

## MINE SHILDREN.

Ob, dose shildren, dose shildren, dey bodder mine life!  
Vhy don't dey keep quiet, like Gretchen, mine wife?  
Vot makes dem so shock fool off mischief, I vander.  
A-shumping der room roundt mit noises like dunder?  
Hear dot! Vas dere anything make sooch a noise  
As Herman and Otto, mine two leedle boys?

Ven I dake out mine pipe for a goot quiet smoke,  
Dey crawl me all ofer, und dink id a shoke  
To go droo mine bockets to see vot dey find.  
Und if mit der latch-key my vatch dey can vind.  
Id takes someding more as dheir fader and moder  
To quiet dat Otto and his leedle broder.

Dey shat out dheir boots, und vear holes in der  
knees  
Off dheir drouzers, and shstockings, and sooch dings  
as dese.  
I dink if dot Czesus vas lifing to-day.  
Dose boys make more bills as dot Kaiser could pay:  
I find me quick out dot some riches dake vings.  
Ven each couple a days I must buy dem new dings.

I bring dose two shafers some toys efry day.  
Pecause "Shonny Schwartz has sooch nice dings,"  
dey say.  
"Und Shonny Schwartz, barents vas poorer as ve"—  
Dot's vol der young raschkeits vas saying to me.  
Dot olit Santa Klaus mit a shleich fool off toys  
Don'd zil sadistactions to dose greedy boys.

Dey kick der clothes off ven ashleep in dheir bed.  
Und vet so mooch croup dot dey almost vas dead:  
Bud id don't make no different; before id vas light  
Dey vas out in der morning mit billows to fight.  
I dink id vas badder you don'd got some ears  
Ven dey blay "Holt der Fort," und den gif dree  
cheers.

Oh, dose shildren, dose shildren, dey bodder mine  
life!  
Bud shap shust a leedle. If Gretchen, mine wife,  
Und dose leedle shildren dey don'd been around,  
Und all der house dere vas prefer a sound—  
Vell, boys, ty you look out dat vey mit surprise?  
I guess dey see tears in dheir old fader's eyes.

CHARLES FOLLEN ADAMS.

## AN ANTIQUE.

A quaint, many-pillared, shadowy room! A room prodigally full of the much sought-for and highly treasured handiwork of a bygone age—here, a curiously-fashioned sconce, its candles multiplied again and again by the reflections of the highly polished silver; there, a slender spindle-legged table; in one nook a wonderfully carved cabinet, black with age; in another corner a heavily bound and clasped chest; and everywhere, banging from the low walls, leaning against the fluted pillars, shining out in contrast to the dusky walnut of the doors and casings, objects worth to-day almost their weight in gold. Over and above all these was an air, a stiffness and precise arrangement that told as plainly as any word could tell that this was not one of the many modern antique parlors. There was a lack of the striving to give prominence to the old furniture, and, perhaps, a lack of the graceful adjustment, the fitting and dove-tailing of harmonious objects, that truly distinguished this room from its latter-day copies.

Near one of the low windows sat a lady, her hands busy with the darning of a bit of fine linen-damask, filling up the torn, ragged space with work intricate as lace embroidery; her subdued, faded, yet pleasant face; her quiet manner; all the varying details of her plain dress in as perfect harmony with the surroundings as was the little, old piano, with its three octaves of yellow keys, its odd rosettes of colored ribbon, narrow music drawers and sliding brackets; or the long, narrow, three-divided mirror, in its tarnished gilt frame, that hung above the mantel.

Mistress and room were like the embodiment of some old painting, like the relics of past, forgotten years—veritable antiques, each of them.

In spite of the delicacy of her work, Miss Beauford's thoughts were not all centred on the damaged linen. As she sat drawing her needle in and out, backward and forward, her mind was grappling with a much more puzzling problem than the mere uniting of the severed threads. It seemed to her oft times as though she had been dropped out of the pressing human throng for a while—as though, while others had hastened on physically and mentally, she had been held back, and upon her attempting to rejoin her kind, she saw them on heights far above her, their actions, motives, feelings, all strange to her, their thoughts not as her thoughts.

Some lives come to be so! Adverse circumstance serves to hold them in check, to dwarf and stunt them for a time. When, at last, they are freed, they find others so far in advance, the world so full of new minds, new thoughts, new inventions, that it is to them like the awakening into a new sphere.

