

If you have the consciousness of genius, do something to show it. The world is pretty quick, nowadays, to catch the flavor of true originality; if you write anything remarkable, the magazines and newspapers will find you out, as the school-boys find out where the ripe apples and pears are. Produce anything really good, and an intelligent editor will jump at it. Don't flatter yourself that any article of yours is rejected because you are unknown to fame. Nothing pleases an editor more than to get anything worth having from a new hand. There is always a dearth of really fine articles for a first-rate journal; for, of a hundred pieces received, ninety are at or below the sea-level; some have water enough, but no head; some head enough, but no water; only two or three are from full reservoirs, high up that hill which is so hard to climb.

You may have genius. The contrary is of course probable, but it is not demonstrated. If you have, the world wants you more than you want it. It has not only a desire but a passion, for every spark of genius that shows itself among us; there is not a bull-calf in our national pasture that can bleat a rhyme but it is ten to one, among his friends, and no takers, that he is the real, genuine, no-mistake Osiris.

Qu'est ce qu'il a fait? What has he done? That was Napoleon's test. What have you done? Turn up the faces of your picture-cards, my boy! You need not make mouths at the public because it has not accepted you at your own fancy-valuation. Do the prettiest thing you can and wait your time.

For the verses you send me I will not say they are hopeless, and I dare not affirm that they show promise. I am not an editor, but I know the standard of some editors. You must not expect to "leap with a single bound" into the society of those whom it is not flattery to call your betters. When "The Pactolian" has paid you for a copy of verses (I can furnish you a list of alliterative signatures, beginning with Annie Aureole and ending with Zoë Zenith), when the "Rag-bag" has stolen your piece, after carefully scratching your name out, when the "Nut-cracker" has thought you worth shelling, and strung the kernel of your cleverest poem, then, and not till then, you may consider the presumption against you, from the fact of your rhyming tendency, as called in question, and let our friends hear from you, if you think it worth while. You may possibly think me too candid, and even accuse me of incivility; but let me assure you that I am not half so plain-spoken as Nature, nor half so rude as Time. If you prefer the long jolting of public opinion to the gentle touch of friendship, try it like a man. Only remember this, that, if a bushel of potatoes is shaken in a market-cart without springs to it, the small potatoes always get to the bottom.

—Believe me, etc., etc.

I always think of verse-writers when I am in this vein; for these are by far the most exacting, eager, self-weighing, restless, querulous, unreasonable literary persons one is like to meet with. Is a young man in the habit of writing verses? Then the presumption is that he is an inferior person. For, look you, there are at

least nine chances in ten that he writes *poor* verses. Now the habit of chewing on rhymes without sense and soul to match them is like that of using any other narcotic, at once a proof of feebleness and a debilitating agent. A young man can get rid of the presumption against him afforded by his writing verses only by convincing us that they are verses worth writing.

All this sounds hard and rough, but, observe, it is not addressed to any individual, and of course does not refer to any reader of these pages. I would always treat any given young person passing through the meteoric showers which rain down on the brief period of adolescence with great tenderness. God forgive us, if we ever speak harshly to young creatures on the strength of these ugly truths, and so, sooner or later, smite some tender-souled poet or poetess on the lips who might have sung the world into sweet trances, had we not silenced the matinsong in its first low breathings! Just as my heart yearns over the unloved, just so it sorrows for the ungifted who are doomed to the pangs of an undeceived self-estimate. I have always tried to be gentle with the most hopeless cases. My experience, however, has not been encouraging.

X. Y., æt. eighteen, a cheaply-got-up youth, with narrow jaws, and broad, bony, cold, red hands, having been laughed at by the girls in his village, and "got the mitten" (pronounced mittin) two or three times, falls to souling and controlling, and youthing and truthing, in the newspapers. Sends me some strings of verses, candidates for the Orthopedic Infirmary, all of them, in which I learned for the millionth time

one of the following facts: either that something about a chime is sublime, or that something about time is sublime, or that something about a chime is concerned with time, or that something about a rhyme is sublime or concerned with time or with a chime. Wishes my opinion of the same, with advice as to his future course.

