

NEW ENGLAND SETTLEMENT IN
NEW JERSEY

THE HAMMONTON TRACT OF
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Poetry.

LITTLE CHILDREN.

BY GEORGE COOPER.

God bless the little children!
Day by day,
With pure and simple wiles,
And winning words and smiles,
They creep into the heart;
And who would wish to say to them nay?

They look up in our faces,
And their eyes
Are tender and are fair,
As if still lingered there
The Saviour's kindly smile!
So very much they look, and wile.

We live again the play-time
In their play;
Their soft hands lead us back,
Along a weary track,
The pathway of our years—
Till the time when life was May.

Oh! when my days have ended,
I would rest,
Where little children keep
Their slumber long and deep;
My grave be near the little mounds
I know that God hath blessed!

Miscellany.

A Young Minister Hugged against His Will.

A most ludicrous scene transpired in a place a few miles from the city of Louisville, one night last week, which, though a little annoying to the parties immediately concerned, and yet so innocent and funny that we cannot refrain from giving the general outlines, suppressing names of course.

Two sprightly and beautiful young ladies were visiting their cousin, another sprightly and beautiful young lady, who, like her guests, was of that happy age which turns everything into fun and merriment. If the truth were told, we fear that we should have to record the fact that these three Misses were just a little bit fat. They were fond of practical jokes, and were continually playing all sorts of mad pranks with each other. All three occupied a room on the ground floor, and cuddled up together in one bed.

Two of the young ladies attended a party on the night in question, and did not get home until half past twelve o'clock at night. As it was late, they concluded not to disturb the household, so they quietly stepped into their room through the open window.

In about half an hour after they had left for the party a young Methodist minister called at the house where they were staying, and enquired of the landlady, which of course was cheerfully granted. As a minister always have the best of everything, the old lady put him to sleep in the best room, and the young lady (Fannie) who had not gone to the party was entrusted with the duty of sitting up for the minister and of informing them of the change of rooms. She took up her post in the parlor, and as the night was sultry sleep overcame her and she departed on an excursion to the land of dreams.

We will now return to the young ladies who had gone into their room through the window. By the dim light of the moonbeams they struggled through the curtains, the young ladies were enabled to decypher the outline of Fannie (as they supposed) crouched in the middle of the bed. They saw, my dear, to wit—a pair of boots. The truth flashed upon them both at once. They saw it all. Fannie had set the boots in the room to give them a good scare. They put their heads together and determined to turn the tables on her. Silently they disrobed, and as stealthily as cats they took their positions on each side of the bed. At a given signal they both jumped into bed, one on each side of the unconscious person, laughing and screaming. "Oh, what a man! Oh, what a man!" they gave the poor bewildered minister such a pronounced hugging and tussling as few persons are able to brag of in the course of a life time.

The noise of this proceeding awoke the old lady, who was sleeping in an adjoining room. She comprehended the situation in a moment, and rushing to the room, she opened the door and exclaimed:—"My goodness, girls, it is a man; it is a man sure enough!"

There was a long prolonged, consolidated scream; a flash of lightning through the door, and all was over.

The best of the joke is that the minister took the whole thing in earnest. He would listen to no apologies the old lady could make for the girls. He would hear no excuse, but he solemnly folded his clerical robes around him and gently stole away.

Query—Was he mad at the girls, or at the old woman?—Louisville Courier.

RIGHT AT LAST.

I'll have the matter decided one way or the other, before the sun sets, said Royal Warner impatiently, as he folded a little billet and placed it in an envelope. I am not a tuff of this-down-to-be-blow-hither-and-yon on the summer wind of a woman's freaks and fancies. If she'll marry me, well and good—if not I will make up my mind to endure it as best I may.

He was a tall, rugged young fellow, with bright curls, flaked with chestnut gold; dark sparkling eyes, and a forehead embrowned with the sun and showers of twenty six years of honest toil.

She knows well enough that I love her, said Royal as he walked along the fragrant solitude of the quiet country lane. Perhaps she'll think this letter a little abrupt, but I'm sure she'll be perfectly aware what a rough and tumble sort of a fellow I am.

The letter aforementioned did partake slightly of the elements of abruptness, nor was Royal's apprehension altogether groundless. Thus it read:

"MY DEAR DORCAS—Will you marry me? Yes, or no? ROYAL WARNER.

