

POOR DOCUMENT

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QUEENS COUNTY GAZETTE, GAGETOWN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 1899.

Literature.

BORROWED NEWS.

"Did you get the paper, Cyrry?" Mr. Luther Carter put his head out of the sitting-room door and spoke sharply.

"Yes," Cyrry answered with easy moderation and held it out.

"Well, I guess you stopped to print it on a hand-press, I don't know where in the world you take your slowness from," Mr. Luther Carter recrossed the room to his easy chair, adjusting his spectacles on the way. His motions were all deliberate, and suggested a probable reason for little Cyrry's slowness.

Mrs. Luther Carter glanced up deprecatingly from her mending. "Now Luther," she said, with meek disapprobation in her voice. "Now Luther, you haven't been borrowing Andrew Gamble's newspaper again?"

"That's hitting the nail higher on the head than you ever did before, Jane Ellen."

"But you borrowed it yesterday, Luther, and day before, and day before that."

"And day before that—keep her a-going, Jane Ellen. I guess you can go as far back as the flood," Mr. Carter's laugh cracked unobtrusively behind the paper.

"But it's dreadfully mortifying to me, Luther, anyway. It does seem as if we might take a newspaper ourselves, and lend instead of borrow, a spell. Then we'd see how it feels."

One spectacled eye appeared above the paper's rim, followed shortly by its mate. Mrs. Luther withered under them.

She fumbled for a new needle, clicking the scissors and spoils together nervously. She had never ventured upon so bold a suggestion before, and already was deeply repentant.

"Jane Ellen, you better darn those stockings, and I guess you can do 'em easier if you keep your lips shut to."

In at the open windows stole pleasant, flower-scented wafts of summer air. Incessant, keen insect voices buzzed and clicked and sang. Within, for a while, there was no sound but the gentle crackle of Andrew Gamble's newspaper; then Luther Carter spoke with a gruff attempt at apologetic good humor.

"When I'm in Andrew's luck, and the uncle I never had and wasn't named after dies and leaves me a pretty little mess of money, I'll take the paper," Jane Ellen. I guess till then 'twon't hurt Andrew if I do borrow his."

"That was a good while ago. I should have thought Andrew'd spent it all long ago, Luther, building barns and things as he did."

Luther Carter suddenly laid down the paper. He gave a startled cry.

"My good land, what is it, Luther? You look all struck in a heap!" exclaimed his wife.

"He's dead, Jane Ellen!"

"Who's dead?" Her voice rose shrill and anxious.

"Andrew is—Andrew Gamble! He died this morning—see, we go to press," it says. "There's a black mark all round the notice. I guess Marietta was thinking to send it to John's folk's. It clean takes my breath away!"

"Andrew Gamble dead! I can't believe it Luther—it isn't possible! I guess we shouldn't have to find it out in the newspaper."

"Well, read it for yourself then Jane Ellen."

They huddled over the paper, reading the lines together with scared, distressed faces. It was a small sheet, whose local columns stood out, boldly prominent. It was the only daily paper in the thrifty town of S—.

Andrew Gamble dead! Andrew Gamble! Why, he just lived a house or two beyond. How could he die and they not know it at once! But there it was; "As we go to press, the painful news reaches us of the sudden death of our much esteemed and well-known citizen, Andrew Gamble. It is too late to obtain particulars of the sad event for to-day's issue."

Luther Carter went to the door and called, "Cyrry! Cyrry!" imperatively. Cyrry shuffled slowly in and sat on the edge of a chair, awed by the solemnity in his parents' faces.

"Cyrry, did you see An—did you see the folks when you went to borrow the paper?"

Mrs. Carter groaned softly and wiped her eyes on Cyrry's undarned sock.

"Nope—guess there wasn't anybody at home. It looked all kind of shut up."

Mrs. Carter groaned again. "Didn't you see anybody, Cyrry?" persisted Luther. "Now you think real hard. Who came to the door?"

"Nobody did. I walked in after I'd kept knocking a while."

"But, who gave you the newspaper, Cyrry? Now you think."

Cyrry began to look embarrassed under this fire of mysterious questions.

