

LUCK AND LABOR.

Luck doth wait, standing idly at the gate,
Wishing, wishing all the day;
And at night, without fire and without light,
And before an empty tray,
Doth sadly say,
"To-morrow something may turn up;
To-night on wishes I must sup."
Labor goes plowing deep the fertile rows,
Singing, singing all the day;
And at night, before the fire, beside the light,
And with a well-filled tray,
Doth gladly say,
"To-morrow, I'll turn something up;
To-night on plenty earned, I sup."

The Black Lace Domino.

BY ELIZABETH M. LEYDEN.

AM a Baltimorean; but last February a year ago, business, in a combination with fate, carried me to Mobile. Pursuing my way up Royal street from the Battle House I was at a loss to account for the throngs of pedestrians which were pouring in two ceaseless streams up and down this thoroughfare. It was a motley crowd, consisting of masquers, peanut vendors, street singers, organ grinders, nuns, priests and ordinary individuals of every class and variety.

I turned into Dauphin street, and came face to face with my old classmate and enemy, Ferdinand Duval. "Why, Philip Blackburn!" he exclaimed, grasping my hand. "What good luck brought you to Mobile at the gay and festive season of mardi gras?" "Mardi gras!" I ejaculated. "So that accounts for the galvanic thrill that has passed over the town."

"Don't abuse Mobile; there isn't a place in the Union that can compare with it. But she is at her best now—you know Mobile has been dubbed the 'Mother of Mystics.' The Knights of Revelry have just finished their procession. To-night the Infant Mystics and the Order of Myths have theirs, and then unite in a grand carnival at the Opera House. You must surely go. There'll be no trouble about a costume. I'll fix you up easily."

While Ferdinand rattled on we had been making our way up Dauphin street to the Albama Club, where he insisted upon my taking lunch. "And you must be sure," he added, "to come out home to seven-o'clock dinner—southwest corner of Conception and St. Anthony streets; you'll find no trouble in finding the place. I am sorry to say that Helene cannot go to the carnival to-night. She has not been well for some time. I say, Phil; if you come to Mobile next winter I'll introduce you to the prettiest little sister-in-law in the country. Margherita Pancita is her name—Helene's sister, you understand." I may as well announce here, by way of parenthesis, that Ferdinand pronounced his sister-in-law's surname as though it were spelled Poncheeter.

"Why can't I meet her now?" I demanded. "Well, for the present she is in a private boarding school; and the teachers have such poor taste as not to include young gentlemen of your fascinating appearance among their list of callers. But Margherita graduates in May. In the meantime you will have to content yourself with Helene and myself."

At the sound of my voice she looked at me curiously. "Ferd," she interrogated, "it is you, isn't it?" "Of course it is—if you mean Ferdinand Duval."

"Well, your voice sounded strange, but I suppose that is the effect of the masque. You are certainly stupid to-night. Why don't you ask me how I escaped from the school? Positively, I don't believe you know me."

But at the word "convent" the truth came upon me like a flash of light. I was on solid ground at last. "Margherita!" I exclaimed, as familiarly as though I had raised her, "is it possible that this is you?" "Now, Ferd," said my lovely companion, giving my arm a gentle squeeze, and looking into my face with two large, soft, beseeching eyes, "if you are going to call this poor little girl Margherita, she will certainly run away. You frighten her to death."

Well, here I was at sea again! What was I to call her? "I'm not too bad for Rita, indeed I'm not!" she exclaimed earnestly. "All right, Rita, my dear," I replied in a voice I was fatuous enough to hope was brotherly, and covered her little soft hand with mine. "I was so astonished, you know—that made me call you Margherita. Go on with your story, child."

"And you'll not breathe a word to Helene?" "Not a syllable to Helene, or any living creature."

"Ferd, I do know you are the best brother in the world. Well, I couldn't withstand the temptation to come here to-night. The idea of a girl seventeen years old being shut up in a school is preposterous anyhow. I have a quantity of black lace and I ripped up an old black silk skirt for the foundation, and made my domino without any trouble. Then as soon as I finished supper to-night I slipped a headache and went to my room. I locked the door on the inside, climbed out the window to the veranda roof, and then by a tree to the ground."

posed relationship warranted—there was nothing platonic about it. With an exclamation of astonishment and indignation, she instinctively drew further from me; and as her angry eyes tried to pierce the masque, I deliberately removed it and stood before her, confessed.

