# VARIOUS

## BELFORD'S MAGAZINE, VOL 2, DECEMBER 1888

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# Содержание

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## A CHRISTMAS ROUND-ROBIN

### I.
### THE MORNING BEFORE CHRISTMAS

When Malcolm Rutherford entered the library, on the morning of a certain day before Christmas, he was surprised to find his wife in tears. This was all the more vexatious because he knew that she possessed everything to make a reasonable woman happy; but Mrs. Rutherford was not always a reasonable woman, being prone to causeless jealousy and impulsive to rashness. They lived about five miles from Winchester, Va., in which city Rutherford had a fine legal practice.

"What's the matter?" he asked. "Have any of our guests disappointed us?"

"No," she replied, drying her eyes. "They have all arrived and are in their rooms; and" – here she assumed an air of mystery – "in addition to the house-party, I have invited a couple of strangers to dine with us to-day."

"Indeed! Isn't it just a little extraordinary to invite strangers?" he interrupted.

"Strangers they are to me, but not to you. The woman claimed to be a friend of yours."

"Well, I have some friends whom you do not know."

"Miss Emily Tillinghurst, for example."

Rutherford started and turned red.

"Ah!" continued his wife, in a tone of triumph, "I think I have at last detected you. The woman who called upon me this morning – she has but just gone – was a Mrs. Honey. She had a letter of introduction from Lydia Wildfen; and what do you think her business was?"

"How should I know?"

"To solicit *our* patronage for a school she is going to open in Winchester. She says that you can recommend her because you once personally placed a young girl-pupil under her charge. Though dying of mortification at your having such a secret from me, I pretended to know all about it, and as your friend I asked her to dine with us to-day and to bring her husband."

"Very good," was Rutherford's comment.

"It is *not* very good; it is very bad. I demand an immediate explanation of all the circumstances."

"I cannot give it," Rutherford replied, meditatively; "not, at least, until after Christmas."

"A pretty Christmas I shall pass with these dreadful suspicions of you gnawing at my very heart. You must – you *shall* explain it all to me."

"I neither can nor will," said Rutherford, angrily; and he abruptly terminated the conversation by turning on his heel and leaving her to suffer the tortures of what she believed to be well-founded jealousy.

Rutherford strode down the one street of the suburban village in such blind haste that he ran full tilt against old Mr. Robert Plowden, who was taking a stroll, and who, with his young wife, was a guest of the Rutherfords that Christmas.

"Dear me!" he exclaimed, "you almost knocked me over, Rutherford."

"Excuse me. I'm in an awful hurry to get to the telegraph office. It's fortunate I've met you here, as I've something to say to you which I would sooner not say indoors."

"You surprise me," said Plowden, falling into step with Rutherford. "Is it anything serious?"

"Extremely."

"And concerns me?"

"Yes. I will come to the point, so as not to keep you in suspense. Although so long settled in Virginia, you are an Englishman?"

Plowden nodded, and Rutherford continued: "And although, before you married your present wife, always supposed to be a bachelor, in reality you left a wife in England."

"Merciful heavens!" exclaimed Plowden, half-falling against Rutherford in his surprise.

He was a physically weak old man. "It is all true. I can explain everything satisfactorily, however. But how came you to know all this?"

"I learned it from an elderly Englishwoman who came to my office yesterday. She called herself Maria Plowden – "

Plowden uttered a groan.

"I see you know the name."

"Yes," returned Plowden; "it is that of my first wife, who died in England shortly after I came to this country."

"Are you sure she died?"

"Bless my soul! of course I'm sure."

"Can you prove it?" persisted the lawyer. "How do you know that she is dead?"

"I had a letter from a friend telling me so."

"Have you that letter?"

"I do not know; I may have. But one doesn't keep letters for twenty years. Why do you ask me all these questions?"

Rutherford replied gravely: "Because the elderly woman claimed to be your wife, and desired to retain me as her counsel in the prosecution she contemplated of her alleged husband, Robert Plowden, for bigamy."

"She's an impostor!" cried Plowden.

"She says she has a bundle of letters which will establish her identity," said Rutherford; "and she was so anxious to begin her suit that I could hardly persuade her that she would have to wait at least until after the holidays."

"My God!" groaned Plowden, "could there have been any mistake about her death?"

"All things are possible, you know; your passing as a single man was hardly wise."

"That may be, Rutherford; but my married life had been so full of pain and shame that I wished with her death to bury all remembrance and reminder of it. When quite young I married for her beauty a girl greatly beneath me in social station, and very ignorant. That I could have borne uncomplainingly, even after my infatuation was over, but her terrible temper and, worse than all, her intemperate habits made my life a burden, and, divorce being then next to impossibility of attainment in England, I determined to leave her. In fact, I was obliged to do so. I placed her in a private Home for Inebriates, and with my little Anna, aged six, I came to this country. Shortly after my arrival here I was informed of her death."

"By the proper authorities?"

"No; for it seems she made her escape from the Home and died elsewhere. You can understand that these sad facts made me disinclined to speak of my married life; and as people seemed to take it for granted that I was a bachelor – well, I simply did not contradict them."

"And what became of little Anna?"

"She died on the vessel which brought us over," said Plowden with emotion. Quickly recovering himself, he inquired of Rutherford what he should do in the matter.

The lawyer reflected a moment and then replied: "I too am in trouble. It has just occurred to me that you can help me, and in return I will do my best to help you."

Plowden assured him that he would do anything he could, and Rutherford proceeded to explain himself.

"I too have a secret," he said; "not so bad a one as bigamy, thank Heaven! but bad enough."

Plowden groaned, while the lawyer, with a surreptitious smile, continued: "It concerns a young girl whom I placed at a boarding-school in New York years ago. Now, my wife – whose infernally jealous disposition everybody knows – has been told of this by the very woman in whose charge I put the girl. I saw her, though she did not see me, as she came from my house half-an-hour ago."

"The girl?"

"No: the schoolmistress."

"Who is she?"

"She was a Miss Archer – an old maid; a Winchester woman who lost all her people and her money during the war. She then went to New York and opened a young ladies' school. Mrs. Wildfen was one of her pupils. She was doing very well until she committed the folly of marrying her servant, a man named Honey, an extremely handsome but ignorant cockney, and young enough to be her son."

"Dear me!" ejaculated Plowden.

"This naturally caused a scandal. Her pupils were withdrawn in a body, and the school was closed for want of patronage. And now my wife tells me she has returned to open a school in Winchester. You will meet them at dinner to-day; my wife asked them."

"That's strange, isn't it?"

"Yes, a most unfortunate complication for me, their being where my wife can – and she will – pump Mrs. Honey. It was to get the chance to do that, I fully believe, which made my wife invite them; hence the absolute need of my having some plausible story with which to satisfy Edna. You, by reason of your age and respectability, can better do this than anyone else."

"But, 'pon my soul, Rutherford," expostulated Plowden, "much as I would like to serve you, I'm afraid I can't. What can I say to your wife?"

"You can tell her that the girl was yours; that to hide her from your wife I secretly put her into the school, for you, under an assumed name."

"But what will my wife say – she who never suspected that I had a wife before her, much less a child?"

"Oh, it will be all right after Christmas. I can then square myself with my wife, and you can make a clean breast of it to yours."

"Why don't *you* make a clean breast of it at once? It happened before your marriage, you know."

"Oh, as for that, it would be all the same to Edna, if it had happened in a previous existence. But that isn't the question. It is a professional secret. I am under a pledge to an old client of mine for whom I acted. He is now in Boston, and I'm going to telegraph him that domestic peace demands my release from my pledge. So you see, Plowden, that if you *can* stave off my wife's suspicions until after Christmas, I will – "

"What?"

"Stave off Mrs. Plowden Number One."

"I'll do my best," groaned Plowden, "though the Lord has not gifted me with the art of deception."

"Inspiration will spring from necessity. Remember, it will bring us a peaceful Christmas and you – relief from Number One."

Together they entered the telegraph office, and Rutherford sent off his message to Boston.

## II.
## THE AFTERNOON BEFORE CHRISTMAS

Miss Helen Fithian, a poor, elderly relative of Edna's, was spending the season – much more than the holidays – with the Rutherfords. She and Edna were sitting together in the library that afternoon, while the perturbed Plowden was learning his hard lesson of enforced duplicity. Mrs. Rutherford was in no humor for conversation. Miss Fithian nestled into the depths of a big arm-chair in a shadowy corner, clutched her lank red fingers over the tidy she was eternally crocheting and never finishing, dropped the eye-glasses from her bony nose into her lap, and went to sleep.

"Can I speak with you alone, Mrs. Rutherford?" tremulously asked Plowden, stopping at the threshold.

"Certainly, Mr. Plowden; come in," Edna replied, trying her best to speak pleasantly. Plowden glanced at Miss Fithian. "Oh, I am as good as alone," continued Edna, following his look. "Helen is asleep; and even if she were awake, she could not hear you if you spoke in an undertone."

"True," assented Plowden. "I forgot that she's as deaf as a post. Well, the trouble is just this. Your husband has confided to me that a little difference has arisen between you, owing to a slight misunderstanding – "

"Ah, indeed! 'A slight misunderstanding,' eh? Well?" interpolated Mrs. Rutherford, icily, but with fire in her eye.

Plowden was very nervous, but he struggled on bravely: "As I alone can set the matter right, he appealed to me to do so."

"Ah! You think you can. I am curious to know how. I presume I shall understand as you go on."

He shuddered, but continued: "In order that you may do so, I must reveal to you my secret – one that I have locked up for many years. When I came to this country, I left a wife in England."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Edna, drawing away from him in surprise, and saying to herself, "Ah! is he too a villain?"

Involuntarily he raised his voice a little, to span the distance that now separated them, and went on: "Yes; but I had some excuse, I assure you." He then related the story of his married life as he had told it to Rutherford, carefully omitting, however, to mention the age of his daughter.

When he had finished, Edna remarked: "Well, I *am* surprised, Mr. Plowden. But still I do not see what all this has to do with me and my husband."

"I am coming to that. You will see. Fearing that my wife might follow, trace, and reclaim my daughter if she remained with me, I prevailed upon your husband to place her in a boarding-school in New York, where she remained, under a false name, until, upon the death of her mother, I removed her. Now, do you see?"

"I do, I do!" exclaimed Mrs. Rutherford, her clouded face clearing. "How simple it all is, in the light of this explanation! What a weight you have lifted from my heart! I was looking forward to a wretched Christmas, but now I shall have such a happy one. How can I ever repay you, Mr. Plowden, for your noble frankness?"

"By keeping my secret, as your husband has done all these years."

"I will; I promise you that. Only, I do not see the necessity for secrecy, since your trouble is over and done for, and you are happily married to another woman."

"That's just the reason, dear friend. You see, I allowed people to think I was a bachelor, if I did not actually tell them so. Gertrude became my wife under that belief."

"Why did you not tell her the truth before marriage?"

"I tried to; but my dear, sweet, young Gertrude was so romantic that, while she could and did overlook the disparity in our ages, she never would have done the fact that I had been married before

and was a father. It would have disenchanted her completely, and I should have lost her. So, you will keep my secret, my dear madam, will you not?"

"That I will. Oh, how shall I ever forgive myself for wronging my own dear, innocent, faithful, self-sacrificing love by my cruel suspicions and hateful jealousy?"

"Freely confess to him your fault."

