B. Bell

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SCATTER SEEDS OF KINDNESS.

Let us gather up the sunbeams
Lying all around our path;
Let us keep the wheat and roses,
Casting out the thorns and chaff;
Let us find our sweetest comfort
In the blessings of today,
With a patient hand removing
All the briars from the way.

Strange, we never prize the music
Till the sweet-voiced bird has flown!
Strange, that we should slight the violets
Till the lovely flowers are gone!
Strange, that summer skies and sunshine
Never seem one half so fair,
As when winter's snowy pinions
Shake the white down in the air!

If we knew the baby fingers,
Pressed against the window pane,
Would be cold and stiff to-morrow—
Never trouble us again—
Would the bright eyes of our darling
Catch the frown upon our brow?
Would the print of rosy fingers
Vex us then as they do now?

Ah! those little ice-cold fingers,
How they point our memories back
To the hasty words and actions
Strewn along our backward track!
How those little hands remind us,
As in snowy grace they lie,
Not to scatter thorns—but roses—
For our reaping by-and-by!

MRS. DANA'S AMERICAN HELP.

MRS. O. W. SCOTT.

Mrs. Dana was a notable New England housekeeper; one of the few who approach in excellence "our mothers" who lived in past generations. Order reigned supreme in her pleasant home, whose belongings seemed to yield to the law of attraction, which holds "everything in its place almost insensibly.

The husband and son looked to her as to a central orb around which all their temporal comforts revolved, without the possibility of disaster. Every morning Mr. Dana expected breakfast at precisely half past six; and at half past seven he expected to be walking down the sunny side of the street toward his store. At noon his cane struck the broad stone step at the front door just as the hands of the old town clock met, and twelve strokes rang out over the village; and he was sure of a good dinner without delay.

But in addition to her home duties, so faithfully performed, Mrs. Dana was what they call in Deerfield, "a good society woman." She not only diffused sunshine upon the pathway of her beloved husband, but carried it here and there, among the poor and suffering, in the shape of medicines, jellies, and bread and butter. If any one doubts the possibility of thus carrying sunshine in a basket, let her try the experiment within the precincts of her own neighborhood. But while returning from one of these visits of charity, an accident occurred which for a time sadly interfered with Mrs. Dana's busy life. She was walking down a hill made icy by the lads and lassies of Deerfield through much "sliding," and lifting her feet with the caution that befitted a stout matron, when a "Hi! hi!" from a wicked boy in the rear made her glance around nervously, and in a moment she was lying helplessly upon the ground.

A little crowd gathered. Mr. Dana rushed from his store, and with the aid of every man and boy whose assistance he would accept, his poor wife was placed in a sleigh and carried home. Dr. Douche and Dr. Pinfeather, were soon in attendance, kindly informed the suffering lady that she had sprained her ankle severely, and broken her right arm in two places. "I can't have it so," groaned Mrs. Dana. "Make up your mind, madam, to enjoy the scenery of this room for six weeks, at least," said the Doctor cooly, as he applied splints and bandages. "At least!" echoed the student with emphasis; at which Mr. Dana stroked his whiskers in a helpless way, as though he felt the foundations moving beneath him. Old Mrs. Price remarked as she bustled about, "that her brothers's wife had just such a fall once and she never stepped for six months." At length, after everything possible had been done, the doctors and the neighbors withdrew, and then the family—for the boys Richard and Ned had hastened home earlier than usual—gathered at the bedside to lament and to decide what to do. "We musn't depend upon the neighbors—no, not for a day," said Mrs. Dana. "They are all good, but have enough to do at home.—Mrs. Hale said that Annie might come, but she is just home from school, and of course does not understand house-work, and we must have some one else who does."

Richard, more familiarly called Dick, saw fit to remark that "girls were afraid of the kitchen." He was twenty-four, just the right age to be both philosophical and critical.

No one ever realizes how difficult it is to find good help until the attempt is made; and, under the circumstances, Mr. Dana was considered fortunate when he secured the services of Biddy McKay. How well Biddy might have done with a mistress to direct her movements, can never be known, but Biddy without a mistress, was not a success. Changes that cannot be expressed in words, came over the whole house. The rooms wore a dreary dusty appearance, similar to Biddy herself. But the gentlemen of the family could have endured all this, since "mother's" room was taken care of by lady friends, and served as a general rendezvous, but they soon revolted against the cookery of the daughter of Erin. "Father," said Dick one morning as he looked up and saw the old gentleman meekly sawing away upon his "steak." "Father, what does ail the meat these days?" "I don't know, my son, I fear Bridget does not understand how to broil it," answered Mr. Dana, as he gently rubbed his aching wrists.—"She don't broil it, she fries it, while she is doing up her hair, father, and I wish she would leave. If 'twasn't for the nice things mother gives me, when the neighbors bring 'em in, I should starve, I know I should." This information and opinion came from Master Ned, who occasionally invaded the kitchen. Mr. Dana and Richard folded their napkins as with one consent, and adjourned. It is astonishing to note the change that poor fare produces. Mr. Dana wore a less downcast look that morning as he wended his way down the street not on the sunny side, but under the shade of the opposite buildings. He sympathized with a group of children at the corner, who were trying to warm themselves in the March sunshine, which could not even take the blue color from fingers or noses, and made them happy by taking them to the nearest grocery and treating them to apples. But when he returned to his home—a little past noon it was—he found that Bridget had gone. "And all because I tried to reason with her a little, after Dick told me about the breakfast," explained his wife. "She seemed really *angry*, and said she should leave immediately. And in less than half an hour she had her things packed—how *do* you suppose she did in—Richard paid her, and away she went."