Trouble such as darkens but few homes had come to Miss Prudence in her girlhood—trouble now happily over and laid away for ever. Only an upper chamber in the Beauford mansion, its doors carefully closed and bolted against prying eyes and gossiping tongues; a room with guarded fireplace, barred windows and padded walls left of it all; a room filled with the childish work and fancies of an only sister, whose mind had become dim and confused over the sudden loss of both father and husband, who found no comfort in the baby boy left to her alone now, but from the deep brooding sorrow of the first days of her loss, changed suddenly to a gayety and lightness that alarmed her sister far more than the morbid grief.

"Her mind is quite unbinged," said the physician Prue had summoned hastily. "She

may overcome it, but we can't tell," with a doleful shake of his head.

"She won't—she can't—she needn't be sent away anywhere!" Prudence had gasped, her eyes wild with this new terror fallen upon her so soon after her loss.

"Not if you can care for her here," was the reply. "She will never be violent, I think, but she will need constant care and watching. You are young, and here alone—"

"I have the servants," the girl had interrupted. "I think I can do all necessary," and she had folded away all her girlhood's hopes and dreams with her bright dresses and trinkets, and had devoted herself to this sister—never violent, as the physician had foretold, but peevish, mischievous, unreasoning, harder to manage than the young child to whose ways she had returned, inasmuch as her strength was that of the woman.

For twenty-five years Prudence had led this life, never off guard, ever on the alert, her heart and mind buried in the one house. Friends had slipped away unintentionally but inevitably. All outside her home was to her a blank. Between herself and the world lay a chasm only partly bridged over by the nephew—sent successively to school, college and abroad—who, with the instinctive dislike for the abnormal seen in all the young, came seldom, as seldom as possible, into the presence of a mother who never knew him as her son, who came with her gray hair and wrinkled face to show him her toys and other caprices.

When all was over, when the bolt had at last been drawn on the muffled and guarded chamber, with its fantastic furnishings, when all further necessity for the almost entire seclusion was over, Miss Prudence had found herself loosed, free, but with empty hands and a purposeless existence.

Gradually she had been drawn towards her nephew, whose outgoings and incomings still made the old mansion less dreariness. He had grown to man's estate now, and his enthusiasms and ambitions brought back to her some of her own youthful dreams. In the passing of a few months she had unconsciously begun to idolize him, to make him the centre of her universe round which all else must revolve. All her resources of honored name and vast wealth were at his command—

"All men beside were to her but shadows."

She loved him almost as a young girl her first lover.

And he?

Well, he liked, now that that other horrible presence had left the house, to go to his aunt to read her admiration in her withered, faded face, to hear her quaint, old-time opinions of men and things. For there was a child-like belief in the purity and incorruptibility of mankind, an unquestioning faith in the morality of, at least, the higher classes, still living in Miss Prue's unworried mind, that her lack of experience had served only to foster. To the skeptic hurling his shafts of ridicule against the so-styled "fable," the superstition that has outlived all else, and urging upon her his own clever theory of a chance creation, a chance Creator, she would have replied with the homely farmer:

"It must take a powerful amount of believing to believe that."

It is even possible that she clung to the Mosaic testimony as to the formation of the world, she was so far behind the speculations of modern minds.

So she lived on her simple life for a year or two, only varying its monotony to open her old, tender heart and arms wide enough to hold the girl of her nephew's choice, and to dream loving dreams of their future together in the deep shadows of her parlor.

"Only a few more months to wait," she said to herself, "and her boy would bring home his wife. She would have a companion in the solitude of her almost friendless state. Once again she would be one of a happy home nest."

It was now the Spring before one of the hot, political contests that rack and wring our country to the heart-core. The hum of excitement, the jangle of party weapons was already in the air. Candidates for office were smiling upon their friends, and flinging calumny at their opposers. Caucuses of three and four were to be seen at every street corner, post-office and saloon. Each man throughout the State talked, acted, ay, perhaps, even thought his opinion worth something in the formation of the party ticket: while the two or three who move the vast machinery were closeted together, weighing this name and that name in the balance of public favor.

One space was still vacant on the list—an important post seemed to be begging for a name. The wise heads puzzled their minds in vain for a time, until one at last suggested, cautiously, and with apparent hesitation, the young lawyer, Beauford Percy.

"Yes, he's young, I know," he replied to the surprised objections of his colleagues. "He's young, but he's smart, and he's got the energy to fight it through. He has Percy grit and cleverness, and Beauford money to back him. He would come out ahead of his ticket, I feel confident. His age is nothing against him, after all. People get tired of voting grayheads into office, and a young name like this will help us."