For there is no earthly use in beating about the bush, thought honest Royal. Seven words are as good as seventy.

As Dorcas Brown, standing in the milk-room, peeped down in the brown jar, to see how much cream she had amassed, something like a tiny white bird fluttered down on the floor beside her.

Good gracious! said Dorcas, with a little start, what's that? and where did it come from?

The rosy crimson swept over her face as she read the few brief words.

It's just like Royal! she laughed to herself. Yes or no? Well—I think—yes!

So Miss Dorcas crept up stairs to her room, and without ever stopping to pull the sleeves down over her plump arms, wrote:

"MY DEAR ROYAL—Yes.

DORCAS BROWN."

I think that is decided enough for him, said Dorcas. And how shall I ever get it to him without my father's knowledge? He wants me to be Mrs. Joe Trimmer.

She hesitated a moment, and then, leaning out of the window.

In the sunshine, on the door step, sat Tommy, a poor half-witted fellow, who ran errands, did odd jobs, and made himself generally useful in Farmer Brown's establishment. A man in years, but a child in mind.

Tommy! whispered Dorcas, softly.

Yes, Miss Dorcas, said the poor fellow, starting suddenly from his doze.

I want you to take this note to Mr. Warner for me. And, Tommy—

Yes, Miss Dorcas.

Be sure you don't let my father see it. Remember that, Tommy!

Tommy promised, and started on his mission, but meeting Farmer Brown in the kitchen room he acted so sheepish that the farmer suspected something wrong and cross examined him severely. After the old man had left, Tommy looked for his note, and at last uttered a purring sob of gratulation as he drew a little billet out from the table drawer.

I don't expect much putting it there, but I suppose I must do so. Now Mr. Royal shall have it quicker!

And Tommy sped away, under the sheltering shadow of the elm trees that fringed the lawn.

For me, Tommy?

Yes, for you, Mr. Royal. Miss Dorcas says, take it to Mr. Warner for me. And, don't you let father see it on no account! So I didn't let him see it.

You're a good fellow, Tommy, and here's a dollar for you, said Royal. Now get back as fast as you can.

He watched Tommy edging along quickly by the road side before he opened the folded billet.

It was utterly and entirely blank, but scarcely blinder than Royal Warner's face, as he turned the sheet this way and that. The next moment the hot angry scowl suffused his face and he bit his lip almost cruelly.

The insult was gratuitous, he muttered under his breath. She need not have added that to the burden of mortification. Well the dream is over—I've been a fool, and I'm glad I know it!

He crumpled the sheet of unwritten paper in his hand, and threw it among the silver white daisies in the pasture field where he was standing.

He will come to see me to night, said Dorcas Brown to herself, as she sat in the doorway dreaming over a bit of delicate needle-work and looking very enviously in a blue muslin dress, and blue ribbon—mangling with her bright profusion of curls, as she would come to night. P. think he ought to have come last night! Why Tommy, what's the trouble?

For simple Tommy was coming up the path wiping the big tears from his eyes with his clenched knuckles.

He's gone! said Dorcas.

Who?
He—Mr. Royal!
Gone? Oh, well, don't cry—he'll be back again soon.
No, he's gone to New York, and he's never coming back no more! He told me so himself!

The soft roses died out of Dorcas' cheeks. Tommy, are you sure that you are not mistaken?

Yes, I'm sure. I saw his trunk put on the stage myself. He's gone! and he's never coming back no more!

Tommy! exclaimed Dorcas, springing to her feet, did you give him that letter?

Yes, and he gave me a dollar, and said I was a good fellow, lauded me, Tommy, piteously.

Dorcas stood a moment or two, absently watching the red stain of the sunset glowing on the western horizon; then she turned, and went in—went in to a world that had changed, and a life that grown dark! Alas, poor proud, little Dorcas!

And so they moved away?

Royal Warner was more disappointed than he cared to have become visible, as he leaned over the garden gate, no longer the stripping farmer, but a tall, dignified, young Member of Congress from one of the Western States!

Oh, yes, two good years ago. Gone to Watson's Corners—furniture all sold at public auction!

Royal Warner hesitated a moment.

I—I am very foolish, I suppose, but I would like to own something that used to belong to my old friends. Do you know of any article that—

Oh! interrupted squire Daley, good humoredly, you're welcome to the Webster's Dictionary wife bought at the sale. Hoses has brought a later edition home from college, and the old one ain't no account anyhow. I'll fetch it!

