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THE FARMER'S PRESIDE.

Around the fire one wintry night,
The farmer's rosy children sat;
The faint light of the blazing light,
And mirth went round, and harmless chat.

When hark! a gentle hand they hear
Low tapping at the bolted door,
And thus again their willing ear,
A feeble voice was heard implore:

Cold blows the blast across the moor,
The sleat drives hissing in the wind;
You toll me mountain lies before,
A dreary treeless waste behind.

My eyes are dim and weak with age;
No road, no path can I discern;
And these poor rags ill stand the rage
Of steh a keen inclement sky.

So faint I am these tottering feet
No more my pained frame can bear,
My feeble heart forgets to beat,
And drifting snow my tomb prepare.

Open your hospitable door,
And shield me from the biting blast,
Cold, cold it blows across the moor,
The weary moor that I have passed!

With hasty steps the farmer ran,
And close beside the fire they place
The poor old frozen beggar-man,
With shaking limbs and pale blue face.

The little children flocking came,
And chatted his frozen hands in theirs,
And busily the great old dame
A comfortable place prepares.

Their kindness cheered his drooping soul,
And slowly down his wrinkled cheek,
The big round tear was seen to roll,
And told the things he could not speak.

The children then began to sigh,
And all their merry chat was o'er,
And yet they felt they knew not why,
More glad than they had done before.

One Woman's Way.

BY ROLPH DOUGLAS.

It was New Year's night. A handsome parlor in a handsome house; a cheery, cozy fire in the shining nickel-barred grate; a gentle moon-like light from the softly shaded gas, and through all the room a slanting breath of fresh flowers and a soft pleasant air of cleanness and wealth.

In a large easy-chair near the glowing grate sat a man; a handsome man, fit inmate of the handsome room, a man of middle age and most comfortable appearance; a smiling, serene gentleman, well fed and well clothed. He was watching with a fond, happy smile, a woman standing in the long, charmingly curtained window. She was rather a tall woman, neither stout nor slim—a happy medium. And she was nicely—elegantly habited in a blue satin robe with an abundance of fine, creamy silk lace about her.

One shapely hand held back the rich amber-colored silk curtain, and the loose shortish sleeve fell back revealing a beautiful plump pinky arm.

She too, was handsome, with a serene, pale face; very brown, beautiful, sober eyes, and a sweet, serious red mouth.

A sensible looking woman, too, despite her stylish fashionable air!

Outside the snow was whirling in a fleecy blinding cloud.

The street lamps made squares and streaks of golden light through the misty, whitish night, thus making the darkness that surrounded all things else seem denser and deeper. And the soft warmth and subdued light and the general air of comfort and refinement seemed to sweep in a great gust past my lady out into the snowy frosty night.

"Amy dear, drop the curtain and come sit with me; aren't you weary enough to rest after all to-day's exertion?"

You recognized the lover by the tenderness in his tones, by the fond light in his kind blue eyes.

"Directly dear," but still she held aside the curtain and stood staring into the night. It had been a wearisome day. From early till late she had been loving and smiling, giving and taking good wishes, hiding her weariness and playing cordiality; for this was the last time that Miss Amy Gordon was to keep open house, you know. Long before next New Year she would be Mrs. Alfred Arnold.

"My dear Amy, come; you make me nervous!"

Slowly as if regretfully she shut out the snowy scene and crossed to the grate. She stood beside her lover's chair, passed her arm over his shoulders and rested her cheek on his gold-colored curly head.

"Dearest," he whispered and lifted her hand softly to his lips.

"Dearest, this is to be such a happy New Year to us is it not?"

Her only answer was the gentle stroke of her cheek on his head.

Such a happy New Year! who could tell! so many trusting, loving women had ventured on this smiling, peace-promising sea of matrimony and had been so sadly snumped and wrecked before six months at a sea event, how could she tell if this New Year would prove of joy or sorrow to her!

But 'twas not wholly on matrimony her thoughts were intent.

"Alf, I don't deserve any extra happiness! what have I done pray for the world, that I shall clasp my hands idly and bask in the purple of God's love? Nay, don't interrupt me, dear, you don't understand me! I have been all day long, yes all this busy day, oppressed with the thought that I am going forward to enter into a joy and bliss that is not mine!

The great rule of this universe is—well—the laborer is worthy of his hire you know! Justice, not generosity, governs the world.