"Poor little girl! She seemed about to drop, and the look in her large eyes made me feel like the blackest villain un-hung."

"Who are you?" she gasped. "Miss Pancita," I began, with ceremony. But her eyes were still distended with terror, and she looked as though she were still meditating flight, so I dropped my dignity and grasped her hands instead.

"Rita," I went on hurriedly, "don't look at me that way; I'm not an ogre. Your brother-in-law is one of the best friends I have; we were schoolmates. His costume is his, as you know. Ask him about Philip Blackburn. He will tell you that I am a man to be trusted and am a gentleman, though I'm afraid I have not acted the part very well to-night. But it was a fierce temptation. At least, believe me, your escapade shall never pass my lips. Won't you try to forgive me?"

She looked at me in a bewildered way, then a burning blush rose and died all her sweet face, the white throat, even the little.

"It is very strange," she murmured, "but you have been very kind. Ferd could not have been kinder; and then, as you say, you will tell no one, while Ferd—well, I've felt all the time as though Helene was sure to know. Really, I am under a great many obligations to you."

REV. DR. TALMAGE.

The Eminent Brooklyn Divine's Sunday Sermon.

Subject: "Straining at Gnats and Swallowing Camels."

TEXT: "Ye blind guides, who strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel."—Matthew xiii., 24.

A proverb is compact wisdom, knowledge in chunks, a library in a sentence, the electricity of many clouds discharged in one bolt, a river put through a millrace. When Christ quotes the proverb of the text, He means to set forth the ludicrous behavior of those who make a great bluster about small sins and have no appreciations of great ones.

In my text a small insect and a large quadruped are brought into comparison—a gnat and a camel. How many people there on the desert seen the latter a few yards away, sprawling creature, with back two stories high and stomach having a collection of reservoirs for desert travel, an animal forbidden to the Jews as food, and in many literatures entitled "the ship of the desert." The gnat spoken of in the text is in the grub form. It is born in pool or pond, after a few weeks becomes a chrysalis, and then after a few days becomes the gnat as we recognize it. But the insect spoken of in the text is its very smallest shape, and yet it inhabits the water—for my text is a misprint and ought to read "strain out a gnat."

My text shows you the prince of inconsistencies. A man after long observation has formed the suspicion that in a cup of water he is about to drink there is a grub or the grandparent of a gnat. He goes and gets a sieve or a strainer. He takes the water and pours it through the sieve in the broad light. He says, "I would rather do anything almost than drink this water until this larva be exterminated." This water is brought under acquisition. The experiment is successful. The water rushes through the sieve and leaves against the side of the sieve the grub or gnat.

Then the man carefully removes the insect and drinks the water in placidity. But going one day and hungry, he devours a "ship of the desert," the camel, which the Jews were forbidden to eat. The gastronome has no compunctions of conscience. He suffers from no indigestion. He puts the lower jaw under the camel's forehead and his upper jaw under the hump of the camel's back and he swallows the camel and the droppings disappear forever. He strained out a gnat, he swallowed a camel.

While Christ's audience were yet smiling at the oppositeness and wit of His illustration—for smile they did in church, unless they were too stupid to understand the hyperbole—Christ practically said to them, "That is you." Punctilious about small things; reckless about affairs of great magnitude. No subject over withered under a surgeon's knife more bitterly than did the Pharisees under Christ's scalpel of truth.

There are in our day a great many gnats strained out and a great many camels swallowed, and it is the object of this sermon to sketch a few persons who are extensively engaged in this business.

It is soon crossed over, and a smile is sometimes just as sacred as a tear. There is as much religion, and I think a little more, in a spring morning than in a starless midnight.

Religious work without any humor or wit in it is a banquet with a side of beef, and that raw, and no conditions and no desert ascending. People will not sit down at such a banquet. By all means remove all frivolity and all paths and all lightness and all vagary—strain them out through the sieve of holy discrimination; but, on the other hand, beware of that monster which overshadows the Christian church to-day, conventionalism. Eclecticism, having on its back a hump of sanctimonious gloom—and vehemently refuse to swallow that camel.

