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ACTON, ONT., THURSDAY, JUNE 21, 1888.

Whole No. 426.

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Acton Free Press.

THURSDAY MORNING, JUNE 21, 1888.

POETRY

HE IS ODD.

He lived just a mile from the village, But there by the fence of the road; His farm, by the help of good tillage, Increased what he planted and sowed.

The folks he never would follow, Nor try to get on any style; But once a dime or a dollar, He said it when due with a smile.

If ever he offered to sell you A cow, or an ox, or a horse, He made it his business to tell you Each one of the animal's faults.

He never made any profession, But something he had in possession, Of which many more need a part; A something that made him so gentle, So honest, so kindly and true;

He never made any profession, But something he had in possession, Of which many more need a part; A something that made him so gentle, So honest, so kindly and true;

OUR STORY.

A CRUEL BLOW.

"The most dangerous and troublesome men," said Dr. Redfield, "are those who should be regarded as fools, but for some unexplained reason are not. Here now is a beautiful and lovely young woman suddenly deprived of reason just on the eve of her marriage to the worthy young man on whom the terrible blow has also fallen."

"The railway train which was bringing her prospective husband from his home, three hundred miles away, was belated time about five hours, delayed by a heavy storm, which had also prostrated the telegraph lines, so that no information in regard to the cause of the detention could be obtained."

"The train came in at last, however, all right, and without having sustained any serious accident. The bridegroom-elect, Frank McAllister, alighted from the cars, going first to the hotel, from whence, in half an hour, he would have reported himself at the residence of his betrothed."

"That foolish cousin, however, who had been sent to the station to obtain the earliest news of the delayed train, came rushing back to the house to bring the tidings, but thought it would be a capital joke, as he afterwards said, to give his cousin, at first, a good scare."

"Well, Florence," he exclaimed, "Frank has been heard from at last. The train's smashed—forty persons killed—and he among them!"

"A bewildered, half-conscious look was followed by a fearful scream, and poor Florence had fallen unconscious. Dr. Redfield, the family physician, who chanced to be passing the door, was immediately arrested by the progress of those terrible convulsions, but with scarcely any success."

family could scarcely have been greater. Frank McAllister knelt at the side of the insensible girl, giving vent to his feelings in an agony of grief.

In the meantime, the young blockhead by whose criminal folly the mischief had been done, was dodging around in a dozen directions, telling everybody how sorry he was for what had happened, and asking each one to tell him what service he could render. He subsided, however, and made himself less prominent, after having been repeatedly told that his immediate departure from the scene of the trouble would gratify every one there."

But the blow that had fallen upon the heart of the afflicted lover was too severe to permit an immediate reaction even in the way of resentment against the author of the trouble. The joyful hope that filled his whole soul an hour before had given place to a sorrow that seemed to have gone through every nerve of his life.

The terrible shock was followed, as the doctor predicted it would be, by a typhomania, that continued three weeks—the patient's life, in the meantime, being suspended in a balance which the weight of a feather might turn.

At the end of that time the malady began to take a different form. The cerebral excitement appeared to have exhausted its force and to be passing away, but the light of reason did not return. The one terrible thought, that her lover had been crushed to death, had gone through and possessed her whole mind, and there did not seem to be any way to remove it.

The first question she asked, when looking up as if making an effort to reason once more, was how long it would be before she could go to Frank's funeral. When assured that he was not dead, but still alive, and actually in the room at that moment, the meaning of the words did not seem to enter her mind, for she again repeatedly asked, in a pleading way:

"Please let me go to Frank's funeral!" Her lover, who had been with her, or near her, almost continually, then came forward, and sitting down beside her, took one of her hands, saying:

"I am not dead, dear Florence! I am alive and here with you." But his kind words only brought a bewildering stare.

"You! Who are you?" she asked. "I do not know you! I never saw you before. You are not my dear Frank—he is dead; and now they will not even let me go to his funeral. Did you know Frank? you look some like him, and I believe you are trying to pass yourself for him. Go away from me! you trouble me!"

"There is hope in her case," said the doctor, when at his next visit this incident was related to him. "The normal action of her mind will not be restored immediately, and will be a work of great labor and care. I think it will be better, my dear friend," he continued, addressing McAllister, "for her not even to see you for a few days. We will, in the meantime, carefully observe all she says in regard to you."