I have given no equivalent, of good nor grief, that entitles me to this rich reward of wealth, and better yet, your love dear!

And I am an honest woman and conscientious and until I have a right to all this joy and gladness, until I have earned it. Until I deserve this reward, I am only an imposter if I accept it.

"Do you understand me, Alf?" Miss Gordon had drawn a low luxurious comfortable chair beside her lover and one white beautiful hand rested on the arm of his chair. He clasped this hand in both of his and his blue eyes grew dark and eager.

"Amy, I do not understand you, and knowing your impulsive determined nature as well as I do, such remarks make me very nervous, to say the least; and before you go further, dear, let me suggest that you 'go slow' as well!

"Amy mine, let us be very careful what is said to-night! Remember it is New Year's night, and the New Year means so much to us, dearest!

"And my Amy—I fear you are in a mistakenly conscientious mood to-night. All these things that make you nappy are given you from God, you cannot earn them.

"My love could not be made a reward dear; God has just made it so; we give our affection to each other as the sun gives its shine, its warmth and life to the earth.

"I can never deserve your sweet love, Amy. God gives it and I accept the blessing, thankfully; the sun shines and the earth receives the genial influence and it is happy, that is all. Has the earth a right to that light and life? these happy, lovely things are all gifts from God, we cannot buy them, dear!"

Not once had the wide, brown, anxious eye moved from his face.

"No, no, Alf, you do not comprehend me. I do not mean to reward God, why that is blasphemous! I would buy the right to my joy, but I would feel in my heart that I deserved it. Take your own thought; the sun spreads the earth with golden warmth and splendor; does the earth remain a cold and senseless clod? indeed no! Rather does she not blossom forth in beauty and usefulness from her gratitude and gladness? She does what she can toward beautifying life and being useful and serviceable. It is because she makes good use of her gifts, Alf, that Madam Earth deserves them!"

"And how does that apply to my Amy?"

Miss Gordon rested her honest brown head against her lover's arm and replied slowly as if bringing each sentence from some deep mine of thought.

I have good and gracious gifts too Alf, and I have been idle and heedless.

But to-day I have awakened. All day as I have been smiling and sipping and nibbling with all the men who have called, the still small voice has been busy at work.

I have wealth that is doing no one any good. It does me no good, for it is not good that I should be robbed in all that money and fashion can furnish, while in all this city there are hundreds of my sisters shivering with cold this night.

Aye, Alfred, they and their little ones freezing and starving, while I—one worthless woman, am fed and warm and wasteful, sole mistress of half a million, happy as God can make me and doing nothing for the many miserable!

Ah, Alf, God will call me to a bitter account yet, I fear for my wasted opportunities, and from this night forth I must do differently; I must be of more service in the world. Better for me had I to-day in place of pleasure, silk and pearls, been in serge and the streets, hunting the poor, the sick and diseasolate and given them of my plenty. And Alfred, my mind is made. I will be a helpful servant in the vineyard.

To-night as I stood there in the window and watched the whirling snow, and thought of the poor, and sinning and starved out there, it seemed as if each flake said—"Amy Gordon, we are cold and white and heartless, but we are of more value than you are, for we are cheerless and try to look on and bring misery to many, yet we give what we can to the earth and life for the coming summer season; we do not waste the good that is in us, we do the best we can with the gifts of good we have. And the very gaslights seemed to rebuke me, saying: 'We even send as far as possible such gold and light and cheer as we have.'

Alfred, perhaps you understand me and will aid me?"

He lifted the flushed earnest face in his hands and kissed the shining earnest eyes.

"My noble love! I am yours devotedly and faithfully in all things."

And this royal couple, these noble lovers sat until midnight, the mystic hour when the uncertain, untired infant New Year bows for the blessing of the worn, old, weary, heavy laden monarch that departs as he lifts his hand to warn or bless; sat there studying and planning how to help and be of service to the sad, sick and sinful.

Midnight and morning kissed in sweet greeting as our lovers parted and Miss Gordon began her New Year as all true worthy women should, with a joyous determination to be helpful and a blessing to her poor unfortunate sisters in life.