Mr. Dana did not grieve over her departure, but hastened to the dining-room, where he found roast apples and milk, crackers, and one of Mrs. Hale's nice mince pies waiting his arrival.—Richard was out hunting for "help."

After the man of the house had dined, he turned the table cloth carefully over the remains of his feast, and left with an easy conscience. The next day another Irish girl was installed in the kitchen, and for one short week the gentlemen fancied there were great improvements; and even when at the end of that time the irrepressible Ned discovered her dispensing alms to several needy "cousins," they decided to overlook it, as their's was a charitable household. but a little later this spirit of forbearance was tested beyond endurance, when Biddy number two was discovered in a frightfully tipsy condition. News of such depravity so wrought upon the mind of her poor helpless mistress, that she got very little pity or mercy from Richard, who sent her away with her wages and plenty of advice thrown in gratuitously. Richard, who was a very fastidious young man by nature and education, began to talk wildly of "boarding" or "going out west," he did not much care which, when his mother suggested the propriety of advertising in the "Deerfield News" for a good American girl. "Sure enough mother, we might have known that an Irish girl would never suit us. How they *ever* get work is a mystery to me," said Richard as he sat down to write the proposed advertisement with all the intense earnestness of a hungry man.

"A smart, capable, American girl, to take charge of a small family." Ah, Dick, that has so often appeared in the newspapers! And there are so few American girls who have a love for housework. After the schools, the shops and the stores are filled, those that are left are so poor. But for once fortune seemed to favor this family; and sooner than the most sanguine dared expect, a bright-faced young lady presented herself as a candidate for the situation. Richard, who was ready to fall down at the feet of any woman who made bread or wielded a broom, greeted her most cordially, and introduced her at once to the vacant kitchen.

Lucina entered upon her duties with cheerful zeal, and soon succeeded in proving her superiority to "foreigners." Once more the head of the house sat to what he termed a "square meal," and his poor wife assured her sympathizing friends that "everything would move on nicely now that she had American help." But Yankee blood does not always insure perfection; so when Lucina sat down to eat her meals with the gentlemen, and entertained them with an account of her friends at home, enlarging upon their charms and eccentricities in the most free-and-easy style, they tried to forget her kitchen apron and rolled-up sleeves, accounting it as a failing of poor human nature. Very soon they discovered that Lucina could sing. She did not wait, like some bashful *prima donna*, for an invitation, but early in the morning the the ringing tones of Antioch, Mear, or some other modern tune, floated up from the kitchen, effectually destroying Mr. Dana's nap, to that gentleman's intense disgust. "Ahem! you have quite a nice voice, haven't you, Lucina?" said he one morning, preparing to drop a gentle hint as to its use. "Yes sir," was the brisk answer, "the singing master said last winter, that I could go the highest without breaking, of anybody he ever saw." Mr. Dana smiled dubiously, thinking that it surely broke up his dreams, but how could he reprove the smiling lass who poured and handed his coffee with such an air of satisfaction?

But Lucina had another accomplishment, not quite as harmless as the one just mentioned. One day not long after her coming, she ran into Mrs. Dana's with her under lip drawn in—sure token of some misfortune—and her hands filled with fragments of china. "Its that big platter, Mrs. Dana, I went to put it up on the shelf, and it slipped and went ker-whack on the floor!"

A lady whose right arm is broken in two places must of necessity keep quiet; so the only comment was: "I'm very sorry; but such things will happen. Put the pieces away carefully, I never like to have them underfoot." Lucina went gaily forth to do her mistress' bidding, and in two minutes was singing "Hail happy day!" A few days after she presented herself with two nice goblets, which she laughingly said, "had tipped against each other and broke *just* as easy!" After this, Mrs. Dana expected to hear a crash whenever the time came to wash dishes; nor did she often listen in vain. As she sat all ready to jump when such disasters occurred, she naturally made some mental calculations as to the number of articles that would be left in her cupboard, should her American help remain a month. As for Mr. Dana and Richard, they were unreasonable enough to grumble when Lucina monopolized the evening paper, and Richard even ventured to suggest—in his most sarcastic style—that it would be well to purchase *two* papers the next day. With the most open-hearted simplicity, Lucina said she wished he would, for she sometimes enjoyed reading the news. It was impossible to bottle up wrath against such an unsuspicious young person, so they mutually determined to eat and drink, and wait for the good time coming; although Richard, tried beyond measure by finding her using his hair-brush, did indulge in some language more forcible than poetical, when safe in "mother's room." "She wasn't brought up right, Dick, that is all," said his mother as soon as she could stem the tide of his indignation, "too many mothers allow such careless habits at home, never thinking how they will annoy strangers." But a change once more came before it was anticipated. Lucina had a letter one day, and after reading it she came to Mrs. Dana, her face covered with blushes, her under lip mutely telling its story of some unusual occurrence.

