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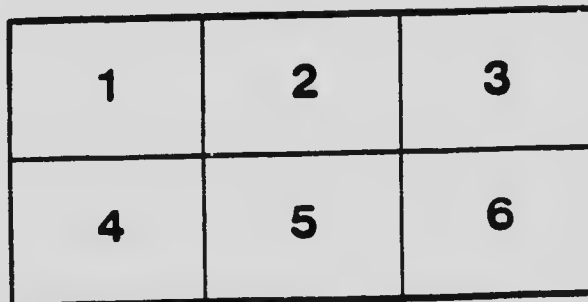
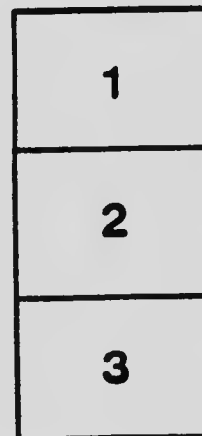
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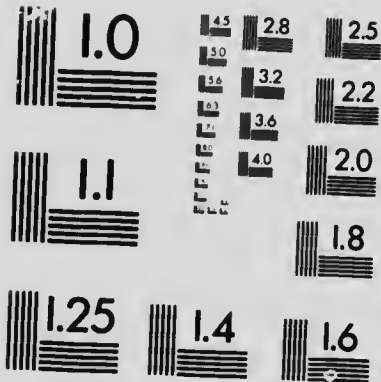
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RODNEY AND FRANCES.*

CHAPTER I.

Rodney's parents discuss his prospects with Frances—2. The latter receives and declines a proposal—3. The parents of Frances express anxiety for the future of their daughter—4. Who, during that evening, confers the promise of her hand to Rodney—5. Relating the incident to her grandmother when she reaches home.

SECTION 1.

During a certain evening in winter, a woman was sitting in the dining room of her home, and was speaking as follows, to a man who lay on a lounge nearer the stove: "You take a peculiar stand in regard to clergymen, Henry, in allowing to them the rite of voting. A measure of such kind could only produce strife in the various circuits."

"I do not originate the plea," replied the man; "I simply approve the agitation it is receiving in other quarters."

"What can you adduce in support?" inquired the woman.

The man replied: "The clergyman falls into that general class to whom is extended the franchise by Laurier's ministry. He is over twenty-one, and a British subject."

"But it would be prejudicial to the harmony of a congregation," rejoined the woman, "if, the flame of partial spirit existing latent there, a minister became prominent on one side to the disparagement of the other."

The man replied again: "The flame of partial spirit should be extinct. Therein lies the force of the argument. It is conceded by many of the present day, that partyism should die, and that the puerile and vituperative editorials propagated by partial organs, should give place to unbiased reports of the doings of government."

"But they say that the governmental members need a check, an opposition," returned the woman.

The man answered by saying: "That, Arletta, is the best argument for partial government; but people are now showing it to be fallacious and untenable. The house of commons should be of one party. Members are sent to parliament to promote the weal of a country, and not of a party. Only when the specious claims of partyism are annulled, will the electors in constituencies begin to vote on the ground of merit. Any body of men can be ruled, can be restrained, by its majority. Why should there be a party in parliament to oppose systematically the ministerial designs, tho these be obviously for the public good?"

*In the relation of this story, it will be observed that *gh* and *ph* are elided from words wherein they are silent; and when having the sound of *f*, are replaced by that letter. Thus, "da^{gh}ter" gives "da^fter"; "gh^t" gives "rit," which is lengthened by a final "e" to "rite"; "thou^{gh}" gives "tho," by throwing away the superfluous "u"; etc.

While this was being said, the woman had arisen, replenished the stove with wood, and removed her chair nearer the lounge. Seating herself in this new situation, and drawing an obstructed breath, she replied: "I confess myself unequal to that problem. Undoubtedly men of principle will deliberate conscientiously on the passing of a public measure, tho no other party should be the to oppose. But, husband, politics are not for women. Let us talk of domestic, and not of exotic, concerns. Let us speak of our children. They are my parliament. And when we sit alone, during evenings like this, I feel that our parliament is prorogued not to assemble again in full. I think of the time when we were altogether alone, before our children were born."

"And I, sometimes," replied her husband; "Our children are around us for a season and are gone not to return."

"Sydney will depart in the spring," continued the dame; "he is our youngest, the heir of our late maturity. Only Rodney and Horace are left; and Rodney is pursuing that path which will convert the son into the husband."

The man answered: "That is true."

The wife resumed: "He has attended Frances since Dominion Day of last summer, when they went up the river to Brockville. Of such long attendance something should come. We did not go together so long, before we engaged."

"Your memory, Arletta, is singularly retentive," replied the occupant of the lounge. "And was I not venturesome to engage so much, in such little time? But, apropos of Rodney, I shall be glad, wife, when he is settled; for a youth is restless, and impatient of control, when fired by Cupid and by early manhood."

The woman said: "What will you do for him, if he should marry?"

"The wooded lot, on which we are planning to erect a house during the summer, is eligible for a newly married couple," replied her husband. "You remember your saying of the other day, that a young man with a young, healthy wife should be willing to carve for himself a home from primeval nature. Let our son perform the dictum of his mother."

The dame vouchsafed no reply, but sat looking into her lap and futurity, whereupon her husband continued: "But of our children whom relentless Hymen has beguiled from their home, I miss most our daughter, our dark-eyed Susan. During the entire course of her maidenly years, and after she became a woman, she responded with alacrity to the demands of affection and duty. It is sad, Arletta, that our children, in going from us, take with them the life of their parents. But we, my wife, will never separate, never part; and our youth remains still, for love can not grow old."

The woman responded with a tear on either cheek. The husband saw them glistening in the lamplight, assumed a sitting posture, and bending forward kissed the descending drops away. The many which began to follow their benighted predecessors were checked by a handkerchief, and by a sound of steps in another room. Presently a door in that direction opened, a man, a woman and a girl entered the diningroom, and the marital tete-a-tete shrank into the silent past.

SECTION 2.

On the following day a woman was sitting in a parlor, on a sofa, while at the organ a man and woman were singing. The words they sang at this point, were as follows:

*Jesus, confirm my heart's desire
To work and think and speak for thee,
Still let me guard the holy fire,
And still stir up thy gift in me,
Ready for all thy perfect will,
Thy acts of faith and love repeat,
Till death thy endless mercies seal,
And make the sacrifice complete.*

When they had finished, the woman on the sofa said: "I must thank you for singing those two hymns, both of them favorites about which cling a thousand memories. Your tenor, Carl, is steadily improving; sweetness is the desired quality in the soprano and tenor, strength in the bass and contralto, their counters. But your voice, Frances, is unrivalled, for this morning by the exquisite neatness of your habit. Pardon me for speaking these truths which wear the appearance of flattery, and excuse my leaving, so abruptly, the scene of my enchantment. I wish to speak with Lucretia."

The woman, while speaking, had arisen. She now left the room. The singers, meanwhile, retired to the vacated sofa, the man conducting the woman by her hand. The damsel, knowing it thus to be retained, after they were seated, said: "Is it not unfair that grandmother should leave us no opportunity to repel these insidious attacks upon our modesty?"

The young man did not reply, and his companion continued: "You are depressed, Carl, and on a such auspicious day, a day when the smile of spring is first stealing over the face of winter."

Carl brant forward his other hand to the task of holding hers, and replied: "I am depressed, Frances; a burden is on my heart, that I would fain repeat in your ear."

"Speak on," returned his companion; "the poet has said: *The grief that will not speak, whispers the o'er fraught heart, and bids it break.* What was good for Macduff will doubtless benefit you."

"I would say, then, dear Frances," replied the man, "that I love you with my whole heart, that my life is in your hand, and that my very being is ensnared in the mesh of your magnetic personality; and this has been from the time, almost, when I first came into your father's service. What do you reply, sweet Frances? Can you return my love?"

Frances replied: "Talk not of love, good Carl. Why do you speak of the grand passion to me? I like you, Carl; I was ever pleased with your attentive kindness, but I do not, can not, love you."

The man evidenced the force of her reply by the tears which balanced on his eyelids. Frances surveyed him askantly, and resumed: "Why, Carl, do you waste a tear upon me, who can not weep a return? Eject me from the secret place. Remain my friend, my companion, but be some other woman's lover."

"I am aware how deeply I am bedded in poverty," replied the tenorist. "I know that we could not marry, tho we reciprocate in love. But I hoped that you mite overlook this, that you would return some hopeful word to my simple offering."

The damsel answered by saying: "The poverty which you profess is not an obstacle. The humbleness of man's station in life can not diminish true love in woman."

"You love another, then," replied the suitor, "since your heart is barred to me. Do you love another, Frances?"

The woman replied: "I must not say."

Then her companion said: "At least, Frances, in remembrance of former times, of the years during which we have shared a common roof, and, as I hoped, matched our thauts to a common groove, let me kiss your lips."

As he spoke he raised his left arm, and was about to put it about her neck, but Frances stayed the sacreligious hand with one of hers, and said: "Would you violate, Carl, the chastity of my lips? They must not be kissed but by an accepted lover."