What shall I do about it? Tell him the whole truth, and send him a ticket of admission to the Institution for Idiots and Feeble-minded Youth? One doesn't like to be cruel, and yet one hates to lie. Therefore one softens down the ugly central fact of donkeyism,—recommends study of good models—that writing verse should be an incidental occupation only, not interfering with the hoe, the needle, the lapstone, or the ledger, and, above all, that there should be no hurry in printing what is written. Not the least use in all this. The poetaster who has tasted type is done for. He is like the man who has once been a candidate for the Presidency. He feeds on the madder of his delusion all his days, and his very bones grow red with the glow of his foolish fancy. One of these young brains is like a bunch of India crackers; once touch fire to it and it is best to keep hands off until it has done popping—if it ever stops. I have two letters on file; one is a pattern of adulation, the other of impertinence. My reply to the first, containing the best advice I could give, conveyed in courteous language, had brought out the second. There was some sport in this, but dullness is not commonly a game fish, and only sulks after he is struck. You

may set it down as a truth which admits of few exceptions, that those who ask your *opinion* really want your *praise*, and will be contented with nothing else.

There is another kind of application to which editors, or those supposed to have access to them, are liable, and which often proves trying and painful. One is appealed to in behalf of some person in needy circumstance who wishes to make a living by the pen. A manuscript accompanying the letter is offered for publication. It is not commonly brilliant, too often lamentably deficient. If Rachel's saying is true, that "fortune is the measure of intelligence," then poverty is evidence of limited capacity, which it too frequently proves to be, notwithstanding a noble exception here and there. Now an editor is a person under contract with the public to furnish them with the best things he can afford for his money. Charity shown by the publication of an inferior article would be like the generosity of Claude Duval and the other gentlemen highwaymen, who pitied the poor so much they robbed the rich to have the means of relieving them.

Though I am not and never was an editor, I know something of the trials to which they are submitted. They have nothing to do but to develop enormous callouses at every point of contact with authorship. Their business is not a matter of sympathy, but of intellect. They must reject the unfit productions of those whom they long to befriend, because it would be a profligate charity to accept them. One cannot burn his house down to warm the hands even of the fatherless and the widow.

The Professor Under Chloroform.

You haven't heard about my friend the Professor's first experiment in the use of anaesthetics, have you? He was mightily pleased with the reception of that poem of his about the chaise. He spoke to me once or twice about another poem of similar character he wanted to read me, which I told him I would listen to and criticize.

One day after dinner, he came in with his face tied up, looking very red in the cheeks and heavy about the eyes,—Hy'r'ye?—he said, and made for an arm-chair, in which he placed first his hat and then his person, going smack through the crown of the former as neatly as they do the trick at the circus. The Professor jumped at the explosion as if he had sat down on one of those small *calthrops* our grandfathers used to sow round in the grass when there were Indians about,—iron stars, each ray a rusty thorn an inch and a half long,—stick through moccasins into feet,—cripple 'em on the spot, and give 'em lockjaw in a day or two.

The Professor let off one of those big words which lie at the bottom of the best man's vocabulary, but perhaps never turn up in his life,—just as every man's hair *may* stand on end, but in most men it never does.

After he had got calm, he pulled out a sheet or two of manuscript, together with a smaller scrap, on which, as he said, he had just been writing an introduction or prelude to the main performance. A certain suspicion had come into my mind that the Professor was not quite right, which was confirmed by the way he

talked; but I let him begin. This is the way he read it:—

PRELUDE.

I'm the fellah that tole one day
The tale of the won'erful one-hoss-shay.
Wan' to hear another? Say.
—Funny, wasn't it? Made *me* laugh,—
I'm too modest, I am, by half,—
Made me laugh 's though I sh'd split,—
Cahn' a fellah like fellah's own wit?
—Fellah's keep sayin',—"Well, now *that's nice*;
Did it once, but cahn' do it twice,"
Don' you b'lieve the'z no more fat;
Lots in the kitch'n 'z good 'z that.
Fus'-rate throw, 'n' no mistake,—
Han' us the props for another shake;—
Know I'll try, 'n' guess I'll win;
Here sh' goes for hit 'm ag'in!