"Well, what is broken now?" asked the mistress, bracing herself to bear calmly the news of a wholesale destruction in china. "Nothing! that ain't it!" and Lucina twisted her apron-strings nervously; "I may as well tell first as last that Sam Johnson has up and wrote me a letter. There now!" "And what of that?" Mrs. Dana asked, laughing in spite of herself at the relieved expression of her handmaid. "Why, he carried me to singing-school last winter, he's *real* smart, but father, he said I wasn't old enough to be engaged; and then I said I'd go away. But Sam, he's growing poor, and"—here two big tears dropped on Lucina's plump hand, "father's given up. He says I'm breaking Sam's heart, and so I'm to go on the first train to-morrow." Mrs. Dana felt releived to know that Lucina was capable of mending one thing she had broken, and assured her that she should not be detained a moment against her will. "I'm sorry to leave, you've been real good to me, and so have they all. But there's Sam—" "Yes, I understand, go and make him happy," said Mrs. Dana fervently, and Lucina ran to pack her trunk, singing as she went: "Fly swift ye wheels of time." A great silence fell upon the household after her departure, and for the third time there was a meeting of the Committee on Ways and Means; Mrs. Dana had insisted upon her rights as a member of this honorable body, and was brought to the tea-table in her arm-chair, much to the satisfaction of the other members. "Now then, what's to be done, mother?" asked Richard as he poured the tea. "Oh, don't ask me! Can't we invent something new? It makes me really sick to think of trying another girl," was her reply.

"I—I'm sure I can't endure much more in that line," said Mr. Dana, who was still suffering from loss of sleep. "Mother, I have an idea!" and Richard crossed his knife and fork with an air of decision. "We won't hire another girl in such haste. I'll do the work *myself*, until we can find one to suit us. You just issue orders, and I'll show you that some things can be done as well as others. March is always a dull month for trade, and I can be spared from the store as well as not. Can't I father?" "Yes—certainly! I can get along nicely," said Mr. Dana, with an air of satisfaction. "I wish you would, Dick, and just have our own selves again, Lucina never pleased me very well." This was Master Ned's opinion.

"But—now you understand that this is to kept quiet, its nobody's business who's in the kitchen; and of course, in the afternoon, mother will sit in the parlor, ready to receive her friends. I shall also be ready to answer the bell, and we shall doubtless find good help in a short time. So, now Ned see if you can keep a secret," said Richard. Ned rolled his eyes, boy fashion. "I know you don't want the *girls* to know about it," but he promised not to tell—"honor bright."

The next morning Mrs. Dana was carried into her kitchen. She saw its desolation, but could only groan in her helplessness. "Never mind, mother!" said all-sufficient Richard, "it won't take me but a few minutes to wash the breakfast dishes, and then I'll put things to rights in a hurry."

"The fire is out, and there is no hot water," suggested the Bureau of Advice. "Certainly, to be sure!" and Richard darted hither and thither, and after a time the morning's work was fairly begun. It took longer than he had anticipated to wash, wipe, and put in their places all the dishes that had been used, but it was done at last to his mother's satisfaction. and with pardonable pride he presented himself for further instructions, which were as follows: "I shall not rest a minute, Dick, until this floor is washed. Too bad that my nice new oil cloth should look like this! Before you begin it, however, you can polish the stove." This work he had done before, and soon, with a very red face he saw it shining as it had not shone before since the first Bridget entered the house. But floor-washing was a mystery; and the young man secretly rebelled when he was instructed regarding the best method. But, determined to excel, he swallowed his pride, got down upon hands and knees and scrubbed manfully, to his mother's great delight.

"Whew?" he ejaculated, as he wiped the perspiration from his brow after the task was done. "I should think you would break your back on such work, mother."

"Oh, this is but a small part of my duties," said Mrs. Dana serenely. "Now fill the lamps, and then perhaps you had better do a little dusting in the parlor; after which it will be time to prepare the vegetables for dinner.

"Well now, when is a man going to read his Daily, I'd like to know?" and Richard looked in amazement at the clock, whose hands had been flying around with unprecedented celerity. "I rarely find time to read in the forenoon," was the reply; and, with true self abnegation, Richard once more bent his noble mind to the work at hand.

"Well wife, I should know you had something to do with this dinner," said Mr. Dana as he cut the juicy steak. "I'd no idea Richard would succeed so well. It will be a change for him; he'll get nicely rested doing housework; and its a pretty good thing all around." Richard made a grimace which his mother alone understood. Rested! That night when the last dish was in its place, and the lamps were lighted, Dick sat down with the air of a conqueror to count o'er his battles. Of wounds he had many; and it was while he applied salve to his burnt fingers that he realized what a hero he had been; but oh, he was too tired to care for the news, and retired early; leaving his mother to muse on the subduing effects of housework.

