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NO. 23.

Creeping Up the Stairs.
In the softly falling twilight
Of the weary, weary day,
With a quiet step I entered
Where the children were at play;
I was brooding o'er some trouble
That had not met me unaware,
When a little voice came ringing,
"Me is creepin' up a stair."

Oh! it touched the tender heart-string
With a breath and force divine,
And such melodies awakened
As words can ne'er define.
As I turned to see our darling,
All forgetful of care,
When I saw the little creature
Slowly creeping up the stairs.

Step by step she bravely clambered
On her little hands and knees,
Keeping up a constant chattering,
Like the magpies in the trees.
Till at last she reached the topmost,
When o'er all her world's affairs
She delighted, stood a victor,
After creeping up the stairs.

Faithful heart, behold an image
Of man's brief and struggling life,
Whose best prize must be his courage
With an earnest noble strife!
Onward, upward reaching ever,
Bending to the weight of care,
Hoping, fearing, still expecting,
We go creeping up the stairs.

On the steps may be no carpet,
By their side may be no rail,
Hills and knees may often pain us,
And the heart may almost fail;
Still above there is a glory
Which no sinfulness impairs,
With its rest and joy forever,
After creeping up the stairs.

The Deacon Would a-Wooing Go.

The sun had disappeared behind the hills of New Bethany, and the lingering light on the mountain tops was changing from rose to purple, when Deacon Pinch sat at his melancholy old man in front of the village postoffice. It was Saturday night, the only time when New Bethany roused itself from its lethargy, and showed any signs of life and energy. The post of the week is drawn, and late-coming towns from railway and manufacturing centers.

"Wha, a Mary Jane!" said the deacon with unnecessary emphasis throwing the reins on the mare's broad back and springing to the ground.

But the despondent Mary Jane had already ceased her shambling gait from sheer force of habit. A ten year's service with the deacon had made her perfectly familiar with the accustomed round of stopping places. Wednesday night it was the prayer meeting; Sunday, the church service; and Saturday night, invariably the postoffice, and, as a late variation, an after pause at the house of Mrs. Betsy Hill, the town milliner, who for a quarter of a century had supplied the women of New Bethany with head-gear fearfully and wonderfully made.

The moment the deacon stepped inside the office he knew, from the unusual buzz of conversation, that something extraordinary had happened.

"Heard the news—eh, deacon?" asked one of the village loungers.

The deacon looked up inquiringly.

"Miss Kezia's had an amazin' streak of luck."

"It's been nothin' but an amazin' streak of luck ever since she was born," returned the deacon. "If owin' the best farm in town and hev'in' money at interest isn't luck, I'd like to know what is."

"Yes, but this is something out of common. You used to know her brother, who died years ago and left his only child for Miss Kezia to bring up? Wa'al, when old man Mead died Miss Kezia took the farm as her share of the property, and her brother, being of a rovin' turn of mind, took the few thousands of personal property as his'n and invested 'em in Western lands, which turned out wondrous, and he lost every cent he put in. Folks always blamed him for bein' so foolish and hasty, and they say grief and mortification like hastened his death. Wa'al, it turns out now they hev' put a railroad square thro' the lands, and its sent real estate way up, nobody knows where. Miss Kezia's bin offered high on eight thousand dollars for the lands, and they say she'll get ever so much more if she only holds out."

"You don't mean it?"

"I dew; it's as true as Scripture."

"She'll hold out, never fear," said the deacon; "and I hold it to be our bounden duty as neighbors to advise her to that end."

Instead of lingering as usual for the village gossip—for the New Bethany postoffice on Saturday night being the purpose of a weekly paper—the deacon seemed in a great hurry to get home.

It was the night of the choir rehearsal, and in driving by the church he saw Mary Mead, Miss Kezia's niece, going up the steps. He suddenly whipped up his sleepy old mare and

drove home at a breakneck rate of speed.