The suitor's face fell, his hand came back to its former place, and thus he replied: "This brite forenoon you have made dark. my cruel love. Shall I believe that you would ruthlessly dash my hopes aground? Your winsome voice bears contradiction to the tenor of your words, and makes refusal sweet. Concede to me the gift of your love, and I will treasure it as no other would."

"I must for your sake speak frankly, Carl," returned the woman; "I can not bid you to hope. But we are young. Shed not the tears of disappointment at this tender age. Save your heart for one more matured. You want a woman, Carl, not one whose maidenic days are scarcely accomplished."

But Carl replied: "Do not belie yourself. You are a woman, and have that maturity which years do not bestow."

He winked his eyelids as he spoke and shook off the irrepressible tears. His companion said: "At least, Carl, do not let this momentary unsuccess unman you. On my life I would kiss away those true tears, if my lips were not constrained by holy vow. Deracinate the pang. Let not a silly virgin wound you to the death. Lead to the kitchen, Carl, and assist me with the dinner."

She arose as she concluded her reply. He followed snit, and kissed without prevention the hand which he still retained; afterward he said: "Pardon this liberty, dear Frances; even your hand is of precious value in my site. How much then do I not long for yourself complete!"

Frances smiled, and said: "I forgive this petty indiscretion, in the memory of your many virtues. Lead me hence."

As he lead her from the room, the suitor repeated:

*"I come to bear thee from a wild
Where ne'er before such blossom smiled;
By this soft hand to lead thee far,
From frantic scenes of feud and war."*

But you, my love, are fairer than Ellen of the raven hair."

SECTION 3.

During the afternoon, Frances and Carl with three other persons, were seated about the dining table. A clock on the wall sounded one stroke. Then the woman at the foot of the table said: "The clock has divided between one and two. If, Ludwig, we shall arrive in Adams by thirty minutes past two, we must start in fifteen minutes."

At her words a youth arose, and donned his overcoat and cap, meanwhile saying: "The cutter will be at the door to receive you in ten minutes."

Ludwig left the room, a sound of bells was heard, the man at the head of the table turned in his chair to look out, and said: "Rodney has come."

"I will go," said Carl, rising. "to assist in the care of his horse."

The speaker donned his hat and rubbers and left the room. As he was going, the man at the head of the table said to him: "Be not too long gone, if you intend accompanying me to the schoolhouse."

Carl had scarcely gone, when a voice was heard calling from a room within: "Frances."

The woman at the foot of the table heard, and said: "Frances, your grandmother calls."

Frances arose with some alacrity, and left the room. When gone, the man at the head of the table said: "Rodney is regular in his attendance on our daughter."

"His attentions are ill-timed," replied the wife, "since they prevent her going to a place of worship, during the Sabbath afternoons."

The man responded by saying: "She will accompany him to the evening service in Adams; and were she at liberty to go during this afternoon, she would not know whom to attend, her mother to the Hornerite chapel or her father to the Methodistic schoolhouse."

"Not again to-day," replied the woman, "should we discuss that unhappy subject. Some day will harmonize, I trust, our religious differences. But tell to me, George, if Rodney is your ideal gendre."

Her husband replied: "I do not expect perfection, Lucretia, nor did we impart that state to our son. Moreover, the affections of Frances must reject or accept, and not the conjectural considerations of her parents."

"I agree," replied the woman; "and thus it is that a child, a girl, and a maiden should be reared with great care and with gentle culture, that the instincts of the budding woman may be alive to the presence of true worth in man, and lead her to reject the pseudo and embrace the intrinsic. A damsel should have learned during all of her pubertic years, that the virginal state must not litely be bartered away, that it is her peculiar endowment of God."

The husband did not answer this speech, and presently his wife resumed: "But I must say that I shall never approve the marriage of an unsaved couple. For when the grafted tree appertains to Satan, to him also belongs the fruit."

"I cannot, Lucretia, endorse that opinion," replied the man. "I consider that children belong, universally, to the Lord."

At this point in the conversation, Frances returned, and Ludwig might be seen driving to the door. The man and his wife arose from table, and the latter assumed with rapidity the externals of her costume. While thus engaged, Carl and Rodney entered, to the latter of whom the man, the woman, and their daughter said: "Good day."

Rodney replied: "Good day to all."

Then the wife, while she secured her bible and tunebook, said: "Lay aside your coat and cap. If you, Frances, will gather the dishes, and pile them for washing on the other table, I will dispose them after supper."

By this time the husband was arrayed for travel, and said: "Carl, if you are ready, we will start."

Carl was ready, and they went. Frances replied to her mother: "I can attend the dishes, mother; your apron will enable Rodney to assist."

"I am wholly at your service," observed the man.

A voice was now heard calling from without: "All is in waiting, mother."

The woman said: "As you will, my daughter," and hastened to join her son.

SECTION 4.

During the evening of that day, Rodney and Frances were driving in a cutter, and as they rode, Frances said: "Tell, Rodney, in what season of the year is one happiest. Is it not when spring is first suggested by a balmy February day? Or is it in later spring, when the birds are singing in the woods, the streams are purling by their mossy banks, and the leaves come out in verdant beauty on the trees? What says the poet, as he describes the seasons dancing before Time?"

First, in green apparel dancing,

The young Spring smiled with angel grace."

Rodney answered by saying: "But what says the poet of autumn?"

More remote and buxom brown,

The queen of vintage bowed before his throne;

A rich pomegranate gemmed her crown,

A ripe sheaf bound her zone.

Autumn is a favorite season to me; but I think, Frances, that the season affects very remotely our happiness; as also the environment. Many men are basking in the sun of Italy, miserably wretched; while perhaps on the frozen fiords of Norway the youths and maidens are supremely happy."

Frances maintained a silence, and the man resumed: "It is love, Frances, that makes all seasons glad, and all places beautiful. It is love that makes the heart of man invulnerable to all operations of time and situation. And of that quality, my own Frances, would I speak to-night. Why should I longer conceal my love? Permit me to repeat the old story, to say to you that your personality has enslaved me, and that my heart is at your feet. Tell to me, Frances, if you will accept the humble offering, if you have lost as well as won."

During the speaking of these words, Rodney was looking intently into the face of his companion; but the damsel had sat with downcast eyes, and now exuded from them tears, but she made no reply. Rodney perceived the drops of emotion, and put his arm about her shoulders, saying: "Weep not, my darling Frances, but say that you return my love."

Frances wept harder, but managed to say in broken accents: "I do return your love."

Rodney clasped her then in passionate embrace, and with tears suffusing his own cheeks, he kissed repeatedly the woman at his side. Presently he said: "You have made me very happy, Frances, very happy; for I had fears that your tender, pure heart would not bestow itself on such as I. But be composed, my love; let not those beautiful eyes, that have in them the very blue of heaven, be thus submerged in tears."

Frances wiped away her tears and said: "How you awaken, dear Rodney, my whole being to the music of love!"

The lover kissed away her pause, and she resumed: "My life is now interwoven with yours, for when your strong arms entwined me, I loosed my last faint hold upon myself, and surrendered all. And my heart is in pain, Rodney, being so full of love and joy."

"Then seal the compact by the soft impression of your lips," replied the man.

The damsel drew nearer his inclined head, and kissed him on the lips, saying: "Be this my pledge of chaste and inviolable love. What is the poet's line?"

In amity and everlasting love."

Rodney replied: "I am reminded, my darling, by your lovely, tear-stained face, of the Eucharster's verses:

*The rose is fairest bathed with morning dew,
And love is loveliest when embalmed in tears.*

And may we not augur from this beautiful starry evening, while Cynthia is shining in nocturnal splendor, a happy and beautiful life, a life of love, Frances!"

"So let us, Rodney," replied his love. "Until when I am dead, I want your strong arm, as now, ever around me. I want to cling with every tendril to my umbrageous oak. I am happy, Rodney."

As she finished speaking, the horse, without command, assumed a quicker pace, Rodney's one hand imposed upon it only a mild restraint, and the lovers sped rapidly along the beaten track.

SECTION 5.

During the same nite, a woman was sitting by her table, reading a large bible opened thereon. While she read the clock struck ten; and, immediately afterward, a door opened and Frances entered the room. The incomer surveyed the reader, and said: "I am surprised that you have not retired, grandmother."

"Ten is not a late hour," said the woman continuing to read.

The damsel resumed: "When I have laid aside, in my room, my coat, hat and gloves, I will return and speak with you for a few minutes, grandmother, after your reading is finished, and if you are not too sleepy for further sitting."

"I will await you, Frances," replied the older woman. Thereupon Frances retired, and the reader continued to read till her granddaughter returned, carrying a lamp. The younger woman took a chair close to that which the other occupied; the reader marked the book with a pen, checked a slip of paper, and closed the latter into the book, having blotted hoth. Then she said: "Of what do you wish to converse, my dauter?"

The younger woman answered by saying: "Of what occurred while Rodney and I were returning from church; he proposed, grandmother."

"And how did you treat his proposal?" inquired the dame; "did it fall on good ground?"

Frances replied: "It fell on ready ground, at least, however the weeds may choke afterwards. I accepted him, grandmother."