Oh, how particular a great many people are about the infinitesimals while they are quite reckless about the magnitudes. What did Christ say? Did He not exhortate the people in His time who were so careful to wash their hands before a meal, but did not wash their hearts? It is a bad thing to have unclean hands; it is a worse thing to have an unclean heart. How many people there are in our time who are very anxious that after their death they shall be buried with their feet toward the east, and not at all anxious that during their whole life they should face in the right direction so that they shall come up in the resurrection of the just whichever way they are buried. How many there are chiefly anxious that a minister of the Gospel shall come in the line of apostolic succession, not caring so much whether he comes from Apostle Paul or Apostle Judas. They have a way of measuring a gnat until it is larger than a camel.

Again, my subject photographs all those who are abhorrent of small sins while they are reckless in regard to magnificent thefts. You will find many a merchant, who while he is so careful that he would not take a yard of cloth or a spool of cotton from the counter without paying for it, and who would rather cashier should make a mistake and send in a roll of bills five dollars too much would dispatch a messenger in hot haste to return the surplus, yet who will go into a stock company in which after while he gets control of the stock and then waters through the stock and \$100,000 appear like \$200,000. He stole only \$100,000 by the operation. Many of the men of fortune made their wealth in that way.

One of those men engaged in such unrighteous acts, that evening, the evening of the very day when he watered the stock, will find a wharf rat stealing an evening newspaper from the basement doorway, and will go out and catch the wretch by the collar and twist the collar so tightly the poor fellow cannot say that it was thirst for knowledge that led him to the disreputable act, but grip the collar tighter and tighter, saying, "I have been looking for you a long while. You stole my paper four or five times, haven't you? You miserable wretch!" And then the old stock gambler, with a voice they can hear three blocks, will cry out, "Police, police!"

That same man, the evening of the day on which he watered the stock, will kneel with his family in prayer and thank God for the prosperity of the day, then kiss his children good night with an air which seems to say: "I hope you will all grow up to be as good as your father." Friends for sinners in size, but palaces for crimes dromedarian. No mercy for sins animalcule in proportion, but great leniency for mastodon iniquity.

It is time that we learn in America that sin is not excusable in proportion as it is detected. Many a man is riding a mule in position ahead and lacksy behind. To steal a dollar is a gnat; to steal many thousands of dollars is a camel. There is many a fruit dealer who would not consent to steal a basket of peaches from a neighbor's stall, but who would not scruple to depress the fruit market, and as long as I can remember we have heard every summer the peach crop of Maryland is a failure, and by the time the crop comes in the misrepresentation makes a difference of millions of dollars. A man would not steal one peach basket steals fifty thousand peach baskets.

Any summer go down into the Mercantile library, in the reading rooms, and see the newspaper reports of the crops from all parts of the country, and their phrasing is very much the same, and the same men write the news, metropolitan and country, carrying out the huge lying about the grain crop from year to year and for a score of years. After a while there is a "corner" in the wheat market, and men who had a contempt for a petty theft will burglarize the wheat about a nation and commit larceny upon the American corncrib. And men will sit in churches and in reformatory institutions trying to strain out the small gnats of soundness, while in their grain elevators and in their storehouses they are fattening huge camels which they expect after they are sold to swallow. Society has to be entirely reconstructed on this subject. We are to find that a sin is excusable in proportion as it is great.

caravan of camels, when they might better fracture every law of the language and shock their intellectual taste, and better let verb seek in vain for its nominative, and every noun for its government, and every proposition lose its way in the sentence, and adjectives and participles and pronouns get into a grand riot worthy of the Fourth ward on election day, than to commit a moral inaccuracy. Better swallow a thousand gnats than one camel.

Such persons are also described in the text who are very much alarmed about the small faults of others and have no arm about their own great transgressions. There are in every community and in every church watchdogs who feel called upon to keep their eyes on others and growl. They are full of suspicions. They wonder if that man is not dishonest, if that man is not unclean, if there is not something wrong about the other man. They are always the first to hear of anything wrong. Vultures are always the first to smell carrion. They are self-appointed detectives. I lay this down as a rule without any exception—that those people who have the most faults themselves are most merciless in their watching of others. From scalp of head to sole of foot they are full of jealousies and hypercriticisms.

