

# THE STAR.

apparently turned his eyes inward for self support at this emergency. But Miggles's laugh, which was very infectious, broke the silence. "Come," she said briskly, "you must be hungry. Who'll bear a hand to help me get tea?"

She had no lack of volunteers. In a few moments Yuba Bill was engaged like Caliban in bearing logs for this Miranda; the express-man was grinding coffee on the veranda; to myself, the arduous duty of slicing bacon was assigned; and the Judge lent each man his good humored and volubly counsel. And when Miggles, assisted by the Judge and our Hibernian "deck passenger," set the table with all the available crockery, we had become quite joyous, in spite of the rain that beat against the windows, the wind that whirled down the chimney, the two ladies who whispered together in the corner, or the magpie who uttered a satirical and croaking commentary on their conversation from his perch above. In the now bright blazing fire we could see that the walls were papered with illustrated journals, arranged with feminine taste and discrimination. The furniture was extemporized, and adapted from candle boxes and packing cases, and covered with gay calico, or the skin of some animal. The arm chair of the helpless Jim was an ingenious variation of a flour barrel. There was neatness, and even a taste for the picturesque to be seen in the few details of the long low room.

The meal was a culinary success. But more, it was a social triumph,—chiefly, I think, owing to the rare tact of Miggles in guiding the conversation, asking all the questions herself, yet bearing throughout a frankness that rejected the idea of any concealment on her own part, so that we talked of ourselves, of our prospects, of the journey, of the weather, and of each other—of every thing but our host and hostess. It must be confessed that Miggles's conversation was never elegant, rarely grammatical, and that at times she employed expletives, the use of which had generally been yielded to our sex. But they were delivered with such a lightning up of teeth and eyes, and were usually followed by a laugh—a laugh peculiar to Miggles—so frank and honest that it seemed to clear the moral atmosphere.

Once, during the meal, we heard a noise like the rubbing of a heavy body against the outer walls of the house. This was shortly followed by a scratching and sniffing at the door. "That's Joaquin," said Miggles, in reply to our questioning glances; "would you like to see him?" Before we could answer she had opened the door, and disclosed a half-grown grizzly, who instantly, raised himself on his hunches, with his forepaws hanging down in the popular mendacity, and looked admiringly at Miggles, with a very singular resemblance in his manner to Yuba Bill. "That's my watch-dog," said Miggles, in explanation. "O, he don't bite," she added, as the two lady passengers fluttered into a corner. "Does he, old Toppo?"

(The latter remark being addressed directly to the sagacious Joaquin.) "I tell you what, boys," continued Miggles after she had fed and closed the door on *Ursa Minor*, "you were in big luck that Joaquin wasn't hanging round when you dropped in to-night." "Where was he?" asked the Judge. "With me," said Miggles. "Lord love you; he trots round with me nights like as if he was a man."

We were silent for a few moments, and listened to the wind. Perhaps we all had the same picture before us,—of Miggles walking through the rainy woods, with her savage guardian at her side. The Judge, I remember, said something about Una and her lion; but Miggles received it as she did other compliments, with quiet gravity. Whether she was altogether unconscious of the admiration she excited,—she could hardly have been oblivious of Yuba Bill's adoration,—I know not; but her very frankness suggested a perfect sexual equality that was cruelly humiliating to the younger members of our party.

The incident of the bear did not add anything in Miggles's favor to the opinions of those of her own sex who were present. In fact, the repeat over, a chilliness radiated from the two lady passengers that no pine-boughs brought in by Yuba Bill and cast as a sacrifice upon the hearth could wholly overcome. Miggles felt it; and, suddenly declaring that it was time to "turn in," offered to show the ladies to their bed in an adjoining room. "You, boys, will have to camp out here by the fire as well as you can," she added, "for that ain't but the one room."

