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THE POET'S CORNER

House Cleaning.

The melancholy days have come, the saddest of the year,
Of cleaning paint and scrubbing floors and scouring far and near.

Heaped in the corners of the room, the ancient dirt lay quiet,
Nor rose up at the father's tread nor at the children's riot;
But now the carpets all are up, and from the staircase top
The mistress calls to maid and maid to wield the broom and mop.

Where are these rooms, those quiet rooms the house but now presented,
Wherein we dwell, nor dreamed of dirt, so cozy and contented?

Alas! they're all turned upside down, that quiet suite of rooms,
With slops and suds and soap and sand and tubs and pails and brooms:
Chairs, tables, stands are strewn about at elbows and at seven,
While wife and housemaids fly around like meteors in the heaven.

The parlor and the chamber floors were cleaned a week ago,
The carpets shaken, windows washed (as all the neighbors know),
But still the squalor had escaped—the table piled with books,
Pens, ink and paper all about, peace in its very looks—

Till felt the women on them all as falls the plague on men;
And then they vanish all away—books, paper, ink and pen.
And now when comes the master home, as come he must each night,
To find all things are "set to rights" that he has "set to rights."

When the sound of driving tracks is heard, the rooms strange echoes fill,
And the carpet woman's on the stairs (that harbingers of ill),
He looks for papers, books or bills that were there before,
And sighs to find them on the desks and in the drawers no more.

And then he grimly thinks of her who set this fuss afloat,
And wishes she were out at sea in a very leaky boat.
He meets her at the parlor door with hair and cap awry;
With sleeves tucked up and broom in hand, defiance in her eye:

He feels quite small, and knows full well that he is nothing to be said,
He holds his tongue, and drinks his tea, and sneaks away to bed.

PARDON'S GOOD LUCK.

Philosophers say that there is no such thing as luck. Asa Darwin thought differently.

"My luck exactly," said he despairingly. "I might have known just how it would be."

He sat on the old stone porch, staring out toward the sunset, his chin tipped back on his two hind legs, his hands thrust aimlessly into his trousers pockets.

It was cold enough to justify the fire of beech logs that was blazing on the hearth in the room inside, where Pardon was tacking up the red moreen curtains that she had just sponged and mended neatly; but it was not an easy thing for Mr Darwin to relinquish the habit of out-door lounging that had clung to him all the summer through.

"What is it, father?" said Pardon, coming briskly to the door with a tack hammer in one hand and a paper of tacks in the other.

"Jones has just gone by," said Mr Darwin. "He says the old cow has got out on the railroad track again."

Pardon bit her under lip.

"I told you she would, father," said she, "if you didn't have those bars repaired."

"And she's got to run over," dolefully added Darwin. "I'm sure I don't know what we're to do without a cow. We've always put a lot of dependence on our milk. But I might have expected it. Luck has been sheer against me ever since John James died. A man with a house full of gals can't expect to make no headway in the world."

Pardon colored up.

"You didn't expect your girls to mind the bars, did you, father?" she asked, a little bitterly.

"I was calculatin' to speak to Tim Parsons about gettin' a new pair o' posts put up," sighed the farmer.

"Wouldn't it have been a safer way to put them up yourself, father?"

"I ain't as young as I used to be," said Mr Darwin, evasively. "And the rheumatism is twistin' me powerful these first cool days."

"Then," said Pardon, with a certain touch of dauntless authority in her voice, "you should come into the house, and not sit there, getting chilled through, and then find fault with your luck!"

Mr Darwin slowly rose and shuffled into the bright little kitchen room, where Pardon had spread a neatly braided rug before the fire, and placed a broken-spouted pitcher of yellow golden-rod on the table.

She looked after him with a sigh, half of impatience, half regret.

"I wish John James had lived!" said Mr Darwin feebly.

"So do I," assented Pardon.

"Ain't supper most ready?" said the farmer, looking discontentedly around.

"It will be in a minute," said Pardon. "I had to split the kindling myself for the kitchen fire, and Fanny has run to Mrs Merritt's for a little meal to make some hot corn bread."

At the same moment Fanny returned—a slight, overgrown girl of fourteen—breathless with the haste she had made.

"Mrs Merritt is very sorry," said she, "but she hasn't any cornmeal in the house."

"That's enough!" said Pardon, glowing scarlet to the roots of her hair. "I don't blame her for getting tired of lending things to us!"

"But," added Fanny, "she sends a pail of Graham flour to make gems. Indeed, indeed, Pardon, she's as kind as she can be!"

Pardon laughed hysterically.

day we can return Mrs Merritt's kindness. But, oh Fanny, have you heard? The red cow got out of the pasture this afternoon and is killed on the track!"

Fanny burst into tears.

"Old Pisky!" she exclaimed. "Is there no end to our bad luck?"