After a few days of wise planning and faithful service, Mrs. Dana saw her home once more in order. Dick was praised without stint; although his hands were growing brown, to his inward dismay, he showed no signs of faltering. No one but old Mrs. Price had discovered the family secret, and she was one of the few women who can keep such things. Indeed, Dick's friends would never have credited such a report, had they heard it; for he had nothing in his appearance to support it. He attended a lecture and concert, dressed in irreproachable style, and flirted with the girls the while his mind was filled with anxiety regarding the new breakfast dish to be concocted the next morning. But while Dick worked and waited, no answer came to his advertisement. Girls seemed to be wonderfully scarce all at once. He was remarking to his mother one morning, while making bread in the pantry. His mother sat just outside the door, book in hand, overseeing the operation, and enjoying with a keen relish the turn that the conversation had taken. During the dull March days, they had discussed politics and poetry, housekeeping, and the fine arts, but never until this rainy morning, had they taken up the "woman question." "They tell us," said Dick, "that New England is full of girls; but when you want one to do housework, they are nowhere to be found. Talk about women voting! I wouldn't complain of that, if they would make a better use of the privilages they now have, and become good cooks, and housekeepers and teachers—"

"Richard, don't run your fingers through your hair when you're kneading bread!" interrupted Mrs. Dana.

"Oh yes—so you said before! but I was about to remark that most girls seem to be the merest triflers. They come into the store, half-a-dozen at once, and giggle and simper, and toss the goods about as though old Father Time was waiting for them at the door, and in no haste whatever. What do they know of the dignity of labor?" and Richard's face wore a look of conscious superiority that was very edifying. "You forgot," said his mother, "that the girls appreciate being in your company. Dick, they know that you are expecting to choose a wife, by-and-by, and—" "a wife!" sputtered Richard, again tossing his hair back and powdering it anew. "When I take one of the village girls, why you may call me crazy, that's all." "Annie Hale can hardly be called a village girl, she has been away so long," remarked Mrs. Dana demurely. "Who said anything about Annie Hale?" asked Richard, smoothing his "sides" with flowery hands, while a red flush overspread his cheeks. "She feels above Deerfield people entirely. She comes sweeping into the store like a queen; selects her goods and sweeps out again. Cool as a north wind, she is."

"You are very fastidious, Dick!" said his mother, "you condemn some of the girls for stopping to laugh and chat, and another because she makes her purchases and leaves at once. That is hardly fair."

"Well mother," and Dick assumed a confidential air, "I admire Miss Hale—as I have a good many others—but I'm agoing to keep my eyes open. When I marry, if I ever do, be sure I shall never choose a strong minded woman, who will want to attend conventions and caucuses. Neither shall I choose a weak, fashionable creature, with more nerves than brains. No, mother! I want a modest, sensible, intelligent, cultured woman, who will be equally at home in the kitchen and in the parlor. One who will not run from a wash-tub even, when visitors come, nor refuse to play the piano before a musical professor. One, in short who believes in the dignity of *labor*, as well as in the dignity of *womanhood*." Dick had struck an attitude with one hand outstretched toward an imaginary audience, the other working away upon the mass of dough. "There my son," said Mrs. Dana, as soon as she could check her risibles, "the bread can be put into the tins now; it must be kneaded sufficiently. I want to ask you one question. Have you thought what kind of a husband such a woman would expect to get?"

"Well—well—I should expect to earn money, of course, should expect to grow rich in time. But, mother, your question is not reasonable. The cases are not parallel. Our spheres are so different. Men are made for the stern duties of life, women for—"

Just then Ned burst into the kitchen. "Say, mother, Annie Hale wants to get a book, and I told her to come right around here to the back door. I never thought of Dick—and she's coming—"

"Gracious!" with this one exclamation, Dick rushed across the kitchen, rolling-pin in one hand knife in the other, and darted into the sitting-room.

In a moment Miss Annie tapped at the half-open kitchen door. "Ned said I might come this way, Mrs. Dana," and a tall, graceful figure, with a most winsome face appeared. "How do you do this morning? No, thank you, I must not sit down, but how nice and cozy you look here. You have American help, of course, and that accounts for it. How fortunate! I do think you had trials enough with Irish girls. It is very hard to find good ones in the country. But I must do my errand. Mother wished me to get the report of the last Association meeting."

"Oh yes," and Mrs. Dana's face wore a puzzled expression. Ned had disappeared at once after Miss Hale entered. "It is in the secretary's book, and that is on the sitting room table." These last words Mrs. Dana spoke with much energy for poor Dick's benefit. "Oh don't call your servant, Mrs. Dana, I will wait upon myself," and so saying Miss Hale went into the adjoining room. As all remained quite Mrs. Dana began to breathe more easily, when Miss Hale said. "I don't see it here, Mrs. Dana, so I will just step into the parlor." She rolled back the door and paused; for there in the corner behind the piano, stood a curious figure with a long white apron bound around his waist, hair and whiskers well powdered, and in one hand a rolling pin held up as in self-defence. Miss Annie's dignity failed her, and she sank down into the nearest chair, laughing outright. Dick, covered with confusion—and flour—was obliged to join in spite of himself, and Mrs. Dana, relieved from fearful suspense, was glad to strengthen the chorus.

