

An Eastern Tale.

CHAPTER I.

And it came to pass in those days that multitudes of people took up their abode in the promised land, even in Kanada. And behold the townships began to be scarce in the land. So the Government arose as one man and said: "Verily, we will make more townships,"—and, lo, it was done. But names were scarce in the land, for it was new, and they cast about to find them. And behold, in a country called Scotland, they found a place the name whereof suited them well, for was not much whiskey drunk there?

And the people of Orow grew and prospered, but the devil saw it and was vexed sore. So he girded up his horns and departed on a journey.

And it came to pass that a cry went through Orow "The Keerahs have come!" And the people smote themselves and were sad, but the devil smote a smile of great size.

CHAPTER II.

And in process of time one Duncan Keerah begat Angus, and John, and Sandy, and Flora, and many more. And he had much land and flocks and waxed rich. But his sons and his daughters become scattered over the land; and the people loved them, yea, even as the Grit loveth to see the Tory have the flesh pots! So when Duncan was waxing feeble, and death came near, verily Sandy was with him. But they agreed not, therefore the old man girded up his loins and came to his son John, even to the great Keerah.

CHAPTER III.

And Duncan and John came to the great man, even the chief, and they lifted up their voices and said: "We want a will." And John lifted up his voice and said: "If he didn't have a sing, Ah'll no see him abuse!" And the will was made and all was left to John.

CHAPTER IV.

And John got a note for several shekels from the old man, and whiskey was plentiful in the land until such time as it was gone. And Duncan lifted up his voice and said: "Give me some money, John." "Ah'll have spen' her all, father." "Darn you! is that the way you're goin' to use me?" "Shut up, you ole fool, or Ah'll broke your nose!" "We'll see, John, we'll see whose nose 'll be broke!"

CHAPTER V.

And verily an old man comes to the chief, and his eye is full of fire, "Give me the will!" "What do you want with it?" "Ah'm goin' to burn her;" and Duncan—for it was even he—took the will and behold it was soon as the ashes. Then he girded himself and ambled down the road, but verily he held his peace, and John knew it not. But behold the grim monster drew near, and Duncan began to give up the ghost. And peradventure John began to snuff the air afar off and it smelt like a burned will. So he arrayed himself and appeared before the chief. "Where's the will?" "I haven't it." "You haven't?" "No." "Darn his ole kite! if Ah'll sought the ole beggar 'll leave me noosing, she'll have a differ'n story! But she's not deat yet." And behold he went forth and joined himself to the highwayman, even the great Fitz-Bluff, and a new will was made, but verily Duncan was gone. And John lifted up his voice and cried "Keerah! what'll we do now?" But the highwayman, even Fitz-Bluff, winked a large wink, and the will was signed, for did not John hand out the shekels?

CHAPTER VI.

And the day of the funeral arrived and John drove the corpe. But behold the whiskey was

like water in the land, and John was full. And it came to pass that the coffin jumped about, yea, even like a pea on the hot stove, and the people lashed their horses, but verily they could not keep up.

CHAPTER VII.

And it came to pass that John, and the will, and the maker thereof, even Fitz-Bluff, came before the Cadi and he took the cat and shook it out of the bag. And the people smiled, and they jeered; yea, they even spit large spits on John, and he went forth from the Cadi and cursed himself for an ass, but Fitz-Bluff felt his shekels and laughed.

The Sunflower.

AN AESTHETIC POEM.

O beautiful Sunflower,
O'er thy comports thou dost tower
Like a giant or a great being athlete,
With an uprightness of form
Like a bean-pole in a storm
Or a booby whose serenity's complete.

Thou dost grace with thy face
Every place where a nace
Of aesthetics can't be otherwise applied,
From our curtains short and squat,
To a cosy for a pot,
Or a sweet suggestive screen for the snug fireside.

At her waist or on her hat,
Thou dost look so very pat
She wasn't half a "flat" that first adopted thee.
Thy countenance expressive
Is so open, so excessive
In the charms that belong to the beautiful and free.

O worshipful Sunflower,
In thy plenitude of power,
Thou hast banished all the lilies of the field;
Thou hast banished all the roses
From our non-aesthetic noses
And the poppy and the pink too must yield.

Sweet violets are nowhere,
Mignonette and pansies no share
Of our soft approval now must dare beguile,
But thou cast'st a fav'ring eye on
The yellow dandelion
And the sedge and ox-eye daisy share thy smile.

The water-flag and bulrush
In thy presence do not need blush
For the lizard and the toad are in thy courtly train;
And leaves all ere and faded;
Or anything that's jaded,
May claim thy kind regard, that is plain!