"You announce it composedly," responded the grandmother, "for one of the feminine gender. I assume, then, that you love Mr. Cozmel."

"With all my heart," said Frances. "My life is indissolubly bound with his. My young heing had gone forth, good grandmother, and now to-nite, it returned bringing with it another."

The speaker paused, but in vain, for a reply. She then resumed: "But why, dear grandmother, do you shed these tears? I expected a joyful congratulation—if, indeed, you approve my choice."

To this the elder woman rejoined: "I was thinking, Frances, while you finished your recital, of the time when your grandfather, Ludwig, sat

with me in the little parlor at home—my father's home—and how he told in my ear that sweet story of conjugal love. I wept, Frances, as he related to me the depth of his devotion. He chided my tears, but mingled with them his. How recent all seems, yet how sadly, how immeasurably remote. The poet has beautifully said :

*Dear as remembered kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feigned
On lips that are for others ; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret—
O death in life, the days that are no more ! ”*

The woman took a handkerchief from her pocket and wiped her eyes. Frances surveyed and wept too, saying : “ I thant not to awaken by my words your fons lachrymarum, *the sacred fountain of feeling* ; but tell to me, grandmother, if life is smooth to them who truly love.”

To this query the grandmother returned : “ It has been said :

*The only folks who give us pain,
Are those we love the best.*

Your tender heart will often ache, my child. God's curse, too, upon Eve was not spoken in vain. Woman must endure sorrow, and travail of body and soul. But love, my dauter, overcomes all.”

Frances did not reply and the speaker continued : “ Sleep with me to-night, Frances. I am lonely, and the dead will not return to cheer and visit me.”

The woman rose as she spoke, as likewise the one addressed. Standing visavis, the elder woman placed her hands on the shoulders of her companion, looked into her face, and said : “ You are beautiful, Frances, in that beauty which emanates from a tender and womanly soul. *A perfect woman, nobly planned.*”

The damsel dropped her eyes, and replied : “ I will sleep with you, grandmother, if you wish it.”

“ Go then,” replied the dame, “ and bring from your room a nitedress, while I wind the clock and secure the damper.”

The speaker turned as she concluded her speech, and began to perform these duties, while the damsel took the lamp she had braut and left the room.

CHAPTER II.

Frances confers with her friend on religion—2, continuing the discussion with her mother at home—3, the mother of Frances discloses to her husband the design of the evening—4, and, on her dauter's return, executes the same—5, Frances afterwards relating to Rodney.

SECTION I.

During a pleasant afternoon, Frances was walking with a companion on the road. The latter, as they walked, put her hand upon Frances' shoulder, and said : “ I must remark upon the beautiful effect produced about the neck and shoulders, by your double cape. It adds greatly to the jacket's finish.”

But Frances replied : “ *My soul is weary of my life. Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased, dear Phoebe ? What is your recipe for a genuine conversion ?* ”

"You almost shock me by your sudden transitions," answered Phoebe. "We are pleasantly discussing the attire of the genus, mulier, and lo, you launch upon me Job and Shakespeare."

"Your recipe," said Frances.

Phoebe replied by saying: "Take for your guidance—since you persist in desiring to be a religeuse—the text of Mr. Duncan for this afternoon: *And herein do I exercise myself to have always a conscience void of offence towards God and towards men. Exercise yourself spiritually.*"

Frances responded: "Your directions are not explicit, Phoebe."

"If you are serious," answered Phoebe, "I will reply in kind. Decide for Christ. Accept Him as your personal Savior. Lead a new life."

"You advise me, then, to turn a new leaf," said Frances. "But can one turn the leaf without assistance, and keep it turned?"

Phoebe replied by saying: "*My grace is sufficient for thee.*"

Frances resumed: "Your recommendations are acute, Phoebe, and dovetail in a manner to suggest that you have warned fellow creatures before to-day. But permit me to confess myself unsatisfied. Luke represents John the Baptist saying: *One mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.* Or, as translated by Jerome, it reads: *Veniet fortior me, cujus non sum dignus solvere corrigiam calceamentorum ejus; ipse vos baptizabit in spiritu sancto, et igni.* John promised to all; the original has *apasi*. Is this baptism for me, Phoebe? Is not this the new birth?"

"These experiences come afterward," replied Phoebe.

"But why should one enter the vineyard, till prepared for labor?" inquired Frances. "For this experience the apostles waited."

To this Phoebe made no reply, and Frances resumed: "Will you pardon me, Phoebe, if I ask: Were you ever baptized in the Holy Ghost? *in spiritu sancto? en Pneumati Agio?*"

Phoebe replied: "I have at many times been blest, Frances. I think such blessings might be called baptisms."

By this time the damsels had come to a corner, and now they stopped thereon, and Frances said: "When Christian, in his journey from this to the other world, surveyed the wondrous cross, he felt his burden of sin dropping from his back. Did you ever, Phoebe, feel your sins to fall from you. Tell to me, my friend, that I may know what my own experience should be."

Phoebe replied: "We must not trust our feelings, Frances. We must believe that God's word is true, and that our sins are forgiven when we have accepted Christ. You should trust him, Frances, for a performance of these things. Rely upon the promises."

"I am not wholly convinced by your argument, Phoebe," observed Frances; "but I am constrained to admire your spirit of christian patience that has enabled you to bear with my bold inquiries. Yet inform me, Phoebe, how you distinguish the love between God and man from the love between husband and wife."

Phoebe took the left hand of her friend, and separating a finger, turned upon it a ring, saying: "This stone of saffire tells to me what your lips leave unsaid. You cannot love God ritely, if too much concerned for a human lover."

But Frances answered: "I confess that Rodney is my all, and that this stone of saffire does not misrepresent; but I trust that sometime I may love my Savior, tho my heart should be filled with human love. For

I believe, Phoebe, that human affection should be purified, and not expelled, by that divine."

As Frances spoke, they separated somewhat, one continuing on the strait road, the other diverging to the left. Stopping, however, Phoebe halted her companion, who was walking backward, by saying: "You are a sophist, Frances, tho a beautiful one. Is it vain to ask that you will sup with me, on this cool Aprilic evening?"

Frances replied: "Quite vain, my dear friend. *And life is thorny; and youth is vain.* Good-bye."

"I flee from your poetic rage," said Phoebe. "Good-bye."

The women separated without further conversation and saut their respective homes.

SECTION 2.

Later in the afternoon, Frances and her brother were in the kitchen of their home, and Frances was saying: "You had better get the cows ready for milking, Ludwig, before snpper."

"Shall I have time?" inquired the youth.

"You can eat when you return," replied the sister; "father and mother are driving in now. Since you will not wait for to milk, you can bail the cows and eat afterwards."

Ludwig replied: "I will go," and left the room. Scarcely was he gone, when his mother entered by another door. To her Frances said: "Did you stop at Mr. Dutrellan's for help with the milking?"

The woman laid aside her garments of travel and her books, as she replied: "We stopped. They will assist us after supper. Is Ludwig gone for the cows?"

Frances replied: "Yes, he will eat when he returns."

"That will do," responded her mother; "Your father and I, with the assistance of Henry and Joan, can handle them easily. Will Rodney sup with us?"

"He will not arrive till after supper," replied Frances. Her mother not speaking, she soon resumed: "I must tell, mother, of my conversation with Phoebe during this afternoon. We were returning from the schoolhouse, where Mr. Duncan preached to-day, and we conversed on the subject of conversion. I felt drawn by a spiritual influence, to speech; and, for that matter, I feel so yet. I therefore asked Phoebe to tell to me a rite method of conversion."

Frances paused, and her mother inquired: "What course did Phoebe recommend?"

The dauter replied: "The refrain of her words was, decide for Christ; namely, turn a new leaf, and accept Christ as a personal savior."

"You doubtless suspected," replied the dame, "that Phoebe's recommendation did not comprehend all. Did she observe that you should be ridden of your load of sin?"

"She cautioned me not to trust my feelings," replied her dauter, "but to believe that my sins were pardoned after I made the start. I instanced, tho in vain, the experience of Christian."

The mother answered by saying: "I believe that the experience of Christian is truly typical. This does not, of course, admit that Bunyan situated the cross in a proper adjacency to the wicket gate; but the coming to Christian of the three shining ones is symbolical of a rite experience. My sins, dauter, fell from me as the devilfish fell from Gilliatt, enabling me to see with what a horrid incubus I had been

oppressed. My sins were forgiven, were washed away in the tears of my contrition, and carried yet farther by the outpourings of ecstasy and delight."

At this point Frances put some tea into the teapot, and some water, setting it on the stove, and said: "I suppose that father will be in soon."

Her mother replied: "I have hoped, my daughter, that you might be one of God's children; but I protest, on this Sabbath afternoon that, for the present, at least, I would prefer your remaining a sinner to your making a meaningless and unprogressive start. Wait on your knees for the pardon that God grants to all who come to Him resolved. You are at a repentant period of life; now is your tender heart susceptible to divine influences. And do not marry, Frances, till you are born anew; for Paul has said that if neither parent is born of God, the children are unclean, are not of God."

To this the daughter replied: "Might I not speak with you to-night, when I return from Adams, and learn then more fully the ways of God?"

