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"Home is the Sacred Refuge of Our Life."
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THE PIANO TUNER'S STORY.

"You are a pair of precious young fools, and that's the best I can find to say about you!" said Aunt George.

Her name was Miss Georgiana Anderson; but the sweet abbreviation, 'Georgie,' was never used to her; as soon might one think of venturing on familiarities with a bishop! Everybody called her 'Aunt George;' and, as she walked with a measured tread, like a grenadier, the name wasn't at all inappropriate.

She was Lizzie's Aunt George, not mine. She had brought Lizzie up in her queer, downright fashion, never giving her a kiss, or a caress, or an endearing word, and yet withal being kind to her in her own practical way.

I wish I could describe Lizzie Anderson to you as she really was. A little, dimpled, blue-eyed creature, with long, shady lashes, and a shy way of looking at you like a child; a girl whose voice was low and sweet, and who moved about noiselessly, like a sweet spring wind rustling the flowers. And only eighteen, too; that was what aggravated her Aunt George the most of all.

"I wasn't married until I was five and thirty!" said Aunt George; "but you young people can't be contented without rushing headlong into the vortex. It would be different if you were rich; but dear me!" and she rubbed her nose perplexedly; "Joe is nothing but a poor piano-tuner, and you haven't a solitary penny of your own, Lizzie."

"We shall be very economical, Aunt George," said Lizzie, cheerfully.

"And you'll have to be," rejoined the old lady, grimly.

It is my intention to be perfectly frank with the reader, and I shall not disguise the fact that I had, in our confidential talks, asked Lizzie if she thought Aunt George would do anything for us pecuniarily.

"Oh, dear, no!" she answered, shaking her curls in a decided fashion; "She always told me to expect nothing from her; and then besides, Joe, she has really nothing to give!"

There was no way of getting over these two facts, taken either together or separately.

"There's one comfort, Lizzie," said I, stoutly; "we are young and strong and brave-hearted, and we'll ask no aid of anybody."

"Of course we won't, Joe," said Lizzie, her blue eyes sparkling like dew-wet violets at sunrise.

I did wish, once or twice, that my business had been something more lucrative than piano tuning; but it was what I had been brought up to, and I had a pretty good run of custom on the whole; and, as Lizzie said, "A little will go a great way when you are careful of it."

"You'll see, Jo," she blithely added, "that I shall make a splendid house-keeper."

We had just seventy-five dollars to furnish our little second floor with; but I can assure you our two rooms looked very cozy, with the red and green carpet and neat stained furniture. Lizzie said it looked exactly like a doll's house, and she wasn't far wrong.

"Such a pair of fools!" re-iterated Aunt George, in an exceeding prophetic mood; "but there's one comfort—it won't last very long."

"Why shouldn't it, Aunt George?" asked Lizzie, coloring and smiling in her captivating way.

"Humph!" said Aunt George; "if you go to that, why don't the sun-shine last forever?"

"So it might, if there were no clouds," answered Lizzie, softly.

"Ah, child!" sighed Aunt George; "you are young now, so enjoy it as much as you can. We can't be young twice, more's the pity."

So we were married quietly, as became our humble estate and moderate expectations, and went to spend a few days in the country, where I had a sister living on a breezy, old-fashioned farm. Do you suppose Lizzie and I will ever forget those days, even if we live as long as Methusaleh?

It was a November evening when we came to the "doll's house," where the red merino draperies glowed warm in the ruddy light of the fire, and the tin kettle was singing out its homely lay of welcome.

"Lizzie," said I softly, "are you glad to come home?"

And she answered, more with her eyes than lips, "Oh, so very, very glad, for we are going to be happy here. I know it as well as if I saw the years before me on a map."

Our first year was very blissful, especially after the baby came, to make our lives musical with his little cooing voice. But after that the hard times came. Not that we repined; Lizzie and I were brave to endure whatever we could bear together; yet it went to my heart to see her getting pale and thin, through sitting up late to sew and earn a little extra money because my business was dull. And then the bills began to accumulate, and the rent got behind.

"This won't do Jo," said Lizzie, gravely; "we must do without meat."

"That is nothing," said I, laughing, although I felt little inclined to mirth; "but we cannot very well do without a roof over our heads."

"Don't fret, Joe," said my cheery little wife; "we'll not want; something will happen."

"But what can happen, Lizzie? The days of miracles are over; there no Elijahs and ravens in these times."