Oh, let me ever wear
A Sunflower in my hair,
Sweet emblem of the pure aesthetic power!
And when I cease to pay—
As my Sunflower does away—
The homage due my day-god every hour,
Let my hat be out of date
And my hair the sport of fate.

LET ME DIE.

Ye Average Boy.

Ye boy is a noun, common, third, singular, (very) masculine, nominative of the verb to be. He is also an institution, family, national, cosmopolitan, perennial, having an inclination to view the world from his own peculiar standpoint, viz., the crown of his head. The first six months of his existence he spends in flannel, screaming, sucking his thumb, and napping. During the next period he amuses himself with attempts to swallow his big toe, crowing like a rooster, holding on like grim death to the whiskers of paterfamilias, who throws him up to the ceiling in a game of "ketch," and laughing softly to himself at the funny feeling of having his feet on the floor. The next he crawls on all fours, pulling chairs, whatnots, all and sundry on top of himself in his desperate efforts to get up; chewing soap, blacking, and other condiments lying around loose, with an invariable tendency to gravitate towards the soft-water cistern.

Tempus fugit.—Hitherto he has been but common gender; now, however, his sex is announced by the final renunciation of potticoats, and promotion to pants, which he values chiefly for the pockets, proceeding to fill them at once with a jack-knife, three bits of twine, an old watch-key, a top with string and button, some marbles, and a few hickory nuts. Later

on, he adds to his store a catapult and a piece of chewing gum. He has now arrived at the era of slate and pencil, atlas and copybook; when the boy who sits behind him pulls his hair, and he is "strapped" for looking around to see who it was; when he tells the truth, and honestly tries to do right, but finding it don't pay, concludes in despair that he might as well have the game as the name. Then comes the brazen era, when he fobbles marbles, hooks jack-knives, green apples, and water melons, and astonishes the household out of midsummer night's dream as he shrieks in the agonies of the double you ups. Then he goes to Sunday-school and electrifies the teacher by telling her he thinks "the prodigal son was a big fool, 'cos, why didn't he kill one of the pigs when he was hungry?" and also manages to effect a union between Deacon Piper's coat-tails and the mantle of Miss Vera Good, by a plentiful and judicious application of burr-thistles thereto. Or one morning before daybreak he elopes with a small loaf and a buuk of pie, and is seen no more until a quarter past six p. m., when he returns with his fishing pole on his shoulder, a three inch perch pendant therefrom; his nose like a ripe pepper-pod, his face swollen beyond recognition, by the bite of a black spider, or poison ivy, and the latter end of his pants *non est*, the missing part being in possession of an aboriginal bull-dog.

Another disappearance, and this time it is midnight when he crawls through the widow, for he has been to the circus, and could not tear himself away until he saw the last elephant off. Now he goes swimming round the bows of the propellers and gets sucked in under, to be clutched by the hair, and restored to love and thee just as he was going down the third time. Then a beautiful linen pillow-case is missing off his bed, and you know at once you will see him no more until ten at night, for he has gone off seven miles into the country in pursuit of hickory nuts, and that clears up the mystery of these three boys whistling for him outside the door at the dinner hour. By-and-bye neighbor Thompson's pet pumpkin disappears, and you discover a deposit of savory cabbage stalks; a candle, and some matches under the cellar stairs, and you know by these signs that the first of November is nigh.

Then one awful day you find him in a corner of the woodshed, sick unto death, and retching violently, vainly imploring you with lack-lustre eyes to leave him alone to die. He must surely be taking small-pox, or scarlet fever, and you hastily send for the doctor, and the doctor with a sudden smile of intelligence smells his breath, and blandly suggests that the fag end of cigar lying in the yard might explain the trouble. Then comes the beautiful, and he is first in the field and foremost in the fight, and you are called upon to pay \$2 for a large pane of glass, which he declares the other fellows broke as much as he, his snow wasn't packed; but you forgive him, seeing he won first prize at these last examinations. Or he skates into a hole in the ice, which is a godsend to "ye local reporter," and straightway your respected family name is in the papers as large as life, in connection with "heroic rescue," "pluck of a boy," &c., with a moral as long and pointed as the juvenile reporter's nose, about the reprehensible carelessness of parents, &c., &c., *ad nauseum*. Then a change comes o'er the spirit of his dream; he looks closely and frequently into your little hand mirror; smiles, looks sheepish, while his elder sisters go off into fits of inextinguishable laughter, when out of his bearing. And you are awful proud of your boy, he grows so tall, and manly, and sensible, so like your brother Tom at his age, but good gracious! what's that between you and the light? how old it makes you feel! that boy has actually grown a moustache! Ahem! that's where your razor disappeared to the other day; ah! well, all's well that ends well, and the end of the average boy is courtship, love, and marriage.