

The joy thy lot to share, and I,
True loyal knight, on life's stein
For thee, dear love, will live or die,
Though 't is my lot to suffer
And unless things to dwell
I still in love thee, sweet for aye
Just as well.

A WINSOME WIFE.

"What!" cried Mrs. Mowatt in shrill accents of dismay. "Marry Bess Harding! Why, Joshua, you ain't never in earnest, be you?"

Joshua Mowatt's broad, good humored face brightened to a smile.

"Well, I rather think I am," said he. "At any rate, I'm engaged to her, and we've set the day for the 30th of May."

"Without asking me!"

"You're not one of the contracting parties," laughingly retorted Joshua. "But, seriously, mother, dear, it was only settled definitely last night, and I was coming to tell you when you met me half-way with the milk-pail in your hand."

Mrs. Mowatt screwed up her lips like a button, her little eyes sparkled with electric fire.

"She shall never come into this house," said she, venomously.

"Mother, don't," pleaded Joshua, with a pained look in his honest face. "Remember, when you and father were young."

"But your father had a little common sense," sharply retorted Mrs. Mowatt. "and I was a hard-working farmer's daughter—not one of your dancing, frolicking gipsies who spend their whole time in candy-pulls and apron-parties, and all that kind of nonsense."

"And you will find, mother," urged the young man, "that Bess will be just as good a wife as you were."

"Pshaw!" was Mrs. Mowatt's curt rejoinder. "When you knew perfectly well that it was the dearest wish of my heart to see you married to your cousin, Nancy Simpson?"

Joshua shook his head.

Nancy never would suit me," he said. "She is one of these cold, quiet, serpent-like women that go gliding about like the ghost in a play. And I'm not vain enough to suppose that I correspond with her ideas any better than she does with mine."

"Well," said Mrs. Mowatt severely, "you've made your bed, and you must lie on it, Joshua. That's all I've got to say on the subject."

"But you will come to see her, mother?"

"No, I won't."

"You will welcome her to a daughter's place in your heart? For my sake, mother," vehemently pleaded Joshua.

"For nobody's sake," said Mrs. Mowatt. "I don't like Bess Harding, and I never liked her. And if you marry her, you deliberately separate yourself from all your home associations."

Joshua Mowatt turned away, deeply pained and stung to the very heart.

"It must be as you say, mother," he said. "But if there is an estrangement it shall be neither Bess's fault nor mine."

Mrs. Mowatt kept her word. She never looked upon Bess Harding, although the girl, deeply wounded at the idea of thus being shut out from the heart of Joshua's mother, came more than once to beg admittance to the house.

She sent no message of affection, no bridal-gift—she would not even lend the grace of her presence to the simple wedding.

"They shall see what it means to offend me!" said she with a quiet vindictiveness.

But pretty Bess, a girl of twenty, with soft, gazelle-like brown eyes, curly hair, and a genuine "sunrise-pink" complexion, was innocently happy in the little farmhouse which Joshua hired where she played at nonsekeeping with real old china which had once been her mother's, gathered roses for the vases, and cooked all manner of delicious dishes for her husband's delectation.

But hard times came, skeleton-like and ghostly, as it comes to all. The succeeding summer was unusually dry. Crops were parched and shrivelled away in the ground. The cows ceased to give rich streams of milk, the bees could find no wild flowers to suck honey from. And—to crown all—Joshua fell from a beam in the second storey of the barn, and broke his leg.

"Send for my mother," he said, with lips which

never looked at him with iron set eyes. "What shall I do?" she asked herself. "Can I sit here and see him suffer for the very necessities of life?"

Just at that time a letter came to her—a letter from a city friend who had once spent a summer in Blooming Vale.

"Darling Bess—Don't be amazed at what I am going to ask you, but I am to have a Christmas party for my little girls, and I do so long for some of the cream of the best and sugared nuts, and delicious chocolate caramels that you used to make when we boarded with your aunt at Blooming Vale. I enclose a ten dollar bill. Please send the goodies by express, just as soon as you can possibly make them. And oblige ever lovingly your friend,
I ALARA"

The joyous tears came into Bess Mowatt's eyes as she sat looking at the bill neatly folded into the letter. It was not only a ten dollar greenback—it represented health, and strength, and ease for Joshua—it seemed to open to her the gates of escape from all the petty tortures of this poverty-stricken life.

"Why have I never thought of it before?" she questioned herself.

She made haste to prepare the caramels, the dainty cream-bars, the walnuts enclosed in a crystal garment of translucent sweetness, and with these she enclosed a letter, begging Mrs. German to open an agency for her with one of the prominent confectioners in New York. And then she ordered a barrel of sugar, all manner of dainties and flavor, and went up to the carret to crack all the butter nuts and hickory nuts which were left from the last autumn's store.