Here I thought it necessary to interpose. Professor,—I said,—you are inebriated. The style of what you call your "Prelude" shows that it was written under cerebral excitement. Your articulation is confused. You have told me three times in succession, in exactly the same words, that I was the only true friend you had in the world that you would unbutton your heart to. You smell distinctly and decidedly of spirits. I spoke and paused; tender, but firm.

Two large tears orbed themselves beneath the Professor's lids,—in obedience to the principle of gravitation celebrated in that delicious bit of bladdery pathos, "The very law that moulds a tear," with which the "Edinburgh Review" attempted to put down Master George Gordon when that young man was foolishly trying to make himself conspicuous.

One of these tears neeped over the edge of the

lid until it lost its balance,—slid an inch and waited for reinforcements,—swelled again,—rolled down a little further,—stopped,—moved on,—and at last fell on the back of the Professor's hand. He held it up for me to look at, and lifted his eyes, brimful, till they met mine.

I couldn't stand it,—I always break down when folks cry in my face,—so I hugged him, and said he was a dear old boy, and asked him kindly what was the matter with him, and what made him smell so dreadfully strong of spirits.

Upset his alcohol lamp,—he said,—and spilt the alcohol on his legs. That was it.—But what had he been doing to get his head into such a state?—had he really committed an excess? What was the matter?—Then it came out that he had been taking chloroform to have a tooth out, which had left him in a very queer state, in which he had written the "Prelude" given above, and under the influence of which he evidently was still.

I took the manuscript from his hands and read the following continuation of the lines he had begun to read me, while he made up for two or three nights' lost sleep as he best might.

PARSON TURRELL'S LEGACY:

Or, The President's Old Arm Chair.

Facts respecting an old arm chair.
At Cambridge,—is kept in the College there.
Seems but little worse for wear,
That's remarkable when I say
It was old in President Holyoke's day.
(One of his boys, perhaps you know,
Died, at *one hundred*. years ago.)
He took lodging for rain or shine
Under green bed-clothes in '69.

Know old Cambridge? Hope you do.—
 Born there? Don't say so! I was too,
 (Born in a house with a gambrel-roof,—
 Standing still, if you must have proof.—
 "Gambrel?—Gambrel?"—let me beg
 You'll look at a horse's hinder leg,—
 First great angle above the hoof,—
 That's the Gambrel; hence gambrel-roof.)
 —Nicest place that ever was seen,—
 Colleges red and common green,
 Sidewalks brownish with trees between.
 Sweetest spot beneath the skies
 When the canker-worms don't rise,—
 When the dust, that sometimes flies
 Into your mouth and ears and eyes,
 In a quiet slumber lies,
 Not in the shape of unbaked pies.
 Such as barefoot children prize?

A kind of harbor it seems to be,
 Facing the flow of a boundless sea,
 Rows of gray old Tutors stand
 Ranged 'ike rocks above the sand;
 Rolling beneath them soft and green,
 Breaks the tide of bright sixteen,—
 One wave, two waves, three waves,
 Sliding up the sparkling floor;
 Then it ebbs to flow no more,
 Wandering off from shore to shore
 With its freight of golden ore!
 —Pleasant place for boys to play;—
 Better keep your girls away,
 Hearts get rolled as pebbles do
 Which countless fingering waves pursue,
 And every classic beach is strewn,
 With heart-shaped pebbles of blood-red stone

But this is neither here nor there;
 I'm talking about an old arm chair.
 You've heard, no doubt, of Parson Turrell?
 Over at Medford he used to dwell;
 Married one of the Mather's folk;
 Got with his wife a chair of oak,

Funny old chair, with seat like wedge.
 Sharp behind and broad front edge,
 One of the oldest of human things,
 Turned all over with knobs and rings,
 But heavy, and wide, and deep and grand,
 Fit for the worthiest of the land,
 Chief Justice Sewall a cause to try in,
 Or Cotton Mather to sit—and lie—in,
 Parson Turrell bequeathed the same
 To a certain student, Smith, by name;
 These were the terms as we are told:
 "Saide Smith saide chaire to have and holde;
 When he doth graduate, then to passe
 To ye oldest Youth in ye Senior Classe,
 On Payment of"—(naming a certain sum)—
 "By him to whom ye Chaire shall come;
 He to ye oldest Senior next,
 And soe forever" (thus runs the text)—
 "But one Crown lesse than he gave to claime,
 That being his debte for use of same."