"Now's yer time, Solomon Pinch," he muttered to himself; "it's mabe a long while afore ye'll hev such a good chance ag'in. She'll be sure to be alone for a couple o' hours or so—Hi, old lady! no stoppin' here to-night," he added, giving the lines a sudden twist as Mary Jane showed an inclination to stop before Mrs. Betsy Hill's house, "we've other fish to fry now, old girl."

When he reached home he drove the mare under the horse-shed and tied her there, instead of unharnessing her as usual. Then he entered the house, and hastily swallowing the scanty supper which the hired woman placed before him, coned his best clothes and drove off again at a rapid pace.

"Law sakes alive!" exclaimed the woman, amazed. "The deacon's got suthin' on his mind, sure! It's the first time I ever knew him to dismember to ask a blessin'."

Ever since the death of his wife Deacon Pinch had looked on Miss Kezia as her probable successor. For years he had gazed with covetous eyes on the fine Mead farm with its substantial buildings, but he never could screw his courage up to the point of facing the snapping black eyes of its owner. Of late he had been seen several times knocking at the door of Mrs. Betsy Hill's little brown house, and the worthy milliner was overjoyed at the opening of this brilliant prospect before her. But the news of the sudden rise in Western lands caused Mrs. Hill, with her small possessions to sink into insignificance by the side of this rich woman with her well-tilled acres, her overflowing barns and her prospective thousands of dollars.

The idea of failure in his matrimonial venture never for an instant entered the deacon's head. "The way afore ye is as plain and straight as a pipe-stem," Solomon Pinch, he murmured, rubbing the palms of his hands together, as he walked toward Miss Kezia's side door. "Women is mostly alike—eager an' willin' to embrace matrimonial opportunities. They'll snap at an offer like a hungry trout at a worm. She has got the money, and I hev' got the prominence and influence; that's a pint not to be overlooked; and deacons in't to be bad every day. Put her money and my influence together, and I rath'er guess we'll stand about top o' the heap in New Bethany."

Miss Kezia was sitting by the table knitting as usual. She had just begun to narrow for the toe of the stocking, when a step sounded on the walk. She threw down the stocking and opened the door, and, holding the lamp lit it above her head, her eyes rested on the amazing spectacle of the deacon in all the Sunday magnificence of white shirt and shiny black broadcloth. "Well I never!" she ejaculated, and then, feeling that her reception had been hardly hospitable, she lowered the lamp and said kindly, "Come in, deacon—come in."

"Thank ye, thank ye; I don't mind if I dew."

"Take a seat, deacon."

"Thank ye; I don't mind if I dew."

The deacon surveyed the attractive room, which, with its cheery fire and comfortable cushioned chairs, seemed a veritable paradise in comparison with his untidy, ill-kept home. He placed his hat on the floor beside his chair, displaying his scant gray locks ingeniously plastered over the top of his head so as to cover as much of the bald surface as possible. Then there was a long pause.

"Anything going on, deacon?" asked Miss Kezia, resuming her knitting.

She was greatly puzzled to account for those Sunday clothes.

"Nothin' within the range of my observation. There won't be much ag'in on now till 'lection time; things'll be pretty lively then."

"Want to buy any hay this year?" chirped Miss Kezia. "Mine is extra good this season; my hired man says it's the heaviest yield in town."

"I rath'er guess I'll hev enough to carry methro' the winter. If I don't, I shall know where to come for hay as I say. I declare your farm does beat all! I feel kind o' rigged like when I think the best farm in town is managed by a woman."

Miss Kezia smiled graciously, and the deacon drew his chair a little nearer his hostess. "It must be a great load for ye to carry alone. Such a large farm is a tre-mem-ous responsibility for a lone woman."

"Oh, I don't mind it; it keeps me proper busy."

The deacon hitched his chair along a few inches further. "Ye'd oughter hev a brother or cousin, or some relative like, to share the burden with ye."

"My shoulders are plenty strong," returned Miss Kezia, good naturedly. "I'm glad to show folks that there are women who are good for something besides giddy-raddying and tattling."