Our sex,—by which, my dear sir, I allude of course to the stronger portion of humanity—has been generally relieved from the imputation of curiosity, or a fondness for gossip. Yet I am constrained to say, that hardly had the door closed on Miggles than we crowded together, whispering, snickering, smiling and exchanging suspicions, surmises, and a thousand speculations in regard to our pretty hostess and her singular companion. I fear that we even hustled that imbecile paralytic, who set like a voiceless Memnon in our midst, gazing with serene indifference of the Past in his passionless eyes upon our wordy counsels. In the midst of an exciting discussion the door opened again, and Miggles re-entered.

But not, apparently, the same Miggles who a few hours before had flashed upon us. Her eyes were downcast, and as she hesitated for a moment upon the threshold, with a blanket on her arm, she seemed to have left behind her the frank,

fearlessness which had charmed us a moment before. Coming into the room, she drew a low stool beside the paralytic chair, sat down, threw the blanket over her shoulder, and saying, "If it's all the same to you, boys, as we're rather crowded, I'll stop here to-night," took the invalid's withered hand in her own, and turned her eyes upon the dying fire. An instinctive feeling that this was only preliminary to more confidential relations, and perhaps some shame at our previous curiosity, kept us silent. The rain still beat upon the roof, wandering gusts of wind stirred the embers into momentary brightness, until, in a dull of the elements, Miggles suddenly lifted up her head, and throwing her hair over her shoulder, turned her face upon the group and asked,—"Is there any of you that knows me?"

There was no reply. "Think again! I lived at Marysville in '53. Everybody knew me there, and everybody had the right to know me. I kept the Polka Saloon until I came to live with Jim. That's six years ago. Perhaps I've changed some."

The absence of recognition may have disconcerted her. She turned her head to the fire again, and it was some seconds before she again spoke, and then more rapidly:—

"Well, you see I thought some of you must have known me. There's no great harm done, anyway. What I was going to say was this: Jim here"—she took his hands in both of hers as she spoke—"used to know me, if you didn't and spent a heap of money upon me. I reck on he spent all he had. And one day—'t's six years ago this winter—Jim came into my back room, sat down on my sofa, like as you see him in that chair, and never moved again without help. He was struck all of a heap, and never seemed to know what ailed him. The doctor came and said as how it was caused all along of his way of life,—for Jim was mighty free and wild like,—and that he would never get better, and couldn't last long anyway. They advised me to send him to Frisco to the hospital, for he was no good to any one and would be a baby all his life. Perhaps it was something in Jim's eye, perhaps it was that I never had a baby, but I said 'No' I was rich then, for I was popular with everybody,—gentlemen like your-self, sir, came to see me,—and I sold out my business and bought this yer place, because it was sort of out of the way of travel, you see, and I brought my baby here."

With a woman's intuitive tact and poetry, she had, as she spoke slowly shifted her position so as to bring the mute figure of the ruined man between her and her audience, hiding in the shadow behind it, as if she offered it as a tacit apology for her actions. Silent and expressionless, yet spoke for her; helpless, crushed, and smitten with the Divine thunderbolt, it still stretched an invisable arm around her.

Hidden in the darkness, but still holding his hand she went on:—"It was a long time before I could get the hang of things about yer, for I was used to company and excitement. I couldn't get any woman to help me, and a man I dursent trust; but what with the Indians hereabout, who'd do odd jobs for me, and having everything sent from the North Fork, Jim and I managed to worry through."

