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Literature.

My Lodger's Wife.

(From Chamber's Journal.)

The alarm from Fenian outbreaks is too recent to require any description here, even if I were capable of writing one; but as a plain widow woman—which I am—I have no pretension to write history. I only know that down at Weymouth, as well as everywhere else, we were always being startled by some fresh report of what the Fenians had done, or were going to do, generally the latter; (this was common to all places, but we had special interest in them at Weymouth, because most of the men, when convicted, were sent to Portland, and we sometimes caught a sight of them on the platform of our station, when they were changed to the little branch line. I suppose almost everybody who reads these words knows that Portland Island is only two or three miles from our town, and that there are nearly two thousand convicts there. They have built the breakwater, and made a regular castle on the Island, and so have done a great deal of work there, if they never did any before they came.

Now and then one escapes, but he is nearly always retaken directly, or gets drowned in trying to swim off to some boat. My husband, who was a master-fisherman, saw one drowned. Although he was a convict, my husband tried to save him, but he went down like a stone, not twenty yards from his ship. My husband was very much upset by it, for, instead of being a forbidding-looking ruffian, like Bill Sykes in *Oliver Twist*, he was a smiling, fair-haired young fellow, who didn't seem above one or two and twenty. However, my poor husband was drowned himself not very long after this; and I have lived ever since on a very little income he left me, and by letting furnished apartments in the season. In the winter, Weymouth is very dull, and I, living alone, would almost have been glad to accommodate any one for nothing, in order to have company in the house; so I was very pleased to have a chance of letting my first-floor rooms to a very respectable young man, who wanted them at a reduced rate. I had been with many others, to the station, to see a batch of Fenians change for Portland, but we were obliged to go back unsatisfied, because the railway companies would not allow strangers in; this was the more annoying, as we all wanted to see a Colonel La Tourelle, a Fenian from New Orleans, who had fought desperately when taken, and he had been horribly hurt about the head, and rendered senseless, before he would surrender. As it happened, we were not able to see him; so we all went back as we came.

I had been at home about ten minutes, when I was warming my cocoa for my supper, when I heard a knock at the street-door, and on opening it, I saw a very good-looking young fellow—very slight, very dark, with a black moustache, and altogether a handsome air. He spoke English, however, and said he had been advised to apply to me for cheap apartments; he was not very rich; he had come to Weymouth believing he would have an appointment in one of the hotels—he looked as if he had made a capital waiter—was disappointed for the present, and wished to remain in the town, to his real business, and so had applied to me. I was glad he had done so, and offered him my rooms cheap; he wanted to take them, and sent for his trunk from the station at once; he had a great deal of luggage, more than most young men possess.

He never had a quieter, gentler lodger in my life than he was; no trouble, no noise, never out of an evening any chance; and his manner was so soft and quiet, that, as I told him, it was more like having a girl in the house, than a man. He would laugh at this, and

say the same thing had often been remarked before. At first, he seemed to make no inquiries after any situation, or to visit his friends at all; but after he had been with me about a fortnight, he went out nearly every day, and all day long. I was glad to see that he did so, for really he moved himself up in his room so constantly, that I began to fear he would injure his health.

What puzzled me not a little, was the finding that he spent a great part of his time on the island—not that Portland is really an island, only everybody calls it so. In the winter time, there cannot be a more dreary place in the world than Portland; the storms seem to rage there often and fiercer than they do anywhere else; the roads are bad, the houses are small and mean, and except for the wild romantic sea-view which lies all around you, and the awful Race of Portland, which no vessel can cross, there is nothing to be seen. My niece paid me a visit about this time, and nothing would do but that I must go with her over the island; I did so, and, to my surprise, I saw Mr. Lewis—for such was my lodger's name—leaning against one of the huge blocks of stones which lie about the quays, and gazing so thoughtfully out to sea, that he never noticed us driving by.

Then my niece's husband came to fetch her home, and as he had never been to Weymouth before, he, too, must see the island, and I must go with him and his wife. So a second time I went, and a second time, to my great surprise, I saw Mr. Lewis. To-day, he was talking to a tall man in plain clothes, who had just the look of a warder out of his uniform; they were in the middle of the road, so Mr. Lewis might have been asking him; but I was confident, from their eager, hurried manner, that he was not. Yet, when he recognised me, he raised his cap, and the warder—I am sure it was a warder—pointed along a path, as though he was giving some direction, and then we lost sight of them; but I did not forget the incident.