"Yes, there are, Joe," she said, cheerfully, "although we don't always know it at the time. There is an order for you to tune a piano up in South street. Isn't that a raven?"

And she held the little strip of paper with the order triumphantly before my eyes.

When I returned home from South street Lizzie met me at the door with humid eyes and a very anxious, troubled face.

"What is the matter?" I cried anxiously; "Lizzie—not the baby? Nothing has happened to him!"

"No, he is quite well, and fast asleep, like a little white lamb. But Aunt George is dead."

"Aunt George!"

"Yes; she died this morning, and I could not be sent for in time to receive her last breath. Oh, Joe, she was very, very kind to me."

Are we men naturally so selfish, or was I, hunted and driven by want, an exception to the ordinary rule? For I confess that as Lizzie stood there, looking tearfully up into my face, the first thought that followed the entrance of this unexpected news to my brain was: Would Aunt George leave us anything? I supposed Lizzie was her sole living relation, and surely, in all these years, though her income was small, she must have saved something. But I am thankful to remember that I never told Lizzie what was in my mind.

"She was very old, dear," I said, striving to comfort my grieved wife; "threescore and ten. It is the allotted age of humanity, and you know she had grown very feeble."

We went to Aunt George's funeral, and the will was read—a very brief document in which she bequeathed her simple household furniture to a nephew in Wisconsin, and "to Elizabeth wife of Joseph Allen, as a token of affectionate remembrance, her piano."

A tuneless, jangling instrument, half a century old, with carved spindle legs, ornaments of inlaid brass, and keys as yellow as Aunt George's own complexion. And that was the end of all my expectations of an inheritance from Lizzie's Aunt George.

The old piano was duly carted home the next day. If it had been a fashionable instrument of modern make, we could never have gotten it up the narrow staircase; but it looked quite friendly and home-like opposite the fire-place, its lank proportions covered by a faded green cloth.

I shrank back with a grimace as Lizzie touched the keys so as to make the baby laugh.

"Of course it's out of tune, Joe," she said, merrily, "but you'll soon set that all right; and I shall rub up my practice again in no time."

It happened to be a very dull time just then: so I had nothing else to do but to take Lizzie's advice; and in half an hour I had the old instrument nearly dissected, much to the baby's edification, as he sat gravely on the floor, in the midst of the interior developments of the old piano.

And now comes the most marvelous part of the story.

All piano tuners know that when you take away the front piece above the keyboard there is a hollow place of considerable extent, in any instrument of ordinary size. And as I stopped to blow the dust away from this place I saw a bundle or a roll of bank notes fastened round with a yellow slip of paper, on which was written: "For my niece Lizzie."

"Lizzie!" I cried, breathlessly, "Lizzie!" and she was at my side in an instant.

And, if you will believe me, there were $5,000, the accumulated savings of Aunt George's frugal life; and this was what she had meant by giving her piano to us.

That $5,000 was the starting point of the snug little fortune we have since scraped together; and if Aunt George could know how much her bequest has done for us, I think it would do her kindly heart good.

ALL IS NOT LOST.—When Jeremy Taylor had lost all, he could still write thus:

"I have fallen into the hands of publicans and sequestrators, and they have taken all from me; what now? Let me look about me. They have left me the sun and moon, a loving wife and many friends to pity me, and some to relieve me; and I can still discourse; and, unless I list, they have not taken away my merry countenance and my cheerful spirit and a good conscience; and they have still left me the providence of God, and all the promises of the Gospel, and my religion, and my hopes of Heaven, and my charity to them, too; and still I sleep and digest, I eat and drink, I read and meditate—and he who hath so many causes of joy, and so great, is very much in love with sorrow and peevishness, who leaves all these pleasures, and chooses to sit down upon his little handful of thorns.

[From the Syracuse News.]

A SINGULAR STORY.

A Brother Just Escapes Marrying his sister.

The strange incidents related in the following sketch are vouched for as strictly true by a gentleman who arrived at New York on the steamship Rotterdam, of the Rotterdam and Antwerp line, on Wednesday of last week:

The vessel left Rotterdam Aug. 7th, and among the passengers in the cabin were a man apparently thirty-five years of age, named James N. Van Seller, and a young lady, apparently fifteen years younger, named Maria Reuter. From the time of leaving port the two mentioned attracted much attention, the man for his graceful bearing and handsome looks, and the young lady for her beauty, of such a type that the gentlemen, in talking about her, styled her "the Madonna."