Smith transferred it to one of the Browns,
 And took his money,—five silver crowns.
 Brown delivered it up to Moore,
 Who paid, it is plain, not five, but four.
 Moore made over the chair to Lee,
 Who gave him crowns of silver three.
 Lee conveyed it unto Drew,
 And now the payment of course, was two,
 Drew gave up the chair to Dunn,—
 All he got, as you see, was one.
 Dunn released the chair to Hall,
 And got by the bargain no crown at all.
 And now it passed to the second Brown,
 Who took it and likewise claimed a crown
 When Brown conveyed it unto Ware,
 Having had one crown to make it fair,
 He paid him two crowns to take the chair,
 And Ware, being honest, (as all Wares be,)
 He paid one Potter, who took it three.
 Four got Robinson; five got Dix;
 Johnson primus demanded six;

And so the sum kept gathering still
Till after the battle of Bunker's Hill.
—When paper money became so cheap,
Folks wouldn't count it, but said "a heap,"
A certain *Richards*, the books declare,
(A. M. in '90? I've looked with care
Through the Triennial,—*name not there*.)

This person, *Richards*, was offered then
Eight score pounds, but would have ten;
Nine, I think, was the sum he took,—
Not quite certain,—but see the book.
By and by the wars were still,
But nothing had altered the Parson's will.
The old arm-chair was solid yet,
But saddled with such a monstrous debt!
Things grew quite too bad to bear,
Paying such sums to get rid of the chair!
But dead men's fingers hold awful tight,
And there was the will in black and white,
Plain enough for a child to spell.
What should be done no man could tell,
For the chair was a kind of nightmare curse,
And every season but made it worse.

As a last resort, to clear the doubt,
They got old *Governor Hancock* out.
The Governor came with his Light-horse Troop,
And his mounted truckmen, all cock-a-hoop;
Halberds glittered and colors flew,
French horns whinnied and trumpets blew.
The yellow fifes whistled between their teeth,
And the bumble-bee bass-drums boomed beneath;
So he rode with all his band,
Till the President met him, cap in hand.
—The Governor "hefted" the crowns, and said,—
"A will is a will, and the Parson's dead."
The Governor hefted the crowns. Said he.—
"There is your p'int. And here's my fee.
These are the terms you must fulfil.—
On such conditions *I break the will!*"
The Governor mentioned what these should be.
(Just wait a minute and then you'll see.)

The President prayed. Then all was still,
And the Governor rose and *broke the will!*
—"About those conditions?" Well, now you go
And do as I tell you, and then you'll know.

Once a year, on Commencement-day,
If you'll only take the pains to stay,
You'll see the President in the chair,
Likewise the Governor sitting there.
The President rises, both old and young
May hear his speech in a foreign tongue,
The meaning whereof, as lawyers swear,
Is this: Can I keep this old arm-chair?
And then his Excellency bows,
As much as to say that he allows.
The Vice-Gub. next is called by name;
He bows like t'other which means the same.
And all the officers round 'em bow,
As much as to say that they allow
And a lot of parchments about the chair
Are handed to witnesses then and there,
And then the lawyers hold it clear
That the chair is safe for another year.

God bless you, Gentlemen! Learn to give
Money to colleges while you live,
Don't be silly and think you'll try
To bother the colleges, when you die,
With codicil this and codicil that,
That Knowledge may starve while Law grows fat;
For there never was pitcher that wouldn't spill,
And there's always a flaw in a donkey's will!

