

Gossip.

We all must have our neighbors  
That gossip now and then:  
We all must bear the infliction  
Of other people's ken.

Who does not sometimes long for  
A little cot away,  
Out in the woods, or somewhere  
Just out of gossip's way?

It is nobody's business  
What you or I may do,  
Unless we're out of reason,  
And care not what we do.

Or if we break the sabbath,  
Or lie or steal, 'tis true,  
It is nobody's business  
What you or I may do.

A little wholesome laughter,  
A little sunshine here,  
Is better for the appetite  
Than idle, croaking fear.

A little merry pastime,  
No matter what they say,  
Is better for the system  
Than all the medica.

A set of idle talkers  
Will cause more sin and strife  
Than all the ills of tophet,  
Or an evil, scolding wife.

A little mirth and frolic,  
And dancing in its place,  
Will never hurt the morals,  
Or sadden any face.

There's danger in a busy tongue,  
Whatever you may think:  
I always dread a gossip as  
An evil, cruel imp.

It's just impossible to please,  
Whatever you may do;  
So go ahead, and mind yourself,  
Nor mind your neighbors too.

SELECT STORY.

The Sceptic in Love.

Chapter II.

[CONCLUDED.]

Proceed, Miss de Valville, said the lieutenant, with an iron-hearted deliberation of tone, and a freezing manner. O, sir, be merciful—be merciful! she exclaimed, in a voice choked with sobs, and do not compel me to humiliate myself further.

What is the meaning of all this? asked the lieutenant, with an air of innocent inquiry.

Listen to me, then, she said, curbing her emotion by a violent effort of the will. Young as I am, I have been nearly ten years a spoiled child of society. I have had suitor after suitor kneel at my feet and woo me with the earnestness of desperation. But never, I affirm to you, was my heart even for a moment touched by the faintest thrill of emotion akin to love, until—

Until what, Miss de Valville?

Until I saw you—listened to you—loved you, as never woman done before. Is it manly in you to extort from me such a confusion? And thus saying, Josephine bent her head and wept passionately.

Have I solicited your confidence, madam? asked the lieutenant with a haughty coldness.

Lifting her head abruptly, Josephine looked him in the face, and continued:—

Have you not been aware long since of the information which has possessed me, and which you have fed by your presence and your attentions, distant as they always were? Tell me, have you not been aware of this?

Yes.

And you still had the cruelty to encourage that fatal passion, which you saw enveloping in its inextricable folds my very soul!—You knew this—and you would not seasonably protect me from your presence!

I would not.

Alas! sir, common humanity—

Humanity! exclaimed the lieutenant springing to his feet, and bending on her a glance which made her cower, Humanity! Josephine de Valville, profane not that word by your utterance! I have heard your story—now listen to mine. I had a brother—a younger brother—the pride, the joy of my father's household—how dearly I loved him I will not say, for you have not the heart to comprehend me. He visited this city, and daily wrote me a journal of his adventures, his plans and purposes, his hopes and fears. At length he wrote me that he was in love. He confided to me a description of every look the loved one gave to him, of every word she uttered. She must love him, I exclaimed as I read. He thought so too; and emboldened by my acquiescence in his conviction, he sought an explanation, declared his passion, and was laughed at for what the lady had the heartlessness to call his presumption! Frenzied with disappointment at finding himself deceived, betrayed, the wealth of his affection wasted—he committed suicide—the news killed his mother, brought

a premature old age upon his father, and desolated the happiest household in the village of his birth. You, you Josephine de Valville, were the heedless creator of all this misery!

With a groan Josephine sank despairingly upon the floor. Forgive, forgive! she murmured; I knew not you were brothers.

Revenge has come to me unsought for, resumed the lieutenant. It was through no deliberate design that I crossed your path. No one can accuse me of seeking to gain your affections. I have never overstepped the limits of frigid respect in my intercourse.

True, most true! sobbed Josephine. It was in my madness that I accused you. Your conduct has been generous, noble, and the opposite of mine. But forgive me—say that you forgive!

I do, Miss de Valville, most unreservedly. Rise, I beseech you; and now that you have found that you yourself have a heart, let me hope that you will manifest some consideration hereafter for the hearts of others.

O fear not I shall again put myself in the way of temptation, sighed Josephine; but make this allowance for me, sir, when you recall this unhappy meeting; remember that I was bred a sceptic in love, and never believed in it till I felt too painfully its power. Enough! You have forgiven me. I have but one favour to ask—it is, that you forget me.