The ship had not skimmed over the dark blue waters more than two days, when the conduct of the two excited the curiosity of the passengers to a still greater degree. They sat separate at the table, and never while at meals evinced by look or word that they were ever acquainted. But in the morning, even before the sun had reared its crest out of the bosom of the ocean, and long after he had sunk beneath the waves, the objects of so much curiosity could be seen engaged in conversation in such a manner as left no doubt of their being man and wife, or lovers shortly to be married. But why the necessity of acting so strangely toward each other when in company? The female occupants of the cabin were no nettles, and determined to solve the mystery. Rumors prejudicial to the fame of "the Madonna" were whispered from ear to ear, and they soon reached the ears of the young man.

He was indignant, but spared the young lady the recital, and, in order to save them from future annoyance, he told the writer's informant that he was engaged to be married, and that his intended bride thought there would be something so romantic about a marriage in mid-ocean that he acceded to her wish. Their acting as they did in the cabin was so that when the time arrived for their marriage, they all, as his intended said, might enjoy a genuine surprise.

The sixth day out from port was set down as the time for the auspicious event, and the ladies in the cabin were wild with excitement. On the evening preceding the marriage, as the sun was dipping its lower edge in the western horizon, the passengers on deck were startled by a loud shriek from the after part of the hurricane deck, rushed to the spot from whence the sound proceeded, and saw Miss Reuter stretched on the floor, while at a short distance her lover leaned against the gunwale, his face ashy pale, while upon its every lineament was depicted an agony that a man can feel but once in his lifetime.

What dire discovery led to such a sublimation of sorrow? What upas tree, with its malignant breath, had poisoned the atmosphere of love that they but a few brief moments before had breathed? There stood the groom of to-morrow, speechless and motionless, and the head of his intended bride, instead of being nestled in his arms, lay where it had fallen—upon the deck.

The passengers, on seeing the sad and strange sight, were amazed, and wondered that her love, whose agony was so apparent, did not approach the prostrate form. But the reason would be made apparent soon enough, and their hearts would bleed for a grief that had no hope, for a blank despair that can never this side of eternity be irradiated with one gleam of sunshine.

The young lady was at once removed to her cabin, and was attended by the ship surgeon, but it was long before she was restored to consciousness. Her intended husband was finally induced to enter the cabin, but his presence brought on a paroxysm of weeping which

THREATENED THE YOUNG LADY'S LIFE,

and he at once withdrew. A few days after the strange events related had occurred, Mr. Van Seller, with much hesitancy, related to the writer's informant circumstances which fully explained the cause of the preceding events.

When a boy of ten, he ran away from his parents, who were residing in the city of Amsterdam, and found employment as a cabin boy on a ship bound for Java. For five years he sailed to different parts of the world, and had accumulated a considerable sum of money. He concluded, finally, to visit his parents; but on arriving at Amsterdam he heard that his father was dead, and that his mother had again married and removed to a different part of the country. On hearing this, he decided at once to ship again, and since then has sailed all over the world. Ten years ago he engaged in business in a Western town, and became rich. Two months ago he visited Europe, and in the city of Rotterdam met with Miss Reuter, who had been engaged as governess. A mutual feeling of respect ended in love, and his proposal of marriage was accepted. She said her parents were dead, and she had no one to consult in relation to any step she took in life. He desired the marriage to take place before leaving, but, providentially, the romantic girl wished it to be at sea, which delay, grievous as the results were, saved them from a fate much worse than death. On the evening previous to their intended marriage Miss Reuter spoke of her mother as having once lived in Amsterdam, and that she had been married twice. This fell upon his ear as the knell of fate, the name of his father, the circumstances of her half-brother running away to sea when he was ten years of age, his reported death by drowning on the coast of France, and the strange coincidence of his and her lost brother's name being the same. Not noticing the intense agony depicted on his face, she drew forth a locket, and their mother's portrait was displayed before them. With a voice sounding as if from the grave, he grasped her by the arm and said: "My God, you are my sister, my own mother's daughter!" She gave one wild, incredulous look into his face, and then fell fainting upon the deck.

The voyage was a long one, occupying nineteen days, and before its termination the young lady was able to go on the deck. She was, however, but a shadow of her former self, and her restless, vacant look showed that her mind did not pass through the fearful ordeal unscathed.