So it had been suggested to him quietly and privately that his name would be brought before the convention as a candidate, unless he should find some reason for preventing the action.

The young man had gone home that evening, his brain in a whirl, his heart throbbing, his

whole bearing showing intense excitement. He found his *franc* with his aunt, for she had fallen into the habit of spending her holidays and half-holidays of release from the treadmill drudgery of a teacher's life in the secluded, quiet nook that was to be her future home, listening to the peaceful words of Aunt Prue, and watching the heavy hands of the old clock as they dragged round to the hour of Beauford's home-coming, and placing an arm about the shoulders of each, he told them the important tidings.

Neither betrayed much surprise. They both loved and admired him, so that they considered the best gift, the highest honor the nation could bestow, none too great for him.

All that evening they spent in happy planning. The two women utterly blind, entirely ignoring the fact of a possibility of defeat—laughing the young man's doubts and fears to scorn in their loving pride.

The spring and summer months had now gone by, and, as Miss Prudence sat drawing her needle in and out of the meshes of her fine work, her thoughts were busy with this one engrossing theme.

A new furrow of care had marked its way on her forehead; there was a puzzled, uncomprehending look in her eyes. She could not understand the passing events. Her nephew away from week to week, only coming now and then to recruit for a day or two, his manner changed from its old careless lightness to a worried, nervous irritability, all his former frankness replaced by a moody secrecy.

Honors were dearly bought that cost so many unhappy days, so many sleepless nights, she thought.

As the time of election drew near, a great fear grew upon her. Hints began to reach her, dark stories seemed hovering in the air. She could no longer sit quietly at her darning. Her one wish now was that all might be over, that they, she, her nephew and the girl so soon to be her niece, might return to the old, quiet, pleasant days of the spring. The jostling and crowding of her confused thoughts seemed wearing away her strength; she was totally unfit for the glare and excitement around her.

It lacked but a week of the important day, and, as the lonely woman wandered about her gloomy house, restlessly busying herself, now in one spot and now in another, her mind on her nephew whom she had not now seen for a month, and the one girl friend who had seemingly deserted her for a longer time than that, sighing, wishing, longing for rest again, a paper was brought her.

She took it wonderingly, and glanced in half-frightened curiosity at the still damp sheets. Until recently she had seldom cared to see the comments and criticisms of the ubiquitous columns; now she read each day a party paper, carefully preserving such as praised and lauded her nephew, glowing over the many compliments paid him, smiling at the sly hits at the weak spots in the armor of the opposition, seeing everywhere the certainty of their own success.

Her hands trembled as she held the unknown tidings; she sat down feeling a kind of premonition of what was to come.

Suddenly her eyes lighted on a familiar name!

A moment more and the letters were dancing up and down before her eyes, a great throes of chilling pain swept over her.

Beauford Percy in clear, distinct type—her Beauford, accused of bribery and corruption! Of buying vote after vote with his aunt's gold, and of paying for influence and favor with his own honor. Of breaking his plighted faith to secure the service of a wealthy, important man, a necessary factor to insure success through his pledges and promises to the daughter.

It was a common enough story. Any expedient has come to be regarded as at least only questionable if it gain the end in view. The world is no longer held in the leading-strings of strict morality and probity; it had advanced beyond that—only Miss Prudence had been left behind—and to her conscience, to her ideas, the word "disgrace" was stamped irrevocably on the old name that her nephew bore.

"If it be true—if it be true!" she kept murmuring to herself, as she rocked slowly back and forth, her temples aching, her worn fingers moving restlessly about.

For the loss of the money she cared but little. All that was here would belong to him some day—belonged to him now, if it need be. But to use it for such a purpose, and above all to pervert even the tenderest, most sacred feelings to this cause, to betray the girl that had loved and trusted him so, it must be a mistake.

All that day the woman strove to fight away the trouble that had encircled her; all that night she lay in restless agony rebelling against the unkind destiny that claimed her. She had had so little experience, was so unversed in the ways and wiles of the "children of this generation." She felt as one branded with eternal disgrace. She had no merciful conception of the trivial nature of these transactions in the eyes of men.

With the coming of the morning's sun she had fixedly determined on one plan. If all her happy hopes for the future years were to be overthrown, she would at least take the young girl, whose heart and love had been cast aside, away from the dreary monotony of a teacher's life; she herself would have one left to comfort and care for.