"Yis, yis," answered the deacon, "we can all testify to your vally and worth. You're really a honor to your sex. You're—ye're a bright and shinin' beacon light to the triffin' and

vain-minded women of the world," and the speaker waved his hand at the conclusion of this little oratorical flourish.

Then hitch, hitch, hitch went the chair toward Miss Kezia. "Don't ye feel sort o' lonely at spells," he asked, insinuatingly.

Miss Kezia glanced suspiciously at the rapidly-advancing chair. She dropped her knitting and went to the fire and piled up the blazing sticks of wood. Then she came back to the table and set her chair on the farther side of it, thus putting a barrier between her and her visitor. "I'm never lonely, deacon; plenty to do is the best medicine for loneliness."

"But woman's a tender, dependent creature; woman's a vine, and needs suthin' to cling to when the troublous, desolatin' waves and winds of affliction and sorrow roll over her."

"Staff and nonsense!" exclaimed Miss Kezia with a contemptuous sniff. "I shouldn't have expected that a man of your sense, deacon, would repeat such silly trash. I have no patience with the people who are always talking as if a woman couldn't stand alone, and needed proping up, like a rag doll that hadn't any backbone. I'm no vine—no such creeping, helpless thing. I can tell ye. I can stand alone as well as anybody, if the Lord so wills it, altho' I admit, deacon, that it's pleasant to have some one keep ye company."

"That's just it; ye hev' hit the nail square on the head!" It is pleasant to her company in our sojourn on this mortal earth."

The deacon seized his chair with both hands and by a circuitous line of hitching placed it within three feet of Miss Kezia's table. "You're a forehanded woman, Miss Kezia; I'm a man of prominence and influence in the community; it seems to me that it would be a good thing if we could walk hand in hand thro' this vale of tears. Providence seems to pint its finger that way." The deacon was thinking at that very moment of the money he would save by putting a thrifty manager like Miss Kezia in the place of his inefficient, wasteful hired woman.

Miss Kezia was dumfounded. She dropped her knitting, and the ball of yarn rolled across the floor. "Mercy!" she finally gasped.

"I'll make ye a first-rate husband, and ye'll make me a good wife. We've been members of the same church for thirty years or more, and we've been members of the spiritual family, we'll now be members of the same human family."

Miss Kezia straightened herself up in her high-backed chair and drew in her chin, while her voice rang out in shrill and clear. "I rath'er guess it'll take two to make that bargain."

A second look at her aged admirer, who was edging up to her with a sheepish simper, exasperated the deacon beyond control. "The old fool!" she said, wrathfully.

The color came into the deacon's thin cheeks, and he started to his feet, looking anxiously toward the door, as if meditating a hasty retreat. But the yarn was wound around his boots and he was forced to remain.

Miss Kezia likewise rose, and folding her hands primly in front of her, remarked, grimly: "When you first began your talking I hadn't the least idea what you were driving at. I thought you were hinting about Betsy Hill, and wanted to take me into your confidence. I never dreamed that you meant me. Why, I supposed every one in town knew that I wouldn't give up my freedom for the best man living. Betsy Hill is a pious, likely woman; she'll make a good home for you, and she needs a home herself."

The deacon looked completely withered, and Miss Kezia continued: "If you'll step around a little livelier, deacon, and pick up the stones on your lot and put them into good fences, and mow down some of those pesky weeds, there's no earthly reason why your farm shouldn't look as well as mine. If I've said anything to hurt your feelings, deacon, hope you'll overlook it. Why, I am all twisted up in that yarn; I'll untangle it."

The delay in unwinding the yarn from the deacon's feet gave Miss Kezia word more, deacon; have you heard about those Western lands?"

The deacon wished he was anywhere out of the range of those merciless black eyes. "I—think I've heern tell suthin' about 'em," he replied, meekly.