Some of her fashionable friends she managed to stir into activity with her, others gave their blessing and sneers. She went out to be a saviour and helper and she succeeded. Many a bright boy and generous girl came under the genial influence of her kindness and generosity. Alfred Arnold walked hand in hand with her through all her noble efforts and together they accomplished much good in life. Children were removed from evil influences and given education, supplied with pure homes and health giving influences; and these grateful children are bound in return to lend a helping hand to the unfortunate through all their coming years. Notice how the circles increase and render, beyond belief almost when you idly toss a tiny pebble in a stream. Much more extensive is the boundless sea of humanity. Many a sick woman received the means and hope and heart necessary to her recovery from Amy Gordon in that grand New Year of Miss G's life and many an uncertain, weakening sister was helped to a point and hopes that saved her from the sad fall of womanly sinning. And even men received a helpful impetus from the earnest honest little woman. She gladly put aside her satins, her pleasures and pearls and never shirked the streets and the serge; and having ventured into the vineyard she was amazed to find how many brave and noble sisters she found there earnestly working for Christ and charity.

And when, some six months later, she stood again for another evening in pearls and satin—white satin this time—she felt secure and happy in the right to rejoice "in the purple of God's love" and Alfred Arnold felt there was no nobler woman in all the land than his fair wife.

And the good work that began in her heart as she stood in her window to survey the snow storm went on through life thereafter.

Alfred and Amy Arnold never failed to remember the night when they awakened from laziness and luxury to labor, love and usefulness.

Working the Press.

"Are you the editor?" said a man, who wore a conciliatory smile and dyed beard, as he took a seat in our office.

We acknowledged that at present we served and instructed the public in that capacity, and to prove our assertion, we showed him the blisters made on our hands by our exertion in operating the Archimedean lever that moves the world.

"Well, I want you to surprise me with a flattering personal notice in your paper. I am going to run for Constable in the Eighth ward, and I want something neat in the way of a send-off."

"Our columns are always open to advance the best interests of the public, but we shall expect you to first surprise us with a pecuniary compensation, not necessarily for publication, but merely as a pledge of good faith."

"I'll pay. A man can't expect to be surprised without paying for it in advance. What have you got?"

"We can accommodate you with almost any kind of personal notice, from a cheap electro-plated biography to an eighteen carat obituary, and at a scale of prices varying according to the strain on our columns and veracity. In moulding public opinion we defy competition. Now, how would you like this? It is a neat little pre-Raphaelite gem, and will cost you only \$1.50."

"Our enterprising townsman, Col. B. than whom there is no more popular and genial gentleman in the length and breadth of our great Empire State, has consented, at the earnest solicitation of many friends, to sacrifice his very profitable business to the public good, and has authorized us to announce him as a candidate for the honorable office of Constable of the precinct."

"If that is not strong enough, here is a Michael Angelo, full length, in which your qualities of head and heart will be touchingly alluded to, and you will be commended for your generous impulses—only \$2.50 each insertion. Then we have a brilliant thing, after Mozart, which is really patented for gubernatorial candidates—suits of your simplicity of character, jeans clothes, and pay-as-you-go proclivities—but it can easily be modified to suit a prospective Constable. It will cost you \$3. There are several others from \$2 to \$10 each. For referring to you as an 'old land-mark,' \$1 extra is charged."

"I reckon you can save me off \$3 worth, but you must throw in something about my brilliant war record."

"We always do that."

"And just wind up by surprising Capt. Bill Snikle. He is running against me. I wouldn't say anything that he might take offence at. Only say he is not fit for the office, because he has a mean breath like a buzzard, and the record of a convict. You might add that my brother hasn't got a wife that has fits. That will hit him where he is sore, for his brother's wife is subject to fits. I don't care to lug any personalities into this campaign unless I am obliged to."

"We can't do it, Colonel. Your rival is our personal friend. He is a subscriber."

"Pshaw! I thought you were running an independent paper, in the interest of the people, but I see you are the subsidized organ of a political clique," and off he went to see the editor of the other paper.

Good-Morning.

Don't forget to say "Good-morning" Say it to your parents, brothers and sisters, your school-mates, your teachers—and say it cheerfully, and with a smile, it will do you good, and do your friends good. There's a kind inspiration in every "Good-morning" heartily spoken, that helps to make hope fresher and work lighter. It seems really to make the morning good, and to be a prophecy of a good day to come after it. And if this be true of the "good morning," it is also of kind, heart-some greetings; they cheer the discouraged, rest the tired one, some how make the wheels of life run more smoothly. Be liberal with them then, and let no morning pass, however dark and gloomy it may be, that you do not help at least to brighten by your smiles and cheerful word.