An old battered volume, with yellow leaves and dog-eared corners—there certainly very little value to the book; but Royal Warner took it reverently, and carried it to his room at the village hotel as tenderly as if it had been the Koran itself, and he a faithful disciple of Mahomet!

He sat down by the window, and turned the leaves carefully over, thinking of Dorcas Brown's violet gray eyes and long eyelashes.

Poor Dorcas! he mused—I wonder if she ever—

He paused abruptly—between the yellow time stained leaves before him lay a small billet directed to himself—directed in Dorcas' well known handwriting. Mechanically he broke the seal and read the message that had been so long on its way:

"MY DEAR ROYAL—Yes.

DORCAS BROWN."

The iron horse keeps straight ahead, whether the thermometer is at zero or boiling heat. Just then the conductor entered.

"Tickets, gentlemen, if you please."

It's a dreadful night, conductor, I said, feeling with stiffened fingers for my ticket in the pocket of my coat.

Dreadful, sir, feelingly responded the conductor. Why the brakeman can't live outside, and so look the other way when they come to get a breath of warm air at the stove. We haven't had such a night since a year ago come the second of February, when Tom Bikeslee, the baggage master, froze both his feet, and a woman who was coming in from Chicago got off at Blinn's Four Corners, with a baby in her arms a dead corpse.

Frozen to death?

Aye, frozen to death; and she never thought, poor thing, but that it was asleep—My poor baby is cold, but we'll soon warm it when we get home, said she. It was just such a night as this! And the conductor opened a door and plunged across the coupling into the next car, crying out:

"Hardwick!"

It was quite a considerable city—with a handsome depot, faring gas lamps, and the usual crowd around the platform, with their hands in their pockets, and their cigar ends flaming through the night.

Our car was nearly the last of the long train, and but one passenger entered it—a slender young girl, wrapped in a neat little travelling hat of grey straw, trimmed with stone colored velvet flowers. She seemed to hesitate, like one unused to travelling, and finally sat down near the door.

Pardon me, young lady, said I, but you had better come nearer the stove.

She started an instant, and then obeyed.

Does this train go to Baywater? she asked in a voice so delicately sweet that it seemed to thrill through me.

Yes, can I be of any service to you?

Oh, no—at least till we reach Baywater. I would like a carriage then.

We will not be there for three hours. Do we stop again.

Only at Exmouth.

She drew a long sigh, seemingly of relief, and settled back in her corner. By the light of the lamp that hung in its brass fixtures opposite, I could see her face—that of a lonely child. Apparently she was not more than sixteen, with large blue eyes, golden hair, drawn straight away from her face, and a rosy mouth like that of a babe.

Do you expect friends to meet you at Baywater, my child? I asked.

No, sir; I am going to school there.

It will be an awkward hour for you to arrive by yourself—one in the morning.

Oh, I am not afraid, said she, with an artless little laugh; I shall go straight to the seminary.

So the express train thundered on, with steady, ceaseless pulsing at his iron heart, and constant rumbling of his iron wheels.

Suddenly the whistle sounded, and the train began to slacken in speed.

Surely we are not at Exmouth yet, unless I have fallen asleep and allowed the progress of time to escape me.

I glanced at my watch: it was barely half past eleven, and I knew we were not due at Exmouth until a few minutes past twelve. I rubbed the frost from the window and looked out.

We had stopped at a lonely little way station in the midst of a dense pine woods.

Is this Exmouth?

It was the soft voice of the pretty traveller opposite.

No; I don't know what place it is; some way station.

Do the express trains stop at way stations? she asked.

Never, generally; they must have been especially signalled here. You are cold, my child, your voice trembles.

It is cold, said she, in a scarcely audible tone, drawing her shawl around her. O, I wish they would hurry on.

We are moving once more I said.

Conductor, for the man of tickets was moving through the car, why did we stop at this backwoods place?

"Out of water; was the reply, as he passed quickly by.

Now I knew very well that this was not the real solution of the matter. Our delay did not exceed half a minute, altogether too short a time for replenishing the boilers; and where on earth was the water to come from in that desolate stretch of pine woods?

Five minutes afterward the conductor entered the car; I made room for him at my side.

Sit down, you've nothing to do just at this moment.

He obeyed.

What did you mean by telling me such a lie just now?

I spoke under my breath; he replied in the same tone.

About what?