"I thought so! I thought so!" exclaimed Miss Kezia, savagely. "Well, deacon, those lands rightfully belong to my niece Mary; I only hold them as her guardian."

The deacon began to look upon his rejection as a blessing in disguise, for without the Western lands Miss Kezia's attraction seemed tame compared with those of mild, blue-eyed, beaver Widow Hill. "I can trust to ye never to mention this!" he asked, timidly.

"I shall never speak of it. Now, follow my advice, deacon; make sure of Betsy Hill before another week goes by.

You have my good wishes. See to this at once."

"Thank ye, thank ye; I don't mind if I dew."

The good woman followed her crest-fallen visitor to the door. As a sudden gust of cold night air put out the light, she said: "The air is snapping to-night; have a frost, eh, deacon?"

And the discomfited deacon felt that he had been nipped by something sharper than a frost.—*Lippincott's Magazine.*

A Few Remarks.

Several gentlemen were sitting on the veranda of the Plankinton house one warm evening recently, when the conversation turned upon the subject of profits in the various kinds of business.

A banker who was present inquired of a newspaper man whose name we suppress on account of respect for his family, if newspapers ever made any money. The newspaper man said there were instances of the kind, but they were rare, and pointed to the fact that Mr. Cramer, of the *Evening Wisconsin*, had made so much money that he was obliged to start a bank of his own to hold it all. Yes, he said, newspapers quite frequently make money, but instead of hoarding it away they put it into their business, adding new attractions to their paper. He said he had known country newspapers to make as high as two or three dollars a day, during harvest when the editor put his printer in charge of the office while he took his customary vacation. A druggist who was present said he always had an idea the newspapers made all the money that was made, except what was made by the meat market men. This was intended to wake up a leading meat man who sat in a chair tipped back against the building. The druggist said he had often watched a butcher when he sold a roast. The butcher would saw off a roast, and throw it on the scales and it would weigh eight pounds, and then he began to trim it. He would chop out about two pounds of the backbone with his cleaver, then dissect out a pound of ribs, remove the kidney tallow, and when he had got done, and spiked it up in a ball with skewers, it would weight about four pounds. The druggist said if he could have the profits of a meat market for three months he would pay the national debt and stop so much talk about it. The gentleman from the meat market here arose, and was recognized by the speaker of the house. He said he thought seriously of becoming a druggist when he was a young man, but when he saw that prescriptions containing only five cents worth of drugs were sold to customers for fifty cents, his conscience would not permit him, and he had sold meat in order that he might lead a Christian life and stand some show after death. He said if the druggist wanted to go into the business of selling meat, and undersell the present dealers, he could probably find a vacant building somewhere that could be had for a reasonable rent. The druggist said he supposed a man in business had to live, but he was sorry the man of meat and such a tender conscience, as he would have starved to death years ago if he had kept a drug store. A druggist he said, charged something for his knowledge, the same as a lawyer, as it took years to learn the profession so as not to get strychnine in the place of asafetida. "A druggist," said he, casting a withering glance at the meat man, "must know something, and perhaps it is as well that you didn't attempt—"

Friends rushed in and separated them; but the thread of pleasant conversation had been broken, and the porch was soon after deserted. We are convinced that it is unwise for men to speak of business matters while engaged in social converse.—*Milwaukee Sun.*

Origin of the Plow.

In a paper on the origin of the plow, Dr. Taylor states that the first agricultural implement seems to have been a pointed stick four or five feet long, such as many savage tribes still carry for the purpose of digging roots, knocking down fruits and unearthing animals. At a later day the stick was bent and used as a hoe, the point being hardened by fire. In the southern part of Sweden large tracts of land give evidence of early cultivation, which is attributed to a prehistoric people called by the natives the "hackers," who are always associated with the giants of mythology, and whose rude hoe was a fir pole with short projecting branch. There came into use afterward a larger instrument of the same kind, which was not used like the hoe but dragged by men or oxen. Instances of this are to be found in old Egyptian pictures and bas-reliefs, and it was probably the primitive idea of the plow, which is of prehistoric origin, evidences being found of its early use among the Greeks, Egyptians and Chinese. It had from the earliest times a religious sanction. The next improvement was a wooden hook shod with iron; and in the time of Virgil a wheeled plow was in use which differed but little from the best in Europe a century ago.