They spend their life in hunting for mistakes and mud turtles instead of hunting for Rocky Mountain eagles; always for something mean instead of something grand. They look at their neighbors' imperfections through a microscope, and look at their own imperfections through a telescope upside down. Twenty faults of their own do not hurt them half so much as one fault of somebody else. Their neighbor's imperfections are like gnats, and they strain them out; their own imperfections are like camels, and they swallow them.

But lest any might think they escape the scrutiny of the text I have to tell you we all come under the divine satire when we make the questions of time more prominent than the questions of eternity. Come now, let us all go into the confessional. Are not all tempted to make the question, Where shall I live now, greater than the question, Where shall I live forever? How shall I get more dollars here? greater than the question, How shall I lay up treasures in heaven? the question, How shall I pay my debts to man? greater than the question, How shall I meet my obligations to God? the question, How shall I gain the world? greater than the question, What if I lose my soul? the question, Why did God let sin come into the world? greater than the question, How shall I get it extirpated from my nature? the question, What shall I do with the twenty or thirty or seventy years of my sublinear existence? greater than the question, What shall I do with the millions of cycles of my post-mortem existence? Time, how small it is! Eternity, how vast it is! The former score insignificant in comparison with the latter than a gnat is insignificant when compared with a camel. We dodged the text. We said, "That doesn't mean me, and that doesn't mean me," and with a ruinous benevolence we are giving the whole sermon away.

But let us all surrender to the charge. What an ado about things here. What poor preparation for a great eternity. As though a minnow were larger than a behemoth, as though a swallow took wider circuit than an albatross, as though a malle were taller than a Lebanon cedar, as though a giant were greater than a camel, as though a minute were longer than a century, as though time were higher, deeper, broader than eternity. So the text which flashes with lightning, "That which is small is insignificant in comparison with the latter than a gnat is insignificant when compared with a camel. We dodged the text. We said, "That doesn't mean me, and that doesn't mean me," and with a ruinous benevolence we are giving the whole sermon away.

Observers of the gorgeous sunsets and afterglows have been most particularly struck with the immense wealth of the various shades and tints of red. Now, if the glowing colors are due to the presence of dust in the air, there must be somewhere a display of the colors complementary to the reds, because the dust acts by a selective dispersion of the colors. The small dust particles arrest the direct course of the rays of light and reflect them in all directions, but they principally reflect the rays of the violet end of the spectrum, while the red rays pass on almost unchecked. Overhead deep blue reigns in awe inspiring glory. As the sun passes below the horizon, and the lower stratum of air with its larger particles of dust which reflect light, ceases to be illuminated, the depth and fulness of the blue most intensely increase. This effect is produced by the very fine particles of dust in the sky overhead being unable to scatter any colors unless those of short wave lengths at the violet end of the spectrum. This we see above blue in its intensity without any of the red colors. When, however, the observer brings his eyes down in any direction except the west, he will see the blue melting into blue-green, green and then rose color. And some of the most beautiful and delicate rose tints are formed by the air cooling and depositing its moisture on the particles of dust, increasing the size of the particles till they are sufficiently large to stop and spread the red rays, when the sky glows with a strange aurora-like light.—Popular Science Monthly.

Fatal Clubhouses. Clubs are not exactly a native growth in this country; but our principal cities have each shown that the institution may become both permanent and flourishing in American soil. New York has many clubs of ripe age and ample resources. One of them, the Union Club, ranks among the largest in either hemisphere, with a membership of about fifteen thousand and a building covering over one-fourth of an acre, in which 5,000 people can be accommodated. The largest clubhouse in the world, however, is said to be the Constitutional, in Northumberland avenue, London, which can entertain in its palace of terra cotta 7,000 members; and very near it in capacity is the National Liberal, at the corner of Whitehall place, which has a famous dining-room 119 feet long by 35 feet wide.

The Baptist centenary fund now exceeds \$250,000 and fresh promises are still being received in furtherance of the movement.