A few nights after this, I was surprised, on answering a knock at the door, to find some one inquiring for Mr. Lewis, for he had never had a visitor before. The stranger gave the name of Brown, and was at once invited up-stairs. After a visit of about half-an-hour he left, and I then my lodger, who had seemed, I fancied, to avoid me of late, came into my little kitchen, and began, in the chatty manner which had made him so pleasant, to talk about the gentleman who had just left. He said he was connected with one of the chief hotels, and had called to speak about an appointment. Now, I had lived in Weymouth maid, wife, and widow for thirty-two years, and know by sight every gentleman connected with every hotel there; and this was none of them. And if my judgment was worth anything, this man was a warder from Portland, and, what was more, was the very warder I had seen Mr. Lewis speaking with on the island. I was quite sure of this, and knew, therefore, that for some purpose my lodger was deceiving me; but I reflected that every family has its secrets, so supposed he had his reasons for trying to mislead me.

Just now a complete change took place in my lodger's habits, for whereas he had previously been the most retiring of creatures, keeping himself so totally within doors that scarcely a soul in the street knew him, he now seemed to be never tired of hanging about the front-door. He cleaned my windows twice as often as I had ever cleaned them; he painted my shutters; he painted my flower-boxes, and was frequently trimming the flowers in them; while he actually went two or three times to the *White Lion*, the public house at the corner of our street, and drank his ale at the bar, instead of allowing the potman to bring it for him, as had hitherto been the case. I took the liberty of saying—for I was quite old enough to be his mother—that I hoped this last would not grow into a habit which might lead to harm.

when, to my surprise, he burst out crying, and dried so bitterly, that I thought he would go into hysterics. I tried to soothe him, and took his hand in mine—he had a soft and delicate hand too; but he rose, and mastering himself by a great effort, went up to his room. In the morning, he apologised for disturbing me by his absent ways; he had had bad news from home, he said. Of course, I told him not to think any more of such a trifle; but in my own mind I wondered where he got the letters from which he so upset him, as I was quite certain the postman had never been near my house all day. All this time, I had heard no more of the situation he expected; and soon after, the same stranger called again—Mr. Brown, I mean. He called very late one night, and went straight up to Lewis's room, came down in a very short time, and left without a word, as before. As I had admitted him, I had a fair chance of confirming my opinion; he was a warder. I was sure. He was a tall, big-bearded, big-whiskered and moustached man, who stood very square when he spoke to you, as a soldier does; weather-browned, as all the Portland warders are, and with a certain quick, watchful look of the eye, which they all acquire very soon.

The next morning brought a heavy fall of rain, with gusts of wind from the sea; and on taking up Mr. Lewis's breakfast, I noticed that he looked excited, if not wild, and I feared he had taken cold. I told him so, but he said: "No. The fact is, Mrs. Gerran, I must now tell you a little secret; I am married, and I expect my wife from town to-day." "Indeed!" I exclaimed, for I had never dreamed of such a thing.

"Yes," he went on, "she is coming this evening, and I am a little worried to think what an unpleasant ride she will have."

"She certainly will, poor thing," I said; "but I will do my best to make her comfortable, Mr. Lewis." "I know you will," he replied. "I thank you heartily, Mrs. Gerran. We rely on you very much." I left him his breakfast, and went down-stairs, considerably astonished by what I had heard. The weather grew worse during the day, and by night it was little short of a tempest. I often thought of the poor young woman who was coming all the way from London on such a night; and what made it worse was, that I could not offer to go and meet her, for, strange to say, Mr. Lewis did not know by what train she would come, or whether she would travel by the Great Western or the South-western line. It blew harder and harder; the furious blasts of wind swept through our little street, and drove the rain before it, so as almost to blind you, if you tried to face it. There was not a gas-light which was not blown out, and I need not say the sky was pitch dark. On such nights, I always sit and think of my poor husband, and of the many others who earn their living on the dreadful sea; and I can hear nothing, attend to nothing, but the howling of the storm. So it was no wonder that the potman knocked two or three times when he brought Mr. Lewis's beer, before I heard him; and when I opened the door, it was almost blown out of my hand by the force of the wind.

"It is a terrible night, Robert," I said, for he was a very civil young man, and had been at the *White Lion* for years.