"Well, nobody gave me the paper. I took it. It's always lying on the table, waiting to be taken. I guess Mrs. Gamble's got sick of getting it for me; and last time she told me to go into the sitting-room and get it myself. I had to hunt all round. It was under the sofa. Say, pa, why don't we take our own paper?"

"Did she look as if she'd been crying, Cyrry?" quavered Mrs. Carter.

"I didn't see her, I said—only her pic-

ture hanging up. That looked real solemn. I guess somebody was crying, though, somewhere. I heard a sniffling sound, real loud."

Luther and Mrs. Luther gazed gravely at each other, sighing.

"Marietta's such a sensitive woman—poor Marietta!" murmured little Mrs. Luther, tearfully.

She rose suddenly, upsetting the darn ing basket. "I'm going right down there," she said. "I feel as if I'd ought to. If I can't be any other comfort to Marietta, I can wash up the dinner dishes and trifle lamps, Cyrry, you run and get my shawl."

She looked down thoughtfully at her flower-sprigged dress. "Yes, I s'pose I'd better get on a black dress. I s'pose so, out of respect for Marietta's feelings."

Soberly begowned and shawled, Mrs. Carter, a few minutes later, tapped gently at the Gamble back door. She noticed that the blinds were nearly all closed and the shades down. An air of solemnity brooded over all things, animate and inanimate, in the small door-yard.

Poor Andrew's choice Plymouth Rock hens went about as if on tiptoe, with drooping tail feathers. To Mrs. Carter's sensitive ear, even the old cock's crowing had a doleful, drawn-wail in it.

She tapped again softly. Nobody responded. Then adjusting the corners of her mouth to appropriate droops, she stole gently into the kitchen.

There was no one there. The little room had on its prim afternoon dress, and looked unsocial and stiff. The faintest possible hint of clicking knitting needles drew the visitor unconsciously toward the sitting-room.

Mrs. Andrew Gamble sat there knitting in the still, dark room. She gave a little start as Mrs. Carter entered.

"Oh," she said, in a low voice. "I'm real glad to see you, Mrs. Carter. No, don't take that chair—that's Andrew's and I can't bear it. This rocker's easier to your back. Undo your shawl, do."

"I had to come over, Marietta—seemed as if I must. I couldn't bear the thought of your sitting here all alone. I wish I could help you—O Marietta, I wish I could!"

Mrs. Gamble looked up from her knitting quickly. "Yes, it is lonesome with Andrew gone," she said quietly. She was a slight, sweet-faced woman, and the loose wisps of hair, turning gray, curled prettily around her face.

For a very little space neither of the woman spoke. The subdued creak of the rockers and a dirge in the visitor's ears. She was wondering how Marietta could knit stockings, and look so composed, and curl her hair! Still, she had been crying. Her eyes were red-rimmed.

Then the visitor spoke in a sharp whisper, drawing the words out solemnly. "Wasn't it dreadful sudden, Marietta?"

"Yes, it was sudden. Still, I'd been expecting as likely as not it might happen. He's never been real hearty."

"No!" Mrs. Carter assented, with a doubtful upward inflection. Andrew had looked hearty, very.

"Ever since he sprained his knee-joint last fall he's been ailing; especially; it seemed to me he was getting weaker."

"I never noticed that he limped."

"Well, he did, going up-hill and coming home after a long trip."

Another pause, and another stanza of the creaking dirge.

"When did it happen, Marietta?"

"Poor child!" Mrs. Carter softly patted the knitting-needles. "Did—did—he suffer much?"

"No, I guess not. That was a mercy. He didn't seem to sense anything all night. We did everything we knew for him—everything. Laudanum didn't seem to do any good." She began to cry suddenly. "I was so fond of him!" she sobbed, apologetically.

"Yes, yes, do cry, Marietta—it'll do you good. You ought to. It's a mercy you can."

"I don't know how we're going to get along without him, Mrs. Carter."

"It's a great loss to the neighborhood. We all feel it," Mrs. Carter murmured. "Luther and I were all struck in a heap. He read it in the paper. Just think of our finding it out in the newspaper!"

Mrs. Gamble lifted her drooping head with an air of solemn pride. "Yes," she said, "they put it in the paper right away. I didn't s'pose they would in to-day's but they're dreadful smart about getting things in. When Andrew's Uncle Andrew died, they got that into the morning paper, too."