"Come out here, children," she said at length, and so they came—Miss Annie with glowing cheeks and sparkling eyes—Dick with a subdued expression that corresponded well with his general appearance. Of course, everything was explained, and Annie was so much interested that she forgot her haste until her small brother came to remind her that she was waiting for that report. After she had found it—with Dick's assistance, and gone, Dick remarked that he had no idea Miss Hale could be so agreeable. "How she did laugh, and what pretty teeth she has, and oh, mother, wasn't it a confounded shame that she caught me?" "It seems to me that you forget all about the dignity of labor," said Mrs. Dana. Dick only laughed uneasily, for he hadn't a word to say.

That evening he dressed himself with unusual care, and stepped over to Mrs. Hale's, just to caution Miss Annie not to mention her morning's adventure to her associates; and it took him until past nine o'clock to arrange the matter. This is not a love story at all, it has only to do with Mrs. Dana's kitchen, so we will not be too curious concerning Dick's future; suffice it to say that Mrs. Dana was not much longer confined to her chair, and soon released Dick from the kitchen, all the better for its wholesome discipline. In some way the story of his servitude went abroad, the birds of the air tell of the matter—and some sly remarks were made concerning Mrs. Dana's "American help," but when he numbered the blessings that followed in the wake of one eventful morning, he felt happy as did Jacob when at last he gained Rachel. Why this illustration seems applicable, my readers can easily surmise.

FEMININE POCKETS.

The most difficult thing to reach is a woman's pocket. This is especially the case if the man is in a hurry. We think we are safe in saying that he always is in a hurry on such an occasion. The owner of the dress is in the sitting-room, serenely engrossed in a book. Having told him that the article which he is in quest of is in her dress pocket in the closet she has discharged her whole duty in the matter and can afford to feel serene. He goes at the task with a dim consciousness of trouble but says nothing. On opening the closet door and finding himself confronted with a number of dresses he hastens back to ask, "Which dress?" and being told the brown one, and also asked if she has so many dresses that there need be any great effort to find the right one, he returns to the closet with alacrity, and soon has his hand on the brown dress. It is inside out like the rest—a fact he does not notice, however, until he has made several ineffectual attempts to get his hand into it. Then he turns it around very carefully and passes over the pocket several times without being aware of it. A nervous movement of his hands and an appearance of perspiration on his forehead are perceptible. He now dives one hand in at the back, and feeling around, finds a place, and proceeds to explore it, when he discovers that he is following up the inside of a lining. The nervousness increases, also the perspiration. He twitches the dress on the hook and suddenly the pocket, white, plump, and exasperating, comes to view. Then he sighs the relief he feels, and is mentally grateful he did not allow himself to use any offensive expressions. It is all right now. There is the pocket, in plain view—not the inside—but the outside—and all he has to do is to put his hand right around in the inside and take out the article. That is all. He can't help but smile to think how near he was to getting mad. Then he puts his hand around to the other side. He does not feel the opening. He pushes a little further—now he has got it—he shoves the hand down, and is very much surprised to see it appear opposite his knees. He had made a mistake. He tries again. Again he feels the entrance, and glides down it only to appear again as before. This makes him open his eyes and straighten his face. He feels of the outside of the pocket, pinches it curiously, lifts it up, shakes it, and after peering closely about the roots of it, he says, "By Gracious!" and commences again. He holds up breadth, after breadth goes over them carefully, gets his hand first into a lining, then into the air again, and finally into a pocket, and is about to cry out with triumph, when he discovers that it is the pocket to another dress. He is mad now; the closet air almost stifles him; he is so nervous he can hardly contain himself, and the pocket looks at him so exasperatingly that he cannot help but "plug" it with his clenched fist, and immediately does it. Being somewhat relieved by this performance he has a chance to look about him, and sees that he has put his foot through a band-box and into the crown of his wife's bonnet; has broken the brim to his Panama hat which was hanging in the same closet. As all this trouble is due directly to his wife's infatuation in hanging up her dresses inside out, he immediately starts after her, and impetuously urging her to the closet, excitedly intimates his doubts of there being a pocket in the dress anyway. The cause of the unhappy disaster quietly inserts her hand inside the robe, and directly brings it forth with the sought-for article in its clasp. He doesn't know why, but this makes him madder than anything else.

A VICIOUS DOG.

