

unity, were only temporary partners, engaged on time, with the liberty of giving three months' notice, and starting off to a new firm.

It is not thus that we understand the matter.

MY WIFE AND I, as we understand it, is the sign and symbol of more than earthly partnership or union—of something sacred as religion, indissoluble as the soul, endless as eternity—the symbol chosen by Almighty Love to represent his redeeming, eternal union with the soul of man.

A fountain of eternal youth gushes near the hearth of every household. Each man and woman that have loved truly, have had their romance in life—their poetry in existence.

So I, in giving my history, disclaim all other sources of interest. Look not for trap-doors, or haunted houses, or deadly conspiracies, or murders, or concealed crimes, in this history, for you will not find one. You shall have simply and only the old story—old as the first chapter of Genesis—of Adam stupid, desolate, and lonely without Eve, and how he sought and how he found her.

This much, on mature consideration, I hold to be about the sum and substance of all the romances that have ever been written, and so long as there are new Adams and new Eves in each coming generation, it will not want for sympathetic listeners.

So I, Harry Henderson—a plain Yankee boy from the mountains of New Hampshire, and at present citizen of New York—commence my story.

My experiences have three stages.

First, My child-wife, or the experiences of childhood.

Second, My shadow-wife, or the dreamland of the future.

Third, my real-wife, where I saw her, how I sought and found her.

In pursuing a story simply and mainly of love and marriage, I am reminded of the saying of a respectable serving man of European experiences, who, speaking of his position in a noble family, said it was not so much the wages that made it an object as "*the things it enabled a gentleman to pick up.*" So in our modern days, as we have been observing, it is not so much the story, as the things it gives the author a chance to say. The history of a young American man's progress toward matrimony, of course brings him among the most stirring and exciting topics of the day, where all that relates to the joint interests of man and woman has been thrown into the arena as an open question, and in relating our own experiences, we shall take occasion to keep up with the spirit of this discussing age in all these matters.

CHAPTER II.

MY CHILD-WIFE.

THE Bible says it is not good for man to be alone. This is a truth that has been borne in on my mind, with peculiar force, from the earliest of my recollection. In fact, when I was only seven years old I had selected my wife, and asked the paternal consent.