TIMELY TOPICS.

The Chicago *Times* says that a few weeks ago an engine started on the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern railroad for the locality of a wreck, with Superintendent Parsons in the cab, the distance to be run being six miles; that the engineer opened the throttle wide, and the superintendent took out his stop-watch and timed the run, and that the speed was at the rate of eighty-one miles per hour. The engine—one of the best on the road—rocked and rolled about so fearfully that the men were "almost seasick," and the engineer, one of the oldest and bravest in the service, showed a ghastly pale face at the end of the run.

The Prussian capital has long contained a jewel of fabulous value, the news of whose existence was first made known by the reports of the last session of the Polytechnic society. The noble stone is a sapphire, and is the property of one of the members of that learned body. It weighs a little more than six ounces. The jury of the Polytechnic society have settled its value at the frightful sum of 64,000,000 marks, or about \$16,000,000 of American money. It need hardly be said that such a treasure is not likely to find a purchaser at such a price. Its present possessor has placed his treasure in state custody for the sake of his heir.

Dr. Treichler, a German physician, has lately made some much-noted comments on habitual headache among young people, a trouble which he avers is largely on the increase. He is inclined to attribute it to excessive intellectual exertion, often caused by the fancy of parents for having a great variety of subjects taught, and more especially to night work, which, he says, produces in the brain the same condition as would be produced in the muscles, if, after a long day's march, a mountaineer were to continue walking far on into the night, and were to repeat this day after day. Dr. Treichler's letter has elicited from a London physician a statement that he has sometimes found the brain to be growing faster than the skull which contained it. What seemed like great stupidity was for a time the result, but in time the skull effected its enlargement, and the brain was relieved. One of the dangers most likely to occur in schools arises from the fact that the same lessons are necessarily allotted to all in a class, and while they entail no effort of intellect on the part of one, may be a frightful labor to another. It is the dull, laborious pupil, we suspect, who oftentimes is the most injured by school pressure, and it should be the study of the teacher to recognize him or her, and afford aid and encouragement.

Winnipeg.

A writer in *Harper's Magazine* gives the following interesting account of Winnipeg, the capital of Manitoba, in British America: "Morning light revealed to us the metropolis of the Northwest. We saw a broad main street bordered with high wooden sidewalks, and rows of shops of every shape and size. Some were rude wooden shanties; others were fine buildings of yellow brick. High over all towered the handsome tower of the Knox church. Several saw and grist mills sent up incessant puffs of white steam into the pure air. The street was full of bustle and life. There were wagons of all descriptions standing before the stores. Long lines of Red river carts were loading with freight for the interior. The sidewalks were filled with a miscellaneous crowd of people; German peasants, the women in dark blue gowns and head flat caps; French half-breeds, with jaunty buckskin jackets, many colored scarfs around the waists, and their black hair shining with oil; Indians, dark, solemn, gaunt, stalking along in blanket and moccasins; Scotch and English people, looking as they do all the world over, but here, perhaps, a little quicker and more energetic. The middle of the street, though there has been but a single night of rain, was a vast expanse of mud—mud so tenacious that the wheels of the wagons driving through it were almost as large as mill wheels; and when we dared to cross it we came out on the other side with much difficulty, and feet of elephantine proportions.

The city of Winnipeg, which eight years ago was nothing more than a cluster of houses about the Hudson Bay company's fort, now contains over 7,000 inhabitants. It is the distributing center for a large region, a place of great business activity, and so situated in relation to the back country and the facilities for transportation that it is sometimes called 'The Bleeder's Paradise.' It is built on a clay bank at the junction of the Assiniboine with the Red river. The nature of the soil is such that it is difficult to find a good foundation for a house, and many of the larger buildings have settled and cracked.