Pardon stamped her pretty, ill-shod foot impatiently on the floor.

"Luck!" she repeated. "Don't use that dreadful word! I believe father would be a better and happier man today if it wasn't in the dictionary at all. There isn't any such thing as luck. It's all bad management—shiftness, the habit of putting everything off until the last moment!"

And then she cried, too, poor little over-burdened Pardon.

She was tall and slender, with large, glittering hazel eyes, red brown hair, and one of those delicate complexions where the sun lays its touch in the shape of here and there a cluster of freckles.

Fanny was dark, with spanish eyes, fringed with long lashes, and hair as black and lustrous as jet. Whatever else fate had denied the Darwin girls, it had been generous to them in the matter of personal attributes.

They made their frugal supper of Graham gems, a very little butter, the weakest brewing of tea, and no milk at all, and then Pardon built up the fire, got her father the last week's newspaper, which good Mrs Merritt had sent over with the Graham flour, and then sat down in the back kitchen with Fanny to slice up a few late peaches for drying.

"For we have got to look after things very close this winter," she said. "Father seems to have no energy at all since John James died. I'm afraid it will end in the farm being sold to clear off the mortgage."

Fanny opened her big, black eyes.

"But we must live somewhere, Pardon," said she.

"You and I can go out to service," said Pardon. "As for father, there is the poorhouse."

Fanny uttered a wail of despair.

"No, no, dear; don't look so distressed," said the elder sister, repenting the rashness of her speech. "I don't really mean it. I'm cross, that is all. It's hard doing the work of hired man, servant girl and housekeeper all in one. I shall feel better tomorrow after I've had a night's sleep. I haven't got to get up early and milk poor old Pink any more."

And once again the sisters mingled their tears.

"If father had only mended those bars," said Fanny. "It was so unlucky—"

But Pardon put her hand over her sister's lips.

"Not that word, Fanny," said she. "Remember, it's forbidden."

The two girls were washing up the breakfast dishes the next day in the temporary absence of Mr Darwin, who had strolled off towards the post office to see if the mail was in, when Squire Etting crossed the threshold.

"Father ain't to hum?" said he.

"Well, I reckon I can talk things over just as well with you, Pardon."

"What things?" said Pardon, distrustfully.

"That there skatin' rink, down by the lake," said Mr Etting. "That John James built. It's goin' to be a good hard winter, if there's any truth in signs, and I've a notion by the concern, just as it stands, and run the rink myself. The land belonged to your mother's estate, and I s'pose you and the gal here have the right to sell it."

"Yes," said Pardon, fixing her eyes calmly on the Squire's wooden visage.

"What will you give for it?"

"Well, it ain't wuth so dreadful much," said the Squire, evasively. "Say a hundred dollars for the building and two acres o' land."

Pardon shook her head.

"I won't sell it for that," said she, decidedly.

"I dunno what you want to keep it for," said the Squire, irritably. "Your father, he ain't got the 'go' to run a skating rink."

"I know that," said Pardon, firmly. "But I don't intend to be 'swindled, all the same."

The Squire stamped out of the room in a rage.

"Then drive a better bargain with somebody else, if you can," said he, viciously.

"Pardon, Pardon!" whispered Fanny close to her elbow, "call him back! A hundred dollars is a great—great sum of money!"

"No," said Pardon, "I will not call him back. Let me think!"

"But what will father say?"

"Father need never know, Fanny. It is as Squire Etting says, the land is all that is left of our poor mother's property. It is ours to sell or to keep, as we please. The lumber alone for that building cost poor John James nearly \$100. The Squire thinks he can safely cheat us, because we are only women. But he will find himself mistaken."

She put on her green gingham sun bonnet that afternoon and went over to the Merritt farm. Joel Merritt was just driving in through the big gates with a load of wood.

"I'm so sorry," said Joel, courteously lifting his cap. "Mother has gone over to a quilting bee at Mrs Dikes'. Won't you step in and rest?"

Pardon took off her green sun bonnet and fanned herself with it. Her cheeks were pink; her lovely hazel eyes sparkled.

"But it isn't your mother I came to see, Joel," she said. "I wanted to speak to you."

Joel jumped off the load, threw the reins on Old Sorrel's back, and came up to her with a countenance of some surprise.

"Me?" he repeated, reddening a little.

For of all created beings he thought Pardon Darwin the most beautiful and winning.

joyously cried the young man, taking both her hands in his, while his whole face grew radiant. "Oh, you don't know how proud and happy you make me! For I've loved you this long time, Pardon, only I never dared to tell you so; and mother will be so glad to call you daughter! Give me a kiss, Pardon—my little shrieking love—just one kiss, so that I may be sure I'm not dreaming!"

But to his great dismay Pardon struggled to free herself and began to cry impetuously.

"I—I don't know what you mean!" said she. "Let me go, Joel Merritt!"