"That I will. I will fly to him and ask his forgiveness."

And "fly" she did, as literally as she could, but in the wrong direction. As the last whisk of her skirts was heard in the direction of Mr. Rutherford's study den, that wily gentleman emerged from a door on the opposite side of the library.

"Well?" he demanded anxiously. "Don't keep me on thorns. Have you made it all right with her?"

"I have," replied Mr. Plowden.

"You don't mean to say she swallowed it all!"

Plowden nodded.

"And didn't even drop on the weak point in the story – that when I was supposed to be placing in school your little girl, aged six years, I was not much older myself?"

"No."

The two gentlemen exchanged a smile; then the elder, becoming serious, said:

"But of course you will keep faith with me, Rutherford, and as soon as you obtain your telegraphic release you will tell her the whole truth, whatever that may be?"

"Yes; but I can't get that, you know, until the day after Christmas. I had to wire to my client's business address, so it was too late to connect to-day. To-morrow is a holiday. It will be the day after before I can hear."

"And what about my affair?"

"That is not so easily managed. Still, I have a suspicion that – but I'll say nothing about that at present. The woman is very determined. I told her I could do nothing in the matter until after the holidays. She said she didn't care 'three ha'pence for holidays,' and if I wouldn't take her case and push it, there were plenty of lawyers who would jump at the chance of prosecuting the rich Robert Plowden for bigamy."

"Hush! for heaven's sake!" gasped Plowden, in a hoarse whisper, as, with an expression of terror in his countenance, he pointed at the old maid. Rutherford also looked frightened as, wheeling round, he for the first time descried her; but seeing who it was, and that she was asleep, he was reassured, and replied indifferently:

"Oh, it's all right – nobody but that mischief-making old cat who foists herself upon us six months out of every twelve. You gave me an awful scare. But she's as deaf as an adder when awake, and can't hear thunder when asleep. Come, let's go to the billiard-room and have a game. I feel like a new man, now that I've got a respite from this business until after Christmas."

"Well, I can't forget that it's only a respite, and my anxiety will spoil Christmas for me."

"And so will mine, I suppose, but we must not show it."

"Oh, what a pair of reprobates we are!" groaned Plowden, as his host led him away to the billiard-room, which, as is frequently seen in the South, was a detached structure, at a little distance from the main building.

No sooner had the front door closed behind the gentlemen than Miss Fithian sprang up. Pallid and quivering with wrath, she muttered half audibly:

"So I'm 'a mischief-making old cat,' am I? and I 'foist myself on' you, you villain! do I? and I'm 'deaf as a post and an adder,' am I? Well, I'm not so deaf but what I heard the whole of your vile plot to conceal your crimes; and if I am deaf – you hypocrites! you conspirators! you bigamists! – you shall find that I'm not dumb!"

# III.
# CHRISTMAS EVE

Not until she was dressing for dinner did Edna Rutherford find herself alone with her husband. Then, between sobs and buttoning her shoes, broken sentences and doing up her hair, she, metaphorically speaking, smote her breast and cried, "*Mea culpa! mea culpa!* I have sinned against thee! Forgive me!"

Rutherford was not only a shrewd lawyer, but a natural diplomat; and finding himself master of the situation, he took advantage of it to exact a promise – which she passionately and penitently gave – that she would "never again suspect him; no, not even on the evidence of her own eyes and ears." This signal victory and the extreme comprehensiveness of the articles of capitulation thus agreed upon enabled Mr. Rutherford to meet Mr. and Mrs. Honey with that calm, clear conscience which finds its strength in the certainty of the impossibility of detection. He greeted them with the unruffled mien and courteous ease of the polished gentleman – a manner that fairly overwhelmed the ex-man-servant, and made him feel that to possess it he would willingly have bartered his remote future to the arch-fiend. None but Honey himself knew how unhappy he was made by his dress-suit, which seemed to persistently inspire him with the idea that he was still a waiter; or how wretched he was in the constant fear that he would be betrayed by that inspiration into the doing of something for which Mrs. Honey would pounce upon him. In vain he had implored his inexorable partner to be allowed to stay at home, impressing those considerations upon her with all the eloquence of which he was possessed; and indeed she saw for herself that he could not refrain, when he wore his dress-coat, from laying his handkerchief over his left arm like a waiter's napkin. Mrs. Honey replied, however, that he *must* meet people on a footing of equality or he would never learn how to conduct himself properly in society; an argument which finally induced him to accompany her, shamefacedly.

Only the persons already mentioned in this narration sat down that afternoon to what was destined to be a fateful Christmas Eve dinner. Smiling faces masked anxious hearts, all round the board. The Wildfens had had a more than usually spirited battle of words just before coming down from their room. Mr. Honey endured the misery of constant effort for the maintenance of a correct deportment, to insure which his wife seemed to fix her gray eyes steadily upon him with a stony glare, while she held an iron-shod heel ever ready to crunch his corns as a silent monition. Edna was still afraid that her husband had not really forgiven her in his heart; and Rutherford's mind was far from easy. Plowden felt that he might just as well be a murderer as a mere bigamist, so conscience-stricken and care-ridden was he. Miss Fithian, osseous, grim, and scowling, looked like "the skeleton at the feast," and felt like "the dread Avenger." The only undisturbed soul present was that of pretty, gentle Mrs. Plowden.

Walnuts and wine were reached at last. Then Mrs. Wildfen remembered how fond Mrs. Honey used to be of making speeches, wherever she might air her oratorical gifts, and in an unlucky moment called upon her to make a speech.

Mrs. Honey was in the act of rising to respond, when Miss Fithian, rudely pushing her down upon her chair, took precedence and demanded of Mrs. Wildfen:

"You want a speech, do you? I'll make you one that will make certain persons here tremble."

There was no doubt about that. Two of them – the conspirators – were trembling already. They felt instinctively that the hour of trouble for them had arrived.

"Cousin Edna," continued the spinster, "I regret the pain I feel it my duty to inflict upon you, but that false husband of yours has again deceived you."

Mrs. Rutherford sprang to her feet, instantly armed *cap-à-pie* with her never-failing jealousy: "What do you mean?" she gasped.

"Silence!" cried Rutherford in a commanding tone to Miss Fithian.

Plowden, who had been struggling with a sudden faintness, suddenly succumbed to it and fell against his wife, who cried out in alarm, "Rob! Rob! what's the matter?"

"I will *not* silence, sir," retorted the old maid, "for I consider it my duty to publicly expose and denounce you – 'deaf as a post' though I may be" (here Plowden gave such an agonized groan that his wife forcibly poured a glass of wine down his throat, choking but reviving him), "and 'deaf as an adder,' Mr. Rutherford, I overheard you confess the foul plot you and that monster had concocted to deceive my poor cousin, your long-suffering, unsuspecting wife. Oh! I'm not afraid of you," she cried, as Rutherford arose with a dangerous look in his eyes. "The girl you placed at school was the creature of your villainy, and not Plowden's daughter."

"What!" cried Mrs. Rutherford, as Mrs. Plowden at the same moment exclaimed: "His daughter! Of course not. He never had a daughter. Had you, ducky?"

"Ducky" was unable to quack a negative, or even to respond when Mr. Rutherford in a stentorian voice called: "Give this woman the lie, Plowden."

"And what if he should," retorted Miss Fithian; "who would believe the word of a bigamist?"

"A bigamist!" cried a chorus of voices.

"Do you mean that my husband is a bigamist?" demanded Mrs. Plowden, jumping to her feet, her eyes flashing.

"I do mean it. Ask him."

"Deny it, Rob, love! Mr. Plowden! Deny it, darling," urged Gertrude, seizing his collar and giving him a shake.

The movement disturbed the doubtful balance of his limp form; he slid from his chair and disappeared under the table, almost unconscious. Surprise at his sudden vanishing-act so startled everybody that a momentary silence ensued, in which sounded sharply the ringing of the front-door bell. Honey instinctively jumped up to answer the summons, but was promptly recalled by his quick-witted wife to a proper realization of his altered social condition. That poised heel came down with such vigor on his toes that he howled with pain.

"Do that 'ere just once more," he yelled, savagely, "han' I'll cut loose from you for good."

"You never can hear a bell ring but you want to run and answer it," she retorted, in an undertone.

At this juncture, Sam, the old darkey factotum, shambled in with a card, for which Honey, in his pain and confusion, unthinkingly stretched out his hand. Sam gave it to him and left the room.

"Who is it? Who is it?" demanded several voices.

"Read it out, Mr. Honey," called Mrs. Wildfen.

"I cawn't, ma'am; hit's writin', an' I cawn't read writin'."

"William!" cried Mrs. Honey, in an awful voice, snatching the card from him and again bringing down that merciless heel upon his already aching toes. Honey sprang to his feet with a cry of anger and pain, half-threatening and half-whining – the vocal outcome of his divided emotions – proclaiming:

"That settles it. I told you I would if you did it wunst more. 'Arriet, I said I would, and I will. I'm a-goin', for wunst and hallways."

As he dashed out of the room, with a ludicrous limp, there was a general cry of "Come back, Honey! come back!" But Mrs. Honey arose and, though very pale, said with much dignity:

"Oblige me, ladies and gentlemen, by letting him go. I deserve this public desertion for my folly in marrying my inferior. The name on the card is '*Mrs. Plowden*.'"

A blood-curdling groan nearly froze the blood in the veins of the guests. It came from under the table, whence, simultaneously with it, emerged Plowden, to whom terror lent instant animation and activity.

"My wife!" he breathed, huskily.

"Your wife!" exclaimed Gertrude. "Then it is true! You are a bigamist!"

"Yes! No! She's dead! Save me from her!" he cried incoherently, rushing to the French window overlooking the lawn and throwing it open. "You will forgive me, Gertrude," he declaimed, with

his foot upon the window-sill, "when the black waters are surging over my head. Farewell! Farewell forever!" And leaping out into the darkness, he was gone.

"Stop him! stop him, someone!" pleaded Gertrude. "He will drown himself!"

"He can't," sneered Miss Fithian; "the fish-pond is frozen over."

"I would advise you, sir," now remarked Mrs. Rutherford to her husband, in a voice of suppressed passion, "to follow your fellow-criminal."

"I will, madam," he retorted, in a like tone of restrained fury; "and since you actually presume to order me from my own house, I go – never to return." As he spoke, he too passed out through the window.

A momentary awe seemed to oppress those remaining at the table. The silence was soon broken, however, by Wildfen saying to his wife:

"A pretty row you've made all around, haven't you?"

"I!" exclaimed Lydia, in amazement.

"Yes, you."

"How?"

"Why, by giving Mrs. Honey a letter of introduction to Mrs. Rutherford – as you confessed to me you did."

"I'm sure I didn't mean any harm by it."

"You did," persisted the quarrelsome Wildfen. "You're always making mischief and pretending you don't mean to."

"I'm not."

"You are. And I want to tell you, once for all, that I'm tired of your eternally contradicting me. Do it once more, just once, and I'll follow the other gentlemen."

"Who cares if you do?"

"You do."

"I don't."

"What! already! Now I *am* off;" and he sprang up and started for the window.

"Good-bye, and good riddance," Lydia called out, as his form vanished in the darkness without, and the window closed behind him with a slam; then sank back in her chair, laughing hysterically. This roused Mrs. Rutherford from the semi-stupor into which she had sunk.

