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Woodstock, July 29, 1858

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Woodstock Journal.

"He is a Freeman whom the Truth makes Free, And all are Slaves beside."

LUME 5. WOODSTOCK, N. B., THURSDAY, MAY 19, 1859. NUMBER 46.

OUR PAPER.

Woodstock Journal is a large eight weekly, devoted to to the advancement of dustrial, commercial, social and moral sts of New Brunswick.

objects at which it particularly aims in resent circumstances of the country are romotion of immigration, the settlement will lands, the opening of the country ans of railroads, &c., an increase of the esentation in the Assembly, and Free Edu n, schools of all grades, from the lowest highest being open to all without money without price, and supported by Direct tion.

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ADDRESS

Editor of the Journal, Woodstock, N. B

LUBBING WITH OTHER PERIODICALS.

By arrangements with the proprietors of the owing periodicals we are enabled to offer m with the Journal at the low rates men ned.

The Atlantic Monthly; an original Ameri n Magazine of the very highest merit, pub hed at Boston by Phillips, Sampson, and mpany. Price three dollars a year in ad nce. A new romance by Mrs. Harriet Beech r, entitled Oldtown Folks, was commenced in the January mber, and will be continued through succes e issues. Thirty thousand copies of this mber was issued as a first edition. We will ve the Atlantic and the Journal for four dol rs a year.

Life Illustrated; a weekly journal; the merican Phrenological Journal, (monthly;) d the Water Cure Journal, (monthly;) all blished by Fowler & Wells, New York. The rst is two dollars a year, and the latter one llar each. All are very readable and useful orks, and are deservedly popular. We can rnish them along with the JOURNAL very eaply. For the Journal and Life Illustrated, ree dollars a year. For the Journal and ither the Water Cure or Phrenological, two llars and a half. For the Journal and ree of Fowler & Wells' periodicals, four llars.

A Tale.

Written for the Woodstock Journal.

The Seventh Daughter.

"Coming events cast their shadows before."

He may safely, I think, be pronounced a brave man who assumes, with any degree of consciousness, the responsibility of educating and providing for a large family of daughters. They are, whether justly or not, generally considered more difficult to settle in life, and less desirable than sons. My father had the credit of bringing up a large family, of which the greater number were daughters, in a respectable manner. It might be difficult to determine whether he fully realized the difficulty of training so many minds until the children had somewhat grown. I myself was the seventh daughter; and it was not until some years after my birth that he was blessed with a son. I know not whether to regard it as a good or an evil thing, as fortunate or unfortunate, to have been the seventh daughter. It is of course well known, and generally admitted, that there are certain privileges and extraordinary, if not quite miraculous, powers inherent in the seventh son; such as that of curing many diseases by a touch. And still more wonderful gifts reside in the seventh son of a seventh son; perhaps because of the rarity of such an instance;—I do not assert that such is the reason, but merely suggest it as a possible one. The secret of these powers is popularly supposed to be in the mystic number; but I take that as a part of the old cabala superstition. But that as it may, it is as indisputable that the seventh daughter has gifts and powers which although not identical with those possessed by the seventh son, are no less wonderful—as indisputable as that the son has his. But are the gifts a happy inheritance? Taking it for granted that those belonging to the seventh son are a happy and fortunate possession,—a proposition not altogether indisputable,—it in no wise follows that those inherent in the seventh daughter are happy and fortunate. Indeed by the law of contradictions,—which may be observed as prevailing so widely in nature, and briefly expressed in the proverb,—"what is one man's meat is another man's poison,"—we might rather expect the reverse,—that they should be anything but happy to their possessor. This, I fear, is the case. I might bring many arguments to prove the reasonableness of the conclusion. This one, however, will appear of great weight with the learned, namely, that sacer mean either consecrated or accursed, that is, devoted either to honor or dishonor; and 7 being a numerous sacer the bearer of the seventh gifts may be either happy or miserable. But I don't rely much on this; although it is certainly observable that the seventh of anything differs from its fellows. The seventh child, no matter whether boy or girl, is sure to be an extraordinary child, more especially if it be the youngest of the family. I have even heard a most grave dissenting divine declare that every seventh new face has a peculiar sweetness, and every seventh glass of wine a peculiar flavor, highly distinguishable from the preceding ones. But although this may be all true, and I doubt not it is, being that it is supported by such authority, it does not settle the question whether or not it is fortunate or not to be the seventh daughter, I have therefore to rely upon my own experience. And although a single instance be not a large basis for induction, yet I have no doubt but that, when you have heard my story, you will consider my conclusion as correct as most generalizations from so scanty an array of facts. For the facts are beyond doubt and may be relied on by any one who hereafter on a wider field of observation may attempt to generalize and form a theory on the subject.

