

said: "Did you ever see Joseph Raymond in Denver?"

"Joe Raymond? Oh yes! knew him well; lived with him right on to a month. His wife is a real good cook, couldn't be beat in them parts."

"You say he was married?"

"To be sure; a right smart fellow, and mighty fond of his wife. Women are scarce out there."

Prudence came in and the old man went his way, all unconscious of the great stone he had cast into the still waves of Dora's heart.

"What's the matter?" said Prudence: "your as white as a sheet."

Dora's only answer was to start out of the house and run, as for her life, down the frozen orchard path, by which she could gain upon and overtake this terrible old man. She might have said with the "holy Herbert":

"My tho'ts are all a case of knives,

Wounding my heart

With scattered smart—"

only misery must have time to crystallize into a memory before it takes the form of poetry. She stood before the old man at the turning, bearded and breathless. "How did the Joe Raymond look, that you lived with?" gasped Dora.

"I never said Joe Raymond," said the old man, peevishly: "I said Jim, Joe who—" but Dora was off again before he could finish the sentence.

She ran back through the orchard, giving thanks with all her heart, that she had not been persuaded of Joe's unfaithfulness by one hearing. Her feeling of grateful awe kept her from mourning much over her passing away of the seventh anniversary of Joe's departure with no sign of his return.

His letters had wholly ceased, and there was nothing left for Dora, but to possess her soul in patience. When another New Year dawned upon her she put on the old red dress, more from habit than from any gleam of hope in her heart, and did not come to look in the glass. In the twilight she walked slowly down the orchard path and leaned on the gate that led into the road.

Suddenly a man sprang from out behind the wall.

"Theodora, my Gift of God!" he said; and Dora, though she recognized no mark of her lover who had left her eight years before, felt that no other knew that pass-word, and suffered herself to rest silently in his arms, in the ineffable content that comes from long waiting.

When Joe and Dora went into the house and she looked at him by candle light, her heart almost misgave her: his luxuriant beard, and the manly assurance of his manners were not at all like her Joe of beloved memory. And a terrible barrier seemed to raise up between them, while Prudence remained in the room with her company manners, which sat more awkwardly upon her than her husband's gown.

When Dora tiptoed softly by her sister's door at a very late hour that night, Prudence was lying awake for her.

"Don't tell me," she said, "that you have been waiting for that Joe Raymond all this time!"

"I won't tell you, if you don't want to hear it," said Dora.

"Do you know whether he came home any better off than when he went away?"

"I really haven't thought to ask him," said Dora, carelessly. Prudence groaned and turned her face to the wall.

Joe waited only till the next day to tell Mrs. Hall the story of his success which looked very moderate in his traveled eyes, but it seemed a noble fortune in her noble ideas.

"I never thought before," said Dora's father at the wedding, "that a woman could keep a secret, and I guess it ain't more common than snow in dog days."

"How long would you have waited for me?" whispered Joe in Dora's ear.

"Forever!" said Dora, solemnly.

And Mrs. Prudence Hall, as she overheard the word, thanked her stars that Dora's foolish notions had not wrecked her at last on a poverty-stricken marriage.

LADIES' DEPT.

THE WEDDING RING.

In the days well known to history as "once upon a time," a certain noble Roman youth was deeply engaged in the excitement of a game of ball. The occasion was an important one to him, for it was his wedding feast; but the play made him careless of the treasure he ought to have guarded with the greatest affection. He took off his ring and placed it upon the finger of a statue of Venus, to remain there till he should want it again. When, however, a few hours after, he found to his dismay that the stony hand had become clenched, so that it was impossible to remove the ring. He now had to pay the penalty of his rashness, for he was constantly haunted by the figure, which kept whispering in his ear: "Embrace me; I am Venus, whom you have wedded; I will never restore your ring." The wretched youth continued to be followed by his disagreeable companion until, after much difficulty, he was able, with the assistance of a priest, to force the goddess to relinquish the ring, and then was the young man free. This legend has been widely spread, and has been popular under varied forms. In some of these the Virgin Mary takes the place of Venus, and the owner of the ring having, by placing it on the finger of a statue, become the betrothed of the Virgin, is obliged to renounce the world and enter a monastery.

In another version a certain priest, desiring to enter the marriage state, seeks a license from the Pope, who grants his request on condition that he shall first conciliate St. Agnes, who was not only the patroness of his Church, but the special preserver of virginal chastity, by placing on the finger of her statue an enameled ring, sent for the purpose by the sovereign Pontiff himself. The priest does as he is directed, and places the ring on the fourth finger of the figure; but his astonishment is great when the hand which had been put forward to receive the ring is returned to its original position. Attempts to withdraw the ring are ineffectual, and the unfortunate priest realizes the truth that he is contracted to St. Agnes, and can marry no one else. These legends are particularly interesting as exhibiting the feeling which was universally entertained in olden times, that wedding rings possessed an inherent power and value in themselves—a belief which still lingers in places.

DRESSING TO PLEASE.