"Laugh," she said bitterly, rousing herself; "laugh while my heart is breaking. No, do not speak. I want no sympathy, no pity. I know his perfidy now, and shall know how to act."

"Why! what's happened to Mrs. Plowden?" exclaimed Lydia.

"She has been in a faint since her villain escaped," replied Miss Fithian, who was supporting the unconscious form, "and I've been trying to revive her."

"Open the window," suggested Edna.

"No, don't," cried the contradictory Lydia. "If you do, I'll catch my death of cold."

"She's coming to," said Mrs. Honey. "Oh, here's the punch coming in. Give her a drink of that and she will be all right."

Sam, who brought in the steaming punch-bowl and placed it upon the table, stared about him in amazement, unable to comprehend the mysterious disappearance of all the gentlemen. He knew that Mr. Honey had gone out by the front door, but, the window being closed, the idea of the others having made their exit by that way did not occur to him.

"Where's the woman who brought that card, Sam?" spoke up Miss Fithian. "Ask her in. She will bear evidence to the truth of my charge."

"Why, miss," replied Sam, "dat a' woman acted de mos' curusest you ebber see. She done come to de do' an' stan' dah, till she see dat a' Mistah Honey come a-shootin' out de dinin'-room do' an' fro' de front do' like he done gone mad. She scrunch herself clus agin de wall fo' to let him pahs, an' he

go by like de bird an' nebber see her. Den she scoot out an' scuttle off, like de debble he after her, in jes' de udder way what he didn't took."

"Strange!" commented Mrs. Wildfen, and looked disappointed when no familiar voice responded, "No, it isn't." The silence and the empty chair beside her quickly reminded her that her contradictor was gone – perhaps forever.

# IV.
# CHRISTMAS

When Rutherford, in a white heat of wrath, rushed from the house, he found Plowden in the garden, jumping from one foot to the other with an agility surprising in a man of his age, and vigorously slapping his sides with his arms, as if embracing an invisible friend.

"What are you doing?" asked the lawyer.

"Trying to keep myself warm. Why do you follow me?"

"Because I was ordered to – "

"It is useless; leave me to my fate."

"Hello! Who's that?" exclaimed Rutherford, as he caught the sound of a man's running. "Hello!"

"'Ullo, yourself," came back in the unmistakable English accent of Honey, who quickly came up, panting.

"It's Bow-Bells," said Rutherford. "Why are you running so?"

"To keep warm. I've run hup an' down the road, hand I cawn't see no signs of hany hinn or public."

"No; there is none near. But come with me. I am still your host, and I think I can make you at least measurably comfortable for the night in the billiard-house."

As they eagerly started to follow Rutherford, glad of any shelter, a voice was heard behind them hallooing, "Hi, there!" and brought them to a halt.

"Ha! ha!" laughed Rutherford, "if it isn't Wildfen! There has evidently been a general mutiny among the women."

"Where are you all going?" asked Wildfen, joining them. "Take me along, wherever it is."

"Come on quickly, then," replied Rutherford, leading the way, like the captain of a small skirmishing party, to the billiard-house.

It seemed by the flickering light of a match rather a bare, desolate, cheerless sort of place, but they were all too glad to find shelter, to make any complaints. "And now," he continued, having lighted a lamp, "make yourselves as comfortable as you can, while I find Sam and get some things to render our plight a little more endurable."

"If he could slip our overcoats out of the hall and bring them here," suggested Plowden.

"Of course he can. Don't be uneasy; you'll be all right in a few minutes."

"No, we won't," muttered Wildfen, querulously, in an undertone.

"Of course; we shall be quite jolly, you know," spoke up Honey cheerfully, in reply to Rutherford's encouraging words.

Plowden said nothing. His soul was precipitated into a depth of gloom, where its only company was a vaguely-formed but terrible demon labelled "Bigamy." It was that presence, even more than the weather, which made him shiver.

Rutherford was gone but a short time, and when he returned was accompanied by Sam, who bore a load of overcoats and a bottle of some amber fluid that seemed to bestow warmth and animation. The faithful old servant proved himself an able skirmisher. Snatching a pillow from one room and a blanket from another, making prey of a quilt here and a comforter there, he succeeded eventually in getting from the guest-chambers a fair supply of bedding, which he transferred to the billiard-house. He also got in an ample pile of wood, with which Honey skilfully made a rousing fire on the broad, open hearth. Honey, too, utilized the bedding as it was brought in, making as comfortable couches as possible under the circumstances, on a sofa and three chairs for Plowden and Wildfen, and upon the floor for himself. Rutherford dragged from a closet an old hammock that he sometimes used to take a summer afternoon nap in, and said he would sleep in that, with a blanket around him. Honey found another lamp and lighted it. What with the cheery glow of the dancing

firelight, the bright lamps, and the colors of the bedding distributed about, the erstwhile dismal room began to seem rather pleasant, and in great measure the happy transformation was due to Honey's readiness and ability in doing things which belonged to his proper sphere of effort.

"Are we going to bed?" asked Plowden, sadly.

"I should say not," ejaculated Wildfen. "Why, it isn't more than eight o'clock."

"I am in no humor for sleep to-night," said Rutherford, moodily.

"I'm hagreeable for hanythink," remarked Honey, amiably.

"What do you say to a quiet game of 'draw'?" suggested Wildfen.

The idea suited Rutherford; Honey knew a little about the game and liked it; and Plowden, though he had some doubt about his ability to play it, upon learning that it was not in the least like whist said he would try. So Sam, when he came in with another load of fire-wood, was despatched to capture a pack of cards from his master's room and a box of gun-wads from the closet where Rutherford's sporting paraphernalia were kept.

The game was not a lively one, and a gloomy despondency seemed to spread its shadow over the table.

"This is very far, my friends," remarked Rutherford, "from the pleasant evening I hoped to give you."

"No matter," sighed Plowden, resignedly; "even this is better than being hanged for bigamy."

"Oh, pshaw, man! that is not a hanging offence. And you're not even convicted yet. Don't give way so. You'll come out all right."

"Yes, I suppose we all will – if we don't starve meanwhile," grumbled Wildfen.

"Oh, no fear of that," laughed Rutherford. "Sam will see to it that we at least sit at the second table."

"That's what I've been used to," remarked Honey, unthinkingly; and then, recalling himself, seemed to listen for a sharp voice saying in reproof, "William!" After a moment he went on confusedly, "Well, gents. I don't pretend I'm equal to my position among you. Hit was 'er has dragged me hinto hit; I didn't want ter come. But that's hall hover an' done for. She's a good woman, honly I cawn't stand 'er hallways ha-naggink hat me hafore folks, hand ha pickink me hup habout my haitches. Why, hafore she married me, hif I'd ha' dropped ha bushel hof 'em she wouldn't ha' said nothink. Marriage, gents, 'as been a werry big disappintment to yours trewly."

"My wife," said Wildfen, sullenly, "is the spirit of contradiction personified."

"And mine of jealousy," added Rutherford.

"And mine of all that's angelic," moaned Plowden; "therefore I must be torn from her by the rude clutches of the law. Did you observe how sweetly she bore the horrible revelation? She looked like a drooping lily, didn't she, Wildfen?"

"No," answered that embodied negative; "you did the drooping-lily part of the play yourself. But are we going to stay here all Christmas, while they are having a good time by themselves?"

"I'm afraid so, unless we sneak back, humbly beg pardon, and persuade them to take pity on us," replied Rutherford.

"Never!" exclaimed the others as one man, except Plowden, who said that he was tired and would lie down, though he did not suppose he could sleep. So he dropped out of the game and stretched himself on the sofa, where Honey neatly tucked him up. The others played on until gray dawn.

A little after midnight, Rutherford, having chanced to glance at his watch, grimly wished his companions:

"Merry Christmas, gentlemen."

"It isn't," snarled Wildfen.

Plowden uttered a groan, so long and deep that the others laughed; and after that laugh they seemed to brighten up a little.

The sound of crunching footsteps in the new-fallen snow was heard outside a little after eight o'clock, and Honey, looking out of the window, exclaimed joyously:

"'Ere's Sam, with a basket han a coffee-pot!"

Rutherford apologized for the poor fare, but the coffee was excellent, the bread and cold meat were appetizing, and Honey, who was the Mark Tapley of the occasion, voiced the general sentiment when, having aided Sam in spreading the viands on a billiard-table, he said: "Cold wit les is werry heatable when you're 'ungry. Ah!" he added, reflectively, "me an' mother 'as hoften been werry 'ard pushed to get has good has this 'ere."

"You haven't got a mother, have you?" asked Wildfen. He couldn't quite contradict the affirmation of a maternal entity, but came near it, in his tone at least.

"Yessir, I 'ave. That's one reason I married habove me – for to get ha comfortable 'ome for mother. My wife said Hi might bring 'er from Hengland, an' we've brought 'er 'ere to Winchester, to keep 'ouse for us, while me and 'Arriet keeps school."

To cover the general smile at this remark, Rutherford asked Sam how the ladies were getting on.

"Dunno how dey is dis mawnin', mars'r."

"Did Mrs. 'Oney stay?" inquired her husband.

"Yes, sah. I heard missus say her husband done leave her dah; she got stay dah till he done come back an' git her."

"And my Gertrude," asked Mr. Plowden, anxiously, "how was she enjoying herself?"

"Dey wa'n't nobody 'joyin' desselves, so fur as I seed, sah. Dey was a-doin' a powah of talkin'. I hyah missus say, sarcastic-like, it were de 'mizziblest merry Christmas' she ebber see; an' de udders groan like de elders does in a 'sperience meetin' when dey means 'Yes, Lawd.'"

Sam's understanding of the prevailing sentiment among the ladies was quite correct. When each of them sought her solitary bed, that night before Christmas, it was with an aching heart that it should be so desolate and dreary. In the morning they dolefully wished each other "A Merry Christmas!" and, after a late and melancholy breakfast, sat in conclave in the library, to discuss the situation.

"Where they all can have gone to, puzzles me," observed Mrs. Rutherford. "There is not a house this side of Winchester where they could get accommodation for the night."

"It was bitter cold last night," sighed Mrs. Wildfen; "and poor Steve is such a shivery fellow anyway, he would have frozen if he had tried to walk to town."

"Perhaps they're all frozen," suggested Miss Fithian, with an air of hopelessness.

"If they are," said Mrs. Rutherford, sternly, "you, Helen, will have four murders on your soul."

"I don't see why you couldn't have kept quiet, at least till after Christmas. It wasn't any of your business anyway," remarked Mrs. Wildfen, aggressively, to the old maid.

"Umph!" sniffed Miss Fithian. "It's safest not to rub cats the wrong way" – which ambiguous expression her hearers vaguely construed as having merely a general application, they not knowing its personal significance.

"Well, it has just completely spoiled our Christmas," sighed Plowden's young wife.

"And theirs too – if there's any comfort in that," added Mrs. Honey. "I never knew my angel boy to show so much spirit before. His favorite corn must have been very bad."

No one inquired the relation between his spirit and his corns.

"Have any of you decided upon a course of action?" inquired the hostess. "You don't seem to, since you say nothing. Well, I have, then. As soon as the law courts open after Christmas, I shall apply for a divorce from Mr. Rutherford."

"I don't see upon what ground," observed Mrs. Honey, who was not only the oldest but the most practically informed woman present.

"He has deceived me."

"His putting a young girl in my charge proves nothing; not even that. It seems to me that there is a game of cross-purposes here – something underneath all this that we do not understand, and that only the interested parties can explain."