Together they concluded it was better to place the ocean between them, and in a few days the unfortunate lady will return to her native Holland. Her brother has made her a liberal allowance, which will always keep her in easy circumstances, and however bitterly they may regret their unlucky fate, they cannot but be thankful that their brief acquaintance ended as it did.

BISMARCK.—Several of the deputies have attacked more or less boldly the policy of the Government. While they speak, Prince Bismarck sits paring his nails, only now and then raising his head and fixing a glance upon the orator who has made a statement which excites him. At last he is roused by M. Tissot, who is attracted by the figure of the Chancellor, of whom he says: "I direct my lorgnette upon him, but I very soon feel an arm laid up my shoulder, which drags me violently backward. 'It is forbidden to *bigner* the Chancellor,' cries a rough voice. I begin to explain that the barrels of my double glasses are not charged, but a neighbor whispers in my ear 'policeman,' and I put both my tongue and lorgnette in my pocket." M. de Bismarck here, as elsewhere, draws all attention. His eloquence, which he hammers like the iron on an anvil, emits flights of sparks. At first his language is embarrassed—he finds the words with difficulty. But little by little he warms, the volcano lightens, it vomits blocks of stones. The man is not an orator, as orators go. This is not an eagle who soars on victorious wings, not a lion who roars in shaking his mane, and in striking the earth with his tail. There is no inspiration in that bosom of iron; there is only a will—a will which moves the mountains. A wild boar tracked to his lair and making a rush upon the dogs—such is M. de Bismarck, orator. One might fancy he saw a German postilion wearing the boots of Louis IX., and wielding the whip with which that absolute monarch reasoned in his Parliament. He holds his anger under government, and mingles malice and invective with cajoleries and puns. Bismarck falls upon the Ultramontanes. His violent attacks and threatening gestures excite one of those tempests which he loves. The protests and hisses of the Centre mingle with the plaudits of the Right and the Left. Divided into two camps, the Deputies provoke and insult each other. The President in vain rings his bell. Dominating the *melee*, his face sweating great drops, his eyes flaming, M. de Bismarck "lets fall from his lips" a smile superbly insolent and disdainful. He feels, as they all feel, that all those heads are for him but so many balls which he can knock one against the other, just as it pleases him.—*Le Monde.*

A PERFECT FLIRT.—For flirting commend us to the belle of a country village—a New England country village in particular. What with some beauty, a trifle of accomplishments, a great deal of sentiment and plenty of novel reading, she is furnished out for the profession of flirting. Her thirst for adulation is as insatiable as her capacity for humbugging herself and others is boundless. It is not unusual for this sort of girl to be engaged to two or three men at once, nor for her to become an old maid after all, because she cannot determine among the number of those who are perishing for love of her who it is she loves most. We have known one of those town flirts to destroy the whole peace of mind of several young men within two years, one of them a clergyman of fair talents, who was, notwithstanding, fool enough to want to marry her, knowing all about it; and because at the last she would not have him, he gave up his profession and left the country.

MODEL HUSBANDS.—Here is indeed, in one respect, the "promised land" for the women, for more devoted husbands women never had (writes a correspondent from Greece). A Greek man is only content when he can lavish upon his wife all the luxuries in the way of dress the female heart can desire. He is only happy when, in company with his wife in the house, in the street, or on the promenade, she is the best dressed of all the fair. With the Greek husband there is no grumbling consent to bestow upon you enough to buy a pair of boots, while he spends ten times that amount with his friends in champagne suppers; no long-drawn visage as he doles out a pitiful sum while delivering a lecture as to female extravagance. Not a bit of it. On the contrary, the Greek husband does not lead his wife throughby-streets, for fear of silk mercers, when she wishes to go out for a little walk; he leads her past the most fashionable shops, and observes with the eye of a critic all the new styles, and is really, ladies—really and truly—willing to spend his money for his own wife. Even for fear she should not be considered as lovely as some one else, he goes to a perfumer's and buys cold cream, rice powders, delicate pink for cheeks, &c., &c.

Beauty is worse than wine—it intoxicates both the holder and the beholder.

THROWING THE SHOE.