On Tuesday last while Mr. John Boland, farmer, living near Eganville was trailing cedars from a swamp, when two dogs followed him, one an old dog, common specie, the other a mere pup, when they commenced to fight. Mr. Boland spoke somewhat cross and ordered the old dog home, but instead of going there went some twenty yards to a turn in the road, where he waited until Mr. Boland came along with his team, and while in the act of passing the dog flew out from behind a stump and attacked in a most savage manner, literally tearing his pants completely off him, as also the flesh on the right hip—one cut over two inches in length and very deep. Mr. Boland, by hard kicking, got him off, but he attacked him the second time lacerating his hip shockingly. By dexterous exertions however, he again got him off, when the dog made for the woods, but returned home in the evening when one of Mr. Boland's men dispatched him with a shot gun. From the effects of the bites Mr. Boland was confined to his bed for four days. He is now able to move through the house, but cannot remain in a sitting posture.—*Standard.*

"NO USE TRYING."

"There's no use trying," said the wife of a couple of years, shaking her head, while tears of sorrow and disappointment gathered into her eyes. "It's evident enough that Robert and I were never intended for each other, and we made a great mistake when we got married. I've tried again and again to make things move smoothly, to see if he couldn't keep his temper and I my tongue; but there's no use; matters grow worse and worse, and if we get on one or two days without jarring or trouble, we're sure to bring up against some beam by the end of that time. So, for my part, I give it up from this hour. All my old dreams of a life made beautiful with love, and sacred by constant care and tenderness, and sweet with words and deeds of affection, a life that should never be jarred by discord and harshness, are faded now, and from this time I shall let things take their own course."

And so, her life was a failure; that married life she had entered on with her young husband, full of sweet and fragrant hopes, as June mornings are with blossoms, and each woke up suddenly to the knowledge of unmitigated faults and weaknesses in the other, which an intimate acquaintance with any character must always disclose.

And it was very hard to recover from the surprise and the shock of this new knowledge; and though the young wife resolved and resolved, she lacked purpose and patience, the very foundation of all true life. And so, after a year or two of fitful struggle and failure, she "gave up," and her husband's life and her own—oh! it was the history of ten thousand times ten thousand other lives—became darkened, and mildewed, and rusted by fretful tempers and selfishness and hard words and unloving looks, by frequent recriminations, at last by coldness and indifference.

"No use in it," mutters the drunkard, as he wakes up in the morning to find the tearful face of his wife bending over him, and learns that, for her sake, he was picked up from the gutter again last night, and was brought home more an animal than the dog they kicked from his door.

"Here I am, fallen again, low as ever, just as I began to hope I had triumphed and got the better of this horrid craving; and I haven't touched a drop for three weeks, and now—well, I give up all hope of ever coming off conqueror, or being a decent man again. There's no sort of sense in saying I will when I won't. I can't save myself any more than a stone can help tumbling down hill when it began rolling. Poor Mary! I've broken her heart; but it's my fate, and I can't help it! I shall never be anything but a poor, drunken dog—anyhow."

And he, too, went down, down, down, laying his brokenhearted wife in the grave first, and following her there, simply because he didn't triumph the first time, or the second time, or the third; as if that three weeks of abstinence from sin wasn't enough to encourage and strengthen him to try again! As if one day, one hour, or five minutes of triumph over any evil habit wasn't enough to hold up in the face of any amount of failure, and say, "There! I did that, and, God helping me, I'll do it again!

"Now, there's no sort of use in it," murmurs the youth, as he pauses for a moment to take breath—for it is slow, hard work for a half grown boy to pile up those heavy stones which build the wall around that young orchard. "I shall never be anybody or anything! I've had hopes and dreams all my life that I should make somebody in the world, and get an education, and be a man that folks would look up to and respect.

"But I'm nothin' but a poor wood sawyer's son, who has to tug at it from sunrise to sunset to keep body and soul together, and I shall have to go grubbing through life just as he's done. Here for two years I have been trying to lay up money to get a winter's schooling at the academy; but it's had to go, and al'ays would have, to, I see plain as daylight. I shall jest give up all hopes now."

And his life, too was a failure in its best and noblest part, for want of a little stubborn perseverance and energy. As if there ever was a man that wanted an education that didn't get it, that *wouldn't have it*, despite of pain or poverty, or opposition, or any obstacle that is in the power of this world, or sin, or Satan, to raise against him!

"No use whatever," sighs the mother over her disobedient son; never a mother tried to set a better example, never tried harder in this world to make a child what he should be—never tried in turn more of punishment, and praise, and admonition; but it's done no sort of good. He grows worse every day—more peevish, more lawless, more headstrong generally, and now he'll have to take his own course, and I shall let him have his own way in future, and come out as he may; I've done my duty."

Poor foolish mother! and her boy was not yet fourteen years old when she gave him over to his own devices; as if there was not an almost infinite amount of possibilites for good in any character at that age long afterward.

No wonder the boy lived to bring shame, sorrow, and disgrace on her gray hairs.

"No use trying." Alas? alas? this is the rock on which is wrecked every life that ever yet was a failure—the mournful epitaph which might be written over the grave buried resolution for which was ever born in the soul of man.

"No use trying!" Did ever a fouler lie enter through the door of a living heart? Don't believe it, dear reader, don't for an hour—no, not for a moment. No matter how many times you've fallen, get up again; this very fact of your "trying" proves that you have "life" in you. You are only "dead" when you cease trying.