"It is, indeed, ma'am," he said; "there's a sea on to-night that's a flying over the Chesil Bank like yeast. They've been firing artillery on the island; but, except now and then in a lull, you couldn't hear the guns."

AGRICULTURE.

Farmers and Farming.

Essay delivered before a Club Meeting of the Sackville and Westmorland Agricultural Society at Sackville, on 15th Inst. by Howard Trueman, Esq.

In Nature everywhere there is diversity. From the same soil is moulded the sturdy oak, the modest daisy, the tall pine and the graceful elm; by the same hand is formed the fleet deer, the noble horse, the fierce tiger and the gentle dove, and last the Great Architect's best work, man, and in the human form, divine, what diversity of form, of feature, of voice, of manner, and in mind what diversity again. Where are the two minds that agree in everything. This diversity in mind as seen when man, in fulfillment of the sentence passed upon him when banished from his first inheritance, chose his profession or calling. One is the "silken robed priest", another unravels the subtleties and intricacies of the law, a third the healing art, a fourth is at home in the counting room, a fifth goes down to the sea in ships, a sixth drives his team and breaks the stubborn globe, and then we have statesmen and warriors, poet and sage, scholar and philosopher, each following the path of his own choosing and altogether making up that variety so essential to the happiness of the race. It is of those who cultivate the soil and supply the world with its bread and butter that I propose to speak for a short time—"Farmers and Farming"—the subject is not hackneyed at least. Farming is an old Saxon word and literally means something to eat. Farmers are a necessary. A law-abiding community may get on very well without its lawyer, a green old age is often reached without the aid or in spite of the doctor, and men do rise and prosper without the benefit of clergymen, but no state however peacefully disposed, and no individual however perfect his physical organization or pure his moral character, can dispense with the labors of the farmer.

NECESSITY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION. In other and older countries, the importance of the craft is fully recognized, and if in New Brunswick farmers have not stamped their mark so clearly as they ought upon their country's history, it is not because they labor under any political disabilities, that requires an act of Parliament to remove, but because there has been a want of united action and fraternal feeling that should always exist between the "sons of the soil."

Living as farmers always must in the rural districts, at a distance from the great centres of population, and deprived to a large extent of the stimulus of intellectual exertion derived from intercourse with literary men, and following a calling that has been told from his earliest years, required but little brains—it is not to be wondered, that farmers, as a class, do not stand intellectually in the front rank. But there is another reason for this state of things. To enter any of the learned professions, a regular course of training is indispensable. To be a merchant, a mechanic, or an artisan of any kind, a certain amount of book knowledge is necessary. A man can be a farmer, and a successful one too; so far as the money-making part of it goes, without knowing a letter in the alphabet, or being able to write his own name, and there are scores, and perhaps hundreds of such in our Province. While these facts account for and to some extent excuse farmers of the present day for the low standard of intellectual culture found amongst them, it does not by any means justify them in not making every effort in their power to raise that standard. Those in every State who cultivate the soil must form no inconsiderable part of the population, and in these days of democracy when the people have "divine rights", and are expected to rule their influence if used aright, ought and should have no mean weight in the councils of their country. Unable like the professional, the mercantile and the manufacturing classes to hide from the as-

