best of news, Floy?" said Jessie, softly. "George—"

Jessie in answer threw open the door, and said gayly: "Come in!" and, in another moment, Florence was in her husband's arms, and the two children were looking in a sort of joyful astonishment at their father.

All was soon explained. George Langford had been among the passengers taken to Calcutta, and had, from some error of the reporters, been put in the list of missing. Cold and exposure had brought on attack of brain fever, and he had been very ill. As soon as he was able, he had started for home, but the voyage had occupied several months; and, after reaching England, he was detained some days before starting for America. He was there at last, and a happier party never met than the one that evening at Oak Lodge—Mr. Lawson's country seat.

ANCESTORS OF WASHINGTON AND FRANKLIN.—In his 'Life of Washington,' Everett furnishes the following: It may be mentioned as a somewhat striking fact, and one, I believe, not hitherto adverted to, that the families of Washington and Franklin—the former the great leader of the American Revolution, and the latter not second to any of his patriotic associates—were established in the same central county of Northampton, and within a few miles of each other; the Washingtons, at Brighton and Sulgrave, belonging to the landed gentry of the country, and in the great civil war supporting the royal side; the Franklins, at the village of Tickon, living on the produce of a farm of thirty acres and the earnings of their trade as blacksmiths, and espousing—some of them, at least, and the father and uncle of Benj. Franklin among the number—the principles of Non-conformists. Their respective emigrations—germs of great events in history—took place,—that of John Washington, the great-grandfather of George, in 1657, to loyal Virginia; that of Josiah Franklin, the father of Benjamin, about the year 1785, to the metropolis of Puritan New England.

FOUND HIS MATCH.—We heard and saw a good thing once. In the Court of Sessions a petty case was being tried. A well-known criminal lawyer, who prides himself on his skill in cross-examining a witness, had an odd-looking genius upon whom to operate. The witness was a boss shoemaker:

"You say, sir, that the prisoner is a thief?"

"Yes, sir; cause why,—she confessed it."

"And you also swear she bound shoes for you subsequent to the confession?"

"I do, sir."

"Then (giving a sagacious look to the Court) we are to understand that you employ dishonest people to work for you, even after their rascalities are known?"

"Of course; how else could I get assistance from a lawyer?"

The counsellor said 'stand aside,' and in a tone which showed that if he had witness' head in a bark mill, no mercy might have been expected. The judge nearly choked himself in a futile endeavor to make the spectators believe that a laugh was nothing but a hiccup; while the witness stepped off the stand with all the gravity of an undertaker.

A certain man says one of his boys knows nothing, and the other does. The question is, which knows the most?

Fun is worth more than physic; and whoever invents or discovers a new source of supply, deserves the name of a public benefactor.