Frances stood near the stove as she spoke, and now her mother arose and coming to her kissed her cheek; and tears were in the eyes of both, as the mother said: "I am concerned for you, my earliest joy, my perennial comfort and aid. Be prepared in mind to-night, dear Frances, to seek this inestimable gift which will purify and ennoble your filial and conjugal relations. I will await you in the parlor."

Steps were now heard in an outer room, and presently the father of Frances entered the room. To him the dame said: "Had we not better sit at table now, George? Ludwig will scarcely be returned with the cows in time to eat with us, and still allow to us a seasonable start at the milking. For we must yet change our clothes."

Her husband removed his hat and gloves, saying: "As you will, Lucretia."

Thereupon Frances placed the teapot by her mother's plate, braut the pancakes and potatoes from the oven, and the women, followed in proper suit by the man, assumed their places at the table.

SECTION 3.

In the course of that day's evening, the father, mother and grandmother of Frances, were together in the parlor. The elder lady sat on a sofa; her son and his wife were by the organ, singing as follows:

"The shepherd with his wife reclined
Beside their tent, at dusky even,
And wondered in their dual mind
What name the new-born child be given.

"Then while Zipporah nursed her boy,
And kindled in her soul the flame
Of motherhood's peculiar joy,
The shepherd found him out a name.

"Be called, my son, a name to tell
How your sad father hither hied,
In Midian's lonely land to dwell;
To you be Gershom's name applied."

"Thus, pilgrims, we recall the home
We left to cross life's ocean wild;
Thence backward, at the last, we roam,
And find the heav'n we left a child.

"And may some kind Zipporahs soothe
Our saddened spirits while we rove,
And God at last beside each booth
Raise up a gourd of shelt'ring love."

Finishing their hymn, the man led his wife to a double chair, while the elder lady remarked: "How beautiful are hymns on the evening of Sabbath! Surely we should be grateful to prolific Wesley, Watts, Cowper, and ad infinitum, for their melodious words that have so widely evangelized. And when our souls are in harmony with the concordant sounds, the pleasure is greatly enhanced. Inform me, George, of the hour."

The man consulted his watch, and replied: "It is a quarter after nine."

"I will retire," said the occupant of the sofa, rising. "Allow me to thank you for the music. Good nite, Lucretia; good nite, my son."

"Good nite, mother," replied the younger woman.

By this time the elder woman was about to pass out; her son held open the door, and said: "Good nite, my mother, I wish for you pleasant dreams."

He shut the door behind his mother, returned to the double chair, and, taking his wife upon his lap, said: "I love my mother, but you, dear wife, are my strength and my song. How indefinable is that tie which conjoins man and woman."

His wife, with her rite arm about his neck, kissed him and replied. "I trust that we may live together beyond this life, dear husband; that we may be one in heaven."

"They do not marry in heaven," replied the man.

The woman answered by saying: "Where none die, none need to be born, hence obviating marriage. But what of the spirits that have interwoven on earth? will they not remain bound in heaven? For God has joined them."

"That is a beautiful hope," replied the husband. "My prayer is, that my Lucretia may be mine during all eternity."

The wife replied: "We grow sad to think how evanescent is life terrene; yet who would live always in the valley of Baca?"

"We live for our children," replied the lower occupant of the chair. "We wish to pilot them as far as we may, over the tempestuous ocean."

The wife responded: "I feel sad to-nite, George; a sadness that resembles sorrow as the mist resembles rain. I wish that I mite ever sit within your arm, and that our whole life mite be one sweet Sabbath evening."

"I will exorcise your sadness," replied her husband kissing her lips.

The wife continued the conversation by saying: "Frances, our dauter, made a request at supper time, that when she returned from Adams she mite find me waiting in this parlor."

"For what?" inquired the husband.

"To seek a baptism in the Holy Ghost," replied the wife.

The husband said: "I have not known so much as that implies. If it is free, as you have frequently said, let me remain."

"It should not be," replied the woman. "She mite not be so unre-served in your presence. I wish to prove by her that this baptizing accompanys, and should not be left to follow, conversion. Then, hus-band, will you not seek?"

The husband replied: "I desire all that there is for man."

The wife said: "Will you not promise to seek with me if she finds?"

"But you must not coerce her," replied the husband.

The wife answered by saying: "I will not. Promise, George."

"I promise wife," replied her husband.

The woman pressed her face to his, and kissed him twice, saying: "Then God will hear us. I have prayed for you so much, George. I do not believe we could live together much longer without you finding, or me losing. A loving husband and wife must have two hearts that beat as one, or their love wanes. This is all that separates us, and now God will remove. For since last December I have prayed, as Elijah prayed when he besant Heaven for rain; and now, behold the little cloud."

The man now released himself from his wife's embrace, and put her from his lap, saying as they arose: "Come, anyway, to our room, and assist in the evenal devotions. If you will not suffer me to remain at the sacred seance, put me safely into bed, at least."

The woman turned down the flame in the hanging lamp, took the one from the organ and with the other hand leaned on her husband's arm, saying: "Should we not be happy, George, in a mutual love? I will lean upon you till we die, dear husband."

The wife accompanied her husband from the room as she spoke.

SECTION 4.

During the same evening the mother of Frances was sitting again in the parlor. She read from a book that lay open on the table; and while she read the sound of approaching steps disturbed the silence. Then Frances came to the door, and looked in, saying: "I believe, mother, I do not feel now in the mood for prayer and seeking. Mite we not defer to another time."

"Lay off your cloak, hat and gloves, but retain your jacket," replied her mother, "for the fire is dead and we are still in April."

Her dauter answered: "But why, mother, since the spirit is not on me now?"

"I would speak with you," replied her mother closing the book. "Doff your wraps, and join me in discussing, if not in executing, our proposed adventure."

As the dame concluded, a clock in another room struck ten. Frances laid aside her removable clothes, and entered the parlor, stopping near the couch. Her mother arose, and approached taking her hand, and observing: "Since your departure for the village I have prayed that your return might be signalized by a triumph of the spirit. It is for you, Frances. Therefore join with me in calling upon the name Jehovah thru Jesus our Lord. He will hear, my dauter, and fill your heart with a new love and a new life. Let us kneel."

They kneeled together by the couch, the mother put her rite arm about her dauter's waist, and they began silently to pray. The silence

was not broken, except by an occasional stir or movement of their bodies, till the clock was heard to strike the eleventh hour. Then Frances, her face suffused with tears, attempted tho vainly to arise, crying out: "Let me go, mother, let me go. I cannot find Him."

But the mother replied: "I can not, dear child; I dare not. Must I resign you now to Satan? My God! My God!"

As she spoke, she kissed her daughter with passionate fervor, and began to weep copiously. As she wept, the damsel cried: "My Savior! My Savior! Thou hast heard me, Lord!"

Both women were now deeply moved by the subduing tho unseen power. As they were weeping convulsively, the door was opened, and Frances' father entered. He came to where they were kneeling, and said: "I cannot sleep, dear wife; I long for that which you enjoy."

His wife moved from her daughter for a little distance, and said in reply: "Kneel between us. Pray with me, daughter, for the baptism of your father. Lift to God, my husband, your voice in silent prayer."

The man kneeled between them; they clung to him on either side, and all began to pray in silence, the wife only saying: "Lord, hear us again, we pray."

SECTION 5.

On the second evening after the conversion of Frances, she and Rodney were driving on the road. While they drove the jungling was saying to his companion: "Behold to larboard the new moon. I will proponnd to you, Frances, a question concerning it: Why can we see only a crescent to-nite, when the full circumference was visible at a week ago."

Frances replied: "That was one of my geographical difficulties. Besides, Rodney, you should not ask concerning that which you already know."

"Point me t' n to Sirins," answered the jungling. "Its manner of location from the polar star I have forgotten, believe me."

His companion then replied: "The canine star is t' e most brilliant of all in the sky, and thus needs no other index to its situation. But the burden of my mind to-nite, is not of an astronomical character."

Rodney answered by saying:

*"There's not the smallest orb which thou beholdest
But in his motion like an angel sings."*

It is not wonderful that Lorenzo nused so sublimely, while the fair Jewess sat so closely beside him."

"Name not Jessica and her charms," replied the damsel, "when the sapient and womanly Portia is in the same story. But listen, my lover, while I tell what occurred, after your departure on the evening of Sunday."

To which Rodney replied: "Did another lover appear? Had you, like Portia, a swarthy Moor to encounter in amatory combat?"

"Allow me to indulge a serious vein," replied the damsel. "The experience of my life transpired on the last Sabbatic evening."

Rodney replied: "Mine, on the contrary, occurred on a Sabbatic evening of last February."

"You are in a witty groove, to-nite," replied Frances; "on that nite we discovered ourselves, but on this later nite I discovered Christ."

Rodney did not reply, and his love continued: "I was oppressed, Rodney, on the afternoon and evening of Sunday, by the spirit of repentance; and, having mother await my return from church, we prayed for my forgiveness. Mother had said that one should know of one's acceptance; and for that evidence we prayed."