The lieutenant bowed; and Josephine beckoning her attendant to her side, leaned upon her for support. Then nerving herself for the effort, she murmured, Farewell, sir, and turned to depart.

Farewell, Miss de Valville, returned the lieutenant. We part in kindness, do we not? Trust me, if I have ever harboured a thought of rancour towards you, it is effaced from my heart. I wish you all happiness.

Happiness! sighed Josephine, in a tone of bitter incredulity. But why would I thus resist my fate? Once more sir, farewell!

And dropping the veil over her face, she leaned upon the shoulder of the slave, and with a crushed and humble spirit quitted the room.

The lieutenant paced the floor for a couple of minutes after she had gone, and then simply muttering to himself, She will get over it soon, he resumed the labors upon which he had been engaged. He left New Orleans the next morning for the north. The ensuing summer he married Miss O'N—, to whom he had been for some time attached. Soon after the news of his union reached New Orleans, Josephine de Valville was the inmate of a convent. She has since taken the black veil.

Won By Proxy.

No, sir, I cannot consent to your marrying my daughter.

But why not, Mr. Merrill, why not? Have you any reasonable objection to my person—my character?

Your person? O no—excepting that you are too confoundedly good-looking. If it had been otherwise, Eva might be a little more docile now.

But my character, Mr. Merrill; have you any fault to find with that?

No, you seem honest enough; I do not suppose that you would steal—that is anything beside my daughter, and I shall take pretty good care that you do not steal her.

Then what is it, sir, may I ask?

Eva, Mr. Beldon, has been spoiled and pampered and petted. She does not know how to do a useful thing. What kind of a wife would she make a poor man?

But I am not poor, I have a large salary. I could not, of course, give her a carriage quite yet, nor a box at the opera, but she would not be obliged to exert herself at all. I shall be perfectly well able to keep servants and dress her handsomely, even richly.

But you might lose your fine salary at any moment.

I have the confidence of my employers, Mr. Merrill, and they are exceedingly kind.

Well, don't say anything more, I am very decided about this, and I beg that you will drop the subject. I wish you to discontinue your visits to my daughter at once. I shall be very glad to hear that you are prospering in this world, but I cannot give you Eva. The comfort and happiness of my daughters are my first and last considerations.

But she loves me, sir.

She will get over it; young girls are not reliable. Good morning, Mr. Beldon, I have told you my wish, pray do not oppose it.

The young man seized his hat and quickly withdrew; but as he was passing the parlor door, a little white hand was laid upon his arm, and he was drawn into the room and eagerly questioned by the lovely owner of the aforesaid hand.

What did he say, Henry, what did he say?

He forbade me coming to the house at all, Eva.

She laid her head on his arm and

burst into tears. Drawing her closely to him, he talked in low, soothing tones, until suddenly raising her eyes to his, she said,—

I cannot give you up, Henry, I will not give you up. If you cannot come to see me, I shall go to you.

O my darling, that will never do. Then you are willing to relinquish me so easily? she asked, drawing herself away from him.

No, dearest, never, never, but we shall be obliged to resort to stratagem, and I have a friend who will assist me. I must go now, for if your father should find me with you, he would be very angry, and after pressing his lips to hers he tore himself away.

William Curtis was seated in his office, hat on and feet resting on the mantle-piece, in regular bachelor fashion, when Henry Beldon entered, looking eager and excited.

Glad to see you, old fellow, exclaimed the former; but see here, what's the matter? You look a little down in the mouth, it appears to me.

Will, I want your assistance. How, where and when?

I want you to woo and win a lady for me.

What's that? Just what I said, exactly.

But supposing she should be like the fair maiden of olden times, and say, why dost thou not speak for thyself? You know, Harry, I am such a bad-looking fellow. But why, what's the matter there, that you do not woo and win her yourself?

Her father has forbidden me the house, because I haven't money enough, but he will never object to you, as you are one of fortune's favorites, you know. So I want you to devote yourself to Eva, and give me a chance to meet her when her father thinks she is with you.

Well, I don't know, Henry, it is putting me in a very dangerous place. Miss Eva is a very fascinating young lady. However, if your heart is set upon it, I'll run the risk. What shall I do first?

Go and invite her to ride; then when you get to Meriden's Lane, I'll relieve you for awhile of your charge.

Why, Harry, you are better at maneuvering than I imagined; when shall it be?

Call upon her to-night, and invite her to ride with you to-morrow afternoon, then I will meet you at the place mentioned.

All right; but what am I to expect for this friendly service?

There's a younger sister coming on, Will.

