

# THE OLD CONSTITUTION.

"THERE'S A DIVINITY THAT SHAPES OUR ENDS, ROUGH-HUE THEM AS WE MAY."—Shakspeare

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## ASPIRATIONS.

Our aims are all too high; we try  
 To gain the summit at a bound,  
 When we should reach it step by step,  
 And climb the ladder round by round.

He who would climb the height sublime.  
 Or breathe the purer air of life,  
 Must not expect to raise in ease,  
 But brace himself for toil or strife.

We should not in our blindness seek  
 To grasp alone for grand and great,  
 Disdaining every smaller good,  
 For trifles make the aggregate.  
 And if a cloud should hover o'er  
 Our weary pathway like a pall,  
 Remember God permits it there,  
 And His good purpose reign o'er all.

## MR. PETERS' FIRST WIFE.

"Dear, dear! no toast, eggs boiled as hard as brickbats, and the coffee stone-cold." And Mr. Peters rose from the table in a temper by no means amiable, and rang the bell violently. He rang again, a third, a fourth time, and still no answer! Out of all patience, he went to the door and called—"Maria! Maria!"

A slight, pretty little woman, dressed in a soiled, tumbled wrapper, answered his summons. She had one of those round, bright faces which Nature intended should be decked with continual smiles; but now, with all its roses in bloom, it was drawn to its full length, and the large blue eyes had a serious, or rather doleful expression, totally at variance with their usual joyous look. Her voice, too, had lost its melodious, ringing sound, and was subdued to a dismal whine.

"What is it, Joseph?"  
 "Where's Bridget?"  
 "Gone out for me. I want more white ribbon for my ascension robe."  
 Mr. Peters said a very naughty word, and then continued, "cold coffee, hard eggs, breakfast not fit to eat."

"I wish," whined his wife, "you would think less of temporal matters, and turn your attention to the great end of life."

"Hang it all, madam, I would like to enjoy my life while I do have it. Here was I, the happiest man in the United States, with a pleasant home, a chatty, cheerful, loving wife, and good, quiet children; and now, since you have joined the Millerites, what am I?"

"Oh, Joseph, if you would only, only come into that blessed circle."  
 "Oh, Maria, if you would come out of it. Where are the boys?"  
 "I'm sure I don't know."  
 "Are they going to school to-day?"  
 "No, dear Joseph."  
 "For what reason, madam?"

"My dear, their teacher has given up the school, and is turning her mind to more exalted objects. Oh! Joseph, turn now, while there is time. You have still a week for preparation and repentance."

"Repentance! Well, when I take up the subject, it will take more than a week to put it through."

"And Mr. Peters put on his coat and took up his hat.

"Joseph," said his wife, "you need not send home any dinner. I shall be out, and I'll take the boys over to their uncle's to dine."

Joe made no answer, unless the violently emphatic manner in which he closed the door was one. Muttering with anger, he strode into a restaurant to make a breakfast. Here he was hailed by one of his friends, Fred Lomers, who looked up as he heard Joe's order.

"Hallo!" he cried, "you here? What are you doing here at breakfast time?—Wife sick?"

"No."  
 "Had a quarrel?"  
 "No."  
 "Gone to town?"  
 "No."  
 "Then why don't you breakfast at home? Chimney on fire?"  
 "No!"

"No!"  
 "Well, what in thunder is to pay! Maria's joined the Millerites!"  
 Fred gave a long, shrill whistle, and then said: "Going to ascend next week?"

"Yes, and if I don't commit suicide in the meantime, you may congratulate me. I am almost distracted. Can't get a decent meal; children running riot, servants saucy, house all in confusion, wife got the blues, either quoting the speeches of the elders at me, or sewing on a white robe, and groaning every third or fourth stitch. Hang it all, Fred, I've a great mind to take poison or join the army!"

"H'm, h'm! you give an enchanting picture, but I think I can suggest a cure."

"A cure?"  
 "Yes, if you will promise to take my advice, I will make your home pleasant, your wife cheerful, and your children happy."

"Do it," cried Joe. "I'll follow your word like a soldier under his superior officer. What shall I do?"

At tea time Mr. Peters entered his home, whistling. Maria was seated at her sewing, and there were no signs of preparations for the evening meal.

"Maria, my dear," said Mr. Peters, "is tea ready?"

"I don't know," was the answer, "have been out all day attending meeting."

"Oh, very well; never mind."

tending meeting! You are resolved then, to leave me next week?"

"Oh, Joseph, I must go when I am called."

Yes, my dear, of course. I must resign myself, I suppose. By the way, my dear, has it ever occurred to you that I shall be a widower with three children? I think I am a handsome man yet, my love, and Joe walked over to the glass, passed his fingers through his hair and pulled up his collar.

Maria looked rather surprised. "You see, dear, it is rather a relief for you to go quickly, you know. It is so wearing on the nerves to have a long illness; and besides, my dear, there will be no funeral expenses to pay, and that is a quite a saving."

Mrs. Peters' lip quivered, and her large blue eyes filled with tears. Joe longed to quit his heartless speech and comfort her, but he was fearful the desired effect was not yet gained.

"So, my dear," he continued, "if you must go, I have been thinking of getting me another wife."

"What?" cried Mrs. Peters.  
 "Another wife, my love. The house must be kept in order, and the boys cared for."

The grief was gone from Maria's face, but her teeth were set with a look of fierce wrath.

"Another wife, Joseph. Another? Yes, I will have a good successor. I deliberated a long time, when I was a bachelor, between her and yourself. You will like her, she is your bosom friend."

"What, Sarah Ingraham."  
 "Yes, my dear. I think that on the day you ascend, I will marry Sarah. What, that good-for-nothing, silly, empty-headed old maid, the mother of my children. What!"

"Well, my dear, it seems to be the best I can do. I don't want to leave my business to go a courting, and she will have me, I know."

"No doubt. Oh, you great, brutal, hateful—"

"Stop, my dear, don't fly into a fury. We will try to spend our last week in happiness. Oh, by the way, I have a proposition to make."

"Go on, sir. Do not spare me."

Ah, yes, that is the very thing I wish to do. I know your mind is entirely engrossed with your ascension, and I wish to spare you the care of the house. Suppose you invite Sarah here to-morrow, to spend the week."

"What?"  
 "Then I can arrange our matrimonial preparations in the evening, while you are at the lecture."

"What?"  
 "And you can leave the house in her charge all day. That will give you plenty of time to go out, and she can sweep the ways of the house."

(Concluded on 4th Page.)

*Mrs. James S. H. H. H.*