Very few, probably, of the thousands who throw shoes after bridal parties as they are leaving home know anything of the origin of the custom. Like a great majority of such usages, its origin is ancient, and can be traced to Bible times. It was then the custom for the brother of a childless man to marry his widow, or at least he had the refusal of her. If he chose to reject her, the ceremony was public, and consisted in her loosing his shoe from his foot, (Deuteronomy xxv. 5-10) and spitting in his face. His giving up the shoe was a symbol of his abandoning all dominion over her, and the latter part of the ceremony was an assertion of her independence. There was an affair of this kind between Ruth and Boaz. In some parts of the East it was a custom to carry a slipper before a newly married couple as a token of the bride's subjection. The custom as it exists with us is very old in England and Scotland. The usual saying is that it is thrown for luck, and that is the idea in this country, but originally it meant a renunciation of authority by the parents over the bride.

It was formerly a custom among the Germans for the bride, when she was conducted to her chamber, to take off her shoe and throw it among the guests. Whoever got it in the struggle to obtain it regarded it as an omen that he or she would be happily married. When the Emperor Vladimir proposed marriage to the daughter of Ragnald, she rejected him, saying, "I will not take off my shoe to the son of a slave." Luther being at a wedding told the bride that he had placed the husband's shoe at the head of the bed as a sign that he was to henceforth govern. Train, in his history of the "Isle of Mann," says: "on the bridegroom leaving his house it was customary to throw an old shoe after him, and in like manner to throw an old shoe after the bride on leaving her home to proceed to church, in order to secure good luck to each respectively; and if by stratagem either of the bride's shoes could be taken off by the spectators, on her way from church, it had to be ransomed by the bridegroom."

In Kent, England, after the couple have started on their tour, the single ladies are drawn up in one row and the bachelors in another; an old shoe is then thrown as far as possible, and the ladies run for it, the successful one being supposed to be the first who will get married. She then throws the shoe at the gentlemen, and the one who is hit by it is deemed to be the first male who will enter into wedlock. Generally it is considered that the older the shoe is the better.

AT A MORMON BALL.

The correspondent of the Sacramento *Union* says:—Saturday was a holiday of the Mormons. At night it closed with a grand ball. How odd it sounds to hear a ball announced in church; how strange to see a ball opened with prayer! What dancers these Mormons are! There was a perfect jam and crush. The sexes were about evenly represented. The women were plainly clad—not a low-necked dress in the room, not a trailing dress to be seen; and, though the dancing was mascularly vigorous, and of the prancing style, with lateral, vertical and all other motions, not one among all the women present displayed an ankle, nor could the most curious catch more than a glimpse of that part of female anatomy. In dress, at least, the Mormon women are modest and severe. But for the men—what shall I say? They came, totally indifferent to personal appearance. A goodly portion were in working clothes, many were in their shirt-sleeves, few had dressed their hair, scarcely one had put on a clean shirt, scores wore no collars, and not a few were filthily dirty, while the women *en masse* were clean, neat and tidy, not a few being tastefully arrayed in white. The dancing was about four parts of quadrilles to one part of round dances. In the cotillions no man's arm encircled a woman's waist. In waltzing there was no hugging. All the dancing was hard work; the women rolled into it till their faces were purple; the men danced as if doing it for dear life; not a bit of mincing about it; ah, no! the way they cracked heels, sprung into the air, pirouetted and broke-down, would have sent Billy Emerson and his like mad with envy. I was introduced to three ladies of like name, and, like a blundering Gentile, took them for sisters or some such, when they were only wives of one man; I looked with sublime admiration upon one woman who had eleven husbands by aid of the Mormon divorce code; I put my foot into it up to the hip in comparing two ladies, in conversation with a man, who quietly closed the audience by remarking they were both his wives. I made up my mind to dance a Mormon quadrille, but discovered it required the ear of experience to their calling, the feet of the Chamois, the strength of Hercules, the agility of Mercury, and the bottom of Pegasus. I left in disgrace after mixing a set up terribly by my blunders, and after, from lack of speed and wind, spoiling the fun of six Mormons and one Gentile for that dance.

A French officer, who fought in the Crimea, related how an English battalion of infantry destroyed two Russian regiments. The Russians fired incessantly and did not lose a foot of ground; but they were excited and aimed badly. On the contrary, the English infantry avoided undue haste, took steady aim, and missed scarcely a single shot. The human being is ten times stronger when his pulse continues calm, and when his judgment remains free.

A FALSE ADAGE.—When poverty enters the door, love(?) goes out at the window.