The Doctor would run up from Sacramento once in a while. He'd ask to see Miggles's baby, as he called Jim, and when he'd go away, he'd say, 'Miggles, you're a trump,—God bless you; and it didn't seem so lonely after that. But the last time he was here he said, as he opened the door to go, 'Do you know, Miggles, your baby will grow up to be a man yet and an honor to his mother; but not here, Miggles, not here!' And I thought he went away sad,—and—and—and— and here Miggles's voice and head were some how both lost completely in the shadow. "The folks about here are very kind," said Miggles, after a pause, coming a little into the light again. "The men from the fork used to hang around here, until they found they wasn't wanted, and the women are kind,—and don't call. I was pretty lonely until I picked up Joaquin in the woods yonder one day, when he wasn't so high, and taught him to beg for his dinner; and then that's Polly,—that's the magpie,—she knows no end of tricks, and makes it quite sociable of evenings with her talk, and so I don't feel like as I was the only living being about the ranch. And Jim here," said Miggles, with her old laugh again, and coming out quite into the firelight, "Jim—why, boys, you would a'maire to see how much he knows for a man like him. Sometimes I bring him flowers, and he looks at 'em just as natural as if he knew 'em; and times, when we're sitting alone, I read him those things on the wall. Why, Lord!" said Miggles, with her frank laugh, "I've read him that whole side of the house this winter. There never was such a man for reading as Jim."

"Why," asked the Judge, "do you not marry this man to whom you have devoted your youthful life?" "Well, you see," said Miggles, "it would be playing it rather low down on on to a considerable extent, but the conviction of one of the most notorious violators of the law, with the probable conviction of others who are being closely watched, cannot fail to have a good effect. In inflicting the above fine the magistrate remarked that it was next to impossible that a systematic violation of the law could go on while two energetic Temperance Societies were on the look out, and

night, boys"; and, throwing the blanket over her head, Miggles laid herself down beside Jim's chair, her head pillowed on the low stool that held his feet, and spoke no more. The fire slowly faded from the hearth; we each sought our blankets in the silence; and presently there was no sound in the long room but the pattering of the rain upon the roof, and the heavy breathing of the sleepers. It was nearly morning when I awoke from a troubled dream. The storm had passed, the stars were shining, and through the shuttered window the full moon, lifting itself over the solemn pines with out, looked into the room. It touched the lonely figure in the chair with an infinite compassion, and seemed to baptize with a shining flood the lowly head of the woman whose hair, as in the sweet old story, bathed the feet of him she loved. It even lent a kindly poetry to the rugged outline of Yuba Bill, half reclining on his elbow between them and his passengers, with savagely patient eyes keeping watch and ward. And then I fell asleep and only woke at broad day, with Yuba Bill standing over me, and "All aboard" ringing in my ears.

Coffee was waiting for us on the table but Miggles was gone. We wandered about the house and lingered long after the horses were harnes-ed, but she did not return. It was evident that she wished to avoid a formal leave taking, and had so left us to depart as we had come. After we had helped the ladies into the coach, we returned to the house and solemnly shook hands with the paralytic Jim, as solemnly settling him back into position after each handshake. Then we looked for the last time around the long low room, at the stool where Miggles had sat, and slowly took our seats in the waiting coach. The whip cracked, and we were off!

But as we reached the high road, Bill's dexterous hand laid the six horses back on their haunches, and the stage stopped with a jerk. For there, on a little eminence beside the road, stood Miggles, her hair flying, her eyes sparkling, her white handkerchief waving, and her white teeth flashing a "la-t-a" good by. "I'm fearful of further fascination, madly I led his horses forward, and we sank back in our seats. We exchanged not a word until we reached the North Fork, and the stage drew up at the Independence House. Then, the Judge leading, we walked into the bar-room and took our places gravely at the bar.

"A e your glasses charged, gentlemen?" said the Judge, solemnly taking off his white hat. They were. "Well, then, here's to Miggles, God Bless Her!" Perhaps he had. Who knows?

## THE STAR.

HARBOR GRACE, DECEMBER 6, 1872

It is gratifying to note the progress being made by the Temperance movement in the different leading communities of the colony. Scarcely a town or settlement of importance but has a vigorous organization of this kind in operation, and we are inclined to believe that ere the expiration of another decade will be shorn of its horrible proportions, and sobriety with all the accompanying influences fully realized throughout the land. Already the Permissive Bill has been brought into operation in some localities with the most cheering results, and our Carbonear friends are now making preparation to have the spirit of the Bill carried out in that district. Altho' Harbor Grace has not yet decided to have the gin-shops closed, we have the greatest reason to hope that the time is not far distant when we too shall be rid of the demoralizing influence of such institutions in our midst. We would again impress upon our temperance advocates the necessity of keeping the good cause in agitation. Let public meetings be held and everything done to induce the people to speak out against the sale of ardent spirits in this district, and the result will be a general closing of the rum shops, a decrease in the criminal calendar, and a decided improvement in the moral and religious tone of the community. The "Chronicle" of the 3rd inst., contains the following in regard to the working of the Permissive Bill in Brigus:—