"To be sure it is only an experiment," she thought. "But I hope—I believe—it may succeed. The doctor says Joshua will not be strong enough to go out of doors until spring. Our expenses are continually draining us, and there is nothing coming in. Oh, it must succeed."

It did succeed. Mrs. Mowatt's delicate home-made confections, in pretty hand-painted boxes, tied with colored ribbons, became the fashion.

Everybody asked for them, everybody bought them. Bess was obliged to hire assistants, and transfer her working quarters to the old unused wing of the house. Money came in with a promptness and a steady flow which seemed to the young wife almost a Golconda.

There was no lack now of good old port wine, refreshing fruit, strengthening food for the invalid.

The farm house was painted anew, needful machinery was ordered for farm purposes, new furniture came in, and Bess even indulged in the—to her—unheard-of luxury of a black silk dress.

"Bess, you are a good fairy," said Joshua exultantly. "A regular enchantress."

But one day Bess came in with a sober face.

"What's the matter?" said Joshua. "Has our new bank failed? Is the maple candy scorched? Or has the kitten tumbled into the boiling kettle of chocolate?"

"Oh, Joshua, don't jest," said Bess. "It is your mother! She has invested everything in the new railroad that was to be cut through Walton's Pass, and it is a failure. A gigantic swindle! The stock holders are men of straw, the President has gone to Japan, and all who have invested in the concern are ruined totally!"

Joshua grew pale.

"What are we to do?" said he.

"There is but one thing to do," Bess answered. "We must go to her. We must bring her here. Our home must henceforth be her home."

"Bess," cried Joshua in a husky voice, "you are an angel!"

"She is your mother, Joshua," said Bess gently. "And being yours she is also mine."

Mrs. Mowatt, half stunned by the suddenness of the blow which had robbed her of her all, scarcely knowing where she was when she found herself sitting in a big arm-chair by the fire in the farm-house parlor, with her hand in Joshua's while Bess tenderly removed her bonnet and shawl.

"But I have no right to be here," she said piteously. "I refused to recognize your wife—I have withheld from you your birthright, and squandered it away. Why don't they take me where I belong—to the poor-house?"

"Mother, don't talk so," pleaded Joshua. "Here's where you belong now and henceforward. Here, by our hearthstone."

"You are my mother now," softly whispered Bess, and the touch of her soft lips on the old woman's withered cheek loosened the flood-gate of tears, the blessed tears which wash away all bitterness and pain.

"And you," she sobbed, "are my daughter."

the rural districts not yet having been subjected to the influences which restrain or destroy the reproductive power. The last census shows that the American married couples have an average of less than two children, and in the great cities the proportion of children is still less. The fact is made apparent that whilst the American male devotes his life to business, money grabbing and speculation, the female devotes herself to society and dress. Neither wish to be burdened by children, and consequently adopt expedients of such a nature that the reproductive power is greatly weakened, and this process continued through successive generations results in that power being lost. There is consequently some danger of the American race becoming extinct, and it is alleged that it is even now preserved from extinction chiefly by the constant arrival of immigrants from Europe, whose untainted constitutions impart vitality to the exhausted energies of the native born Americans. In these facts, as disclosed by the census, there is matter for grave consideration, and the conclusion is irresistibly forced upon all thoughtful minds that Nature herself is joining hands with the Communists and Socialists to bring about such a change in the social condition of the people as will restore, not only the weakened or lost reproductive power, but also that home love, family affection, and domesticity, the absence of which is one of the marked characteristics of American civilization. The first signs of the approaching changes are already visible to those who look beneath the surface, and among them may be noted the extension of what are called Mutual Marriage Aid Associations. These societies are becoming very numerous, and are apparently doing useful work. It has been usual to sneer at such societies, and to ridicule them but as now constituted they are deserving of approval, for they partake largely of the nature of Life Assurance.

Thus, a young man, of a prudent character, who contemplates marriage in the future, can join one of these societies and by payment of a monthly sum he becomes entitled to a lump sum on marriage at the end of ten years, or he can convert that lump sum into an annuity for himself or for his children on attaining a certain specified age. The youthful aspirant for a provident marriage, who at sixteen years of age pays two dollars a month to an Association will be entitled on marriage at the age of twenty-six to an annuity which will keep him for the rest of his life above actual want, or if re-invested it would provide a handsome sum for each of three children on their each attaining the age of twenty-one. In such a plan as this there is nothing to ridicule. It is a wise provision of thoughtful and responsible men, and if generally adopted would lead to the most important social results. The real question is as to whether such associations should be of a public or private character,—whether they should be left to the enterprize and management of individuals or whether they should be established, subsidised, and controlled by the State. Those who favour the latter are Socialists.—a name too frequently used as a term of reproach—but in this matter of Marriage Aid Associations, as it promotes early and provident marriage, this journal at once proclaims itself Socialistic, and it gives to the system its warmest commendation. The Government which takes such subjects into its consideration, and initiates a system of cheap, easy and popular Life Assurance and Annuities, will be entitled to the highest praise and the noblest place in history. Why does not our own Provincial Government lead the way in this direction and institute a Marriage Aid Department? Common Sense recommends it, and Advanced Thought gives it the full weight of its influence. Why, then, should it not be done?