About the reason you stopped just now—He smiled.

To tell you the truth, I stopped to take on a single passenger—a gentleman who has come down from Baywater.

For the privilege of travelling once more over the same route?

Exactly so—for the purpose of travelling in certain society. Don't be alarmed for your own safety; it is a detective policeman.

A—

I was about to repeat the word in astonishment when he motioned me to keep silence. And who is the offender?

I do not know yet. He doesn't want to be seen until the moment of the arrest. We are safe enough until we reach Baywater.

Who is he?

The detective! He sits by the door yonder, with a ragged fur cap pulled over his eyes.

I sniffed—I could hardly keep it.

What is the case?

A murder—a man and his wife and two children—their throats cut last night, and the house set fire to afterwards.

Great Heavens! what a monster.

We had continued the conversation through a out in a whisper, and now the conductor rose and left me to study the faces of my fellow passengers with curious dread and horror.

Somewhat as often as I resolved the matter in my mind, my fancy would settle on a coarse, cross-looking man, shaggy, with a bushy beard and a coat of shaggy wool, with the collar turned up round his ears. I felt convinced that this man, with the brutal eyes and the heavy, hanging jaws was the "Chin." And as I looked furtively across, I caught the wide open eyes of the fair little girl.

Obeying the instantaneous impulses of my heart, I arose and went to her.

You heard what we were saying, my child. Yes; a murder—O, how terrible!

Do not be frightened; no one shall hurt you.

She smiled up at my face with a sweet confiding innocence.

Our stop at Exmouth was but brief; but during the delay I could see that the watchful detective had changed his seat to one nearer the brutish man in the shaggy overcoat.

See, faltered the girl, they—they looked the car doors at Exmouth; they are unblocking their now.

She was right.

Probably they were fearful lest the criminal should escape. I remarked in an under tone.

Will you—may I trouble you to bring me a glass of water?

I rose and made my way towards the ice-cooler by the door but with difficulty, for the train was under rapid motion. To my disappointment the goblet was declined to the shelf.

No matter, said she with a winning smile, I will come myself.

I drew the water and held up the cup, but instead of taking it as she approached, she suddenly passed me, opening the door, and rushing upon the platform.

Stop her! stop her! shouted the detective springing to his feet. She will be killed, conductor—breakman hold up!

There was a rush—a tumult—a bustle. I was first upon the platform, but it was empty and deserted, save by the half-frozen brakeman, who seemed horror stricken.

She went past me like a shadow, and jumped off as we crossed Cairn turnpike road, she stammered.

Jumping off the express train! Well, said the conductor, shrugging his shoulders, she must have been killed instantly; what need folly!

It's \$500 out of my pocket, said the detective ruefully. I didn't want a new before we got to Baywater, but I was a confounded fool. A woman carried with me anything I do believe.

What, I calculated, you surely do not mean that child—

I mean, said the detective calmly, that child, as you call her, is Attilla Burton, a married woman 25 years of age, who last night murdered four persons in cold blood, and was trying to escape to Canada. That's just what I mean!

The train stopped, and a party of us, headed by the conductor and the detective, went back to search for any traces of the lean FBI young creature, whose野蠻ness and apparent innocence had appealed to my sympathies so earnestly. Nor was it long before we found her lying quite dead by the side of the track, frightfully mangled by the force of the fall, and mutilated almost beyond recognition.

Well, she escaped justice in this world, if not in the next, gloomily said the detective as he stood looking down upon her remains. "Do you suppose she expected to spring off the morning train without injury?"

Without injury—yes, women are unreasonable creatures. But I never dreamt of such folly, or I should have taken prompt measures to prevent it.

They lifted up the fair dead thing, and carried it to the nearest place of refuge—a lonely place among the firs in the hills, and we returned to the train, reaching Baywater only a few minutes behind our regular time.

And when in the morning's paper I read

ESCAPED FROM JUSTICE.

It was bitter cold night in January—a night when frozen on the moor might have sunk down and frozen to death, and the very marrow seemed to congeal in one's bones.

There's one advantage in steam, growled a fat old gentleman in the corner seat; wind and weather don't affect it. No flesh and blood horse could stand a night like this, but

Sit down, you've nothing to do just at this moment.

He obeyed.

What did you mean by telling me such a lie just now?

I spoke under my breath; he replied in the same tone.

About what?

About the reason you stopped just now—He smiled.