Hospitality is a good deal a matter of latitude,
I suspect. The shade of a palm-tree serves an
African for a hut; his dwelling is all door and
no walls; everybody can come in. To make a
morning call on an Esquimaux acquaintance,
one must creep through a long tunnel; his house
is all walls and no door, except such a one as an
apple with a worm hole has. One might, very
probably, trace a regular gradation between

these two extremes. In cities where the evenings are generally hot, the people have porches at their doors, where they sit, and this is, of course, a provocative to the interchange of civilities. A good deal, which in colder regions is ascribed to mean dispositions, belongs really to mean temperature.

Once in a while, even in our Northern cities, at noon, in a very hot summer's day, one may realize, by a sudden extension in his sphere of consciousness, how closely he is shut up for the most part. Do you not remember something like this? July, between 1 and 2 P.M. Fahrenheit 96°, or thereabout. Windows all gaping, like the mouths of panting dogs, Long, stinging cry of a locust comes in from a tree, half a mile off; had forgotten there was such a tree. Baby's screams from a house several blocks distant;—never knew of any babies in the neighborhood before. Tin-man pounding something that clatters dreadfully,—very distinct, but don't know of any tinman's shop near by. Horses stamping on a pavement to get off flies. When you hear these four sounds, you may set it down as a warm day. Then it is that one would like to imitate the mode of life of the native at Sierra Leone, as somebody has described it: stroll into the market in natural costume,—buy a watermelon for a half-penny,—split it, and scoop out the middle,—sit down in one half of the empty rind, clap the other one on one's head, and feast upon the pulp.

I see some of the London Journals have been attacking some of their literary people for lecturing, on the ground of its being a public exhibi-

tion of themselves for money. A popular author can print his lecture; if he deliver it, it is a case of *quaestum corpore*, or making profit of his person. None but "snobs" do that. *Ergo*, etc. To this, I reply, *Negatur minor*. Her Most Gracious Majesty, the Queen, exhibits herself to the public as a part of the service for which she is paid. We do not consider it low-bred in her to pronounce her own speech, and should prefer it so to hearing it from any other person or reading it. His Grace and his Lordship exhibit themselves very often for popularity, and their houses every day for money. No, if a man shows himself other than he is, if he belittles himself before an audience for hire, then he acts unworthily. But a true word, fresh from the lips of a true man, is worth paying for, at the rate of eight dollars a day, or even of fifty dollars a lecture. The taunt must be an outbreak of jealousy against the renowned authors who have the audacity to be also orators. The sub-lieutenants of the press stick a too popular writer and speaker with an epithet in England, instead of with a rapier, as in France. Poh! All England is one great menagerie, and, all at once, the jackal, who admires the gilded cage of the royal beast, must protest against the vulgarity of the talking-bird's and the nightingale's being willing to become a part of the exhibition!

THE LONG PATH.

(*Last of the Parenthesis.*)

Yes, that was my last walk with the *school-mistress*. It happened to be the end of a term; and before the next began, a very nice young

woman, who had been her assistant, was announced as her successor, and she was provided for elsewhere. So it was no longer the school-mistress that I walked with, but—Let us not be in unseemly haste. I shall call her the school-mistress still; some of you love her under that name.

When it became known among the boarders that two of their number had joined hands to walk down the long path of life side by side, there was, as you may suppose, no small sensation. I confess I pitied our landlady. It took her all of a sudden,—she said. Had not known that we was keepin' company, and never mistrusted anything partic'lar. Ma'am was right to better herself. Didn't look very rugged to take care of a family, but could get hired haalp, she calc'lated. The great maternal instinct came crowding up in her soul just then, and her eyes wandered till they settled on her daughter.

No, poor, dear woman,—that could not have been. But, I am dropping one of my internal tears for you, with this pleasant smile on my face all the time.