Have you evil tempers or indolence, selfishness or pride, wrong imaginations or foolish thoughts to conquer, and have you been vanquished again and again in the struggle to overcome?—don't give up! You have gained something whether you know it or not. Get right up and "buckle to" again for only in despair is defeat.

Look all your losses and failures bravely in the face, and say, "I know that you've gotten the victory over me many and many a time; but I'm undaunted yet, and if I fall a thousand times, shall get on my feet and go right at the struggle again. I shall keep trying, with God's help, so long as there's a breath of life within me?"

And amid all the blessed eternal records to be unsealed by the hand of God, there shall not be found written the name of one soul who has boldly, earnestly, and reverently said this, and persistently lived it; and every other life has been a *wreck* and *failure*.

HOW IT HAPPENED.

A DRUMMER IN A SCRAPE—THE WAY HE GOT OUT OF IT.

At Big Creek, Arkansas, they have a peculiar fashion which sometimes proves embarrassing. As there is no preacher within thirty miles, the way for marrying is by kissing across a table, recently a New York drummer was out there. He put up at a private house, and became intimate. One evening he was fooling around one of the girls, trying the extent of her temper, when she gave his whiskers a pull and ran. He followed. She got the table between. He chased her around it several times. When out of breath he stopped on other side, made a wild plunge, caught her in his arms and gave her a hearty kiss. She then sat down on the sofa, and talked pleasantly for a couple of hours—he thinking it singular that she should sit up so late.

At last she said, "Don't you think it's about time we went to bed?"

"I guess you are right," he remarked, "let's go."

She lit a candle, and he was about to do the same when she said:

"I reckon one's enough. One candle will light two folks to bed."

"Undoubtedly it would when those two persons occupied the same room. but your candle won't illuminate my chamber.

"Ain't we going to occupy the same room? Ain't we married?"

"Ain't we what?" shouted the surprised gentleman.

"Married! Didn't you kiss me across the table? That married us."

A cold sweat spread over the drummer.—He knew that if he said he wasn't married to her she would make an outcry and then her loving and much-tobacco consuming father would arise in his wrath and carve him into cutlets, and her brothers would bring down their shot guns and empty their contents into him. He must be strategic. He must put her off. He said.

"Fairest of your sex, permit me to remark that I did not know that kissing across the table constituted a marriage ceremony. But I am content. I have never seen one who so completely filled my ideal of a beautiful, sweet, loving and modest woman. However, I would never think of holding you to this marriage until I had asked the permission of your father to pay my address to you. To-morrow at dinner, when the entire family are present, I will propose for your fair hand."

This satisfied the lady, and after bestowing upon him a fervent kiss, she went to her room and he went to his. He packed his carpet bag, took off his boots and made tracks for the nearest railrood station. He didn't feel entirely safe until he reached St. Louis. He hasn't informed his wife of this little adventure. He's afraid she might write out to Arkansas for the facts in the case, and then he might be arrested for bigamy. Women won't sometimes listen to reason, you know.

* * *

A young gentleman in Illinois, finding himself in a woful predicament, writes for advice. "Lately becoming acquainted," he says, "with a young girl attending school. I was smitten with her, and she appeared to regard me favourably. She is very much of a lady although but sixteen years of age. I sent her a present of a handsomely bound book of poems costing eight dollars, which she returned with a note, stating that her father would not let her keep it for which she was very sorry. Don't you think it was an insult to return the book without more of an apology? Hadn't I better whip the old man if he don't apologise for the insult? I think it ain't the girl's fault, for I know she loves me." We cannot approve of whipping the old man. A school girl of sixteen, even though she be very much of a lady, is subject to the obedience of her father, and if the old man forbids her to accept a book of poems, handsomely bound and costing eight dollars, she does right to send it back. The fact that she is a dutiful daughter goes far to justify our correspondent's good opinion of her, and to show that she would make a good wife. Indeed, if she is very much of a lady, the spectacle of her pa "steepled in gore," to use the expression of Miss Fanny Squeers, would displease her, and only aggravate our friend's difficulties. It will be best to approach the old man gently; find out whether he objected to the book out of pure cussedness or because he did not like that kind of poetry; mollify him with such palliatives as the diagnosis may suggest; and when his temper has been smoothed, or his taste for literature and handsome binding sufficiently cultivated, ask his permission to present the book to his daughter as a mark of respect for her family. That, we think, will fetch the old man, without resort to the more violent and dangerous treatment which our correspondent proposes.

* * *

We are indebted for a new idea in poultry feeding to a well known Scotch land owner, Lord Kinnaird. He obliges his turkeys to sit instead of perching. "Because," says his lordship, "you see that if one of those great fellows were to jump up and down his legs would get out of shape, and by compelling him to sit still and remain in perfect repose, when he comes to the table his legs are tender." This beautifully illustrated the abandon with which a wealthy amateur agriculturist may carry out his scientific improvements.

