

# TORCH

*Light Literature!*

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No. 4

[For the Torch.]

VERNS.

iv.

Years ago, as I am told,

(Ah! the years, they fade, they fade!)

In this room so quaint and old,

Betty, crowned with locks of gold,

Studied, sang and played.

Is she guileless now as then?

(Ah! the years, they fade, they fade,

And I scarce can guide my pen!)

Is her heart as pure as when

She was called my little maid?

See! she stands beside my chair!

(Ah! the years, they fade, they fade!)

Was I dreaming? She stood there!

Look! she vanished down the stairs—

Still my little maid!

Ah, my eyes grow old, grow old,

And the years, they fade, they fade!

Betty with the crown of gold

Is a woman, I am told,

Nevermore my little maid.

H. L. SPENCER.

SALLIES FROM AN ATTIC.

No. 3.\*

I sometimes think my owl is gifted with the faculty of mind reading. A few evenings since, I was cogitating upon the fortunes of my friend Wilkins and his spouse, when chancing to glance over my shoulder, the feathers, eyes, and even the bill of that sage bird seemed contorted with demoniac laughter; but at once he assumed an attitude of profound and melancholy meditation. I am inclined to the belief that old age creeps upon him, he grows cynical and crabbed, as men sometimes do,—that the pleasant features of life are as distasteful to him as are the rays of my lamp, or the blinding glare of the noonday sun. I was thinking of my friend Wilkins and Mrs. Wilkins, *see* Muffins. When I first became acquainted with Miss Muffins, now Mrs. Wilkins, she was the meekest eyed and mildest manner-

ed Muffin in the family. Her voice was thin and aerial, and her hair was thin and carrot; her chest was thin as her voice, and innocent of "adventitious aids," and her conversation was also thin and unattractive. You have seen her? No doubt!—she is often abroad. Wilkins was a man of tolerable parts, no cabbage head by any means, though he was a vegetable gardener, and owned a place that it would be hard to beat, a few miles from town. Wilkins was eminently practical in his ideas,—every potato he dug from the ground had its cash value—and the destiny of that cash was the bank—with interest in prospect. It need not be said that Wilkins prospered and that consequently peace smiled upon the Wilkins mansion. But Satan snaked his way into paradise, and one of his emissaries invaded the Wilkins domicile in the form of an *ulster* coat! It is not necessary for me to say that the wearer of that ulster was innocent of any participation in the destruction of the Wilkins' peace, for it is well-known that in the days of which I write, those garments were only worn by bank clerks, half-fledged lawyers, and kindred inanities. But Mrs. Wilkins saw an animated ulster on one of her visits to the city, (this was many years ago) and being somewhat *outré* in her tastes, she insisted upon Wilkins providing himself with one of the garments at once. Wilkins, though a gold-worshipper, was very deferential to the wishes of his wife, so without demur, the order was left with Snip & Scissors, and (singularly enough) in due time the garment was sent home. A few days after, Wilkins ensconced himself in his ulster, and with a load of potatoes and turnips proceeded to market. Alas for the vanity of human wishes! Alas for the uncertainties by which we are all environed! Had Wilkins been a fresh arrival from the moon, he could not have been met by his acquaintances with stonier stares. He saw his neighbors' potatoes and turnips rapidly transforming themselves into legal tender, while he was never approached by a customer. At last he was accosted by an ulster in this wise, "Ah demme, were you at old Lager's party last night?" and another ulster, adjusting its eye-glass remarked, "Hi, old boy, Boosy's

champagne was rather too much for you wasn't it? Didn't expect to see you out to-day, By-by, you'll get seasoned after a time." Now this was all Greek to my friend Wilkins, but it rung in his ears, with slight variations, till near sunset, when, perplexed, wrathful and upset generally, he started for home without having made a single sale. On his way, he reflected! he cogitated! and at last he came to the conclusion that that ulster was the parent of all his woe. When the Wilkins mansion was reached, he strapped the ulster on Dobbin in place of his accustomed blanket, strode into the house, kicked over the cradle, and demanded supper in the tones of a Stentor.

The home of the Wilkinse is sadly changed, (My owl, who has been dozing, opens his eyes and gives a confirmatory and exultant "h-o-o-t") Mrs. Wilkins' voice is still as thin as her hair, but its shrillness is agonizing and its acidity is unparalleled except by her temper,—Wilkins is morose and moody—he smokes pipes, and sometimes, when he comes home from town, his intellect seems clouded, and expressions fall from his lips which are not tolerated in polite society. I have suggested that, being a man of considerable influence among his neighbors, he should join the Reform Club, but I hardly think my readers would be edified by his reply.

Now, ye who gather wisdom by Torch light, mark the

MORAL.

*Be sparing when you give advice!*

*Ere you take it, consider twice!*

*Of a bad job, the test of wit*

*Is to make the best of it;*

*Wife! be wisely as you can!*

*Husband! always be a man!*

S.

MR. HUGH DAVIDSON'S new building, on Prince Wm. Street, is, internally and externally, one of the finest in the city. The front is one of the very few in which fancy bricks have been artistically arranged, and the design reflects great credit on the architects, Messrs. McKean & Fairweather. The Dominion Government have rented the building for Custom House, Inland Revenue and Public Works Departments.

\*The previous numbers were entitled, "It was Christmas Eve," and "Eve of December 31st."