Frances paused, and Rodney said: "You know, my darling, that of religion I am profoundly ignorant, tho not without times of desire. I admit myself to be careless and indifferent concerning things divine; but what concerns you is interesting to me. Let me therefore request a more explicit narration of your experience."

"I have been preoccupied with reflections on it," said Frances, "during our stay at the league, and, in fact, during the whole evening. And because, dear Rodney, you have won my heart, and gained possession of my life, I am anxious to communicate to you my experience, and endeavor to have you healed as I was healed."

Rodney replied: "How did your mother proceed in the affair?"

Frances answered him by saying: "We kneeled by the couch in the parlor, and for an hour or more we prayed in silence; then I felt, while I still kept entreating, a great struggle in my bosom, between Satan and the Lord. And I felt drawn by the adversary and tried to desist from my pleading, and arise, and flee from God; but my mother's arm was about me, which I than at the time to be the very arm of my Savior. And then a great wave swept over my soul, and in that moment my sins were washed away, leaving me dissolved in tears. Mother, too, was greatly moved. Then father came from his bedroom, and, innocent of boots, of vest and of coat, kneeled between my mother and me. We clung to him and prayed to God with our whole mite that he, too, would be baptized; and soon the soft contagion of our presence, filled as we were with the Holy Ghost, moved him; and, dear Rodney, he wept as I had never seen man weep before. I than that tears were the exclusive privilege of women, but he was a subsidy of tears."

While Frances spoke she toyed with the disengaged hand of her lover, who now replied: "I am astonished at your narration, Frances, and will ponder over it. I am convinced that my blue-eyed Pallas, my my blonde Eve, has a very warm heart, and will be to me a treasure more than gold."

The jungling put his hand about her waist while speaking, and now he kissed her lips, saying: "We are at your gate. Sometime, Frances, I will drive by and take you to another home. Shall I not?"

He alited from the buggy, and as he supported her to the ground, she replied: "I have not, like Cassandra, the gift of prophecy; and if I had, would be discredited as she."

CHAPTER III.

Rodney broaches to his fiancee the subject of marriage—2, who in turn consults her mother—3 She puts her lover on trial 4, explaining the reasons to her folks at table—5, and gaining Rodney's assent thereto.

SECTION I.

On a certain afternoon Rodney and Frances were seated in the parlor of the latter's home, occupying jointly a double chair, and Rodney was saying: "You have not informed me lately concerning the welfare of our friend Carl. I am interested in his career."

Rodney held her hand while he spoke, and while she replied: "Carl has now been absent for about a month. Father received a letter from him during last week, which informed us that he is doing well, and has had no bad luck to date."

Rodney answered by saying: "The men at Montreal have these young cheesemakers at their mercy, and can nip them when they please. Young men like Carl should have a representative in the Montreal market, to save their product from unmerited and irregular condemnation."

The damsel observed: "You must not deliver a disquisition on cheesemakers' rites during the Lord's day; tho' I am delighted to see you concerned for that fraternity of which Carl is a unit."

"I have indeed fancied in the golden time," observed the lover, "that I had a dangerous rival in Mr. Jones; but subsequent events have rendered extremely improbable the supposition that you affect him seriously."

"I trust," said Frances, "that I may ever regard Carl with friendly feeling, for he was ever respectful and obliging to me. I cannot indeed love him with that mysterious love by which I am drawn to one who is nearer, but—"

Rodney interrupted by saying: "Let me pay for this ingenuous compliment before it becomes overdue."

He spoke, and, drawing her nearer, kissed her on either cheek. She continued: "But this is because I have only one heart."

"You are bound to maintain a continuity of thant," said Rodney, "in spite of my rude interruption. But tell to me, my pet with the tawny hair, what would be Carl's only course, if he had chanced to be ensnared in your soft and pliant net? Could he afterward love another?"

Frances replied: "I cannot answer for der mann, whose love for woman, they say, is only one feature of his existence; but die weib can love once alone, that love being her very life."

To this Rodney said: "You do our sex a considerable injustice, surely. You do not observe the injunction: *neither extenuate nor set down out in malice*. Let me instance Romeo. Was he not bound in the *easy chains* as titely as Juliet?"

Frances replied: "What I have written I have written, said the procrurator. But it does not become me to enter argument with my future lord."

"Truly, Frances," said Rodney, "the gentle woman ever surprises and delites by the sweet affability of her speech. But say, dear Frances, when I am to claim you for my own. When is the legal to confirm the psychic bond?"

"Soon, Rodney, I hope," replied the damsel; "but yet I should not wish to say when, to-day."

Rodney answered: "Will you tell when I come again? That interval will allow to you time for cogitation. And let me bespeak an early date; for truly, Frances, man is very incomplete, very weak, without the subtle support of woman."

"When you come again," said Frances, "I will tell the time when I shall place my cipher after your one, forming ten."

Rodney replied: "I thank you for these sweet concessions, Frances. At many times I wonder that one so fair, so good, should have yielded to my ruf entreaties. Shall I not ever owe to you an unpayable debt? For you gratuitously concede what with Rockefeller's gold I could not buy."

But I tire you with these protestations, and I crowd you in this circum-
scribed chair. Let me have all of the chair, my love."

Frances replied: "And to me be only assigned your unspeakable
lap?"

Frances arose, and sat upon his lap, putting one arm about his
neck. Then she resumed: "I am true if not complimentary; your lap
is an unspeakably happy place."

SECTION 2.

During the forenoon of the next day, Frances was in the kitchen of
her home, engaged in preparing pies for the oven. Her mother sat near
mixing seeds of pumpkin into a bucket of corn. While the daughter rolled
a piece of do, she said: "Unfold to me, mother, your sentiments on
dress in the home. As you know, we are not dressed to-day, as perhaps
we would wish to be if visitors were present. How think you regard-
ing it?"

Her mother responded: "For my part, I feel myself to be well
enough dressed for company. People, when visiting, prefer to see their
entertainers as they are during every day. Yet I think it to be my duty,
and find it my pleasure, to appear as neat and tasteful before my hus-
band and children, as before other people."

"Then we may infer," said Frances, "that people whom we find
uncommonly well dressed while receiving, fall into an opposite extreme
when en famille."

Her mother answered: "You may deduce as much."

"And do you set your table ordinarily," said Frances, "suitable for
visitors should any come?"

Her mother replied: "As you must have noticed, I have it set
sufficiently in taste and in abundance, to be alike ready for the visitor
and the beggar. I would not wish that Lazarus should come to our
door and find no welcome."

After a pause the dame resumed: "Repeat, my daughter, the most
appropriate verses that you have in memory, touching the planting of
corn."

The daughter replied by saying: "It was written by Carlyle:

*Old mother, receive this corn,
The son of six thousand golden sires;
All these on thy kindly breast were born,
On more thy poor child requires.*

And Virgil, in his first Georgic, has told when to turn the fruitful soil,
and when to sow the corn. But, apropos of poetry and quotations, give to
me, mother, your best verses on love."

"You ingenuously reveal the trend of your thought," replied the elder
woman. "What think you of these?"

*Love took up the harp of life, and smote on all its cords with mite;
Smote the cord of self, which trembling passed in music out of site.*

But, by the way, have you converted your big worldly lover yet?
You surely will not yoke with an unbeliever."

Frances replied: "Permit me to quote your own passage:—for the
unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife."

"Paul is a correct guide," replied her mother. "When your father
and I stood before the hymeneal altar, neither of us knew anything of

God, tho both were professing desires. What had then become of our children, if the Lord had not spared, and was not yet sparing, them to reach the years of repentance and salvation? I often think of Samuel's injunction to Saul: *Now go and smite Amalek; slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.* The infants and sucklings had not sinned by act, but they suffered for the sins of their parents. Likewise in GENESIS xvii, 14, is said: *And the uncircumcised man child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.* The man child could not be aware of the covenant he was breaking; he suffered for the neglect, or the alien condition of his parents."

"I am persuaded that children are placed by God in the parental category," answered the dauter. "But with respect to Rodney, what do you advise? He tipples, uses tobacco, and until recently has danced. Should I marry him as he is, tho the husband is sanctified in the believing wife?"

The mother responded: "He will abandon these hahits at your request, will he not?"

"I do not know," replied her dauter. "It pains me to think that he does not abandon them without request, since he knows that they cannot be agreeable to me. And he is coming here during some evening of this week, to hear me name the day on which we shall marry."

"Is he so eager?" said the elder woman.

The younger replied: "I have thaut, mother, that he should be penanced with a year's abstinance from these obnoxious practices, before we marry. Yet I fear that he may not wish to wait so long, and be forced, as it mite seem, to ahandon what doubtless he does not consider very wrong."

"If he strongly loves," replied the dame, "he will endure much at your hand; and surely more hefore, than after, marriage."

"Would you then advise," inquired the dauter, "that I prohate him for a year. I love him, mother, with my whole soul and with my whole strength; but that makes me willing to endure a delay that will make him like myselt."

The mother responded: "A rigorous course is best; but yet go gently, Frances; gentleness is very becoming in woman, and her chief weapon. I will get the potatoes for dinner. I think you are wise to act with firmness, dauter. Pray for guidance. Be ductile in the hands of God."