"But, Pardon, you said yourself—"

"It was the skating rink that poor John James built on Deep Lake!" faltered Pardon, on the verge of new tears.

"I—I wanted you to help me fit it up and manage it this winter, I never dreamed of asking you to—"

Joel, what must you have thought of me?"

"Then you didn't mean it, after all?" said Joel, dropping his arms to his sides, and standing with a blank face before her.

"You don't care for me?"

Pardon stood silent a moment, twisting her apron strings, while the soft glow still burned on her cheeks.

A sudden light flashed into Joel's sun-burned face.

"My own love!" he cried out, valiantly. "I'll take the skating rink, but you've got to be there with me to the bargain, too! Say you'll consent, Pardon!"

And at all events Pardon did not refuse.

"Oh!" said Asa Darwin, when the facts of the case became patent to his rather dense understanding, "young Merritt going to finish up the rink before frost comes? And he's asked our Pardon, too! Well, I declare that is a piece of luck!"

And this time Pardon took no exception to the obnoxious word.

Ulcinated Stomach.

"For three years I was unable to work, suffering from ulcerated stomach. Medical aid having failed, I was told to try Burdock Blood Bitters, of which 7 bottles made a permanent cure. This was two years ago, and I feel that I have to thank B. B. for being alive and well today." Mrs Rose Ann McCloskey, Marquette, Ont.

Golden Opportunities for Kindness.

How lamentable that we should go through the world so misunderstanding one another, letting slip golden opportunities for glimpses into others' better nature, which might have knit our hearts to their forever in a brotherhood of love, and draw the veil of charity over faults, which, in our blindness, seemed to us without a virtue to balance them.

In has been said that angels turn sorrowfully away from this soul blindness of ours, and that friends laugh over the final fall of despair which our helping hand might at such moments have averted.

Well for us all it is that He who is Himself without sin, more merciful than man, sees gathering tears in eyes that we deem hard and dry.

Half the blessing of existence lies in having friends whom we can know and understand; who will reciprocate our friendships, and sympathize with us in success and in trouble.

The best regulators for the stomach and bowels, the best cure for biliousness, sick headache, indigestion, and all affections arising from a disordered liver, are without exception Johnson's Tonic Liver Pills. Small in size, sugar coated, mild, yet effective. 25 cts. per bottle. Sole agents, Dr. Goode, druggist, Albion block, Goderich, sole agent.

Perhaps there is no sight more pathetic to people who are familiar with the various types of New York men than the old time bartender. His story has been told. The public, and particularly men of refined tastes, have renounced him and he is either to be seen standing a round street corners with an air of discontent upon his face, or else he is enthroned in some small grogery on the east or west side, where he retails his wares to a select few. The contrast between the old timer and the new is very strong. A few years ago before the system of checks, registers and similar contrivances had been introduced in the city bars, men who administered drinks to the public were influential and important. It was considered an honor by men about town to have their names entered by these august functionaries, and the revenues of such bartenders were usually very large. The type is familiar. The old time bartender was usually a very stout, red-faced and important personage, with a waxed moustache, heavy eyes, and a conservative manner of speaking. He was not particularly cleanly, and he never quite recovered from the blow which was inflicted upon him by the mechanical register behind the bar. His successor is a keen alert and deferential young man, who wears a snowy jacket, and never ventures upon sociability across the bar.

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Tolstoi may quixotic, but his is a quixotism. In a recent talk with a visitor to his country home the farmer-shoe maker-novelist-aristocrat said, with an enthusiasm not to be assumed: Oh, yes, every day, according to the season, I labor on my farm. I cut down trees, I chop wood, I mow. Ah! and I plough. You do not know what a pleasure that is. You go so turning up the fresh earth, tracing the long furrows, and do not notice that one hour, two, three hours pass. The blood courses joyously through your veins, your head is clear, your feet scarcely touch the ground, and how hungry you get, and how you sleep afterwards!

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DILUOSITY, BILIOUSNESS, DYSPEPSIA, FLUTTERING OF THE HEART, ACIDITY OF THE STOMACH, DRUNKENNESS, OF THE SKIN, AND every species of disease arising from disordered LIVER, BOWELS OR BLOOD.

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Our Vancouver Correspondent.

From Esquimaux, B.C., Mrs A. B. Cameron writes that being very much troubled with dyspepsia she tried two bottles of Burdock Blood Bitters, which gave great relief, and hopes that others may be induced to try it also and receive like benefits.

A young man named Robert Fisher, of Kippure, who has been employed as a blacksmith by Mr. Thos. Mullin, and his leg broken above the knee, one day last week. He was passing a horse belonging to Mr. Mulholland when the brute suddenly kicked him, with the above result. He was removed to his father's residence and we are pleased to be able to state that he is doing as well as could be expected.

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