It was in the year 18— that the circumstances I am about to relate took place. I was a girl at the time, not more than sixteen years of age. An elder sister of mine,—the beauty of the family,—had married a poet, a man of considerable and rising talents. They were devotedly attached to one another. You may have read the beautiful lines he addressed to her before his marriage. His quick, delicate fancy kept unbroken after marriage that mystic influence—that kind of halo which surrounds a first and absorbing passion. The first doubt or misunderstanding dispels it, and, like the bloom of the peach, once removed it never returns. Their union was blessed with one child, a fine boy, who inherited much of his father's vivacity and fancy, along with a moderate share of his mother's beauty.

Their happiness now seemed to be complete. My brother-in-law was editor of one of the leading periodicals, and drew from it an income which if not large was sufficient for all their moderate wants. But, alas, the fairest and most beautiful things are generally the most fleeting! And so, alas, it proved with their happiness. Death stepped in and removed the fair young mother, whose spring was just ripening into a most beautiful summer. How often our fairest hopes and plans, and sweetest enjoyments, are dissolved by the clay cold touch of "his skinny hand."

Her death brought a great and sad change on my brother-in-law, who had always been of a gay and happy temperament, delighting in the society of his friends, and enlivening home and the social gatherings of the Borough by his ready wit and pleasant stories, of which last he had a great abundance. But now he avoided social intercourse; he roamed by himself along the borders of little winding stream, or under the shadow of a dark wood at some distance from the town, letting his fancy feed upon itself. Instead of listening to the soothing words and receiving the quiet attentions of loving friends around the evening fire, he sought the false excitement and glare of the Theatre, his acute and morbid fancy, as many minds often do, taking pleasure in stinging itself by transferring the joys and sorrows of the false and glaring stage to himself; and by how much he then heightened to himself his former felicity, by so much did he darken and begrim his present desolated state. At the opera he would torture himself by tracing hidden resemblances between some exquisite tones and her now mute voice. The joyous parts of the music turned into an image of his late wife, and then took a kind of savage delight in seeing how small a proportion they bore to the sad and the horrible; and the latter he appropriated to himself. He would listen with an intense mingling of pleasure and pain to the words and tones of anguish that Mrs. Siddons gave forth, regarding them as the expressions of his own excited and tortured mind. And then to drown the sorrows he had thus raised,—to forget for a while the phantom of his own imagining, he sometimes repaired to the wine cup, that worst of all consolers,—a good slave but a bitter master. After recovering from the effects of such debauches, his sorrow was deepened into horror by the thought that he had profaned the sanctity of his grief. His friends employed every means, tried every method, to draw him away from these enchantments—for they seemed nothing else; but all in vain. Who can

"Minister to a mind diseased?"

This state of things continued for a year or two. And what served to keep it up was that he fancied the excitement necessary to enable him to write with ease and brilliancy. It was always after coming from the theatre or opera that he sat down to compose. It is of the last of these occasions that I intend to speak. There was to be a great performance that evening. The night before I had been much disturbed by unpleasant dreams, in all of which my brother-in-law flourished most prominently. But what caused me chief uneasiness was a constant sense or feeling of his presence accompanying me wherever I went during the day, although I knew that at the time he was either miles away on business, or in a distant part of the house. Generally this spectre was invisible; but thrice I saw it at a distance, and believing it to be himself went towards it, when it immediately vanished. Even when he himself was present this sense of an invisible presence did not leave me, but I realized the idea of two beings, different, yet the same. I told my mother and my other friends about my dreams and feelings. They rather derided them, imagining them to be caused by nervousness, or an unchecked fancy. But I was not in the least nervous; on the contrary I was strong and active. I could run round the outer walk of the old castle keep, outside the railings, without the least fear or dizziness. As to my imagination, I had never thought of checking it; for although exhuberant it had generally been pleasant and sunshiny. And therefore I felt sure it was not imagination merely, or nervousness, or both: no; I told them it must be a premonition of great evils, or of death. I was very much afraid. I told them that we should never see G—alive again. As the gloom of evening deepened this invisible presence became almost intolerable to me. If I moved from one room to another it followed close behind me; and sometimes as I turned quickly round an angle it seemed to grasp at my gown. If I came quickly down stairs it rushed up past me even more quickly, so that I was almost terrified to death. And yet it was not of it that I was afraid; I feared for what it might portend. I was at last too terrified to move about. I made the servants double the lights in the parlor, and I sat between my father and mother, thinking that the safest place. At length the clock struck twelve, and shortly after G—— came home. How delighted I was to see him; it must have been fancy on my part after all, I thought. He was in the highest spirits possible; the play had been excellent; the principal performer had outshone herself; never had he felt easier in his mind, stronger in body; never had his intellect been clearer; he must set to work now upon a grand poem which had shaped itself out whilst he was in the theatre. But notwithstanding that he looked so well and spoke so joyously, after the first burst of delight at seeing him was past, my old uneasiness returned. His double self,—his invisible presence,—still kept beside me, and seemed to be mocking at his mirth and good-humor. And when he said that he would prefer to go to the theatre on Sunday to going to the church, while we all looked sad and hurt at such dreadful words, his invisible presence seemed to laugh loud and harshly, and as if it was far away, so that I could feel the sound rather than hear it. G—— soon went to his own room; and mother and I assisted him in disposing himself for study. I told him about my fears during the day and in the evening, and begged him not to study to-night. He laughed at me and said I was a foolish little puss; he never was better in his life, or in better trim for studying, and he could not think of giving it up. We left him, and returned to the parlor. I still felt very heavy, and oppressed in my mind. But just as we were thinking of rising to go to bed I said to mother, "O mother! I am so glad that invisible presence has left me; I am sure all will be right now." I had scarcely uttered these words when we heard a great rush in G——'s room, and a deep groan. We hurried away then to his chamber, which was a good way off, and found him lying dead! We stood paralyzed with fear and wonder for a moment. I was the first to raise him up. His neck was broken. "O why," I said, "why did you not take my advice, you would not now have been dead—dead!"