A CARLIST STORY.—A strange story is reported from Spain. A detachment of Alfonsist soldiers recently discovered in a secluded part of a mountain chain a cavern which was inhabited by robbers, who had taken advantage of the civil war in order to ply their criminal avocation. An alcove was attached to this subterraneous dwelling, the door of which the soldiers broke open. They were astonished to find the apartment decently furnished, and provided with books, flowers, and even a piano. In an easy chair sat a venerable old man. The soldiers interrogated him, but obtained only incoherent replies. It has since been ascertained, from the confession of one of the robbers, that the old man was the cashier of a banking firm at Burgos: that they had broken into the bank, stolen the safe, and taken the cashier with them, in hopes that he would assist them to open the safe. During their retreat, which was marked by many adventures, the intrepid old man succeeded in evading the vigilance of his guardians for a short time, secreting the safe in a place where he would be able to recover it afterwards. When the booty was missed, and the robbers failed to induce the cashier to reveal the place where it was concealed, they revived the proceedings of the famous "chauffeurs" by roasting the feet of their victim in order to extort a confession. But the inflicted tortures had a different effect.—The man went deranged; and it was with the object of restoring him to reason that the robbers bestowed the utmost attention on him, in hopes that when he recovered his reason he would reveal to them the place where the safe was concealed.

FEMALE LIFE IN HAVANA.—Great scarcity of women at Havana. There are at least three times more males than females. Hardly any other women than negroes are to be seen about. Ladies without any pretensions to youth and beauty would sooner die than venture out unprotected, even for their early mass; and so uncommon is the sight of decent women unattended in the streets that foreign ladies unacquainted with the custom, and sauntering from shop to shop, become the objects of a curiosity frequently degenerating into impertinence. The cause of this is that, besides the priests and soldiers and sailors, the crowds of Spanish immigrants are attracted there by the high wages, and do not of course take their families. Among the upper class an exclusive male society is cultivated. The charms of cafe and club life, such charms as they are, wean the Havana husbands from homes where real feminine accomplishments are as unknown as hearth-rugs and fire irons.

THE GOLDEN RULE.—A few days ago a gentleman of New York city, says the *Tribune*, received by mail a check for five hundred dollars. He deposited it in his bank, and went down into the street, there to be met by a rumor that sent him back in haste. Just twenty-five minutes had elapsed. The teller's little door was shut. The money was gone. Had it been stolen? Was the banker a swindler? No, he had failed.

About the same time a merchant received a large quantity of goods one day near the close of business hours. He made some commonplace excuse for not making immediate payment, and promised to send a check the next morning. The first announcement of the morning was that he had failed and was a bankrupt. He had the goods, but the real owner was without his check. Was the merchant a thief? Ought he to have gone to jail? Not at all. He had only suspended. He was unable to meet his obligations.

Two young men were recently brought into one of our police courts on a charge of stealing shoes from a store. They were decent in appearance, and it was believed by some that they had been driven to crime by want. Had they failed, or had they suspended? Or was it because they were unable to meet their obligations? Not at all. They were thieves—common thieves—very common thieves. They were sent to the penitentiary for two months.

A SHARP LEGISLATOR.—A member of the last Ohio Assembly did this: He bargained for board at the United States Hotel at Columbus, and arranged that he was to pay fifty cents a meal, and, whenever he was absent a meal, he was to be credited with that amount. He then hunted up some cousin in the vicinity, an old schoolmate, a man who had once courted his (the member's) wife, and several other relations, and sponged his living off them the larger part of the session. When he settled up with the hotel the day of adjournment, the landlord was astonished to find that he owed his boarder $75, the amount credited him for absence at meals, over that charged for presence at meals. It was a Western Reserve man did it.

Correspondence.

FOR THE GAZETTE.

REMINISCENCES OF EUROPEAN TRAVEL.

NUMBER LXXXII.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—The soil of Tuscany is more or less clay, which I was surprised to see, for I thought that it was alluvial. Being clay, it produces wheat, rye, barley and buckwheat; and, of the vegetables, cabbages (much larger than any I have ever seen in this country), artichokes, turnips (small ones), cauliflower (very fine), and all other vegetables that we have in the Southern States except ochra, cucumbers, tomatoes and egg-plants. Years ago, while on a visit to Saratoga, a lady from Savannah, Ga., who sometimes spent her winters in Edinburgh, Scotland, told me that cucumbers were very scarce in Scotland, and that in buying them the purchaser always chose those that were largest and so old that they were yellow. I soon saw, after my arrival in France, why this was the case, for the only way in which the people used them was to make pickles and to fry them. I never saw any cucumbers anywhere on the Continent but in France. Two other vegetables—the green pepper and vegetable-egg—are rarely ever seen anywhere in Europe except Paris. The sweet potato is brought from Africa.