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The Mutual Marriage Aid Association.

(Kingston Whig, Dec. 26th, 1883.)

The above Association, with headquarters in Hamilton, Ont., has for its object the payment of a dowry on marriage of a member varying in amount from \$100 to \$5,000, the amount received by the member depending on the length of membership and the number of certificates taken. The success of the Association has excited the attention and admiration of a large majority of the thinking classes throughout the Dominion.

A second plan of the Association has been instituted, called Division "B," and is the outgrowth of the experience of the promoters during the past two years, and combines nearly all of the advantages of Division "A," together with advantages applicable

to become a member.

A young man will find that if he simply invests the amount spent foolishly, and devotes his surplus to something that will prove a benefit to him through life, a vast change in his future would take place. We would say to all unmarried persons, take out one or more certificates in this Association, the cost is trifling, and in fact they owe it to themselves to do so. All young men mean to marry at some time in their lives, and it is their bounden duty to make their homes as pleasant as possible.

Over \$70,000 has been paid during the past year by this Association. Call on or address the agent, A. C. McMahon, Sec'y, Mechanics' Institute.

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A Small Boy's Long Tongue.

"I don't altogether like this young man Millikin who comes here to see you so often. I hear that he is nothing but a poor dry goods clerk," is what the head of the family said to his daughter one day at the dinner table.

"He is a very nice young gentleman," replied the daughter. "Besides, he is something more than a 'poor dry goods clerk.' He gets a large salary, and is manager of one of the departments, and expects some day to have an interest in the business."

I hope he may," responded the old man, "but he strikes me as very flippant, impertinent young person, and in my opinion he should be sat down upon."

"Well, I have invited him to take tea with us this evening," said the daughter, "and I hope you will treat him politely at least. You will find him a very different person from what you suppose him to be."

Oh, I'll treat him politely enough," he said.

That evening Mr. Millikin appeared at supper, and made a most favorable impression upon the old gentleman. "He is a clever young fellow after all," he thought. "I have done him an injustice."

It was just here that Bobby spoke out. Bobby was a well-meaning little boy, but too talkative."

"Papa," he ventured, "you know what you said to-day at dinner about Mr. Milliken that he was an impertinent young man and ought to be sat down upon—"

"Silence, sir!" shouted the father, swallowing a mouthful of hot potato.

But the little fellow would't silence. "It's all right," he continued confidently, but in a whisper loud enough to be heard out of doors, "he has been sat down upon. Sister sat down on him last night for two hours."

After this the dinner went on more quietly, owing to Bobby's sudden and very jerky departure.

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Felt the Situation.

A German farmer was on trial in one of the justice courts the other day for assault and battery, and had pleaded not guilty. When the cross-examination came, the opposing counsel asked:

Now, Jacob, there was trouble between you and the plaintiff, wasn't there?"

"I expect dere vhas."

"He said something about your dog being a sheep-killer, and you resented it, eh?"

"Vhell I calls him a liar."

"Exactly. Then he called you some hard names."

"He calls me a sauer-kraut Dutchmans."

"Just so. That made you mad?"

"Of course. I was so mad I shake all oafar."

"I thought so. Now Jacob, you are a man who speaks the truth. I don't believe you could be hired to tell a lie."

"Vell, I plief I vhas pooty honest."

"Of course you are—of course. Now, Jacob, you must have struck the first blow. You see—"

The lawyer objected, and after a wrangle the defendant turned to the court and said:

"I doan oactly make outd how it vhas. I like to own oop dot I struck first, but I haf paid my law-yea \$5 to prove de odder vhay. I doan like to tell a lie, but I feel badt to loose der money!"

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One of the high rate monopoly companies paid last year, as appears from its reports, in "death claims, including dividend additions," \$6,743,153 while its interest receipts amounted to \$5,078,766 and notwithstanding its interest receipts exceeded the death claims by several hundred thousand dollars, demanded and received from policy-holders the sum of \$12,845,593. What did they do with it? Possibly voted another bonus, or used it to pay its tools to slander and libel successful assessment association officers and agents.—Society Journal.