The dame arose, while she spoke; her dauter replenished the fire.

SECTION 3.

During an evening later in the week, Frances and Rodney were driving on the road.

"Whither shall we go?" said Rodney, as they emerged from the gate. "Shall we descend with the Nation and pass the Horneritic assemblage, or do you decree that we ascend towards Adams?"

"Draw the dexter line," said Frances. "Let us not disturh what we can not join."

Rodney turned to the rite, the mare assumed a lively trot, and the lover said: "But why can you not participate in their devotions? They pray to the same, and thru the same, deity that you address and invoke. Is it the contiguity of the wicked swamp where, as in ancient Saxony, the

hags of old are lurking, and machinating their dark designs, that repels and deters you?"

Frances replied: "Mr. Horner's worship is in the rite spirit, but scarcely with the rite expression. Hornerism is an animal deformed and unshapely, but instinct with life; Methodism is a creature of symmetrical and exact proportions, but not yet a living soul."

"Neither then, it appears," said Rodney, "is like the milk white hind, immortal and unchanged, nor like the panther, sure the noblest next the hind, and fairest creature of the spotted kind."

The damsel replied by observing: "It is hily improper in any christian to condemn a movement so manifestly on the side of Christ as the movement of holiness. It is left, however, to those who prefer the sacerdotal polity of Wesley or Knox to that of Mr. Horner, to disapprove in silence."

"I have noticed," responded the jungling, "in Mr. Horner's sermons an element of strong sense, and a direct reproof of sin. But I will cling to that fabric wherein my Frances delites to stay; and now, with your and Mr. Horner's permission, I will revert to a subject on which we are more unanimous, or at least more evenly informed."

"What subject is that?" inquired his love.

"How the ignorance is! as the Welchman said," replied Rodney. "Will not your womanly modesty permit you to admit a knowing that I thaut formed a considerable part of your whole knowledge?"

Frances answered by saying: "You ascribe to me great intellect, I observe."

Rodney replied: "Goethe has said that man never loves woman for the depth of her understanding and the measure of her intellect, but for her womanliness. Man has intellect; and he seeks in woman what he lacks, the undefinable property of womanhood. This in you won my love; tho (pardon me for an apparent flattery) I am delited to find that your intellect also is acute and commanding."

"I would surely have imputed this to flattery," replied the young woman, "had not my Rodney warned me of the error."

Rodney answered her thus: "Your wit, as usual, deprives mine of its lustre. But tell to me, Frances, the day when our nuptials are to be celebrated."

"It is sad, Rodney," replied his love, "that the disagreeable persists in mingling with what is pleasant. Our easy chitchat must now be rudely dispelled by the voice of duty and of prudence. You ask me for the day. I swear, dear Rodney, by this precious stone, that if the conditions were met, to-morrow would not be too soon. But are you ready for matrimony? Is there naut about you displeasing to woman? naut that would tend to friten away the sensitive presence of connubial love?"

"You alarm me by your tragic hints," replied the jungling; "I thaut, my darling, that my imperfections had been overlooked. I perceived none in you; and mine, I hoped, you had accepted with whatever was deserving."

The damsel responded: "Constitutional defects, and acquired imperfections, must not be confounded. If I found my healthy lover a consumptive husband, I would love his disease away, or woo it to myself, that I mite die with him for whom I lived. But permit me to remind you that you should not offer to my affection the plug of tobacco and the distillings of rye and wheat. These are exotic, Rodney; they do not belong to you by birth, nor should they to me by adoption."

"You surprise and pain me, Frances," said her lover.

Frances replied: "Rather, I communicate to you the pain at my own heart. You awaken at once my love and my antipathy. Can you sacrifice always on the altars of Terpsichore, of Bacchus, and of Nicotin, and not grow neglectful of Cupid's and Hymen's?"

"Is my dancing arraigned also?" inquired Rodney, "in which I have not indulged since last February. And with regret I hear you condemn what the ancients approved, and what the votaries of graceful physique have ever recommended."

Frances replied: "If you have quitted, I have ceased to condemn. I too admire the lore of the ancients, as of Pan who

*Knit with the graces and the hours in dance,
Led on the eternal spring.*

But the promiscuous contact of man and woman in the dance is prejudicial to the contactual purity of one man and one woman. Take a year, Rodney, a year from this day; and, having remained exempt from these objectionable habits till May 25, 1901, take me then for your own absolutely."

"Can you be earnest," inquired Rodney; "say that you jest, that this is pleasant raillery. Insist not, my love, on a so long delay."

The tears came to the eyes of Frances; she clasped his arm and said: "Why are we so far apart, Rodney? Why can not purity prevail, and goodness triumph?"

The damsel continued to weep, and her lover replied: "Anything but tears, Frances; you break my heart with these crystal outpourings." He released his arm, put it about her neck, and kissing her said: "Let the day be deferred, my love; let me at least have time to reflect. Hush your weeping. Your affection, my darling, is boundless and aggressive, and I am impure in its life."

At this moment a bicycle met them on the road, the mare sheered to one side with suddenness, and Rodney braut both hands to the work of restraining her.

SECTION 4.

At noon of the next day, Frances, her father, her mother and her brother, were sitting at table, tho Frances at the moment was serving a pudding, and was saying: "Ludwig, I beg to quote for you the words of an old poet:—

*The board with varied plenty crowned,
May spare the luxuries of sound.*

"I must repeat however," said Ludwig, "that my sympathies are with the form of government which obtains in the United States."

As he finished his speech, his father handed to him his cup and saucer, saying: "Another cup of cocoa, wife, if you please."

The wife received the cup from her son's hand, refilled, and returned, saying to Ludwig, while Frances resumed her seat: "Your approval, I fancy, is suggested by the approval of your father. For my part, son, I feel to esteem as a blessing a so benignant sovereign over us as Victoria."

The husband replied: "To Victoria as a woman, none can deny the most unbounded praise; as a monarch she is nihil, and her presence at St. James a superfluity. The monarch of England to-day is Lord Salisbury; he declares and closes war; Laurier is our ruler, not Lord

Minto; therefore we admire a system of rule that gives to a man of talent the nominal, as the real, power. McKinley is the chief executive in the United States, and no figurehead is placed above him."

"Have you not said, dear mother, before to-day," observed Frances, "that woman should not be vested with authority over man, publicly or privately?"

Her mother replied: "While I remark upon the excellence of your pudding, Frances, let me remind you of Dehborah, of the Queen of Sheba, and of Candace, the Ethiopian sovereign."

"I profess," remarked Ludwig, "only an intellectual knowledge of the bible, and that imperfect; but was not Deborah the prophetess and Barak the real leader? and let us not go to the barbarous Ethiopians for examples of government. The successors of Solomon were males; and of Augustus."

"And notice, mother," added Frances, "how our esteem for the Amazonian warriorress, Clorinda, is lessened by the prominence which Tasso gives to her masculine prowess and animalic courage."

The dame replied: "Are all against me? Then I surrender to superior numbers. I shall not attempt to surround you, as the Irishman did the three Russias. But your father is without pudding."

"Not so much as before, Frances," said the husband giving to his daughter his plate. "You have carried the argument from republicanism versus monarchy to kingship versus queenship. There are many at the present day who desire that Canada should be independent and republican; that as a damsel when matured should leave her mother's house, so a colony, when self-supporting, should be an independent unit. Witness the remarkable growth of the United States since the regime of Washington."

His wife replied by saying: "But republicanism, like monarchy, is convulsed by partyism, and its elections disgraced by civil faction."

The husband rejoined: "True, and not till the fatal error propagated by the politicians of William and Mary is eradicated from the mind of statemanship will the blessings of uni-partyism be diffused among the countries. The deliberations of a W.C.T.U., or a Methodistic conference, are swayed by a major vote, without any preëxistent division among its numbers; and so, we believe, mite parliament legislate by its majority, and be divested of bi-membership. Never will christian representatives be sent to parliament, while the unchristian qualities of obsequiousness and vituperation are requisite in a candidate for his election. But, Ludwig, the time approaches when we must meander to the field and the hoe, and Frances has not yet finished her exordium of the morning concerning her determination with regard to Rodney and his eccentricities."

Frances replied: "When you pull down monarchies, father, and erect on their ruins the fabrics of republicanism, your female listeners are unconcerned; but when your satire falls upon the fabric of feminine love, we rise in arms. I can only repeat now what your haste would not permit you to hear in the morning; that, with your and mother's approval, I will delay for a year my exit from the parental home."

"You are trying him, are you?" inquired her father.

Frances replied: "Yes, sir."

"What think you of it, wife?" inquired the husband.

The dame replied: "She is not of twenty years till June, and Rodney lacks some months of twenty-four. A year will benefit their imma-

turity, relieve the lover of his unfortunate habits, and confirm or dissuade our daughter in her choice."

"Has Rodney acquiesced in this probationary delay?" inquired the man.

Frances replied: "He has asked me not to press for a decision till the next Sunday, which is to-morrow."

"I believe," observed her father, "that your womanly intuition and good sense will teach you to secure a happy issue. Before marriage is the time for disagreements and re-adjustments. Get the oatmeal ready, Ludwig."