It is a curious thing to a stranger to see the way in which the Italian prepares his fertilizer:—he has a vat built of brick, ten, twenty or thirty feet square—according to his need—and lined with mortar. Into this vat the crude, fresh article is put, and water poured upon it to dissolve it. Boards are then placed over the vat, to prevent, if possible, the ammonia from escaping. When the manure is well dissolved, the farmer, with buckets having very long handles, dips it out and scatters it broad-cast over his land, which produces vegetables that I have never seen equalled anywhere in America. In Italy, as in Germany, no person is allowed to turn out his cattle and other stock to destroy his neighbor's farm. (When will the people of the South learn to be like the rest of the world in this respect?) But it seems to me that this is an unnecessary precaution in Italy, for it is about the only country where I saw substantial stone fences, which remind one very much of those to be seen in Western North Carolina. There are in Italy many little farms embraced in one inclosure.

I took great pleasure in passing through the markets in Florence, early in the morning, and asking questions. The principal market street in New Town is narrow and crooked, and the houses are small and ugly. There is no market-house, and the venders have no other protection than little shelters built in front of the houses, and which answer for what the Down Easter calls a "stoop," but which the rest of the world calls a "piazza." In this market is to be found all the fine vegetables spoken of above. The beef is not as fine as that found in the New York market, but it is good; pork is seldom seen, and the mutton is poor. The mutton is injured very much on account of the butcher not skinning it immediately after it is butchered; instead of this, if a person buys a quarter in market, it is skinned on the spot, and the remaining quarters are left in the hide. With all their care, the wool will touch the mutton, which makes even the flesh of the lamb taste as strong as the oldest sheep. The chickens are not so fine as those we have in our markets, but are poor, and many of them are of a bluish color. It is the custom in France and Italy for the restaurants to expose in their show windows whatever they intend to have served during that day. In looking in at these windows in Florence, I noticed that the chickens looked plump and altogether different from what they did in market, but I also noticed that they had a bruised appearance, which I mistrusted, and, sure enough early one morning, I saw the keeper of one of these restaurants take a round stick which he kept concealed under a towel, and beat down the hips and breast bone of a chicken, which gave it a fat, plump appearance. This was a droll trick in trade. All through the market there are plates of chicken livers and other giblets, which are sold at high prices; and also plates of chicken combs, that are sold at high prices to make pies. The comb pies I did not indulge in, for I thought I could very easily pass them by, as I had indulged in buttermilk soup, sausages out of lights, and other dainties, in Germany.

But (to change the subject very abruptly) I had liked to have forgotten to tell you that Harriet Beecher Stowe—sister of the renowned Beecher who has been figuring so gallantly in our civil courts—was in Florence for only a day or two. She was too keen for the beggars and other poor creatures in distress, for she went out in a rather close carriage, and only passed through the fashionable streets, where she could not be shocked at the sights of wretchedness, and the horses went at full speed, in order that beggars might have no opportunity to test her liberality. But I lived in hopes that the condition of the wretched Italians would bring forth a second "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and I even entertained this hope after my arrival in Paris, and the great attempt was made on the life of Napoleon III, when three persons were killed and sixty odd wounded. The day before the execution of Perry and Osini, Napoleon received a letter from them, in which they begged his forgiveness, and at the same time implored him to free their dear country from the German yoke. Although he and the Empress had had such a narrow escape, it was said that as he read the letter he wept and vowed that Italy should be free, and in twelve months Italy was free. But what of Beecher's sister all this time? Why, she was as dumb as an oyster: and simply because the Italians were not black!

Now, as I am about to take my leave of Italy, that I may not be accused of prejudice in giving my opinion of the Italians, I will quote from one of many authors (and that one a German) on the subject. After many compliments on these people relative to the arts and sciences, language and society, he says:—"Here the arts and sciences first revived, and here commenced the regeneration of Europe. The most celebrated names in Italian literature and art are of Florentine origin. Refinement, genius and taste rendered the age of Lorenzo de Medici one of the most brilliant in history, and took root so deeply as to be still conspicuous in the city where he ruled. The language of even the lower people is pure and graceful, and full of delicacy and expression. Generally speaking, the people are lively, polite, social, devout, and, like others, fond of the theatre, but in industry and dexterity surpassing the most of them."

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