essor and tax gatherer large sources of revenue, he is exposed to the fullest force of the highest taxation; unable like the classes referred to, whose capital to a large extent, is represented in their own persons, to remove from the country in times of bad government without having their property confiscated and their homes destroyed, the owners of the soil in proportion to their means are more interested in the government of their country than any other class probably can be. If farmers would use their influence morally, socially and politically, that their interests require, that their numbers give them a right to, and that the dignity of their calling demands, they must give more attention to intellectual development, in short they must be better educated. But how to educate a boy that is intended for the farm, so that when he is educated he will not turn his back upon the farm, is fast becoming a vexed question. So fully is this fact coming to be recognized that a late English writer when treating of the desirability of giving boys intended for the farm a better education, said that one of the greatest difficulties to be contended with was that while education was being acquired they acquired a dislike, and in too many instances were physically incapacitated for the labors of the farm. The strapping fresh from college, dressed and cravated in the latest style, luxuriating in the belief that he is the eighth wonder of the world, may succeed in one of the learned professions, but as a farmer never. The lad who has spent three years consecutively at an Academy, in nine cases out of ten will make but a sorry farmer unless the Government can afford him a handsome yearly allowance. The Alma Mater of the farmer must be the parish school until Agricultural Colleges are established, where the theoretical and practical part are so combined that in acquiring one you will also secure the other. If then farmers are practically prohibited from the higher seats of learning, their first duty is plainly to use their influence to elevate the standard of common schools. With the advantages that these schools offer even now, and a thirst for knowledge you cannot keep a boy in ignorance. But they can be very much improved, that instead of offering a stipend that will attract only indolent scholars, the Government allowance is supplemented by a sum that will ensure solid attainments and moral worth, if instead of small and unsightly school-houses these are made comfortable and attractive, and if instead of censuring your teachers the first advice account of his qualifications and conduct, from your child, you would visit the school often and learn for yourself the difficulties to be overcome, and counsel and encourage rather than stand aloof as is too generally done and grumble and find fault. It is not however in this age so much the want of means as the want of a desire for knowledge that keeps men in ignorance. Where "there's a will there's a way," is as true of education as anything else. Some of the men who have secured the deepest mark in their country's history and wrought for themselves and the world lasting good have been self-educated men. That which we acquire by severe and diligent application, we set a higher value upon, and if we have stolen from our hours of sleep the time to read this or that work, or to perfect ourselves in this or that, knowledge so gained will be more valued and better impressed than if it had come more easily or almost without effort. Farming, though one of the most laborious of the callings, still affords some moments of leisure, and these carefully improved would enable the farmer to add largely to his stock of knowledge. It is not true however, as a certain class of writers seem to think, that from the time the sun enters the winter solstice until the earth again "puts on her livery of green," all the long winter evenings are at the disposal of the farmer, to be used as he pleases, and devoted to the improvement of his mind. These writers seem to take it for granted that neither religious, moral, social nor political duties are to be found in the farmer's decalogue. The temperance movement has enlisted the sympathy of the working class more largely perhaps than any class—and farmers have not been backward in devoting a portion of their time and influence to reclaim the fallen and to stay the tide of intemperance that is sweeping so many of the best into unhonoured graves. The claims of religion have never been ignored nor forgotten by those who are largely dependent upon the genial sunshine and the fruitful shower, and the week night prayer meeting claims its

or perhaps more correctly speaking, of his wife and daughters is not so easily satisfied, and not a few of the winter evenings are devoted by the young farmers at least to worshipping at the shrine of the goddess of the social circle. But notwithstanding the many claims upon the farmer's time, too much of it is wasted in lounging in the country store, gossiping in the workshops and thinking about nothing. Young farmers, if there are any here to-night, read more for yourselves, study, reflect, compose, use your mental powers, so that when Prof. Jones or Lawyer Smith sit down to have a chat with you on any scientific or political subject, you will not be obliged to assent to everything that they may say, simply because you know nothing about the subject; do not let your curriculum of study be narrowed down to reading, writing, and just enough of mathematics to save you from being cheated by the merchant, it being generally considered by farmers, I believe, that the merchant is the sharpest fellow they have to deal with.

DIGRESSING a moment from the subject, I would like to say, that there seems to be an impression among many farmers that our merchants are constantly on the watch to over-reach them in a bargain or to take advantage of them in settling up the year's account. Not only do I not share in this impression, but taking into consideration the amount of business transacted by the mercantile class and the many temptations there are in the business to take advantage of the ignorant, I believe the world knows no more honorable, dignified or upright class of men than its merchants.

DUES ON FARMS. But to proceed with my subject, farmer, do not be content with knowing how to write, read, and cast accounts, as they used to say, dabble some at the sciences if you have time. Make yourselves acquainted with Chemistry and Geology so far at least as it is connected with your own calling. Keep posted up in the general movement of the day by taking one or two first class papers, but above all, I repeat it, learn to think for yourselves. If you do this your mind will expand, you will enjoy life better, be more respected, and exercise a more powerful and beneficial influence on those around you. There used to be an impression very general, and I am not quite sure it is altogether eradicated yet, that anybody could succeed as a farmer, if he was only willing to work, in fact the few brains a boy had in all probability the farmer's profession, if there was one in the family, was quickly settled. The world however is fast changing in this matter, and in these days of cast and weevil, light and midew, it is pretty generally conceded that it takes a pretty clever man to be a successful farmer. But how is it so many farmers' boys prefer other ways of getting a living than that practised by their fathers? That such is the case is by no means an unmixed evil, for not a few of our most successful merchants and most clever professional men are the sons of farmers.