A private letter from Brigus furnishes very satisfactory information respecting the operation of the Permissive Bill in that place. On the 26th ult., an individual was brought before the Stipendiary Magistrate and fined \$8 for illicit selling. It is known that secret grog selling goes on to a considerable extent, but the conviction of one of the most notorious violators of the law, with the probable conviction of others who are being closely watched, cannot fail to have a good effect. In inflicting the above fine the magistrate remarked that it was next to impossible that a systematic violation of the law could go on while two energetic Temperance Societies were on the look out, and

that in case of future convictions he would certainly inflict a much higher penalty than he had done in this instance. "The district and town are singularly free from disturbances of any kind, and scarcely a drunken man has been seen on the streets since the 1st of November. One good effect is already apparent from the Permissive Bill—that those who do sell secretly take good care not to allow their customers to indulge too freely, for fear of the Police picking them up and leading to information the next day at the Police Office. The liquor dealers now plainly see the risks they run, and do their sly business with fear and trembling." Every confidence is felt that the worthy magistrate there will do his duty fearlessly and conscientiously, exercising at the same time that wise discretion which is recognized in high places as one of his most valuable characteristics.

INFORMATION of the loss of the brig "Union," bound from this port to Boston, with a cargo of herrings, was received here yesterday. It would appear that in the late stormy weather she was dismasted and went ashore off Ferryland, where it is said she now lies, part of her cargo having been washed ashore. Crew saved.

In the gale of Tuesday night last, a fore-and-aft schooner, (commanded by James Bransfield) from St. John's for Carbonear, met with very rough weather, by which she lost her mainmast and rigging. The craft was latterly got to anchor at Bay de Verds, where the foremast was cut away to save her from driving ashore. The steamer "Lizzie" was despatched to her aid on Wednesday evening, and towed her to Carbonear early yesterday morning.

## KORRESPONDENCE.

[TO THE EDITORS OF THE STAR.]

DEAR SIRS,—

Notwithstanding the oft-repeated complaints of the press and of the public of the negligence of those constituting our Road Boards, regards the non-completion of work begun, and of work that should have had due attention being utterly ignored, no excuse whatever has been offered. With ample means at disposal and every facility for effecting thorough improvements, one is at a loss to know what such a mockery of the duties imposed upon, and trust placed in the Board can mean. In last issue you had occasion to refer to the dangerous condition of Cooperage Hill. Now, were that all, little might be said; but it is not so. For instance, that public way (known as Martin's Lane) connecting Water and Harvey Streets, is in a very dilapidated state, so much so that it presents as fine an ankle-deep mud march in wet weather as can well be conceived. A stream dissects the lane, and what was once a bridge across it, is at present a dangerous impediment to pedestrians, being broken and the water-way beneath it clogged up, so that the stream makes its way over and around it, causing passers-by much inconvenience.

The Road Board, I believe, was petitioned early in the summer ament this nuisance, yet it has been allowed to remain, and is of course getting worse with winter weather. A new bridge, and a few loads of gravel would rectify the matter, and it is not yet too late to attend thereto. Hoping the Board will shake off apparent sluggishness and exert themselves in the public weal,

I am, yours, &c.,

Dec. 6. DUTY BOUND.