Waiting until the deep-toned bell called out the release from the hours of labor, and she saw the groups of merry-faced children flocking along

the street, Miss Prudence started in search of her friend.

If she had lingering doubts as to the truth of her nephew's falsity; if she had unconsciously clung to a fragment of hope that the dreams they three had dreamed together of the coming years might yet be realized, all was put to flight when she saw the girl's face—the hollow circled eyes, the weary, jaded mouth, the pale cheeks from which all fresh bloom had faded.

"Bertha!" she cried, in pitying surprise, taking the slight form into her arms.

The girl clung to her, sobbing, trembling for a moment, then as she drew away half-ashamed:

"I have been all alone so long," she said, hoarsely.

Miss Prudence took one of the lifeless hands and held it tenderly in her own as she said, timidly:

"But you will come to me now? My dear, I am alone, also, and I need you so."

Bertha started.

"Oh, not there—not there!" she said, nervously, her face flushing, her eyes full of tears.

The older woman read the unspoken thought.

"I am quite alone," she replied, quietly. "I shall live so always unless you come to me."

A long silence followed. Then the girl murmured, hurriedly:

"Don't be so hard on him. He is unhappy, too, but he says it is necessary. It will be a close contest, and the party needed the influence of this man. It is all as it should be. I am not suited for such a life, and the other is brilliant and beautiful."

Miss Prue looked her firmly in the eyes.

"Unless you consent to come I shall be alone and friendless," she repeated, determinedly, rising as if to leave.

"Then give me time to think," Bertha pleaded. "I will come to you. I will let you know soon," and then Miss Prudence had gone away, a numb aching in all her limbs, an odd sensation of strangeness, of her remoteness from others of her race, stealing away her faculties.

The contest was a close one. All the schemes and artifices employed in turning the scale were put forth on the final day of decision. The streets were full of the clamor of the strife, and echoed to the sound of hurrying, excited feet, but Miss Beauford heard all unmoved. Victory or loss, all was one to her now. She listened only for Bertha's coming. She was eager only to hear her decision.

Early on the following morning she heard of her nephew's success, of the triumph of cunning device, heard with a curious sinking of heart, for defeat might have brought him back to her again, though she would not acknowledge this to herself. Now, all hope of that was cut off forever—she hardened her heart against the successful man, and yearned for the girl whose dearest longings had been sacrificed to his exaltation.

In the twilight of the November afternoon Bertha came, hesitatingly, almost shrinkingly, till when, in the fire-lighted parlor, Miss Prue turned to her with outstretched arms and trembling voice, saying:

"Is this my daughter?"

And the girl, putting away her own fears, reading the wistful craving of her old friend, took the poor, faded face between her slender palms and kissed the sunken cheeks as she answered:

"Yes."

As they sat together in the gloaming a great peace came to the older woman; the younger once felt a sort of calm stealing over her.

Suddenly there was a rush of cold air. The heavy street door opened and closed; there was a step coming towards them—a step that they both knew.

The girl flushed. A nervous tremor shook her body. The woman, with a flash of scorn in her old, brave eyes, rose to meet the intruder.

A moment more and he was with them, the two who had loved and trusted him and whom without a thought he had betrayed. He was excited with his victory, an air of assurance breathed from him—he had lost far more than he had gained. As he saw them thus together for an instant he hesitated, then coming boldly forward would have made some explanation, have attempted some justification, but Miss Prue waved him back. He looked in some way smaller, less of a man in her unworried eyes.

Without one word she found and passed into his hands the newspaper, with its scathing disclosure, then turning, followed Bertha from the room, leaving him silenced and stunned to find his way out into his chosen atmosphere—going with her one companion back to the seclusion and quiet peacefulness of her old life.

A SCIENTIFIC CENTENARIAN.—Perhaps never in the history of science, says the *Lancet*, has a distinguished career equaled in its length that of Mr. Chevreul, whose name is best known in connection with his investigations on color; and it is probably altogether unique for a *scientist* to be able, at one of the most distinguished scientific societies in the world, to refer to remarks which he made before the same society more than seventy years previously. A few days ago Mr. Chevreul made a communication to the Académie des Sciences, and at its close he observed: "Moreover, gentlemen, the observation is not a new one to me. I had the honor to mention it here, at the meeting of the Académie des Sciences, on the 10th of May, 1812!"