It was then acknowledged too late that more attention ought to have been given to the words and visions of the Seventh Daughter. But I am forgetting that I have not told you yet how the fatal catastrophe was brought about. The cause was very simple. G—— held the idea with Wordsworth that it was better not to commit verses to paper until after they had long been revolved in his mind; for once written down they are less plastic; and moreover writing them down at once is apt to lead to verbosity and diffusion; whereas the beauty of verse and its utility consist greatly in the condensation of much thought into a little space. For this reason, and to guard against the impulsiveness and inequality of his temper, which might tempt him to write down hasty and imperfect thoughts, he was in the habit of having his arms bandaged down by his side, and himself to his chair—a large heavy arm chair with a low back. Very generally he had a hdkf. tied round his brows to keep down the throbbing of his brain when, as sometimes happened, it ached in grasping ideas, or in polishing and malleying the hard rough words.—He was in this state on that fatal night. His spirit being higher than usual and thoughts more flowing, he had gradually raised or tipped back his heavy chair till it passed the equilibrium, when down it came, making the crash we had heard; he himself, unable to use his hands and defend himself, in the struggle to right the chair had fallen with all his weight on the side of his head, and being somewhat heavy at once dislocated the neck and broke the spinal nerve. Years—many years have passed since then, yet the memory of that night comes back as fresh and clear as if it had been of yesterday.

The sound of that wild eldrich laughter often breaks in upon me as in dreams, when I am sitting alone, and the curtains rustle with the wind that comes through the open window. The stillness of summer eves and the long continual gloom of winter nights, bring back the trains of old thoughts and associations. Troops of faces flit past the mind's eye, distinguishable as the living, but softened and mellowed down to a more spiritual beauty. I love this quiet little world of my own, where I seem to see through the hearts of the actors; but often the fancy light is darkened by the memory of the sad occurrence here related. In the midst of revery I seem to hear the sound of a falling of a chair, and a stifled groan,—I start—and my little world has flown.

COMMERCIAL BANK OF NEW BRUNSWICK.—At the Annual General meeting of the Stockholders held on Tuesday last, the following gentlemen were elected Directors for the ensuing year:—

Geo. Carvill; M. Dole; John Duncan; R. L. Hazen; S. Hersey; Wm. Jack; G. L. Lovett; C. Meritt; D. J. McLaughlin; W. Parks; A. McL. Seely; Moses Tuck; J. Vernon.

And at a meeting of the directors held on Wednesday, Wm. Parks, Esq., was unanimously re-elected President.

The active and enterprising President of the Rural Cemetery, John M. Walker, esq., has imported a large variety of shrubbery directly from England, such as will stand our climate well, for the purpose of ornamenting the grounds. Persons having friends buried in the Cemetery, will be able to obtain these shrubs at mere cost and charges.—[News.

MAIL ROBBERS SENTENCED TO BE HUNG. Brantford, C. W. April 30.—Moore and Over, the two negroes tried for robbing the mail and murdering the carrier near this city ten days ago, were found guilty to day, and sentenced to be hung on the 7th of June. After sentence they made a full confession.