The great mystery of God's providence is the permitted crushing out of flowering instincts. Life is maintained by the respiration of oxygen and of sentiments. In the long catalogue of scientific cruelties, there is hardly anything quite so painful to think of as that experiment of putting an animal under the bell of an air-pump and exhausting the air from it. [I never saw the accursed trick performed. *Laus Deo!*] There comes a time when the souls of human beings, women, perhaps more even than men, begin to

faint for the atmosphere of the affections they were made to breathe. Then it is that Society places its transparent bell-glass over the young woman who is to be the subject of one of its fatal experiments. The element by which only the heart lives is sucked out of her crystalline prison. Watch her through its transparent walls;—her bosom is heaving; but it is a vacuum. Death is no riddle compared to this. I remember a poor girl's story in the "Book of Martyrs." The "dry-pan and the gradual fire" were the images that frightened her most. How many have withered and wasted under as slow a torment in the walls of that larger Inquisition which we call Civilization!

Yes, my surface-thought laughs at you, you foolish, plain, overdressed, mincing, cheaply-organized, self-saturated young person; whoever you may be, now reading this,—little thinking you are what I describe, and in blissful unconsciousness that you are destined to the lingering asphyxia of soul which is the lot of such multitudes worthier than yourself. But it is only my surface thought which laughs. For that great procession of the *unloved*, who not only wear the crown of thorns, but must hide it under the locks of brown or gray,—under the snowy cap, under the chilling turban,—hide it even from themselves,—perhaps never know they wear it, though it kills them,—there is no depth of tenderness in my nature that Pity has not sounded. Somewhere,—somewhere,—love is in store for them,—the universe must not be allowed to fool them so cruelly. What infinite pathos in the small, half-unconscious artifices by which unat-

tractive young persons seek to recommend themselves to the favor of those to whom our dear sisters, the unloved, like the rest, are impelled by their God-given instincts!

Read what the singing women—one to ten thousand of the suffering women—tell us, and think of the griefs that die unspoken! Nature is in earnest when she makes a woman; and there are women enough lying in the next church-yard with very common-place blue slate-stones at their head and feet, for whom it was just as true that "all sounds of life assumed one tone of love," as for Letitia Landon, of whom Elizabeth Browning said it; but she could give words to her grief, and they could not.—Will you hear a few stanzas of mine?

THE VOICELESS.

We count the broken lyres that rest
Where the sweet wailing singers slumber,—
But o'er their silent sister's breast
The wild flowers, who will stoop to number?
A few can touch the magic string,
And noisy fame is proud to win them;—
Alas for those that never sing,
But die with all their music in them!

Nay, grieve not for the dead alone
Whose song has told their hearts' sad story,—
Weep for the voiceless, who have known
The cross without the crown of glory!
Not where Leucadian breezes sweep
O'er Sappho's memory-haunted pillow,
But where the glistening night-dews weep
On nameless sorrow's churchyard pillow.

O hearers that break and give no sign
Save whitening lip and fading tresses,
Till death pours out his cordial wine
Slow-dropped from Misery's crushing presses,—

If singing breath or echoing chord
To every hidden pang were given,
What endless melodies were poured,
As sad as earth, as sweet as heaven!

I hope that our landlady's daughter is not so badly off after all. That young man from another city, who made the remark which you remember about Boston State House and Boston folks, has appeared at our table repeatedly of late, and has seemed to me rather attentive to this young lady. Only last evening I saw him leaning over her while she was playing the accordion,—indeed, I undertook to join them in a song, and got as far as, "Come rest in this boo-oo," when, my voice getting tremulous, I turned off, as one steps out of a procession, and left the basso and soprano to finish it. I see no reason why this young woman should not be a very proper match for a man that laughs about Boston State house. He can't be very particular.