The Beauty of Reproach.

Goethe was in company with a mother and her daughter, and the latter being reproved for some fault, blushed and burst into tears. He said: "How beautiful your reproach has made your daughter. The crimson hue, and those silvery tears become her better than any ornament of gold or pearls. These may be hung on the neck of any woman; but those are never seen disconnected with moral purity. A full blown rose besprinkled with the purest dew is not so beautiful as this child blushing beneath her parent's displeasure, and shedding tears of sorrow at her fault. A blush is the sign which nature hangs out to show where charity and honor dwell."

Some New Geography.

"Of what is the surface of the earth composed?"

"Of corner lots, mighty poor roads, railroads tracks, base ball grounds, cricket fields and skating rinks."

"What portion of the globe is water?"

"About three-fourths. Sometimes they add a little gin and nutmeg to it."

"What is a town?"

"A town is a considerable collection of houses and inhabitants, with four or five men who 'run the party' and lend money at fifteen per cent. interest."

"What is a city?"

"A city is an incorporated town, with a mayor who believes that the whole world shakes when he happens to fall flat on a cross-walk."

"What is commerce?"

"Borrowing \$5 for a day or two and dodging the lender for a year or two."

"Name the different races."

"Horse race, boat race, bicycle race and racing around to a man to indorse your note."

"Into how many classes is mankind divided?"

"Six; being enlightened, civilized, half-civilized savage too utter, not-worth-a-cent and Indian agents."

"What nations are called enlightened?"

"Those which have had the most wars, the worst laws, and produced the worst criminals."

"How many motions has the earth?"

"That's according to how you mix your drinks and which way you go home."

"What is the earth's axis?"

"The lines passing between New York and Chicago."

"What cause day and night?"

"Day is caused by night getting tired out. Night is caused by everybody taking the street-car and going home to supper."

"What is a map?"

"A map is a drawing to show the jury where Smith stood when Jones gave him a lift under the eye."

"What is a mariner's compass?"

"A Jug holding four gallons."

Warmth from Newspapers.

Many years ago, in one of the severe winters when there was much hardship among the poor, a city paper suggested that old newspapers, spread over the bed, would form an excellent substitute for blankets and coverlets. This brought upon the journal a great deal of harmless ridicule from other papers, but it brought comfort to many a poor family. In the matter of bed-clothing, especially, we are apt to associate warmth with weight, and do not consider that there is no warmth in the coverings themselves, but that they merely prevent the heat of the body from passing off. Whatever is a poor conductor of heat will make a warm covering. Paper itself is a poor conductor, but still poorer are the thin layers of air that are confined when two or three newspapers are laid upon one another. A few newspapers laid over the bed will keep one much warmer than some of the heavy, close-woven blankets. We do not propose newspapers as a substitute for blankets and comforters, but it is one of those make-shifts that it is well to know. In traveling one may, by the aid of a few papers, secure a comfortable rest in a thinly clad bed, and if we cannot afford to give a destitute family a blanket or a comforter, we may show them how to increase the usefulness of their thin coverings by stiching a few layers of newspapers between them. It may be well to remind those who grow window plants, that by removing them away from the window, and arranging a cover of newspaper over them, they may be preserved from harm in severely cold nights. With the plants as with ourselves, it is not so much that cold comes in, as that the heat goes off, and often a slight protection will prevent the escape of heat.

Happy is the man who has a little house and a little angel in it on Saturday night—a house, no matter how little, provided it will hold two or so—no matter how humbly furnished, provided there is hope in it. Let the winds blow—let the curtains. What if they are plain calico, without border, tassel or any such thing. Let the rain come down, heap up the fire. No matter if you haven't a candle to bless yourself with, for what a beautiful light glowing coals make! Rendering cloudless, shedding a sunset light through the room, just light enough to talk by; not loud as in the highway; not rapid as in the hurrying world; but softly whispering with pause between for the storm with-tunes—the hearty "Amen" break forth from their father's lips when the sermon was particularly enjoyable.

One cold Sabbath day these children were left at home, with many cautions to be careful.

Hardly had the parents left ere the wood work near the stovepipe was discovered to be on fire and out of the children's reach; but, with wonderful activity and energy, the eldest climbed upon the table and put out the flames.

When the father and mother returned they shuddered to see the danger to which their dear ones had been exposed, and, with thankful hearts, praised them for their courage.