"Explain in their own way," retorted Mrs. Rutherford.

"Ladies," said the amiable Mrs. Plowden, "what has occurred is very unpleasant, but for all of you is only a little disagreement that really – as Mrs. Honey says – may be capable of explanation and eventual reconciliation with your husbands. But what is my position? I am the only one who has been terribly deceived, beyond the possibility of a doubt, and the consequences of that deceit are irreparable. If Mr. Plowden left a legitimate wife in England, then what is my position? What am I?"

"The divorce court," said Mrs. Rutherford, "is as open to you as to me."

"But I don't want a divorce from my Robert," sobbed the "willowy" and now weeping Gertrude.

"And you don't need any if he has really been guilty of bigamy," added the practical Mrs. Honey.

"Oh, I'm sure he did not intend to deceive me. He must have married me by mistake."

"Married by mistake! That's a new way of marrying. Ha, ha!" laughed Miss Fithian, scornfully.

"I am willing," continued Mrs. Plowden, unheeding the old maid's taunting laugh, "to wait for his explanation before condemning him, if he would only come back and make it; but I fear he may never do so. Even now I tremble to think that he may be behind prison bars."

"If so," replied Mrs. Wildfen, "he at least is well fed and warm, no doubt, while my poor Steve is wandering over the frozen roads, in the snow, houseless, hungry – and on Christmas, of all days in the year."

"What a wretched quarrel, when there should be 'peace on earth, good-will to men'!" commented Mrs. Honey. "I could find it in my heart to forgive William, if only for the sake of the season."

None of the ladies felt "up" to going to church, so they passed the time, until luncheon was served, speculating upon what had become of the gentlemen, and how they were faring. When they returned to the library, and were talking there, the Indian-like ear of Mrs. Rutherford caught unwonted sounds in the dining-room, and she quickly glided into the hall-way to learn the cause of the violent clattering of dishes, scuffling of feet, and masculine coughing she heard. Darting into the dining-room, she surprised Sam (was the artful Sam surprised?) in the act of clearing the remains of the luncheon from the table and packing them into a large market-basket.

"Why, Sam!" she demanded, "what does this mean?"

"Fo' de Lawd, missus, I dassent tell," he replied, affecting great confusion.

"You must. I insist upon it. Where are you going with that basket of food?"

"Well, missus, ef I must 'fess, I 'fess. I gwine take it to mars'r. I'se on'y a pore ole nigger, but I can't let de gemmen starve, specially young mars'r."

"Where is he?"

"In de billiard-house, missus. All de gemmen dah. Dey's mose starbe', mose froze; don't hab nuffin but cole stuff dis mawnin. Mars'r look mighty sick, an' I reck'n dat ole man, Mars'r Plowden, he mose done gone."

"Sam," said Mrs. Rutherford, with her usual impulsiveness, "after you have taken that basket to them, come back to me. In the meantime, I will consult with my friends as to what steps to take. But say nothing to the gentlemen about this until I bid you."

"No, missus," replied Sam, shuffling off with his load, and wearing a knowing smile on his honest black face. While the husbands were discussing the viands he carried to them, their wives were discussing the new situation of affairs.

"Ladies," said Mrs. Rutherford, after informing them of the whereabouts of their spouses, "you are all at liberty to invite your husbands back here to dinner; whether you do so or not is for each of you to decide for herself. As for me, Mr. Rutherford said he would never return, and I am not going to ask him to."

"We all, in the heat of passion, say things," replied Mrs. Honey, "which at the time we think we mean, but for which we are afterwards sorry. Did not William say he left me forever?"

"No," answered Mrs. Wildfen, "he said 'wunst an' hallways.'"

"That's unkind of you, Lydia," remarked the gentle Gertrude. "What does it matter whether a man spells his heart with an 'h' or an 'a,' so long as it is in the right place? – as I am sure Mr. Honey's is."

"Thank you, my dear," responded Mrs. Honey, with moistening eyes. "Your good husband can never have committed the crime imputed to him."

"Nor mine either, I suppose you think?" queried Mrs. Rutherford; to which the schoolmistress replied that that certainly was what she did think.

"Oh, yes," sneered Miss Fithian; "you're all in the melting mood. You'll get down on your knees and beg 'em to come back and trample on you."

Mrs. Honey smiled as she remarked: "They must, by this time, be too famished to trample much. I know that must be my husband's condition. With his enormous appetite I think he must be now about starved into submission, if not penitence."

"Remember, it is Christmas, and we should forgive and forget," said Mrs. Plowden. "Suppose we unite in an invitation to them to come to dinner to-day."

"Good!" eagerly responded Mrs. Honey, "and send it by Sam, with a flag of truce."

"Yes, and put in that we will undertake to keep the peace during dinner," added Mrs. Plowden.

"Say rather," suggested Mrs. Rutherford, "that we will preserve an armed neutrality."

"No, no, that's too warlike," protested Mrs. Honey; "I will draw up a pacific invitation, and we will all sign it."

"I won't," promptly objected Mrs. Wildfen. "At least, I won't put my name first. That would look as if I had flung down my arms and surrendered unconditionally."

"What then *shall* we do to preserve our dignity and get them back?" piteously asked Mrs. Plowden. "Rob and I had no quarrel, and I want him – bigamist or no bigamist."

"Mrs. Plowden! I am shocked! and will no longer remain under the same roof with you!" exclaimed Miss Fithian. "Edna, I am going to order Jim to hitch up the sleigh and drive me to the depot. I shall go to cousin Melinda's."

Mrs. Rutherford made a feeble show of urging her to remain until after dinner, but she replied: "No, no; I will not sit at table with your hypocrite and that woman's bigamist."

Said Mrs. Rutherford coldly, "Then I fear that we will have to be deprived of the pleasure of your society."

As soon as order was again restored, after Miss Fithian's unregretted departure, Mrs. Honey took up the interrupted theme. "Suppose, then," she said, thoughtfully, "as no one seems willing to sign first, that we draw up a 'round-robin' which we can all sign, without either seeming to lead."

"I won't," again objected Mrs. Wildfen – "not until I know what a 'round-robin' is."

"It is a paper to which signatures are affixed in a surrounding circle, so that the precedence of all is equal."

"Oh, I'll sign that!" "So will I!" "And I!" responded the other wives.

This then was the form in which Mrs. Honey drew up the invitation, and the signatures were affixed.

When completed, and addressed "To the gentlemen in the pavilion," it was handed to Sam for delivery, and he went off chuckling over the success of his ruse in attracting attention to his foray upon the luncheon-table. In a short time he brought back a verbal acceptance of the invitation.

Mrs. Honey had constituted herself leader of the feminine discontents. When they were marshalled in the dining-room, awaiting their guests, she thus addressed them:

"Ladies, now let us preserve a calm, cold, and dignified demeanor, so as to let them understand that we have simply taken compassion upon them, not as husbands, but as men, and in the name of a common humanity."

"Exactly," assented Mrs. Rutherford. "No beggar, especially at this season, should be turned away either cold or hungry from my door."

The speech addressed by Mr. Rutherford to his friends and partners in adversity was quite in consonance with that uttered by Mrs. Honey.

"Gentlemen," said he, "do not let us show elation or be too eager to forgive our wives, but bear ourselves as just men who, having received overtures for peace, are willing to grant proper consideration to proffered terms of capitulation."

Following their host, Wildfen and Honey supported between them Mr. Plowden, who when he entered the dining-room seemed much cheered by the absence of Miss Fithian. No word was spoken as the husbands entered, and in stern silence each retook the seat he had occupied on Christmas Eve. The turkey – a grand bird, yellow-meated and tender from fattening on English walnuts – had been served and eaten in silence.

Suddenly Sam ushered in a shivering telegraph-boy, with a message for Mr. Rutherford. When the diners were left alone again, the host arose and said:

"Friends, last evening you heard made against me a charge which I was, at the time, bound in honor not to refute. It fortunately happens that you are all present to hear my exculpation. First let me read this telegram: 'Your message received by fortunate accident. Tell everything. No further need for secrecy. Mother dead two months. Daughter with me. —*Charles Wilbour*.' Now for the solution of it. I inherited my father's practice, and some odd clients he had. Among them was a gentleman who had made a secret marriage, for which his wealthy mother, if she had known of it, would have disinherited him. It was effectually concealed, and he had a daughter pretty well grown when I had anything to do with the case. His wife had died but a little while before. He was recalled home to his mother, whose health was believed to be failing, and knowing that he would have to remain there some time, he wished his child put in a boarding-school, as a place of safe care for her, and under a false name, to still conceal her identity while his mother lived. He came to me, as his lawyer, to so dispose of her, under a solemn pledge of my word of honor that I would keep his secret. That was the girl I confided to Mrs. Honey, and her father was Mr. Wilbour, the signer of the telegram I have just read. Further documentary evidence, if needed, is in my office."

"Oh, Malcolm! forgive me!" cried his wife, throwing herself into his arms.

Sam entered in time to be both amazed and delighted by this tableau. When he could claim his master's attention, he drew him aside and told him in an undertone:

"Dat strange ole woman what come hyer las' night done come agin, sah. She outside 'n' say she jes want to see you a minnit, but she mus' see you. She say she got lettahs fo' you, sah, 'n' wun't gib 'em to nubbudy else."

"Show her in here, Sam."

"Yes, sah."

Rutherford had raised his voice in giving the order, and Plowden looked up at him inquiringly as Sam left the room. The lawyer bent down to him and whispered: "Mrs. Plowden, Number One."

The unhappy old man half arose, pallid with a sudden scare, and looked as if he meditated going through the window again; but before he could do so, Sam returned, ushering in a stout elderly woman. At sight of her, Plowden sank back in his seat, and his face gave evidence of lively emotion, but the feeling it expressed was astonishment rather than consternation.

"Are you Mrs. Robert Plowden?" demanded Mr. Rutherford.

"Yes, sir; that's my name," the new-comer replied.

Young Honey, who had been sitting with his back to her, and indeed had not even noticed her coming in, jumped up at sound of her voice, turned and confronted her, with a cry of —

"Mother!"

The woman seemed to shrink and cower, as if overcome, not by fear, but by shame at sight of him, and whined: "Oh, Billy! Hi didn't know you was 'ere hagain."

"Why are *you* 'ere, mother?"

She hesitated, stammered, seemed as if she would have turned and fled, had not the stern demand in his glance detained her.

"I didn't think it was hany 'arm," she whimpered; "I 'ated so to be dependent hon you an' 'Arriet – an' 'e's so rich."

The honest fellow's face flushed crimson, tears dimmed his eyes, and his voice trembled, as he said, in tones not of anger, but of deep sorrow: "Oh, mother! 'ow could you? Poor an' hignorant we hallways was – which hit was hower condition – 'ard, but not dishonest – and nothink hever for to be hashamed of huntil now. Oh, mother, you've broke my 'art!"

"No, no, my boy," impulsively exclaimed the good-hearted Plowden, hurriedly rising, coming to him and laying a hand on his shoulder, "don't feel so. I can understand better than you how desperately one may feel who is poor as well as old. Sister-in-law Sally, I forgive you; for if you have raised a ghost – that has put some gray hairs in my head in the last twenty-four hours, I think – you have also laid it, and forever. Yes, Sally, I forgive you with all my heart; and if you want to be independent and go back to England, I'll give you enough to enable you to do so."