It was warm in the room, and Mrs. Carter took up a paper from the table to fan herself. She folded it neatly and set it waving with slow, steady strokes.

"When are you going to—to—when will you—bury him, Marietta?" she asked at length, gravely.

Mrs. Gamble took up knitting-work. "Oh, we buried him this morning as soon as 'twas real light. We thought we might as well get it done with, and we wouldn't feel so bad when 'twas over."

"Why, Mrs. Gamble! Why, I never heard of such a thing in my born days—I never!" She spread out the newspaper fan in abstracted agitation, and stared at it absently. Her face expressed the utmost amazement and horror.

Suddenly her eye fell on one of the items in the paper. She read it hastily once—twice. Then she glanced at the

paper's date. It was the morning paper, and the notice in it was of the "lamentable loss of our respected townsman, Andrew Gamble, has sustained this morning—as we go to press—in the death of his valuable and petted chestnut horse," etc., etc.

Mrs. Luther Carter crumpled the paper in her fingers and rose; "Well, Marietta, I must be going. I'm real sorry for you and Andrew, but 'twon't be as if 'twas one of the family gone, you know. Good-by."

She went rapidly home, and finding the borrowed paper thrust into Luther's hand unceremoniously, pointing to the date. For the first time they noticed that it was old and time-stained, and exhaled a faint musty odor. They had read its mention of the death of Andrew Gamble's uncle!

Luther Carter read and re-read the date. Then he got up and went out of the house.

When at supper time he came back, he remarked briefly to Cyrry as he went through the kitchen:

"I've subscribed for the newspaper myself, Cyrry, so I guess you won't need to go borrowing any more."—Auntie Hamilton Donnell, in "Youth's Companion."

TEMPERANCE COLUMN.

Contributed by the I. O. G. T.

THE STREET OF HELL.

By Rev. R. T. Cross.

In 1870 there were in the United States one hundred and forty thousand licensed liquor-saloons. If formed into a street with saloons on each side, allowing twenty feet to each saloon, they would make a street two hundred and sixty five miles long. Let us imagine them brought together into such a street, and let us suppose that the moderate drinkers and their families are marching into it at the upper end. Go with me if you have the nerve and patience, and stand at the lower end, and let us see what that street turns out in, one year.

What army is this that comes marching down the street in solemn column, five abreast, extending five hundred and seventy miles? It is the army of five million men and women who daily and constantly go to the saloon for intoxicating drinks as a beverage. Marching twenty miles a day it will take them more than twenty-eight days to go by. Now they are gone, and close in their rear comes another army marching five abreast and sixty miles in length. In it there are 530,000 confirmed drunkards. They are men and women who have lost control of their appetites, who are in the regular habit of getting drunk and making beasts of themselves. Marching two abreast the army is 150 miles long. There are gray-haired men and fair-haired boys. There are, alas! many women in that army sunk to deeper depths than the men, because of the greater heights from which they fell. It will take them seven days to go by. It is a sad and sickening sight, but do not turn away yet; for here comes another army—one hundred thousand men and women in prison and penitentiaries they come. At the head of the army comes a long line of persons whose hands are smeared with human blood. With ropes around their necks, they are on the way to the gallows. Others are going to prison for life. Every crime known to our laws has been committed by these persons while they were under the influence of drink. But hark! Whence comes those yells and who are those band with strong chains and guarded by strong men, that go raging by? They are raving maniacs made such by drink. Their eyes are tormented with awful sights and their ears ring with horrid sounds. They are gone now and we breathe more freely. But what gloom is this that pervades the air and what is that long line of black coming slowly down the street? It is the line of funeral processions. One hundred thousand men who have died the drunkard's death are being carried to their graves. Drunkards do not have many friends to mourn their loss and we can put thirty of their funeral processions in a mile. Then we have a procession 3,333 miles long. It will take a good part of the year for them to go by. Look into the coffins and see the dead drunkards. Some died of delirium tremens and the lines of terror are still plainly marked on their faces. Some froze to death by the roadside, too drunk to reach their homes. Some stumbled from the wharf and were drowned. Some wandered into the woods and died and rotted on the surface of the earth. Some blew their brains out. Some were fearfully stabbed in drunken brawls. They died in various ways but strong drink killed them all and on their tombstones, if they have any, may be fitly inscribed: "He died a drunkard's death." Close behind them comes another long line of funeral procession; we know not how many but they are attended by mourning friends. They are those who have met their death through the carelessness and cruelty of drunken men. Some died of broken hearts. Some were foully murdered. But here comes another army—the children, innocent ones upon whom has been visited the iniquities of their fathers. Two hundred thousand, marching two abreast they extend thirty miles. Each one must bear through life the stigma of being a drunkard's child. They are reduced to poverty, want and