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Joseph Longworthy, of Cincinnati, has given $50,000 towards endowing an art department in the university of that city. As Cincinnati is not exactly an artful city his gift will be long worthy of rememberance.

MR BEECHER ON THE WHISKEY WAR.

Mr. Beecher remarked in Friday night's Plymouth prayer meeting that he believed that constant, moderate, steadfast action is better in any cause; but at times whirlwinds of sentiment are valuable. The women's temperance movement is a striking instance of the latter. The history of the race does not show its parallel. There is no evil that cries aloud in more voices to Heaven for suppression than intemperance. While it is peculiarly deleterious in individuals, it is murrain and blight in families. It has defied legislation, and moral force has not overcome it; but now, in the Providence of God, there has risen this cyclone of influence. It is one of the fruits of the woman rights agitation. He was first, middle, and last committed to the elevation of woman to equality with man, and he looked upon the accomplishment of her liberty as something certain of coming. Miss Smiley is not allowed to preach in a Presbyterian church in Brooklyn; but it is not certain now but that woman's influence will make itself felt there in the onslaught on whiskey in a way that will demonstrate her power. The proper use of a candle is to light a room, but shall it not shine out of the window too? Is women to stand still in an everlasting waiting. Her first sphere is home, undoubtedly; but when she feels that her domestic relations are affected, has she no right to move? Has she no right to combine and exert her power? Is there any other than the rum evil that so spreads nets for her husband's and sons' feet? If Dante had lived in the present day he would picture a pure, proud woman tempted into wedlock with a libidinous, drunken knave, who has a right to her society, her table, her coach. She must live in the presence of a total hog. No greater suffering can be conceived of. Have such women no right to rebel? May vipers crawl in and out of homes and nobody be allowed to tread on them?

He added that he was not attempting to speak critically of the movement, or saying in what channels it may run. He was only contending that no popular movement ever had a greater or more righteous cause, and was more deserving of prayer and countenance. Fanaticisms are to be believed in, at least those that are sweet, and not bitter. Their tendency, however, is to be excessive, and to exhaust themselves. It is a great pity that the force of this woman's movement cannot be economized. It is probable that it will be like a prairie fire, that burns away a great amount of stubble and scotches a great many snakes, and then stops. A temperance revival is in danger of being short lived, because it has no solid organization to give it permanent effect. If this movement could be transferred to the churchs it would gain a perpetuity.

* * *

A gentleman from Nebraska is extremely mad about divers statements which the Grand Duke Alexis is said to have recorded in his book as to the accomplishments of Nebraska legislators. He emphatically says that it is *not* true that one Western statesman congratulated the Duke on the successes of his father in France, and that another wanted to know if it was cold in Russia. Far from it; but the reason why his Highness forgot and said it is suggested by this exasperated writer in the insinuation that perhaps the Duke was disappointed because the people of Nebraska didn't rush forth with frenzied curiosity to behold him. Then follows a dark and mysterious hope that the royal writer has related how many times he shot at and missed one very large buffalo, and how the animal was finally wounded by the daring Buffalo Bill and respectfully held by the horns while his Highness killed him. The Nebraska gentleman intimates that a glittering throng of witnesses is prepared to rise like a bunch of Banquos, at almost any moment and confront the rash being who has dared to cast a doubt upon the noble and untamed wisdom of statesmen.

* * *

HOUSE DRAINS.—Where there is a kitchen sink it is much better to have the discharge fall on the surface and there evaporate than to have an imperfect drain that smudges and steams and freezes. I doubt the propriety of underground drainage such as is usually arranged, and if the pipes are less than four inches in diameter they will become coated with what looks like mucus, a white, tough, leathery substance, which gradually accumulating, will after a time stop the flow altogether. I have seen a discharge by a six-inch pipe into apit 12 feet deep which seemed to me to work well, but then what effect did it have on the well water? We had better be cautious. I think that the time of discharge should be as short as possible; that all deep pits are to be avoided, and that a shallow pit lined with brick or board should be constructed, and into it fresh earth should be added every day or so for a deodorizer, and this will make a valuable compost. I find no purifier equal to fresh earth, but chloride of lime, copperas, and such chemicals are to be used where only fluids run. The truth is, dish-water ought not to be poured into a sink; a hog should be kept, and it should be emptied into a swill barrel to which bran, meal, or other food is added. This whole subject requires much closer attention than it has yet received.

* * *

A CREW POISONED.—Twenty of the crew of the steamer Roman, lying at Long Wharf, became ill, exhibiting symptoms of poisoning. A physician was called promptly, and, with the aid of a stomach pump, soon relieved the men, and placed them out of danger. An analysis of the food of which the crew had partaken for dinner, revealed the presence of arsenic in a dish of [illegible] duff." It is believed the poisoning was accidental, as the cook was among the victims.

* * *

A Nebraska Journal [illegible] says: "Who says [illegible] this State? Fifteen years ago a young man came to this State without a dollar in the world. Last week he went out of the State taking with him [illegible] dollar and thirty-eight cents, the savings of fifteen years [illegible]. Come West, young man, come West."