A law of nature, from which there is no appeal, has bestowed on woman a desire to dress becomingly and well. Frown as we may upon mis-spent time in making and arranging ourselves in fashionable garments, ages of cultivated taste have left our sex helpless in the hands of earth's master tyrant—fashion. Like a flock of sheep that blindly follow their leader, leap where he leaps without knowing the reason, women with slight discrimination, wear broad rims and narrow rims, long skirts and short skirts, red, black, and blue, which ever fickle fortune is pleased to endorse. Yet not for herself does woman give valuable

time and thoughts to beautifying her person, but that others' eyes may dwell with pleasure on her adornments. Few, perhaps, have asked themselves for whom they dress. Numberless times have wives been rebuked for not dressing for their husband's eyes, after the honeymoon had waned, and they had settled down to the practical routine of every-day life. The immaculate morning collar, the tidy wrapper, and carefully arranged hair, have been pointed out to young wives as of especial importance in retaining the husband's love.

But thinking women know well enough that a sensible man's affections are not weakened by a hurried toilet when necessity demands it, and thinking men know, too, that wrappers will become soiled, and collars must sometimes wait, and crimps remain in pine.

Society, too, is forgiving, and tolerates last season's styles and shades, if the wearer is ladylike and agreeable.

The little children are the most appreciative lovers of a pretty toilet. Mothers are too apt to forget that the first years of a child's life are those which receive the most lasting impressions. Being the mother's constant companions, the little ones take in all that is new and beautiful with which they adorn their persons, and three score years and ten will not eradicate the impression made at beholding a new piece of jewelry, a bright ribbon or glossy curl.

When Lydia Newman fastened her shoes with "poppy-red ribbons," to please her little boy, she gave him a happy thought that never forsook him. We all remember what was graceful and lovely in our mother's dresses, and when we recall her image from her long home, she comes to us clothed in the beautiful garments we so much admired in childhood.

Dressing with care for the children receives a lasting reward. Dressing for the criticism of Mrs. Grundy, and her numerous family is a hopeless, thankless task.—California Patron.

FACETIÆ.

The best thing out—an aching tooth. Counter-claims—Your wife's shopping bills.

A man always feels put out when he is taken in.

Rheumatism is always a joint affair, and yet there is only one party to it.

There are more sensible people who are smart than smart ones who are sensible.

True affection grows stronger as it grows older. The same may be said of an egg.

It is harder for a penurious man to be honest than for a gourmand to keep a fast.

Why cannot a Temperance man kiss a Jewess? He has sworn not to taste Jew-lips.

Providence has given us hope and sleep as a compensation for the many cares of life.

Why is a policeman like a good conundrum? Because you must look sharp to find him out.

A kiss on the forehead means reverence, but there's no fun in it worth mentioning.—Rochester Democrat.

"The rich," said a Dutchman, "eat venison because it is deer. I eat mutton because it is sheep."

Why is a young lady like a bill of exchange? Because she ought to be settled when she arrives at maturity.

"What do you take for your cold?"

said a lady to Mr. —. "Four pocket handkerchiefs a day," was the answer.

Jones believed in policemen, and thinks they are all square men. "At any rate," he says, "they are never 'round'."

"Ma, does pa kiss the cat?" "Why, no, my son. What in the name of goodness put that into your head?" "Cos, when pa came down stairs this morning he kissed Sarah in the hallway and said: 'That's better than kissing the old cat up stairs, ain't it, Sarah?'"—N. O. Picayune.

The Boston Post is authority for the following statement about a circus manager who wanted a new name for his show: "L.," a sophomore collegiate suggested monohippic aggregation as good, and the circus man had got three towns billed before he was informed that 'monohippic' meant 'one-horse.'"

A negro preacher described hell as ice-cold, where wicked froze to all eternity. When asked why, he said: "Cause I don't care to tell them people nuffin else. Why, if I tell them hell is warm dey be wanting to start down dere, some of dem ole rheumatic niggers, de very fus' fros."

JOHNNY'S COMPOSITION ON THE KANGAROO.—The Kangrewain't much of a recommend for the factory which made him, or maybe he knu in himself wen the rginal diergrams was in the safe, and rakin up such organs az wuz left over he made his ownself. He looks in the face like a shaller goose, and when see him walkin on his narrativ you don't blame nachur for giving him that expression. His legs mus been made on diffrent moles, cause the last one iz long as a torch-lite percushin but the front ones aaz got too much shortnin in. Sum Kangrews has their cloze made so tha kin carry thare familys round in thare overskurts, but if I wuz a boy kangrew ide rather paddle mone kanew. Kangrews wears mustaches like cats, but a mule kin give em a yard start on the ear question an' beet em like sickty.

AN OLD STORY.

When Davy Crockett was in Washington he was one day sitting in a hotel toasting his shins when a senator from Massachusetts entered.

Approaching the old frontiersman the latter said:

"Crockett, a large procession of your constituents are marching up the street. You ought to go out and greet them."

Crockett hurriedly arose and went out upon the hotel steps, when a large drove of mules passing by caught his eye. He quietly watched them until the last one had passed and then returned to his seat by the stove. The Massachusetts senator was still there, and as the redoubtable Davy dropped into his chair, asked:

"Well, did you see your friends?"

"Oh, yes," was the response. "They looked remarkably well, too."

"Did you ascertain their destination?"

"Certainly, sir."

"And where are they going in such a solid body?"

Crockett turned to the senator with a quiet, calm expression, and replied: "The blamed fools are all going down to Massachusetts to teach school!"

And then they gazed a moment into each other's faces and sadly walked up to exercise the bar-keeper a while.