This plan was continued for some three weeks, but with no encouraging result. The experiment of allowing Frank to return and talk to her, and with other persons, also, in her presence, was again tried, but without success.

By the earnest desire of the parents and other friends of the patient, Florence was retained at home instead of being sent to an asylum for lunatics. Dr. Redfield giving her his daily, and, in fact, almost constant attention. In this way three months of painful and anxious suspense, with no certainty in regard to the final result, passed.

"You are a good singer, I believe," said the doctor, addressing young McAllister, as they were sitting together on the veranda, where they had been talking for a half-hour in regard to the case of poor Florence.

to go and join her dear Frank in the world to which she knew he had gone. Similar experiments were repeated frequently, occasions being selected when Florence was most quiet and not liable to be too much excited; her lover, in the meantime, passing around from one room to another, sometimes quite near to her, and then in a distant part of the house.

After a few trials the patient began to ask for the singing, and would not be satisfied until she heard it. She would listen for a considerable time with the deepest attention and interest, occasionally joining with her own voice, but would invariably become weary after a time, and sometimes pass off again into the wildest excitement. The moment, however, any trouble of that sort appeared to be approaching, the singing was, of course, suspended.

In this way these experiments had continued for some two or three weeks, with encouraging results. At length, one day when the patient was sitting up in her chair, and more quiet than usual, the familiar notes of "The Last Rose of Summer" sounded out clear and distinct. Florence immediately joined her own voice to that of the unseen singer; then, as if forgetting that she had ever imagined that her lover was dead, she sprang from her chair—the doctor grasping her arm at the same instant—and fixing upon him an earnest and intelligent look, exclaimed:

"Doctor, that is my dear Frank! He is in the next room! Why does he not come in here?" She would have gone to find him if Dr. Redfield had not persuaded her to sit down and let him go and see if he could find him.

"Go in at once," directed the doctor, "but in a perfectly natural way; do not show the least excitement. I will come after a few moments, but you better go in and meet her alone."

Ten minutes later the doctor entered quietly, and had the happiness of seeing his patient sitting by the side of Frank, clasping his hands in her own.

"Why, Doctor," she exclaimed, "here is my dear Frank! He has come at last! He says the cars were off the track, and were delayed a few hours. We were to be married to-morrow, you know."

"Yes, Florence," said the doctor, taking her hand kindly; "but you have not been very well lately, and it will be better to defer your marriage for a few days."

"But you will not go away any more, Frank, until after our wedding?" said Florence, anxiously.

"No, indeed," said her lover, the tears starting to his eyes. "And we will be married just as soon as you are well enough for us to go on our wedding tour."

No allusion was made at that time to what had occurred, but after some days, in answer to her questions, she was gradually permitted to learn the whole truth. Of the sudden fright, however, she remembered nothing. The last thing her memory recalled in connection with that terrible affair was an incident that occurred about four hours previous to that event, when her father, as she said, came in and told her that the train was behind time, having been due for an hour. All after that was a blank, the terrible shock having, by some strange law of the mind, reflected backwards, so as to wipe out entirely the recollection of what had occurred in those four preceding hours.

She referred, however, occasionally to having heard Frank singing in the adjoining rooms, and wondering why he did not come in where she was. This had seemed, however, more like a dream than a reality.

Her recovery was rapid. Although possessed of a highly wrought nervous temperament, her constitution, previous to this sad affair, had been good, and her health was soon restored, leaving no trace of the mental disturbance and injury she had suffered.

Plugging Wheat. (Puck's Son.) One who reads about the honest farmer, and how he is cheated by the wicked monopolist, would hardly think that one of the hard-headed toilers could be guilty of doing a wrong, or putting up a job on innocent wheat buyers. A correspondent of the Sun was at Tama City, Iowa, a few days since, and was witness to a scene between a farmer and a wheat buyer named Jake Burton. Jake came along as the farmer was pouring the wheat from the sacks into the spot at the side of the elevator, and he noticed the wheat was plugged, that is, that the top of a sack was all right, but the middle and bottom were the poorest kind. The following conversation ensued:

"Hello, my friend," said Jake. "Plugged your wheat, did you? The farmer passed in his labor, and ripped his sun-burnt brow and replied: 'I guess not, I don't think it is.' 'Don't think it is,' yelled Jake. 'Look at this and look at that,' he said, holding up both hands full of grain. 'Well, it does seem to be different grades,' said the astonished farmer. 'I don't see how it could have happened.' 'Your boys did it,' suggested Jake. 'No,' he replied, 'that cannot be, for I have always taught them to be straight, and I know them to be good, honest boys.' 'Hired man?' again suggested the never tiring Jacob. 'Y-a-s,' said the hard-headed son of toil, 'it must have been him,' and in went another sack of mixed wheat. 'Those hired men,' mused Jake, 'will soon ruin us all. Only yesterday Joe Smith scooped a load of plugg'd wheat on me that his hired man had fixed up for my special benefit. Poor innocent Joe felt terrible about it. Last week Deacon Jones unloaded a fine load of barley. That is, it was fine at the top and bottom of the sacks, but the hired man had plugg'd the middle with stuff that would not sell for screenings. The good doctor would hardly believe that the young man could do such a wicked thing, I have worn off my shirt-sleeves, and my arms are callous to the elbow ramming them into sacks for next-ages that those ungodly hired men have laid for me. Now and then the boys do it. Boys that walk out in the ways of their fathers, but get roaming around Sundays, smoking cigars, drinking beer, and finally wind up in abusing the confidence of their honest fathers in doing me unbeknown to them. Cases have occurred where the wives have actually stolen away to the grainery while their husbands were selling their lives away, and put up a load or two of mixed grain, but these cases are rare, and the main run of sounders are the hired men, imposing on the honest farmer. Now, some folks would think that you fixed up this mess, but of course I know better. I have had experience. It's always the same story; and nine times out of ten any farmer will tell you that it is the hired man. We have got to put them down. Your fair name is at stake. See here, my friend, I will give that villainous valet of yours a lesson in commod dooney. I will dock you 25 cents a bushel on his load, and you take it out of his wages.' 'I don't think that will do,' said the farmer. 'Let him kick.' 'Let him kick,' replied Jake, 'you send him to me; I'll settle his hash. You take it out, and if he won't settle with me, I'll refund. Here's your ticket; other bank; drive on and let that other team up. I want to see what kind of a hired man he has got.'

The farmer drove off, and Jake, softly whispering, balanced his scales for the next deal, and pretty soon the farmer was seen sitting on a pile of grainstubs in front of a store, figuring on a piece of shingle with red chalk, and it was more than likely he was figuring up how much he had made.

Charged Nothing. Dr. Abernethy, the celebrated physician, was never more displeased than by hearing a patient detail a long account of troubles.

A woman knowing Abernethy's love of the laconic, having burned her hand, called at his house. Showing him her hand, she said: 'A burn.'

"A position," quietly answered the learned doctor. The next day she returned and said: "Better."

"Continue the position," replied Dr. Abernethy. In a week she made her last call; and her speech was lengthened to three words: "Well, your fee!"

"Nothing," replied the physician. "You are the most sensible woman I ever saw." The Chicago Eye modestly says that so far as we are concerned style is no object—we would just as leave walk to a cemetery as ride in a hearse.

Wise Words. Comparison, more than reality, makes men happy, and can make them wretched. True friends visit us in prosperity only when invited, but in adversity they come without invitation.

The sister of temperance is not she who stands idle, but she who goes straight forward to the work. Despotism can no more exist in a nation until the liberty of the press be destroyed than the night can happen before the sun is set.

Whoever has a contented mind has all riches. To him whose foot is inhaled in a shoe, it is not as though the earth were carpeted with leather? It is so much pleasanter to have imaginary enemies than to recognize one's own incapacity for any task undertaken, that the delusion is always maintained.

Occupation of Children. The habits of children prove that occupation is a necessity with most of them. They love to be busy even about nothing, and still more to be usefully employed. Children should be encouraged, or, if indolently disinclined to it, should be disciplined into performing for themselves every little office relative to their toilet which they are capable of performing.

A certain merchant in want of a boy, lately displayed the following suggestive notice: "Boy wanted; that has fully rested himself, and is not too intellectual."