The young fellow whom I have so often mentioned was a little free in his remarks, but very good-natured.—Sorry to have you go,—he said.—Schoolma'am made a mistake not to wait for me. Haven't taken anything but mournin' fruit at breakfast since I heard of it.—*Mourning fruit*,—said I,—what's that?—Huckleberries and blackberries,—said he;—couldn't eat in colors, raspberries, currents, and such, after such a solemn thing like this happening.—The conceit seemed to please the young fellow. If you will believe it when we came down to breakfast the next morning, he had carried it out as follows. You know those odious little "saäs-plates" that figure so largely at boarding-

houses, and especially at taverns, into which a strenuous attendant female trowels little dabs, sombre of tint and heterogeneous of composition, which make you feel homesick to look at, and into which you poke the elastic coppery teaspoon with the air of a cat dipping her foot into a wash-tub,—(not that I mean to say anything against them, for, when they are of tinted porcelain or starry many-faceted crystal, and hold clean bright berries, or pale virgin honey, or “lucent syrups tinted with cinnamon,” and the teaspoon is of white silver, with the Tower-stamp, solid, but not brutally heavy,—as people in the green stage of millionism will have them,—I can dally with their amber semi-fluids or glossy spherules without a shiver.)—you know these small, deep dishes, I say. When we came down the next morning, each of these (two only excepted) was covered with a broad leaf. On lifting this, each boarder found a small heap of solemn black-huckleberries. But one of those plates held red currants, and was covered with a red rose; the other held white currants, and was covered with a white rose. There was a laugh at this at first, and then a short silence, and I noticed that her lip trembled, and the old gentleman opposite was in trouble to get at his bandanna handkerchief.

—“What was the use in waiting? We should be too late for Switzerland, that season, if we waited much longer.”—The hand I held trembled in mine, and the eyes fell meekly, as Esther bowed herself before the feet of Ahasuerus.—She had been reading that chapter, for she

looked up,—if there was a film of moisture over her eyes, there was also the faintest shadow of a distant smile skirting her lips, but not enough to accent the dimples,—and said, in her pretty, still way,—“If it please the king, and if I have found favor in his sight, and the thing seem right before the king, and I be pleasing in hi seyes.”—

I don't remember what King Ahasuerus did or said when Esther got just to that point of her soft, humble words,—but I know what I did. That quotation from Scripture was cut short, anyhow. We came to a compromise on the great question, and the time was settled for the last day of summer.

In the meantime, I talked on with our boarders much as usual, as you may see by what I have reported. I must say I was pleased with a certain tenderness they all showed towards us, after the first excitement of the news was over. It came out in trivial matters,—but each one, in his or her way, manifested kindness. Our landlady, for instance, when we had chicken, sent the *liver* instead of the *gizzard*, with the wing, for the schoolmistress. This was not an accident; the two are *never* mistaken, though some landladies *appear* as if they did not know the difference. The whole of the company were even more respectfully attentive than usual. There was no idle punning, and very little winking on the part of that lively young gentleman, who, as the reader may remember, occasionally interposed some playful question or remark which could hardly be considered relevant,—except when the least allusion was made to matrimony, when he would look at the land-

lady's daughter and wink with both sides of his face until she would ask what he was pokin' his fun at her for, and if he wasn't ashamed of himself. In fact, they all behaved very handsomely, so that I really felt sorry at the thought of leaving my boarding-house.

I suppose you think, that, because I live at a plain widow-woman's plain table, I was of course more or less infirm in point of worldly fortune. You may not be sorry to learn, that, though not what *great merchants* call very rich, I was comfortable,—comfortable,—so that most of those moderate luxuries I described in my verses on *Contentment*—most of them, I say,—were within our reach, if we chose to have them. But I found out that the schoolmistress had a vein of charity about her, which had hitherto been worked on a small silver and copper basis, which made her think less, perhaps of luxuries than even I did,—modestly as I have expressed my wishes.

It is rather a pleasant thing to tell a poor young woman, whom one has contrived to win without showing his rent-roll, that she has found what the world values so highly, in following the lead of her affections. That was a luxury I was now ready for.

I began abruptly:—Do you know that you are a rich young person?

"I know that I am very rich," she said. "Heaven has given me more than I ever asked; for I had not thought love was ever meant for me."

It was a woman's confession, and her voice fell to a whisper as it threaded the last words.

I don't mean that,—I said,—you blessed little saint and seraph!—if there's an angel missing in the New Jerusalem, inquire for her at this boarding-house!—I don't mean that; I mean that I—that is, you—am—are—confound it!—I mean that you'll be what most people call a lady of fortune.—And I looked full in her eyes for the effect of the announcement.