beggary. They live in ignorance and vice. It has taken nearly a year for the street to empty itself of its year's work. And close in the rear comes the van-guard of next year's supply. And if this is what liquor does in our land in one year, what must be the result in all the world through the long centuries.

These figures cannot tell all. They give only the outline of the terrible tragedy going on around us. They cannot picture to us the wretched squalor of a drunkard's home.

They cannot tell us how many unkind and cruel words strong drink has caused otherwise kind and tender husbands and fathers to utter to their dear ones. They cannot tell us how many heavy blows have fallen from the drunkards' hands upon those whom it is his duty to love, cherish and protect. They cannot tell us how many fond expectations and bright hopes the fair young bride had of the future have been blasted and turned to bitterest gall. They cannot number the long, weary hours of night during which she has anxiously awaited and yet fearfully dreaded the heavy footfall at the door. Figures cannot tell us how many falling tears the wives of drunkards have shed, or how many prayers of bitter anguish and cries of agony God has heard them utter. They cannot tell us how many mothers have worn out body and soul in providing the necessities of life for children whom a drunken father has left destitute. They cannot tell us how many mothers' hearts have broken with grief as they saw a darling son becoming a drunkard. They cannot tell us how many white hairs have gone down in sorrow to the grave mourning over drunken children. They cannot tell us how many hard-fought battles the drunkard in his sober moments has fought with the terrible appetites; how many times he has walked his room in despair, tempted to commit suicide because he could not conquer the demon. And finally we cannot search the records of the other world and tell how many souls have been shut out from that holy place where no drunkard enters and banished to the regions of eternal despair by the demon of drink.

What man, woman or child would not vote to have that whole street, with its traffic in the infernal stuff, sunk to the lowest depths of perdition and covered ten thousand fathoms deep under the curse of the universe.

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Don't Marry Him.

Don't marry the young man who leaves his mother to find her way home as best as she can on a dark night, while without a thought or a word of apology he looks after you. One of these days, when the novelty has worn off, he will leave you to go along as best you can, while he seeks his selfish enjoyment at the club.

Don't marry a man who curls a scornful lip when religion and the Bible are spoken of, and who has all the mistakes of Moses and the misdeeds of Solomon, in his tongue's end. A copy of infidel lectures on the vulgar table instead of the family Bible is a very poor guarantee of happy family life.

Don't marry a man whose friends smile at each other when his name is mentioned and say, "well, we hope he will come out all right, but he is saving a few wild oats just now." Remember that which is sown before marriage is reaped after marriage. Don't marry a man whose line is more spotted than his character, whose shirt collar is more inflexible than his integrity and whose necktie is the only immaculate thing about him. Collars and cuffs and neckties are all very well, but they do not make a good husband, though they do very well for a tailor's dummy. Integrity of character is more important than all these things.

ACTIVE SOLICITORS WANTED EVERYWHERE for "The Story of the Philippines" by Murat Halstead, commissioned by the government as Official Historian to the War Department. The book was written in army camps at San Francisco, on the Pacific with General Merritt, in the Hospitals at Honolulu, in Hong Kong, in the American trenches at Manila, in the insurgent camps with Aguinaldo, on the deck of the Olympia with Dewey, and in the rear of battle at the fall of Manila. Bonanza for agents. Brinful of original pictures taken by government photographers on the spot. Large Book. Low prices. Big profits. Freight paid. Credit given. Drop all trashy unofficial war books. Outfit free. Address, F. T. Barber, Sec'y, Star Insurance Bldg., Chicago.

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