"How did you manage, Tommie, to reach the fire?"

"Why, said Tommie, 'I pushed the table up to the wall and got upon that.'"

"And did you help brother, Jimmie?" to the next.

"Yes, sir; I brought him a pail of water and handed him the dipper."

"And what did you do?" said the proud father to his pet, the youngest of the group.

"Well, papa," said Artie, "you see I was too small to help put out the fire, so I just stood by and hollered 'Amen.'"

—*Youth's Companion*

Pat's Pledge.

"Tim, this won't do; you must take warning from the fate of your friend, O'Shaughnessy. Only three nights ago he came home much soberer than you are, but in attempting to blow out a candle his breath took fire and he exploded—blew up—so his friends in three days have not been able to scrape enough of him together to hold a wake over."

"An' do you mane to tell me that he bust up?" said Tim.

"Indeed I do, upon my honor."

Tim said he would take the pledge at once, and he did so in the following form: "I swear never to blow out a candle while I am drunk again."

Oxford Torchlight. Senator Vance presented some petitions against railroad discriminations.—*Ex. Let the Senator mend his bolt,* and call for help when he is ready, and the people will help him.

SMALL BITES.

Think twice before speaking evil of any one.

When is a wall like a fish? When it is sealed.

How does a stove feel when full of coals? Grateful.

Which of the reptiles is a mathematician? The adder.

When is a boat like a heap of snow? When it is a drift.

A Vermont man has willed his picture gallery to a blind asylum.

What is that which shows what it can not see itself? A mirror.

He who throws out suspicion should at once be suspected himself.

When is a doctor most annoyed?—When he is out of patients.

When is a literary work like smoke? When it comes in volumes.

Why is the letter G like the sun?—Because it is the centre of light.

What word may be pronounced quicker by adding a syllable to it? Quick.

How does cow become a handed estate? By turning her into the field.

What is an old lady in the middle of the river like? Like to be drowned.

Lemons may be kept fresh a long time in a jar—changing the water every morning.

Why is a miser like a man with a short memory? Because it is always forgetting.

How does a sailor know there is a man in the moon? Because he has been to sea (see).

The Virginia Legislature is trying to get quarters in Norfolk, to get away from the small pox at Richmond.

Jones says that after trying for years to photograph his girl on his heart, all he got in the end was a negative.

A cynical old bachelor says that lovers are like armies; they get along well enough till the engagement begins.

Reflect upon your present blessings, of which every man has many; not on your past misfortunes, of which all have some.

An ignorant old lady was asked by a minister visiting her, if she had religion. She replied, "I have slight touches of it occasionally."

It seems that competition has forced the price of false teeth down so low that it isn't really worth a body's while to cut his natural ones.

"My son," said an old lady, "how must Jonah have felt when the whale swallowed him?" "Down in the mouth," was the young hopeful's reply.

A receipt for lemon pies vaguely adds: "Then sit on a stove and stir constantly." Just as if any body could sit on a stove without stirring constantly.

Gen. Ransom has introduced a bill to authorize the erection at Asheville and Greensboro of government buildings to be used as offices and court rooms.

Voltaire had his cynical dab at doctors when he spoke of a physician as 'a man who pours drugs, of which he knows little, into bodies of which he knows less.'

"Mamma, do you know how I get into my bed so quickly?" "No my darling. How do you?" "Why, I put one foot on the bed, and then holler 'Rats!' and scare myself right in."

"Deacon," said the widow, as she gently stroked, in a feline manner, the nutcase tabby that evidently lay in her lap for that purpose, "don't you long for spring, with its balmy breath, its warm sunshine, and its gentle flowers, which awakens nature, and puts life into everything that has laid cold and dead during the long winter, and brings everything up out of the cold, cold ground into light and life?" "Well, hardly, widow," responded the old deacon, "you know I buried my second wife last Fall."

In order to get on satisfactorily in the world, and be able to look at one's past deeds with complacency, it is necessary to have a clear conscience. At least so thought the Irishman in the following story: The priest said to him in tones of severe reproof, "Patrick, how much hay did you steal?" The reply was that of one who takes a profoundly philosophical view of things, and who proposes not to allow his religion to too seriously interfere with every day duties. "Well," said Patrick, "I may as well confess to your reverence for the whole stack, for I'm going after the rest to-night."

W. H. Amos

THE FLOWERS COLLECTION

200
125
50
115-0
4-0
700