There wasn't any. She said she was thankful that I had what would save me from drudgery, and that some other time I should tell her about it.—I never made a greater failure in an attempt to produce a sensation.

So the last day of summer came. It was our choice to go to the church, but we had a kind of reception at the boarding-house. The presents were all arranged, and among them none gave more pleasure than the modest tributes of our fellow-boarders,—for there was not one, I believe, who did not send something. The landlady would insist on making an elegant bride-cake, with her own hands; to which Master Benjamin Franklin wished to add certain embellishments out of his private funds,—namely, a Cupid in a mouse-trap, done in white sugar, and two miniature flags with the stars and stripes, which had a very pleasing effect, I assure you. The landlady's daughter sent a richly bound copy of Tupper's Poems. On a blank leaf was the following, written in a very delicate and careful hand:—

Presented to . . . by . . .

On the eve ere her union in holy matrimony.

May sunshine ever beam o'er her.

Even the poor relative thought she must do

something, and sent a copy of "The Whole Duty of Man," bound in very attractive variegated sheepskin, the edges nicely marbled. From the divinity-student came the loveliest English edition of "Keble's Christian Year." I opened it, when it came, to *Fourth Sunday in Lent*, and read that angelic poem, sweeter than anything I can remember since Xavier's "My God, I love thee."—I am not a Churchman,—I don't believe in planting oaks in flower-pots,—but such a poem as "The Rose-Bud" makes one's heart a proselyte to the culture it grows from. Talk about it as much as you like,—one's breeding shows itself nowhere more than in his religion. A man should be a gentleman in his hymns and prayers; the fondness for "scenes," among vulgar saints, contrasts so meanly with that—

"God only and good angels look
Behind the blissful scene,"

And the other,—

"He could not trust his melting soul
But in his Maker's sight,"—

that I hope some of them will see this, and read the poem and profit by it.

My laughing and winking young friend undertook to procure and arrange the flowers for the table, and did it with immense zeal. I never saw him look happier than when he came in, his hat saucily on one side, and a cheroot in his mouth, with a huge bunch of tea roses, which he said were for "Madam."

One of the last things that came was an old square box, smelling of camphor, tied and sealed.

it bore, in faded ink, the marks, "Calcutta, 1805." On opening it, we found a white Cashmere shawl, with a very brief note from the dear old gentleman opposite, saying that he had kept this some years, thinking he might want it, and many more, not knowing what to do with it,—that he had never seen it unfolded since he was a young super-cargo,—and now, if she would spread it on her shoulders, it would make him feel young to look at it.

Poor Bridget, or Biddy, our red-armed maid of all work! What must she do but buy a small copper breastpin and put it under Schoolma'am's plate that morning at breakfast? And Schoolma'am would wear it,—though I made her cover it, as well as I could, with a tea rose.

It was my last breakfast as a boarder, and I could not leave them in utter silence.

Good-bye,—I said,—my dear friends, one and all of you! I have been long with you, and I find it hard parting. I have to thank you for a thousands courtesies, and above all for the patience and indulgence with which you have listened to me when I have tried to instruct or amuse you. My friend the Professor (who, as well as my friend the Poet, is unavoidably absent on this interesting occasion) has given me reason to suppose that he would occupy my empty chair about the first of January next. If he comes among you, be kind to him, as you have been to me. May the Lord bless you all!—And we shook hands all round the table.

Half an hour afterwards the breakfast things and the cloth were gone. I looked up and down the length of the bare boards, over which I

had so often uttered my sentiments and experiences—and—Yes, I am a man, like another.

All sadness vanished, as, in the midst of these old friends of mine, whom you know, and others a little more up in the world, perhaps, to whom I have not introduced you, I took the schoolmistress before the altar from the hands of the old gentleman who used to sit opposite, and who would insist on giving her away.

And now we two are walking the long path in peace together. The "schoolmistress" finds her skill in teaching called for again, without going abroad to seek little scholars. Those visions of mine have all come true.

I hope you all love me none the less for anything I have told you. Farewell!

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