His wife replied: "I have prepared a sort of beer for your post-meridian drink; thus you may have variety now, and sufficient porridge in the morning."

The husband arose; the others followed suit; the former said: "The resources of a good wife are infinite and unrepayable."

The men assumed their hats, the women began at the table, and the labors of the afternoon were shortly under way.

SECTION 5.

On the following afternoon Rodney and Frances were sitting in the parlor of the latter's home; Frances was seated on the lap of her lover and held her arm about his neck, while he said: "You must be insane, Frances, to insist seriously upon a so long delay. I cannot wait, my darling; I want you now. My manhood is arrived; and why should it be permitted to slip by in wasteful dissatisfaction and delay? Do not, my love, ask too much of frail humanity."

Frances replied: "You are not frail, but determined. Promise to wait abstemiously for the year, and I will chance the lifetime. We are not alike. Be patient, and, bearing my apparent caprice, wait till next May."

"I can not wait, my darling," replied her lover, drawing her to him with impatient energy. "Why be so cruel? Accept me at my word. I renounce the habits which offend; but do not play the inquisitress, and bigot me to ruin."

Frances kissed him, and answered by saying: "May the God of Heaven teach to me the rite course, if I have not already learned. I am young, dear Rodney; can I enter the sacred precincts of wifehood before my years number a score? Let time do its preparatory work. Our love must be subjected to its excoriation. Be patient."

The lover bowed his head and replied: "Who can contend with women and the gods? You use me ruffly, Frances, and make me so suspect that your heart is not an aching heart, as mine when in its times of yearning. But I yield, peerless woman. One year of life with you would compensate a lifetime of waiting. Much more than a lifetime a year. Your obedient slave."

He kissed her as he concluded his speech. She replied: "Say not my slave, but always my dear lord." Saying this she put her other arm about his neck, and pressed her lips to his. Then she continued: "And you have braut gladness to my heart; the strong has bowed to the weak; the stable to the capricious. I rejoice that my liege is not deaf to entreaties; that he has forgone at my request, the present to the future. May I then be very loving and ministrive, that our heavenly bond may enlarge, refine, and strengthen. And if the God of Abraham, of Isaac

and of Jacob is the same to-day, our human love will ere long be irradiated and intensified by that which is divine."

"But your very goodness, your warmth, and tender protestations," replied her lover, "make it doubly hard for me to live so near you, yet wholly apart."

"And for me," replied the damsel, letting one arm fall to its former place. "Woman longs for man more than man for woman. My heart too is an aching heart, and will be so fitfully till it reposes at last, and for aye, beside your own. Woman is weak, very weak, my Rodney. Without man she is a reed. *Frailty, thy name is woman.*"

The jungling replied: "Her weakness is the potential element with man. But what if I trespass during this year, this fiscal year, as I may say."

"The celebration of our nuptials," replied the occupant of his lap, "will then be dated from the period of your fall."

Rodney assumed a look of terror, and responded: "How martinetic is your discipline! I am horrified at the prospect. But seriously, Frances, only your prayers can prevent my transgressing. And, by the way, I thaut some of making a start during the present ensemble of the Hornerites."

To this Frances answered by saying: "Talk not of a start so superficial. I will during this year, *dei gratia*, start you with the needed impetus. What is my religion if it cannot communicate itself to you? or, what must you be? I anticipate, my lover, that we shall yet be happy, with a happiness that we have not known. So come, and give your basest bass to my favorite tune, *Irish.*"

They thereupon arose, and going to the organ, prepared to sing."

CHAPTER IV.

Rodney falls before the tempting bottle—2, Confessing the same to Frances—3, The latter consults with her mother and grandmother—4, Acquaints Rodney with the course she has taken respecting him—5, And relates to her folks at table how he bore her decision.

SECTION I.

On a certain morning Rodney, his father and three other men were standing beside a stack of straw, and one of the three men was speaking as follows: "Go, Bertram, and see if the engine is in readiness; and call when sufficient hands have arrived to begin work." A younger man departed at his word, whereupon he continued: "You have heard, I presume, of the question now before one of the etatic legislatures across the line, concerning the riddance from cities of the two urban evils most deplorable. As you know, the cities of to-day are troubled with the problem of slums and impure air. The state in question proposes to legislate away these evils."

"By offering what remedy?" inquired Rodney's father.

The first speaker replied: "By enacting that in future no house shall be erected in a city, town or village, within four rods on any side of another house; and what respects a house is also applicable to a shop, a theatre or an inn."

One of the other men now replied by saying: "We should have no cities, towns or villages, if houses were broadcasted in that manner."

"It is known," continued the first speaker, "that tenemental and adjoined houses are the nurseries of violence, rapine and harlotry. The multiplicity of the slummers prevents their apprehension; for to arrest the guilty would depopulate one street and faminize another. But separation of the houses reduces the number of the inhabitants per square mile, and renders possible the execution of law. And with the reduction of the population on a given area, is an increase of oxygen in the circumjacent air."

The father of Rodney replied: "What would become of the rural districts? Would all become suburban?"

Another of the men now spoke up, saying: "*And wander in suburban lanes forlorn.*"

The first speaker replied to Rodney's father as follows: "A suburban. The open country would be urbanized, and the cities ruralized. But this remedy is to be offered as a local option, like the suppression of traffic in liquor."

A voice was now heard, calling: "All is ready."

The first speaker replied to the call: "Yes." He added in a low tone: "The threshing will now begin."

The speaker departed as he spoke, followed by Rodney's father. One of Rodney's remaining companions then went to a part of the stand farther along the side, saying: "Now is our time." He soon returned carrying a bottle. He offered first to Rodney, saying: "Partake."

"None, thanks," replied Rodney.

The carrier of the bottle replied: "I will pass then to one less punctilious and more sapient."

Saying this, he passed the bottle to the other man, who accepted and drank, observing: "That is powerful, as the negroes say, but likewise oily and palatable."

He passed the bottle to him from whom he received, who, after drinking, offered it again to Rodney, saying: "Have you recovered your former good sense and bonhomie?"

"Why press me? I do not want it," replied Rodney.

The one who had first produced the bottle passed it again to the third man, saying: "You, Horace, are not the slave of a woman."

Horace was about to accept the proffered bottle, when he who held it drew back the extended arm, and again holding it before Rodney, said: "Drink of this, the nectar of the gods, the elixir of life."

"What spirit of hell is in you, to press me over the precipice?" said Rodney, taking the bottle; "and in me to accept?"

He drank, tho with some hesitation, passed to Horace, and Arden drank again.

The latter offered the bottle to Rodney once more saying: "Finish and secrete the bottle."

The speaker, accompanied and imitated by Horace, took an impaled fork from the ground, and departed. Rodney drained the bottle, and grasping it by the neck, dashed it in pieces with needless energy upon an adjacent rock. Then, taking his fork, he likewise withdrew.

SECTION 2.

During the evening Rodney and Frances were driving thru the gate that led from the barnyard of her home, and Rodney said: "Whither shall we drive to-night?"

"Anywhere is deliteful on an evening so lovely," replied Frances; "but the road to Adams is especially dear to me, because in its way I once lost my life."

Rodney turned the mare to the rite, and Frances continued:

*"The dews of summer nite did fall;
The moon (sweet regent of the sky)
Silvered the walls of Cumnor Hall,
And many an oak that grew thereby."*

Permit me to drive the horse to-nite." Frances assumed the lines, and resumed: "If I was a linner, and could catch on canvas the forms of life, I would immortalize with the brush our winsome Nell. Like Bonheur, I would represent animals with the gift of mind." The damsel paused in her speech, but as Rodney made no reply, she again resumed: "What engages your thaut on this happy evening, Rodney? It seems to me that the whole world should be happy to-nite."

"The Hornerites have begun their evenal service," said Rodney.

Frances replied: "We wish well to them."

Rodney now put his arm about the waist of his driving companion, and said: "I have a confession to make before you, Frances. Was ever man so wicked and so unfortunate as I? Let me bespeak forgiveness before I begin to relate."

"A confession?" inquired the damsel.

Rodney continued: "I drank some liquor during this morning. I yielded to Satanic persuasion and mad impulse. My year of abstinence is violated, darling."

"Rodney, I am sorry for this," said Frances, with tears starting from her eyes.

Rodney replied: "Say that you forgive."

The damsel answered by saying: "You put sadness into my heart, dear Rodney. Can I love and wait forever? Will you indulgently postpone the nuptialic day till my heart is worn out? I forgive, Rodney, but I deplore."

"And may my soiled lips impart their touch of sacrilege to yours again?" said Rodney, and kissing her before she mite refuse. "Say, too, that this shall not be counted; that the year, for this one offence, will not be extended. Be it mine, Frances, humanly to err, and yours alone divinely to forgive."

Frances replied: "Let me consider till Sunday. I must consult my God in matters pertaining to my bappiness."

"Do not delay your concession, Frances," said Rodney. "You will harden with meditation, and I shall deteriorate with delay."

Frances replied again: "I thaut—how many times, my lover, have I not thaut?—that we were drawing smoothly near the time of our uniting. But Satan is strong and alloys the happiness of mortals."