Notings.

Only some withered blossoms,
Crumbling to dry decay;
Only a glove half torn in two,
And idly thrown away;
Only a heart that's broken—
That is, if hearts could break;
Only a man adrift for life,
All for a woman's sake.

Only a few such tokens
Prized by a love-sick fool,
Naught but the ashes that strew the ground,
When love's hot flame grows cool.
Not the first man by thousands
The dupe of a heartless flirt;
Not the first time that priceless love
Was treated like common dirt.

Only in jest! You know it
Now, though it's rather late—
Rather too late to turn in your life,
And seek another mate.
You're not a man like thousands,
With a heart that will veer and twist,
And feel a glow at the word and glance
Of every flirting girl.

Finished forever, and done;
Wrecked by a treacherous smile;
Following madly a will-o'-the-wisp,
Happy, it but for a while.
Only a heart that's broken—
That is, if hearts could break;
Only a man adrift for life,
All for a woman's sake.

—Harper's Bazar.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

Miners delight in picking a "pocket"—*Cincinnati Commercial.*

Cats have no fixed political belief. They are usually on the fence.

On the island of the Neuse, N. C., a cypress tree, in the hollow of which a horse can be turned around.

Benjamin Franklin, Henry Willis and Charles Sumner Murray are triple born in Boston twenty-four years ago.

The members of a recently elected Pennsylvania school board are Jas. L. Eagle, Joel Fox and Samuel Bear.

A small boy who for the first time noticed a cherry tree in bloom, enthusiastically directed the attention of his mother to "the popcorn tree."

On a tree near Swan's Springs, Cal., J. Woods found hanging a costly hanging-case gold watch, a lady's enamel watch, and two long gold neck chains.

Six great English brewers were defeated in the recent elections, including Sir Arthur Guinness, of Dublin, who has spent vast sums in restoring theatres.

The lower Yellowstone is literally black with large herds of buffalo, many of the citizens are slaughtering them by wholesale for their hides, which find ready sale in Missis City.

Sixteen years ago Mary Mulhan hanged herself from a tree at Coonhook, Ohio, because her lover deserted her, and now the lower Henry Moore, I. been killed under the same tree by an accidental discharge of a gun.

California, once called the land of gold, is now called the land of grass. Last year it produced \$300,000,000 worth of the former and \$90,000,000 worth of the latter. Agriculture is the backbone and source of real wealth to nation after all.

On a sheep range at Desert Spring, Nev., the slaughter has been terrible by wildcats and coyotes. A poison carcass was thrown in the pen, and the following morning, within a circumference of 300 yards, the bodies of fifteen coyotes and ten cats were found (settled voice).

A young bachelor sheriff was called upon to serve an attachment against a beautiful young widow; he accordingly called upon her and said: "Madam, have an attachment for you." The widow blushed, and said his attachment was reciprocated. "You do understand me; you must proceed," said the sheriff. "I know it is leap-year, but I prefer you to do the courting." "Mrs. P., this is no time for trifling; the justice is waiting." "The just is? Why, I prefer a parson."—*New Orleans Picayune.*

"I will propose to her right now,
Hang me if I'm altered—
I do feel cat-wampus like,
But dare me if I'm skeered."

Jim (fortissimo):
"Marian, wouldn't you—won't you—
Will you—say, will you have—"

"What is it, Jim, speak, why don't you
Jim (collapsed):
"Come and see our new calf."

A marked feature of the emigration at New York this season is the proportion of hardy young people, many of them Scandinavians, who come from the United States determined to establish new homes. There is also a proportion of German young men, who are skilled artisans, who flee from a tary proscription. Many have come to pay for homesteads. There are few papers than in past years, though many destitute Hungarians, the victims of famine, are arriving. It is estimated that the average amount of money brought is \$80 per head.