Again the practice common among all classes, but particularly farmers, of refusing to give their sons any portion of their property until long after they have attained their majority, is not conducive to the multiplication of farmers, and from this we not only main men as farmers, but numbers are driven away from our country by it.

FARMING FINANCIALLY. In an age in which "get money, get it," farming will not be the popular profession in practice if it is in theory. Its profits are too low. There is not enough of "and bustle and excitement" to commend it to "Young America." But why is it that farmers do not succeed better financially? I know there is an impression among many from the fact that farmers are able to supply so many of their wants with their own labor, that we are all rich and as a consequence considered "fair game" by the collectors or agents of every charitable institution. There are no just grounds for such an impression and I am prepared to assert, without fear of successful contradiction, that in proportion to the labor and capital invested, the business pays a lower percentage than others presented in New Brunswick. I do not say this must necessarily be the case, and feel sure it would not be if the business was conducted on the same enlightened principles that our manufacturers conduct theirs. Think of a manufacturer carrying on the technical part of his business in the same style and with the same machinery as his father did half a century ago, and yet that is precisely what we majority of farmers are doing.

Now men in most other professions, as soon as they get an amount of spare capital use it in improving and extending their business; the manufacturer introduces new machinery so that he may be able to produce a better article at the same or less cost; the merchant aims to enlarge his business so that he may sell more at less percentage, and so it should be with the farmer. But the waste in the manure heap and the draining of the marsh lessens the amount produced and an extra course plow makes the cost of production greater, and as the rest of the whole, the profits are reduced. I should urge upon farmers generally the importance of keeping a debtor and creditor account in all our transactions. How many of us can tell what our wheat, our buckwheat, our oats, or our potatoes cost us a bushel, or what our butter, beef, pork or cheese cost us a pound, very few, if any of us. We know what we get for it in the market, but we are not sure what pays us the best, and the very article that we are getting the highest price for may be the one in which there is the least profit. There is profit, great even among farmers, and if it is not as rapid as we younger men would like to see, still it is progress; and if the business in a money point of view has not been very profitable, it has its compensation. It is conducive to health, happiness, and the growth of moral principles; it is a glorious old calling, honest and respectable; honored and respected by king and peasant. Let us be careful to bring no disgrace upon it.

Petition for Divorce. The Memphis "Avalanche" gives the following as an exact copy of a petition for divorce, recently filed in the courts of that romantic village: Sarah W., vs. Randal W., alias Randal—

Your petitioner who has been for two years, and is now a resident of Memphis, represents to your honor that on or about October 23, 1869, she was lawfully married with defendant, Randal W., who sometimes calls himself Randal P., also a resident of Memphis, and has made him a dutiful and obedient wife. They lived together for about two weeks; they were united as two clouds that meet at evening. They were "two souls but but a single thought, two hearts that beat as one." For the first week he was kind, and their lives were as harmonious as music. During the second week he was harsh, cruel, and inhuman in his conduct, and made it unsafe for her to live with him, and he under his domination and control. He was the worst kind of Othello; threatened to drive her out of the house and tried to force her to leave him. He then deserted her on the classic Hattie, like Ananias weeping by the waters, or like Dido with a willow in her hand. He has never returned to charm her loneliness. Promises considered, &c., prays for such relief as your honor may grant and the complexion of the case may demand.

First-rate Whiskey. "Haathen Chinee" is New England are knocking up rights from the revenue department by making a first rate article of whiskey by distilling rain-water through a box filled with saw-dust, scraps of old iron, burned leather, India-rubber soaked in oil-of-vitrol, horse heads, lam rinds and water in which potatoes have been boiled. The beverage thus obtained is extremely popular with the Chinese, and every one else who would get drunk in five minutes and stay so for a week. They call it Choo-kung. There is no law at present to tax its manufacture, so the Celestials are in high glee and the Government is sick.

DURABILITY OF TIMBER.—Experts with various kinds of timber, exposed to atmospheric influences an equal length of time, under precisely the same conditions, gave the following results:—East India teak was found to be rather soft, but good; African teak, a little decayed; mahogany, tolerably good; Polish larch, decayed one-quarter inch; Scotch larch treasuries, surface one half inch decayed, rest brittle; Italian and English oak, very much decayed; Canada white oak, very bad and rotten; Memel oak, very bad and rotten; Riga and Danzig fir, very much decayed and rotten; English elm, all rotten; American ash, all rotten.