Yes, and she is even prettier than Eva?

Well, that is according to taste, you know. Maude is a very pretty girl, and will soon make her debut in society, so you had better have your eyes wide open.

That evening the gentleman called, as requested, upon Miss Merrill, and invited her to ride the following day. At breakfast next morning, her father said to her,—

Eva, I am quite willing you should encourage Mr. Curtis's attentions, he is a very promising man.

And has plenty of money, she added, dryly; parents are always willing to encourage the attentions of young men that have a fortune, or the expectation of one. They may drink, cheat or steal, if they are only rich. But if a man is relying upon his own exertions to make his way in the world, no matter how good and honorable he may be, he is treated like a vagrant, or felon. I hate such injustice.

Don't grow ill-natured, Eva, it would soon spoil your beauty.

I had rather be ill-natured than mercenary, she retorted.

I suppose you think your father a terrible old bear, because he won't let you play at love in a cottage—scrubbing floors, washing dishes, cooking salt pork, &c.

I think you are very cruel, she said, and, bursting into tears, rose from her seat and left the room. Her mother's eyes followed her full of tenderness and sympathy, but Mr. Merrill only laughed, saying,—

She will be in love with Curtis in a week, you see if she isn't.

Oh, no, said the mother; Eva is very constant in her loves and friendships; she will not change, I know.

Mr. Curtis is not in love with Eva, nor she with him, exclaimed Maude, a beautiful girl of seventeen years.

Indeed, miss, what do you know about it?

The young girl blushed rosy red, and then laughing a little answered,—

I can see, papa, as well as other people.

You had better attend to your books, and not trouble yourself about your sister's affairs.

I shall soon be through with my tiresome old books, and have some affairs of my own, she retorted saucily.

I beg, Maude, that you will wait until Eva is settled before you begin your flirtations. I shall certainly grow crazy if I have two to look after.

I am going to parties this winter, papa, and of course I shall look my prettiest, and then—and then—

It is time to go to school, so no more nonsense, but come and kiss me good-by, and the young lady did as requested.

That afternoon Mr. Curtis called with a dashing turnout, and took Eva off in triumph, the young girl looking bright and happy enough to warrant her father's predictions; but at Meriden's Lane another young gentleman took his place by her side and indulged in certain demonstrations that his predecessor had not dreamed of. They passed one delightful hour together, the horses being allowed to take their own pace, meanwhile; and upon returning to the place appointed, Henry sprang out and young Curtis again sprang in and drove the lady home.

This programme was appointed week after week, Eva of course losing neither health or spirits under such a regime.

At length, one day when Harry Beldon was with her, who should they see coming but Mr. Merrill himself.

What shall we do? what shall we do? asked the frightened girl.

Haven't you a thick veil, darling?

Yes, yes, and immediately the article in question was drawn closely over her face, and shivering with apprehension, they met the severe parent, who gave them both a searching glance as he passed by.

O Harry, do you think he knew me? Not unless he recognized your dress.

Then I'm safe enough, for papa never knows whether I am clothed in purple, green or yellow. Fortunately, I had this veil, and I shall regard it in the future as my kindest friend. Wasn't it funny? and she went off into a fit of joyous laughter, so contagious that her companion soon joined in her merriment.

That evening Mr. Merrill turned to his daughter, saying,—

Eva, I don't think you need wear the willow any longer for Mr. Beldon; he seems to be consoling himself.

What do you mean, father? she inquired, very demurely, but almost choked with repressed laughter.

I met him riding with a lady to-day, so closely veiled that I could not see her face—but they seemed to be enjoying themselves very much.

I do not suppose Mr. Beldon will be silly enough to make a hermit of himself, and renounce the society of all other ladies, because he has been dismissed from the house of the girl he loves. I hope that he will find consolation somewhere.

I think, Eva, that you had better find consolation in the society of the gentleman you were with to-day.

The gentleman I was riding with, papa?

Yes, dear.

Why, wouldn't you object to my marrying him?

I should be most happy to see you his wife.

Well, I'll tell him then, and laughing mischievously she ran out of the room.

So much for a girl's love! What did I tell you, mother? I knew she would be fascinated with the next good-looking fellow that came along! exclaimed the old gentleman triumphantly.

I have not changed my opinion yet of Eva, she replied.

Have not changed your opinion? You do not believe that she is still in love with Beldon, do you?

Wait and see.

Why, I have just given my consent to her marrying William Curtis—and she went off happy as a bird.

The mother smiled incredulously, but said nothing more.