She was sobbing, too much overcome to reply in words, and could only bow over and kiss the kind hand that he extended to her. Then she turned toward the door, and her son led her out. Rutherford called to him as he went, "You must return, Honey," and he nodded assent. Mrs. Honey, pale and silent, followed them to the vestibule. After a short absence she returned with her husband. Tinkling sharp and clear in the crisp wintry air, they heard the bells on the horses that carried the old woman away. Fainter and fainter became the sound until it died away in the distance, and then the cloud lifted, as if by magic, from over the house-party, and at last "Merry Christmas" came for them.

*Celia Logan.*

# A CHRYSTMESSE WYSHE

There be
A wyshe I have for Thee
Thys Chrystmesse-tyde:
Maye Joye, and alle Gladde thynges
The seasonne brynges,
Gette to Thee
And Abyde.

*Wm. Hallister Wall.*

# "*DEAD-SHOT DAN.*" [1]

"Come, Dan, old man, it's your turn now."

This remark was made by one of a group of miners seated in front of a camp-fire in San Mateo canyon on the Colorado.

The person addressed as Dan was a splendid specimen of a "frontiersman," having all the characteristics of a frank, free American, with the physical advantages of a stalwart "Englisher." Among the miners he was variously known as "English Dan" and "Dead-Shot Dan." How he got the latter nickname always seemed a puzzle to his comrades, for he was one of the best, gentlest, and kindest fellows on "the lode." His manners and appearance indicated anything but a wicked nature, and he was always ready to do a comrade a good turn, or act as peacemaker in the ever-recurring rows of the miners.

It was Christmas Eve, and the boys were gathered around the fire, smoking their pipes, and telling stories of their past lives. Some told of homes and loved ones in the far-distant States; some of the late Civil War and its scenes of strife and sorrow; and some of escapades with the Mexican "greasers" and cattle-thieves of the Rio Grande.

Now the crowd turned to Dan, whom they regarded as a sort of superior creature. He was a general favorite. He knew something of medicine, and had nursed and cured many a comrade of camp-fever. He had, on more than one occasion, even set a limb and extracted a bullet from a wound – attentions which undoubtedly had the effect of increasing the freedom of the miners in the use of the "seven-shooter."

"Come, Dan, it's your turn now."

"Yes, yes," shouted a dozen voices. "Give us a story, English."

"I'm not much of a story-teller, boys," said Dan; "can anybody suggest a subject?"

"Yes," exclaimed old Peleg Carter, the Nestor of the crowd, "I can suggest a subject."

Peleg was a Missouri man. He was over six feet high, and had gray hair, while his large and flabby ears stood out from his head like the side lamps of a hansom cab. He had only one eye, and he boasted that he had lost the other in driving Joe Smith and the Mormons from "Nauvoo." His word was law in the economy of the camp, so that when he said he could suggest a subject to Dan, all the lads waited with awe and attention to hear what the subject would be.

"Well, old man," observed Dan, "start the subject, and I'll do my best."

"Tell us, then," said Peleg, "how you got the name of 'Dead-Shot Dan.' You never wear a weaping, unless you keep one underneath your jumper."

"No," replied Dan, "I don't carry a weapon. I carried a pistol once, but swore I'd never 'bear arms,' again. Well, lads," he continued, as he filled his pipe, "you want to know how I got the name of 'Dead-Shot Dan'?"

"Yes, yes," was the unanimous response.

"I must tell you, then, that I came to Colorado, not exactly a fugitive from justice, but the victim of what is called in civilized countries the 'code of honor.' I was an assistant-surgeon on board one of the 'Quintard Line' of steamers, sailing from Liverpool to the Mediterranean. On my first voyage we put in for passengers and coal at Marseilles. We had forty-eight hours to remain in port, and as I was anxious to see all I could of foreign parts, I went ashore early in the morning. My companion was the senior surgeon of the ship, a strange, hot-headed old fellow. He had formerly been a surgeon in the Royal Navy, but had been cashiered while on the West Indian station for challenging the admiral on account of some supposed affront. His name was Dr. Caldwell, and he was sometimes known as the

[1] From "Florence Fables," by William J. Florence (Comedian), just published by Belford, Clarke & Co. Copyrighted, 1888.

'Fire-eating Surgeon.' Both of us, being very hungry when we got on shore, thought we would have a jolly good breakfast before visiting the objects of interest in the place.

"'Come with me, Dan,' said the Doctor, 'and I will take you to a famous restaurant frequented by all the savants of the city. Astronomers and political economists go there, and Italian refugees and communists too. Frenchmen rarely have more than a crust of bread and a cup of coffee before noon; but if the frog-eaters have such a thing in their larder, we'll have a beefsteak or a brace of chops.'

"With that he led me into a quiet side street, and we soon reached the restaurant. Early as it was, the principal dining-room was filled with customers sipping their coffee, and I could see at a glance that they were of no common order. They appeared to form a kind of literary class.

"We took our seats at a table which was already occupied by an old French gentleman, with a mustache and beard of a decidedly military cut.

"'Two large beefsteaks!' shouted the Doctor, in a voice which attracted the attention of everyone in the room.

"The waiter looked at us as if we were lunatics escaped from an asylum, and said, in broken English, '*Messieurs*, this is not the time for beefsteaks. Beefsteaks are at twelve o'clock. 'Tis now only half-past eight.'

"'Two beefsteaks, d'ye hear!' again roared the Doctor.

"'Certainlee, if *messieurs* will have it so,' replied the waiter, somewhat staggered.

"'Beefsteak! Beefsteak!! Beefsteak!!!' was the exclamation which went from one person to another around the room, and all eyes were turned towards us.

"'Look,' said the Doctor, 'how these French fools stare. Confound them! What do they mean?'

"'Pardon me, sare,' remarked the old gentleman at our table, addressing himself to me, 'ess zis your breakfast or your dinnaire?'

"'Don't answer him,' said the Doctor; 'we'll have some sport with these fellows.'

"The beefsteaks were brought, and we attacked them with great effect.

"'It must be ze dinnaire,' muttered our military friend to himself, just loud enough for us to hear.

"'Pardon me, gentlemen,' he again said, addressing himself to me in a louder tone, 'ess zis your breakfast or your dinnaire?'

"'Bring some fried eggs,' called out the Doctor, before I could answer.

"'*Oui, messieurs*,' replied the waiter, quickly darting into the kitchen.

"'Oh, it must be ze dinnaire,' again muttered our old friend opposite; 'certainlee, it must be ze dinnaire.'

"The eggs were brought and soon despatched. The old Frenchman looked aghast.

"'Pardon me once more, my dear young friend,' he said, 'ess zis your breakfast or your dinnaire?'

"The Doctor winked at me not to answer, and called out, 'Waiter! two more cups of tea!'

"The old Frenchman looked at his watch and said despairingly, 'Oh, it must be ze dinnaire. Dinnaire at half-past eight! *Mon Dieu!* Howevaire, I will ask once more. My dear sare, ess zis your breakfast or your dinnaire?'

"'Sir,' I replied, somewhat petulantly, 'we came here to eat, not to answer questions!'

"'Yes, sare, but I am a journalist, and am anxious to study ze characteristics of ze Engleesh; zerefore, I ask, ess zis your breakfast or your dinnaire?'

"'Bring more toast, waiter,' said the Doctor.

"'More tost! Ah, it ess ze dinnaire – must be ze dinnaire,' mumbled the old Frenchman.

"The toast and tea disposed of, we rose and paid our bill. We were about to leave the restaurant, when the old Frenchman quitted the table, as if for the purpose of having a parting shot at us. Just as we were stepping into the street, he tapped me on the shoulder, and making a polite bow, said, 'Sare, if you please, was zat your breakfast or your dinnaire?'

"This seemed too much for human nature to bear, and without thinking exactly what I was about, I threw my glove into his face.

"'Sare, what you mean? An insult?'

"'Yes,' said the Doctor, 'and another, if you like. We have stood your impertinence for the last half-hour. You are no gentleman.'

"'Sare? No gentleman? Zare is my card!'

"'And there is mine,' said the Doctor.

"'One at a time, my friends,' coolly replied the old man. 'My business is wiz zis young gentleman first. He has struck me wiz his glove! He must fight.'

"'Agreed,' said the Doctor. 'Send your friend to me. I shall be happy to assist this young gentleman, and to fight you myself afterwards.'

"'One moment, gentlemen. My friend, Colonel Monier, now at yonder table, will confer wiz you;' and the old fellow called to his friend.

"In a few moments arrangements were perfected for a meeting between the Frenchman and myself the next morning at daylight, at a small clump of trees a few miles from town. Weapons, pistols; distance, fifteen paces.

"'Don't be alarmed, Dan,' said the Doctor, as we were going on board our ship; 'I'll teach you how to wing the frog-eater. Wing him, my boy! Wing him! I've done the trick a dozen times!'

"Next morning the Doctor, Tom Wallace, our purser, and myself drove to the place appointed for the meeting, and found the French party already on the ground.

"'Cheer up, Dan,' said my second, 'and remember, aim for his left shoulder. You'll wing him like a pigeon. Those Frenchmen know nothing of fire-arms.'

"The preliminaries over, we took our positions. I must confess I was terribly nervous; but while I intended to merely wound my adversary, I determined to follow the advice of the Doctor, and 'aim for the left shoulder.'

"'Are you ready?'

"'Ready.'

"'Fire.'

"'One.'

"'Two.'

"'Three.'

"It had been arranged that we should fire between the words 'One' and 'Three;' and as the word 'Two' was on the lips of the second, I fired.

"'Oh, *mon Dieu!*' cried my opponent, falling bleeding into the arms of his second, as the bullet from his pistol almost grazed my cheek.

"'*Parbleu!* He is dying – shot through the heart. You are a surgeon; can you do anything for him?' said I, appealing to my friend, the Doctor.

"'No, my lad,' said he; 'you aimed too low.'

"'This is terrible,' I cried, now for the first time realizing the awful position in which I was placed. 'What can we do?'

"'Get across the frontier as soon as possible,' was the advice of the old Frenchman's second.

"'Our ship sails at noon,' said the Doctor.

"I advanced to the dying man, whose life-blood was pouring from his side, and with tears streaming down my face, begged his forgiveness. He opened his poor, sad eyes, now almost glazed in death.

"'Oh, speak to me!' cried I, 'if only one word. I would give the world to recall this wicked duel. Is there anything on earth that I can do for you or yours? Tell me, and on the honor of an English gentleman, I will do as you command.'

"'Ah, my young friend,' said the dying man, 'I feel that I have but a few minutes to live. I am dying even while I speak; but I shall die perfectly happy if you will tell me whether *zat was your breakfast or your dinnaire*?'"

*William J. Florence.*

# "FORGET-ME-NOT."

"Forget – forget me not!"
Vain, piteous human prayer!
We all are doomed to be forgot;
It is, alas! the common lot
Of mortals everywhere.

'Tis everywhere the same;
Over the olden stone
That bears the once dear dead one's name,
Whom love and tears could not reclaim,
The willow weeps alone!

There is no sadder thought
Of death and its sweet rest
Than that we are so soon forgot —
E'en in those hearts remembered not,
That we have loved the best.

It hath been so, and must
So be for aye and aye:
And though it seemeth hardly just,
Affection will not cling to dust,
Nor linger with decay.