NAPOLEONIC RELICS.—An old and esteemed Liverpool lady, Miss Isabella Mather, who was well known for unobscured charity, has just died in her 80th year, and by her death a large number of interesting and valuable miniatures will be added to the town museum. These miniatures were formerly the property of the ex-Emperor of the French—then plain Louis Napoleon—having been bought from him by the brother of Miss Mather when he was in pecuniary difficulties, before his ascension to power. The miniatures represent different members of his family, including the parents of Napoleon I. and his celebrated marshals, and after the Emperors accession to power, he endeavoured, but in vain, to induce Mr. Mather to part with them. The deceased lady was one of the last representatives of an old Puritan family, who were probably among the original members of the first Dissenting chapel in Lancashire.

The Prince Imperial was, on October 11, under examination as a candidate for admission to the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich.

## Latest Despatches.

LONDON, Dec. 2.

An orderly meeting was held in Hyde Park yesterday. Odger and Bradlaugh were the principal speakers. A resolution was passed, condemning the Public Park Regulations Bill, and the meeting adopted a petition asking for the resignation of Commissioner Ayrton.

The Emperor of Germany has created 25 new Peers out of Government officials and land owners.

Mrs. Mary Somerville, the celebrated mathematician and writer on astronomy died yesterday.

The contest in the French Assembly, re-opened on Saturday, and after a heated debate, a resolution was passed by a vote of 305 to 299, censuring the Minister of the Interior. Le Franc, the minister censured, resigned immediately. A Cabinet Council was held yesterday, and all the Ministers offered their resignations, but excepting Le Franc's, none were accepted. President Thiers again intimates an intention to resign, and once more there is a crisis.

The steamship "Dalmatian" has been wrecked in the Mediterranean, and 35 lives lost.

PARIS, 2.

Two Cabinet Councils, each of long duration, were held yesterday. After a full deliberation upon the situation, M. Thiers finally agreed to remain in the Presidency, if the ministers who tendered their resignations yesterday, would withdraw them, and the latter consented.

NEW YORK, 2.

A severe fight took place near the mouth of Lost River, Oregon, on the 28th November, between border Indians and a detachment of soldiers sent to remove them to reservation. Fifteen Indians two citizens, and one soldier were killed. Four soldiers were wounded. At last accounts the fighting was going on.

GOLD 113 7-8.

Congress assembled to-day at Washington. President Grant's message is of unusual length, but mainly devoted to domestic affairs. In relation to the fisheries and other matters affecting the United States and British Provinces, he recommended early legislation to carry into effect the recent treaty. He congratulates the country on the result of the Geneva Arbitration, and the settlement of the San Juan boundary, and speaks of Great Britain in the decisions.

SAND PAPER.—The device for making sand-paper is simple, and at hand to anyone who has occasion to use the paper. A quantity of ordinary window glass is taken—that having a green colour is said to be the best—and pounded fine, after which it is poured through one or more sieves of different degrees of fineness, to secure the glass for coarse or fine paper. Then any tough paper is covered evenly with glue, having about one-third more water than is generally employed for woodwork. The glass is sifted upon the paper, allowed a day or two in which to become fixed in the glue, when the refuse glass is shaken off, and the paper is fit for use.

THE LI SEA.—An been adopted for submarine.

A plate proposes is en as to be cov space of fo is sunk to th the expirat drawn up a way. It been obtain actinic rays hitherto success might covering the vessels.

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THE wreck register for 1871 has recently been issued by the board of Trade and it is, as usual, a very complete and exhaustive document. It is supplemented in the usual way by the most interesting charts. It states that the number of wrecks, casualties, and collisions from all causes on and near the coasts of the United Kingdom and in the surrounding seas reported last year is 1,575, being 73 more than the number reported in 1870, and with the exception of 1870, less than the number reported in any year since 1864.

GIFT OF ENGLISH BIBLES.—German newspapers express great gratification at the gift of about 50,000 Bibles by the British and Foreign Bible Society to the widows and families of German soldiers and others killed in the war. The Bibles being intended not as alms, but as tokens of condolence and solace in bereavement; the presentation has not been limited to the poor, but families in good circumstances have as thankfully accepted them. The Emperor William himself has been presented with one, and has received it with thanks.