The next day, Mr. Merrill was sitting in his office, when suddenly the door opened, and Eva entered, leaning on Mr. Beldon's arm, looking very happy, but a little nervous.

My husband, father, said the audacious little lady.

What's that? he inquired, pushing back his chair.

Don't scold now, papa, she continued, you said I might marry the gentleman I rode with yesterday—and this is he, I was the veiled lady you saw consoling him.

Mr. Merrill looked very grave for a moment, and then said—

Well, children, your two young heads were more than a match for my old one; go and see your mother.

And the happy couple were very sure that they heard a sound strongly resembling laughter, as they left the room.

Papa, said a sweet voice, a few moments afterwards, you were anxious, you know, to have Will Curtis in the family; and—and—he is willing.

What do you mean, Maud. You haven't commenced your affairs in good earnest, have you?

Eva is settled—and Mr. Curtis wants me to marry him.

Not for two years yet.

He is willing to wait. And kissing her father a dozen times, she also left him, to join her impatient lover.

THE bravest man in America—the man who talks of going to Saratoga and Newport without taking his wife.

A NOBLE FISHER BOY.

The 9th of October, 1857, will long be remembered among the Labrador fishermen. On that day an awful hurricane raged along the coast. One of the fishing vessels, with a large number of men, women and children on board, was caught in the storm, and tried hard to ride out the hurricane. After a few hours of fearful suspense, she dragged her anchors and was driven on shore.

With great difficulty, all on board were safely landed. Drenched with rain, blinded by the snow-drifts, shivering in the cutting blasts, they found themselves on an uninhabited part of the coast, the nearest huts being near five miles distant.

The gloomy night closed in as the last of them was dragged ashore from the wreck. Their only hope lay in endeavoring to reach the distant huts, and in the darkness and storm they staggered on. Who can picture the horrors of that night of suffering to this forlorn band?

When the morning sun shone out, nineteen of them lay dead upon the shore. A group of three women and three children, clasped in one another's arms, and half buried in mud, was found all stiff and stark in the icy embrace of death. During the darkness and confusion of landing, a family of four young children were separated from their parents, who sought for them in vain, and at length gave them up for lost.

A boy of fourteen, hearing the cries of these poor little ones, and finding they had no guide or protector, resolved to do what he could to save their lives. To reach the huts with them being impossible, he made the shivering children lie down locked in each others arms; then he set to work resolutely collecting moss, of which, fortunately, there was a large quantity about, and piling this about them in layers, he at length succeeded in excluding partially the piercing cold. Fortunately, too, he found on the beach the fragment of an old sail, which he spread over all, and collecting more moss, he increased the rude covering until the poor little sufferers ceased to cry with the bitter cold, and declared themselves more comfortable.

Through all the weary hours of that night the heroic boy stood alone by these children, replacing their covering when the wind scattered it, and cheering them with words of hope. He might have tried to escape with the others, but he would not leave his helpless charge.

At length day dawned, and then he turned his tottering steps toward the settlement to seek aid. When about half way he met the parents of the lost children, wild with grief, coming to search for their dead bodies, as they had no expectation of finding them alive. The young hero quietly told them what he had done to save them, and by his directions they soon found the spot where they lay. On removing the covering of moss they found the little creatures snug and warm, and in a refreshing sleep.

What words could picture the wild joy of the father and mother at that sight? But, alas! on their way back, near the spot where they had parted with him, they found the noble boy, who had saved their children's lives at the expense of his own, lying dead. Nature was exhausted after the fatigue and exposure of the night, and, unable to reach the friendly shelter, he sank down and died.—[N. Y. Paper.]

A PROFESSOR in a certain college had taken his class out, on a pleasant afternoon, to exercise them in practical surveying. The first boy was called up. The professor said—

How would you go to work to survey a lot of land?

(Deep thinking, but no answer.)

If a man should come to you to survey a lot of land, what would you do?

I think, said the student, thoughtfully, I should tell him he had better get somebody else.

THE STAR

AND CONCEPTION BAY SEMI-WEEKLY ADVERTISER,

Is printed and published by the Proprietors, ALEXANDER A. PARSONS and WILLIAM R. SQUARBY, at their Office, (opposite the premises of Capt. D. Green, Water Street, Harbor Grace, Newfoundland.

Price of Subscription—THREE DOLLARS per annum, payable half-yearly.

Advertisements inserted on the most liberal terms, viz.:—Per square of seven, ten lines, for first insertion, \$1; each continuation 25 cents.

Book and Job Printing executed in a manner calculated to afford the utmost satisfaction.

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