Where'er above the dead
The gentle willow waves,
The warmest tears are ever shed,
The freshest flowers ever spread,
Over the freshest graves!

*Thomas Hubbard.*

# CERTAIN ANCESTORS OF PRESIDENT CLEVELAND

President Cleveland's Great-Great-Grandfather in Halifax – "Mather's Church," the First Dissenting Meeting-house – Some Rare Antique Books – St. Matthew's Church – The Poet Cleveland and Others – A Poem – A Repartee.

On Pleasant Street facing Spring Garden Road – two aristocratic avenues of residence in the city of Halifax, Nova Scotia – is St. Matthew's Congregational Church. To sight-seekers from "the States" who during the last three years have visited Halifax this ecclesiastical building has become a place of especial interest. An ancestor of President Cleveland was the first pastor of the society; and through the influence of Rev. Aaron Cleveland, the first non-conforming church in British North America was built. It stood at the corner of the present Hollis and Prince streets, upon what now is the site of the Halifax Club, a portion of the building being occupied by Doull & Miller's dry-goods store.

There the little structure remained for more than a century, although Mr. Cleveland's ministry extended over but five years, when, in 1755, the pioneer pastor removed to England, leaving behind him no church records. Hence the history of Congregationalism in Nova Scotia, during that period, is traditional. A few volumes, unique in style and huge in size, the nucleus of what to-day is the Church and Sunday-school library of St. Matthew's society, survived the pastor's departure. Many of the books were the gift of Mr. Cleveland. In some of them is preserved his autograph presentation. A large proportion of the other volumes were donated by friends of Mr. Cleveland, mostly residents of Great Britain. Of these the notable ones are:

A Large and Complete Concordance to the Bible, by Samuel Newman, now teacher of the church at Rehoboth in New England. London, 1650.

The presentation reads as follows:

"This book is the Gift to the present Minister of the Gospel at Halifax in Nova Scotia, and to his successors,

**By their well wisher and Humble Servant**

Nov. 6, 1750.
*John Staniford.*

The same date and wording of presentation accompanies
The History of Britain, 1655.
Bearing the imprint, London, 1684, are the

Works of the Rev. and Learned John Lightfoot; Late Master of Katerine Hall, in Cambridge. With Author's Life and Maps.

Also, illustrated with many fine engravings, are

**The Works *of the* Learned *and* Pious Author of**

**The Whole DUTY of Man**

**London, 1704**

The Works of the Most Reverend Dr. John Tillotson, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury. London, 1752.

The Works of the Rev. & Learned Lord Mr. Joseph Boyse of Dublin, Never before Published. 2 vols., London, 1728.

This last book was

"The Gift of the Rev. Mr. John Walker of London, to the Rev. Aaron Cleveland and his Successors in the Ministry at Halifax, in Nova Scotia, 1753."

St. Matthew's Church, called in early days "Mather's Church," was constructed after the same plan as Maryborn Chapel, England. This "Meeting-house for Dissenters" was put up in 1750, at a cost to the colony of £1000. In a letter dated July 10, 1750, to The Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, written by Hon. Edward Cornwallace, Governor of Nova Scotia, the "Meeting-house" was grouped as one of the "necessary works," with "a Court House and Prison, and a powder Magazine."

At the time of Mr. Cleveland's ministry in Halifax, "The Dissenting Congregational Meeting-house" was known as "Mather's Church." It derived its name from the then famous New England Congregational divine, Cotton Mather. The frame of the building was brought from Boston. Tradition erroneously says that the edifice was removed bodily to Halifax, and that it was the identical church in which Cotton Mather preached.

After the fire, January 1, 1857, that destroyed the original structure, the present St. Matthew's church edifice was erected. The building, which is of brick, is the best of its kind in the Dominion. Its cost of construction was $75,000. The manse was built at an additional expense of $12,000. The congregation is fashionable and influential. The Word is preached from an old-fashioned box-like pulpit, perched, like a bird's nest, near the ceiling. The minister reaches this enclosure by means of two winding stairways, curtained with red drapery along their sides. The pews are, as in ancient times, padded throughout with scarlet. British "red-coats" constitute a portion of the congregation. They occupy the high gallery that reaches around three sides of the auditorium. The Sunday-school is one of the largest and the best conducted in the city. The original silver-plate communion-set and the baptismal fount have been preserved and are used as occasion allows. These pieces are engraved with the follow inscription:

"The Gift of Francis White, Esq., to the first Protestant Dissenting Church in Halifax, Oct. 25, 1769."

A prominent officer of the St. Matthew's Society stated in the presence of the writer, "We have many proofs that the Lord has abundantly blessed the labors of the first minister, the Rev. Aaron Cleveland, … and we rejoice in the manifestation of His goodness in having raised his descendant to the highest honor in the gift of a free and sovereign people."

To the town of Cleveland, – "a corruption of Cliffe land," – Durham County, England, the family of Cleveland or Cleaveland owes its name. "The principal branch was seated in the county of

York. Early in the fourteenth century, Sir Guy de Cleveland was present at the siege of Boulogne, in France, and afterwards at the battle of Poietiers, where he commanded the spearmen. A branch of the family went into Devonshire, and continued until the male line of the family was extinct."

The Rev. Aaron Cleveland, great-great-grandfather to the President of the United States, was the son of Captain Aaron, a grandchild of Moses Cleveland who came to this country from Ipswich, county of Suffolk, England, about 1635, and who died at Woburn, Mass., January, 1701-2. Seven sons and five daughters composed the family of Moses. From the eldest son, "it is confidently believed, are derived all the Clevelands or Cleavelands in this country, of New England origin." The other of the two brothers who came to this country settled in Ohio. One of them, General Moses Cleveland, was born 1754, in Canterbury, Connecticut. He graduated from Yale College, and subsequently held a position as general in the regular army. Afterwards he practised law. As chief of the staff of surveyors commissioned by the Connecticut Land Company, he was sent to the Western Reserve, where he secured the confidence and friendship of the Indians by his tact and repeated evidences of friendliness. He established a surveying camp, laid out a city, and gave to it his name. It was to his memory that the Early Settlers Association of Cleveland, Ohio, celebrated the ninety-second anniversary of this event by unveiling, in the public square, the 22d of last July, a bronze statue of the city's founder.

"The brother who settled in New England had two sons, one of whom removed to Michigan, the other to New York. From the family of the latter sprung the President."

The following epitaph immortalizes the memory of Colonel Aaron Cleveland, who is buried in the Congregational graveyard at Canterbury, Conn.:

> "In memory of Col. Aaron Cleveland, who died in a fit of apoplexy, 14th April, A.D., 1785. Born 7th of Decr. 1727; on the 17th of June, A.D. 1782, when in the bloom of health and prime of life, was struck with a numb palsy; from that time to his death, had upward of sixty fits of the palsy and apoplexy. He was employed in sundry honorable offices both civil and military.
>
> "Calm and composed my soul her journey takes,
> No guilt that troubles, and no heart that aches.
> Adieu! thou Sun, all bright like her arise,
> Adieu! dear friends, and all that's good and wise."

Rev. Aaron Cleveland, the Halifax minister, was the fifth son and the seventh child of Captain Aaron Cleveland. He was born in Cambridge, Mass., 1715. He studied and graduated at Harvard College, and was married to Susanna Porter, a daughter of Rev. Aaron Porter, of Medford, Mass., the same year, when but twenty years of age. Four years later, 1739, he was called to the pastorate of a congregation at Haddam, Connecticut, where he continued until dismissed for alleged heterodoxy.

A year later Mr. Cleveland was installed over a congregation at Malden. His views being there deemed too liberal, he was obliged to resign that charge also. This circumstance occurred in 1750, the same year in which he went to Halifax. Falling into disrepute once more, because of his too rapid advance in theological tenets, he was forced to give up the Nova Scotia pastorate. The same year, 1755, he removed to England. He subsequently disconnected himself from the denomination of his early choice, and took holy orders in the Church of England from Bishop Sherlock, of London, from which denomination he received the following commission:

> "Charter House, July 1, 1767 – Good Gentlemen: The society for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts have granted your request and appointed Mr. Cleveland their missionary in your church; but it is on the express condition, which is now a standing rule in their missions, that you provide him with a good house and glebe, and not less than twenty pounds sterling per annum, towards his

more comfortable support. Heartily recommending you and Mr. Cleveland to God's blessing, I am, sirs, your very faithful, humble servant,
*Philip Bearcroft.*

To the church wardens and vestry of the episcopal church of New Castle, in Pennsylvania."

Returning to America, he officiated at Lewes, Delaware, and at New Castle, Pennsylvania, until his death, which occurred suddenly at Philadelphia, August 11, 1757, while he was visiting his friend Benjamin Franklin, but two years after his removal from Halifax. *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, at that time owned and edited by Franklin, contained the following obituary – a sober paragraph amidst the bountiful supply of wit and ridicule with which that journal abounded.

"On Thursday last, the 11th, died here the Rev. Mr. Cleveland, lately appointed to the mission of New Castle, by the society for the propagation of the gospel. As he was a gentleman of humane and pious disposition, indefatigable in his ministry, easy and affable in his conversation, open and sincere to his friends, and above every specie of meanness and dissimulation, his death is greatly lamented by all who knew him, as a loss to the public, a loss to the church of Christ in general, and in particular to that congregation who had proposed to themselves so much satisfaction from his late appointment among them, agreeable to their own request."

During Mr. Cleveland's residence in Nova Scotia three children were born to him, they being the last of a family of ten. All these survived the father's death. The widow removed to Salem, Massachusetts, and there made a future home for her children and herself. Aided by a relative, Judge Stephen Sewell, Mrs. Cleveland supported her family in comfort and respectability until the time of her death, in 1788. Aaron (5th), who was also the fifth of the children, was born in Haddam, Conn., February 3, 1744. He lived in Halifax with his parents from his sixth to his eleventh year. He became a member of the legislature of Connecticut in 1799. Subsequently he followed the early calling of his father and became a Congregational minister, and was known throughout New England as a statesman, an orator, and a wit. Twice married, this Aaron (5th) was the father of William, one of fifteen children. Said William was grandfather to President Cleveland.

Aaron was a poet. He never claimed to be such, and the few verses that he allowed to find their way into print were published anonymously. Many of them have been lost. The authorship of others was never given to the public. A few, however, of his poetic word-creations passed into the possession of his grandson, the Rev. Arthur Cleveland Coxe, of Hartford. Illustrating Mr. Cleveland's appreciation of personal merit and personal exertion over that of ancestry, we insert the following satirical composition from his pen:

## THE FAMILY BLOOD: A BURLESQUE

"Genus et proavos et quod non fecimus ipsi
Vix ea nostra voco."

Four kinds of blood flow in my veins,
And govern, each in turn, my brains.
From Cleveland, Porter, Sewell, Waters,
I had my parentage in quarters;
My fathers' fathers' names I know,
And further back no doubt might go.

Compound on compound from the flood,
Makes up my old ancestral blood;
But what my sires of old time were,
I neither wish to know, nor care.
Some might be wise – and others fools;
Some might be tyrants – others tools;
Some might have wealth, and others lack;
Some fair perchance – some almost black;
No matter what in days of yore,
Since now they're known and seen no more.

The name of Cleveland I must wear,
Which any fondling too might bear:
Porter, they say, from Scotland came,
A bonny Laird of ancient fame:
Sewell – of English derivation,
Perhaps was outlaw from the nation;
And *Waters*– Irish as I ween,
*Straight – round-about* from —*Aberdeen!*

Such is my heterogeneous blood,
A motley mixture, bad and good:
Each blood aspires to rule alone,
And each in turn ascends the throne,
Of its poor realm to wear the crown,
And reign till next one tears him down.
Each change must twist about my brains,
And move my tongue in different strains;
My mental powers are captive led,
As whim or wisdom rules the head;
My character no one can know,
For none I have while things are so;
I'm something – nothing, wise, or fool,
As suits the blood that haps to rule.
When Cleveland reigns I'm thought a wit
In giving words the funny hit;
And social glee and humorous song
Delight the fools that round me throng;
Till Porter puts on the crown,
And hauls the Cleveland banner down.

Now all is calm, discreet, and wise,
Whate'er I do, whate'er devise;
What common sence and wisdom teach,
Directs my actions, forms my speech;
The wise and good around me stay,
And laughing dunces hie away.
But soon, alas, this happy vein
May for some other change again!

Sewell perchance shall next bear rule:
I'm now a philosophic fool!
With Jefferson I correspond,
And sail with him, the stars beyond:
Each nerve and fibre of my brain,
To sense profound I nicely strain,
And thus uprise beyond the ken
Of common sence and common men.

Thus great am I, till Sewell's crown
About my ears comes tumbling down.
Wise fools may soar themselves above,
And dream in rapturous spheres they move;
But airy castles must recoil,
And such wild imagery spoil.

But who comes now? Alas! 'tis *Waters*,
Rushing and blustering to headquarters:
He knows nor manners nor decorum,
But elbows headlong to the forum;
Uncouth and odd, abrupt and bold,
Unteachable and uncontrolled,
Devoid of wisdom, sence, or wit,
Not one thing right he ever hit,
Unless, by accident, not skill,
He blundered right against his will.

And such am I! no transmigration
Can sink me to a lower station:
Come, Porter, come depose the clown,
And, once for all, possess the crown.
If aught, in Sewell's blood, you find
Will make your own still more refined;
If found in Cleveland's blood, a trait
To aid you in affairs of state;
Select such parts – and spurn the rest,
No more to rule in brain or breast.
Of Waters' blood expel the whole,
Let not one drop pollute my soul:
Then rule my head – and keep my heart
From folly, weakness, wit apart:
With all such gifts I glad dispense,
But only leave me – Common Sense.

As a wit, Mr. Cleveland's reputation has been immortalized by a few sentences that are frequently quoted, and which the writer furnished to the Editor's Drawer, *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, August, 1885. Mr. Cleveland was a Federalist of the school of Jay and Hamilton, whom he supported with more than ordinary zeal, and perhaps not without something of the prejudice which ranked all Jeffersonians with French fatalists and infidels. On horseback one day Mr. Cleveland was riding from

Middletown to Durham; a little stream bounded the limits of the townships. He halted to water his horse; meanwhile a young man, having come from the opposite direction, drew rein so suddenly in the midst of the brook as to render the water unfit to drink.

"Good-morning, Mr. Minister," said the youth.

"Good-morning, Mr. Democrat," replied the reverend gentleman.

"And pray why do you take me for a Democrat?" queried the young man.

"Pray why did you take me for a minister?" rejoined Mr. Cleveland.

"Oh," said the fellow, "that is plain enough – by your *dress*."

"And that you are a Democrat is plain enough by your *address*," was the retort of the preacher.

Mr. Cleveland was buried in New Haven, Conn., where he died suddenly, while paying a visit to friends in that city. He lies in the "New Haven City Burial Ground," the first cemetery in this country that was divided into family lots. The plot in which Mr. Cleveland was interred was at that time owned by Edmund French. Recently it was resold to William Franklin, a proviso of the transfer being that all previous interments should forever remain undisturbed. Two massive stones, of veinless white marble, mark the head and the foot of the scarcely perceptible mound. They are low and unpretentious. The larger is about two feet in height; the smaller is proportionally less tall. Erected but a short time ago, it is said that President Cleveland ordered them that he might mark the last earthly resting-place of his great-grandfather. The inscription reads:

**Rev. Aaron Cleveland**

**son of**

**Rev. Aaron Cleveland**

**Born in Haddam Feb'y 3. 1744**

**Died in New Haven Sept. 21. 1815**

A much loved, and respected, and stainless name is the inheritance that this man has left to his descendants.

# THE SOLDIERS' DAY AT SHILOH

The wives and little ones at home who knelt one Sabbath morn,
And prayed for God to save our land, with battles rent and torn,
How little knew the quick reply, while yet they bent the knee,
In Shiloh's fierce and stubborn strife beside the Tennessee!
Oh, may they never cease to pray for our dear nation's good.
Till wrong no more shall lift a hand to claim the price of blood!
For heavy was the debt we paid in noble blood and true,
When Slavery cast the gage of war between the gray and blue.

Bright burst the dawn o'er Shiloh's field, as o'er the northland homes;
As o'er the worshippers that rose to seek their shining domes;
And gentle morn, that whispered low and woke the sleepers there,
Had almost led the soldier back the Sabbath joys to share,
When, lo! a murmur through the trees above the breezes came,
And shook the forest in our front with thunder-sound and flame!
Now all the dreams of peace and home in quick surprise dispelled;
Adown the line and far away the clamor rose and swelled!

Defenceless on a field of war – 'tis terrible in thought!
Then how the holy morn was changed for those who blindly fought!
At breakfast fire and forming line, their life-blood stained the green;
Before them flashed a fiery storm; behind, the river's sheen!
The army smitten in its camps, though flinching, rallied soon,
And steady rose the battle's roar on that red field ere noon,
While, mindful of their sad neglect, up came our generals then —
Alas! they could not form in rank the dead and dying men!
Against a crushing battle-tide right well we fought our ground;
Full oft the foe that smote our ranks the soldiers' welcome found.
That day the swaying underbrush a reaper, all unseen,
Smote with the battle's deadly breath as with a sickle keen;
The scorner of the widow's wail, the orphans' sore lament,
There gathered treasure in his grasp, from hut and mansion sent.
With deadly volleys crashing near, the cannons roll afar,
That Sabbath closed on Shiloh's field, a bloody scene of war.

Ere long the thrilling scenes will fade, the veterans will depart;
But ere we leave the land; my child, write this upon thy heart:
No soaring genius labored there to guide the stubborn fight —
That was the common soldier's day from morning dawn till night;
His stinging volleys checked the foe and laid their leader cold,
As ever near with gleaming front the wave of battle rolled.
Until the western sun was low and succor reached the field,
Madly they pressed the volunteers, Columbia's pride and shield.

The trump of fame has sounded long for those who led us then,

And echoes still where poets sing the praise of mighty men.
But where the commoner is found beneath his household tree,
The soldier's heavy tramp is heard, the bayonet's gleam we see!
Ah! never more in knightly ranks will nations put their trust,
And soon the fabled hero's sword will gather mould and rust:
As war disclosed the true defence in man's unarmored breast,
So has it shown a nation's strength above the dazzling crest.

The stars of union raise aloft that once on Shiloh led;
Give justice to that rank and file, the living and the dead!
And when ye see that flag on high, remember how they fared
Who sprang to meet a cruel strife, surprised and unprepared:
O children, often when I see our standard quick unfurled,
Unconsciously my steps are braced to meet those volleys hurled!
Still burdened with the memories of sad and glorious fight,
The morning breaks among the tents, by the river falls the night.

Remember, 'twas the Sabbath day – the holy, blessed time
When neighbors crowd the roadside walks, and bells do sweetly chime
—
Your fathers thronged the gates of death in Shiloh's bloody fray,
Beside the rolling Tennessee: – call that the soldier's day!
And oh, for our dear country pray, that all her laws be good,
That wrong no more shall lift a hand to claim the price of blood!
For heavy was the debt we paid, in noble blood and true,
When Slavery cast the gage of war between the gray and blue.

*Joel Smith.*

# CHRISTMAS IN EGYPT

"Christmas comes but once a year,
And when it comes it brings good cheer."

Or it ought to. But when a Christian finds himself, on that most sacred of all the Christian holidays, in a Moslem country, say in Egypt, the procuring of the wherewithal to make the prescribed good cheer becomes a matter of no small difficulty.

If the Christian be an English one, the difficulties are apt to be increased by the fact that an Englishman is nothing if not conservative.

To the average Englishman the correct celebration of Christmas means attendance at divine service, *perhaps!*– the regulation Christmas dinner, certainly.

Christmas means a crisp, cold day, the home bright with glowing fires – a yule-log, maybe – and flashing with the brilliant green of ivy and the crimson of holly-berries; a dinner of roast-beef and plum-pudding; and, to wind up with, a bowl of steaming wassail and a kiss under the mistletoe.

When an Englishman finds himself in a country where he can sit in the open air, under a blazing sun, on Christmas Day, and where neither roast-beef nor plum-pudding has any place in the domestic economy, and where the "wassail" is always drunk iced, and called by another name, and where mistletoe does not grow, the possibility presents itself that he would be obliged to accommodate himself to the situation and do without these particular features.

Not at all!

He immediately sets to work to obtain them, crying aloud, meantime, against the barbarity of a land that does not offer, at this particular season, the things that are peculiar to his own tight little island.

To the casual observer this may seem a light task that he has set himself. But it is by no means so. On every hand he is met by an almost impenetrable wall of difficulties.

The fire he cannot have, for the very simple reason that there is no chimney in the house.

The beef he can get by sending for it to England, where it has been purchased from either Northern Europe or America. But where is the great fire before which it ought to be roasted, by the aid of a "jack," and with frequent bastings at the hands of a comfortable, rosy-cheeked, red-armed woman cook, in "Merry England"?

Here, in Egypt, the only fire to be procured will be a tiny one of charcoal, one of a dozen, but each separate, like the squares on a chess-board, and not much larger. And the cook will, in all likelihood, be a wizened, yellow little man, smelling of "arrack," and much given to peculation.

He may succeed in procuring his Christmas pudding, if he, early in November, orders the ingredients for it from England, through his English grocer, and if the ladies of his household agree to compound it.

Then the dreadful question presents itself, how is it to be cooked? A Christmas pudding of fair proportions needs to be boiled from four to six hours, and during those hours it wants to be kept steadily and continuously boiling, or it becomes what the English cook calls "sad." And so do its consumers.

Now a charcoal fire is a good deal like Miss Juliet's description of lightning, "it doth cease to be, ere one can say it lightens." And no power on earth less than a file of the Khedive's soldiers would keep an Egyptian cook in his kitchen, feeding a fire, four or five hours.

Aside from the fact that he hates and despises, as a good Mussulman should, his Christian employer, and regards with horror and disgust the pudding around which cluster the hopes of this

Christian family, he has a great number of little habits and customs that demand his frequent absence from the scene of his distinguished labors.

He has a "call" to the little shed at the corner of the street where "arrack" is illicitly sold by a cyclopean Arab. No sooner is this accomplished, and he slinks back to his kitchen, furtively watching the windows and wiping his treacherous mouth with the back of his dirty yellow hand, than he feels himself obliged to again rush out and indulge in a war of words with the old man who has brought the daily supply of water to the household.

This is a very dirty old man, bare as to his legs and feet, and without any toes to speak of. He is clothed in a goat-skin, as is also the water, for he carries that blessed commodity on his back, in a goat-skin that is distended like an over-fed beast, with its legs "foreshortened" and all in the air, like a "shipwrecked tea-table."

The greatly overtasked cook has scarcely had time to recover from this sally, when he feels himself called upon to again issue forth and attack the donkey-boy, a small and inoffensive child who brings him vegetables, which the patient little donkey carries in two panniers slung over his back.

After invoking upon the head of this child a string of polyglot curses, one of which is that his progeny, to the sixth generation, maybe born with their faces upside-down, he again retreats to his kitchen, gives the pudding a vicious punch and the fire a morsel of charcoal.

Soon he must go and squat in the sand at the back of the house, safe from all fear of observation, and play a game of dominoes with "Nicolo," the cook of the neighboring house.

Then he must smoke two or three cigarettes, which he deftly rolls with his dirty yellow fingers.

Is it surprising that after these manifold exertions his exhausted nature demands repose? He stretches himself in the warm white sand, and, indifferent to the sun and oblivious of the fleas, he falls into a sweet sleep.

For the pudding? Let us draw the mantle of silence over that heavy, stately ruin. When he wakes to find the ruin he has wrought, he will weep and wail and beat his breast, and call upon *Allah* to witness that never – not for an instant – has he left the kitchen.

And in his heart he will secretly rejoice.

The Moslem servant always secretly rejoices in the annoyances and discomfitures of his Christian employer. If that Christian employer is met by annoyance and discomfiture while attempting to keep up any custom associated with his religion, or to celebrate any Christian holiday, the Moslem servant is especially and particularly pleased.

And in this he obeys one of the laws of Mohammed, which forbids friendship or good-feeling between Moslems and either Christians or Jews.

The Moslems have a great number of holidays in their calendar, but these are nearly all fast-days.

The Arabs are a temperate, abstemious race, a race of light feeders; naturally, they have a contempt for gluttony. In the matter of food, an Egyptian would feast luxuriously for a week on the amount that an American or Englishman would consume at a single meal.

Thus the very abundance of the preparations which the Englishman makes for his Christmas dinner repels good Mussulmen.

Then, they do not celebrate the birthday of their own prophet; and the celebration, in their own country, of the day which to us is invested with so much love and reverence they consider an insult to them and to their faith, and they submit to it with an ill grace and in sullen silence.

All these things make a combination of opposing forces against which the Englishman, endeavoring to enjoy his Christmas in Egypt, struggles in vain.

So he eats his roast-beef, which is braized, and his boiled plum-pudding, which is fried; takes his kiss – if he has any sense – without mistletoe; winds up an unsatisfactory day by drinking, instead of the time-honored "wassail," a jorum of champagne punch, cooled with artificial ice; and goes

grumbling to bed, with the conviction that a Christmas in Egypt is a very "brummagem" sort of Christmas.

*Rose Eytinge.*

# STATISTICS OF IDLENESS

Reliable statistics relative to the number of men out of employment and seeking work have always been difficult to obtain. In June, 1879, the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor investigated the matter in that State, reporting "28,508 as the aggregate number of skilled and unskilled laborers, male and female, seeking and in want of work in Massachusetts." In November of the same year the number was reported as being 23,000. This was a little less than five per cent of the total number of skilled and unskilled laborers in the State at that time. Upon that basis, says the report, "there would be 460,000 unemployed able-bodied men and women in the United States, ordinarily having work, now out of employment." On the basis of the June report, there would have been 570,000 unemployed in the United States. This was the only statistical report upon the subject made prior to 1885; and coming, as it does, from Colonel Carroll D. Wright, through the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor, it possesses as much authority as statistical statements ever do.

While taking the census of Massachusetts for 1885, Colonel Wright thoroughly canvassed the subject of the unemployed in that State, the result being published in the Report of the Bureau of Labor for 1887. This report, though much delayed, is a remarkable one, not only for its completeness and the masterly analysis of the figures it contains, but also for its minute divisions of the classes of unemployed; giving the age, sex, nativity, and trade of each person unemployed, and how many months in the year such enforced idleness is suffered.

Out of a total of 816,470 persons employed in gainful occupations in Massachusetts in 1885, 241,589, or 29.59 per cent, were unemployed. The duration of the idleness varied greatly in different industries and localities, but the average loss of time was 4.11 months per year for each of the unemployed. Over 29 per cent of Massachusetts protected workingmen idle for over four months of each year! The idleness of 241,589 persons for 4.11 months is equivalent to 82.744 persons unemployed for an entire year. This is nearly 11 per cent of the entire population employed in gainful pursuits. Idleness, that is enforced idleness, increased 110 per cent in Massachusetts between 1879 and 1885; and this average time unemployed is net average, as the 10,758 persons, whose loss of time at their "principal occupation" or trade was partially made up by securing "other occupations" and "odd jobs," are separately tabulated, and the amount of work at "other occupations" is deducted from their loss of time at "principal occupation," thus giving a net average of the time wholly unoccupied at any sort of labor. It is interesting to note the industries in which the greatest percentage of this enforced idleness occurs. I take the following from an elaborate table given in Mr. Wright's report. In the boot and shoe industry of Massachusetts, 48,105 male adults are supposed to be employed. Of these 15,731 get steady work, while 32,374, or 67.3 per cent, are unemployed four months in the year. The same industry employs 14,420 females, of whom 10,250, or 71 per cent, are idle four months, an average of 2.62 months idleness for all persons employed in that industry. The cotton-mill operatives number 58,383 of whom 26,642 are males, 31,741 females. Of all these operatives, 24,250, or 41.5 per cent, are idle more than one third of the time.

In the manufacturing of agricultural implements, a protected industry that, being carried on in factories, needs not stop for weather, 69.1 per cent of all persons employed are idle 4.12 months per year; whereas, of farm laborers, whose occupation is unprotected, and whose employment is wholly at the mercy of seasons, only 30.19 are idle during any part of the year, while 69.81 per cent find steady employment the year around.

Carpenters, also, whose labor is unprotected and dependent largely upon season, report 52.82 per cent steadily employed, with 47.18 per cent idle three months in the year.

Compositors and printers number 4541 in the State, only 450, or 9.91 per cent, of whom are idle during any part of the year, while 90.09 per cent find steady work. On the other hand, 51.31 per cent of the stove-makers are idle 4.09 months per year, and 66.4 per cent of rolling-mill employés are

idle 4.04 months. Stone-workers and brick-masons fare better, though unprotected, since but 46 per cent of these are idle during any part of the year; while the tack-makers, taking both sexes, have 70 per cent of idleness for one-third of the time, only 30 per cent finding steady work. The silk industry employs 1975 persons – 556 males and 1419 females; of these, 979, or 49.5 per cent, are idle nearly four months each year.

The woollen industries of Massachusetts employ 22,726 operatives of both sexes. Of these, 9463, or 42 per cent, are idle four months in the year.

Perhaps the infinite beauty of protection is best illustrated by a comparison of the work secured by blacksmiths with that of rolling-mill employés. Of blacksmiths, 82.25 per cent had steady work for the entire year, while only 17.75 per cent were idle 4.41 months. Of rolling-mill employés, as stated above, 66.40 per cent were idle 4.04 months, and of nail-makers 73.49 per cent were idle 3.86 months.

The manufacturing industries of Massachusetts furnish 69.14 per cent of the idleness of the State; i.e., of the 241,589 unemployed, 167,041 depend upon the manufacturers for work and sustenance. On the other hand, agriculture furnishes but 6.28 per cent, transportation 2.91 per cent, personal service but 1.72 per cent, and the day laborers but 8.43 per cent.

Fall River, with a total laboring population of 26,220, found steady employment for but 11,437, or 43.62 per cent, while 14,783, or 56.38 per cent of her population, were seeking work 3.49 months in the year. The result of it all is that one third of the persons engaged in remunerative employment in Massachusetts were unemployed for more than one third of the time.

It is significant that 129,272, or 53.51 per cent, of the total number of unemployed were found in twenty-three cities of the State, while 325 towns furnished 46.49 per cent.

It is often claimed that labor disturbances, strikes, and lock-outs are responsible for most of the idleness in manufacturing industries. The report under review goes into this question, and as a result ascertains that in the manufacturing industries "an average suspension of one-fifth of a month (0.20) was caused by repairs, improvements, etc. An average suspension of one-fiftieth of a month (0.02) was caused by strikes and lock-outs," while the balance was due to "slack trade." Just how much of the loss of time was due to combinations and trusts "restricting production, so as to control prices," does not appear; but when it is shown that in an average idleness of 4.11 months per year, strikes are responsible for but an average of one fiftieth of one month, or but little over one-half day, it is time for "statesmen" to abandon their stock argument of "strikes and strikers," and look about for some of the real causes of present conditions.

It is possible to only partially supplement this investigation in Massachusetts by similar investigations in other States.

In 1886 the Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics, in an investigation of trade and labor organizations, covered the question of the number of weeks' work secured during the year. The following analysis of that report refers only to the membership of labor organizations in the State which reported upon that question, or 85,392 workingmen. For these the average was 37.1 weeks work and 14.9 weeks idleness during the year. Only one-fifth found steady work for the year; about one-third could get work but one-half the time; while, to quote from the report, "the industrial people, as a class, secure work for only 71.7 per cent of full time, and spend 28.3 per cent of their time in idleness, for want of work to do." (Illinois Report for 1886, page 319.) The coal-miners of the State secure work for but 23 weeks in the year. The occupations securing the greatest percentage of employment are those most removed from the protecting influences of that Congressional bill of fare called tariff. Thus the barbers, horseshoers, printers and pressmen, street-railway employés and railroad men, report nearly full time; iron-moulders and rolling-mill men, 35 weeks per year; while other metal-workers report 30 weeks of work and 20 weeks of want of work.

In commenting upon the tables given, Colonel John S. Lord, the able secretary of the Bureau, says: "Whatever value may be attached to the ultimate percentage of time lost, as deduced from all

classes, the specific facts remain as to a great number of men and occupations. No interpretation of these facts can obscure the important fact that out of 85,329 workingmen, organized to promote their material interests, and presumably able to secure a greater share of them than the unorganized, only about one-fifth of them can obtain continuous work for a full year of working time. As the last table shows, those who get less than 40 weeks work are 65 per cent of the whole; and those who get only from 13 to 30 weeks' wages in the year are 35 per cent of the whole, or 30,451 in number." (Page 320.)

Another and not less important feature of the Illinois report is that it shows the number of members of labor organizations out of work at the time of the investigation – June and July, 1886.

The question of the number of weeks' work secured during the year might be sometimes loosely answered by the secretaries of labor unions; but as to the number at that time unemployed the answers would be almost as accurate as a census enumeration. The 634 labor organizations of Illinois had an enrolled membership in June, 1886, of 114,365. It was found that 17 per cent of these belonged to both the Knights of Labor and to a trade union, and had hence been duplicated. Deducting these, it was found that 103,843 persons were members of these bodies. Of these, 88,223, or 85 per cent, were employed, while 15,620, or 15 per cent, were idle. Applying this percentage to the entire number of persons engaged in the industries in which organizations were found, basing that number on the census of 1880, there must have been in the three grand divisions of industry – manufacturing, mining, and transportation – at least 50,000 men unemployed in Illinois in June, 1886. If that percentage could be applied to all occupations, this number would be swelled to 150,000. The Illinois Bureau found 15 per cent of all those engaged in manufacturing and mining industries idle in 1886.

# Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.