To this speech Rodney responded: "Pass over this one misdemeanor, and be like Portia, the advocate and practiser of mercy."

"Give to me time to think, Rodney; till Sunday, to think," replied the damsel. "Surely communion with God will not barden me. Let us advance one step in the rite direction, rather than a thousand on a dubious road."

Rodney replied: "Will you not overlook now?"

"I must reserve my verdict," replied his companion.

"You are obstinate, Frances," said Rodney. "Would you rule, and remain a woman? Consent to forgive as I have been frank to confess."

"I ask time," replied the one who drove.

"I cannot give it," responded the lover, withdrawing his hand from her waist. "Do you think me a god or a brute, that I should forbear and wait forever? That I have erred is true. But one stumble should not interrupt a progression. I cannot wait for you till I myself shall become a saint. Let your goodness leaven me; do not hold me aloof, to withe like a wormy cabbage. Tell to me, Frances, your ultimatum."

Frances replied: "I am confused by this evening's disclosure. I am not fit to decide. And is it not rite that I should seek divine guidance? Mistake not my allegiance to God for obstinacy. I must love my Savior more than my lover, more than my life."

"How can we longer be engaged," answered Rodney, "when I am not the one most dear to you? We may as well dissolve the bond that can be rendered lax by a stronger, titer bond."

To this Frances returned: "We will never part at my bidding; but as God is in heaven, I will not encourage in you this Satanic spirit. Would you have me? deserve me. Would you enjoy the good? cultivate it."

"You surprise me, Frances," replied the lover. "I came to you confessing a wrong. I asked you to obliterate it from the record of the year. You refuse. You talk of God's mercy; where is yours? You talk of religion; what irreligion is this?"

"Take these lines and drive toward home," said the damsel, handing to him the lines, "before that is said which may not be recalled. I ask you for time to think; the devil within you clamors for present compliance. As God is my hope, I shall not grant it to him."

Rodney took the lines while she was speaking, and now he replied "I have wounded you, my darling. I am dark and sinful. Let us drive on and be reconciled." She began to weep copiously, and Rodney put his arm about her saying: "How strong is your emotion; how obtuse my heart."

The lover kissed away the tears from his companion's face, and felt the feeling in his own eyes; but now the curvetting of his horse demanded his attention, and gave a passage to the silence.

SECTION 3.

During the following forenoon, Frances and her grandmother were in the latter's dining room, and Frances was reading. She came to the following lines:

*Oh, the blessed woods of Sussex, I can hear them still around me,
With their leafy tide of greenery still rippling up the wind!
Oh the cursed woods of Sussex! where the Hunter's arrow found me,
When a fair face and a tender voice had made me mad and blind!*

*In that ancient hall of Wycombe thronged the numerous guests invited,
And the lovely London ladies trod the floor with gliding feet:
And their voices low with fashion, not with feeling, softly frated
All the air about the windows with elastic lafters sweet.*

As the damsel concluded this stanza, her grandmother said "Finish at some other time, Frances; the story is too long for one reading."

ing. But I think that the gentle lady did a noble deed. She recognized the equalizing power of love."

Frances closed the book and replied: "But a poet is a rare product. She did not stoop much. I would have rather filled the place of Anne Hathaway than of Queen Elizabeth."

The grandmother replied: "Possibly because of Anne's married state, rather than because she was a poet's wife. I would, rather than either of these, have been the one to whom he wrote:

*Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes, shall outlive my powerful rime."*

"Your acuteness outgenerals me," replied the young lady. "And the wisdom of age is not always pleased with the sallies of youth."

To whom the grandmother responded again: "Your ingenuousness, your artless intuition, surpasses logic by a thousand fold. But apropos of loves and lovers, permit me to inquire how your courtship is faring."

"It was not mine, as Geraldine's, to condescend," replied Frances. "But the eyes of woman were moulded for looking upward. Regarding my relations with Mr. Cozmel, I may say that at present they are strained."

"You alarm me," said the grandmother.

Frances replied: "You express surprise with histrionic adroitness. I have to inform you, confidentially, that Rodney has fallen. His pedestal was too high, or the winds too violent."

While Frances was speaking, her mother had entered the room. She remarked to her daughter as follows: "Be more serious, Frances, and narrate in particular."

"During last evening's drive," resumed the damsel, in reply, "my fiance informed me that, spirituous liquid coming in his way, he partook."

"Has he no backbone?" inquired her mother.

Frances replied by saying: "I have always supposed him to be a vertebrate animal."

The grandmother said: "What line of conduct will you pursue?"

"I have till Sunday to consider," replied Frances. "He grew angry, very angry, when I refused to overlook at once, and suppose it not to have occurred. What would you advise? Four months of the year, or three and a half, are past."

Her mother replied: "Have you the patience to proceed with him as you have begun?"

Her grandmother said: "I think that you are unduly rigorous, Frances. Besides, the woman should not dictate to the man."

"I wish to follow only the dictates of a rite conscience," replied Frances.

Her grandmother responded again: "Your grandfather, Ludwig, smoked and tiddled litely when we became one. He was a good husband. He became weaned from the latter habit, and I found no reason to disapprove the former."

The mother of Frances observed: "I can not but rejoice, mother, that Frances is morally courageous. Woman should be meek but not weak; she should obey but not fear."

"I am pained with the delay," said Frances; "for I may confess to you, dear mother, and to you, my grandmere, that my heart strongly rebels against waiting and arraigning, and the adversary urges me to take

him as he is. I yearn for my Rodney. I long to be his wife. Why is love so strong, when running counter to purity and prudence?"

Tears were in the speaker's eyes as she concluded her speech. Her mother replied: "I am glad, my daughter, that the Holy Ghost was given to you in abundant measure; else, you would have yielded to present solicitations, and set aside considerations for the future and the still small voice of conscience. The Lord loves you, and therefore chastens; and when you have been tried, dear Frances, you will be as gold. Take courage, my daughter; yet hold him not to all of the time, but divide the unhappy period between him and your rite."

The grandmother now observed: "You speak of religion, Lucretia, in a new way. We spoke not thus of the Holy Ghost in the old days; and there were many good people living then, many good people. We have believed that they went home since then; yet they talked not thus of the Holy Ghost."

The mother of Frances replied: "I would not presume to dogmatize before you, on religion; but truly, mother, the Holy Ghost is a blessed gift, and free to all."

Her mother-in-law answered by saying: "What say you is the reason, if it is free to all, that so few receive it, that it so rarely descends?"

The mother of Frances replied: "The hindrances are: ignorance of its readiness to come on application, and indisposition or inability on the part of man to acquire that repentant earnestness which alone can induce its descent. Let us, Frances, complete our forenoon's work."

Frances and her mother arose as the latter was concluding her speech, whereupon Mrs. Harding also arose, saying: "I will accompany you; I have been lonesome during this morning. The finite longs for infinite. I long for that enlarging paradise where we shall live the life that never dies."

As the oldest of the three women finished speaking, they left the room.

SECTION 4.

Later by three days than the time in which the preceding event transpired, Rodney and Frances were driving on the road, and Rodney was saying: "Tell to me what will ensue if I again offend."

"You shall not offend again," replied his companion.

"How will the possibility be averted?" inquired Rodney.

"I will lead you to conversion," replied his companion.

"Will religion quench the fires of delayed love?" inquired Rodney.

Frances replied: "Religion is the only balm for telluric wounds, the only preventative of human error. I entreat you to be persuaded to seek your Savior to-night."

Rodney answered thus: "I am not in the vein. As Richard said to Buckingham: *I am not in the giving vein to-day.*"

"Repentance may be wooed," replied his companion; "and therefore like woman, it may be won."

Rodney answered again by saying: "I have found woman a very evanescent and elusive creature. When I had supposed her won in a few months she loomed up farther away by sixty days."

"I entreat you to be serious, Rodney," replied Frances, "I can not bear this unlike relationship for another day. I will renounce my religion, waive my rite to Heaven and our ten months' delay, and be your submissive, wormeaten wife; or you shall seek and find divine forgive-

ness. My mother awaits our return. I requested her to sit, until we came; and I promised to bring you with me. I mentally resolved at the same time that if you did not go in, I would not."

"Your determination is unwarrantable," replied the jungling. "Shall I go in and mock your mother's condescension with unfeeling prayer and dissimulated protestations?"

The horse was now halted at the gate leading to the barnyard of Frances' home. Before they turned in, or alited, Frances said: "I entreat you to come in. I will not, can not, dare not, live another day till I know that we are alike. As God is in Heaven, I do not believe that our love is true, or, if true that it will live and grow, when we are completely separated by Christ. Come with me."

She clasped him about the neck as she concluded her speech, and tears began to flow from her eyes. He gently disengaged his imprisoned head, having dropped the lines, and then replied: "Be calm, dear Frances, you know not what you urge, nor how utterly alien I am to God."

"Come with me," replied Frances; "drive inside, and tie your horse."

Rodney replied again: "Your mother will press me with attentions that I cannot appreciate, and which in my utter incongruousness of situation will tempt me to abhor."

"My mother knows her part, and you," replied Frances.

Rodney drove inside, alited, assisted her to the ground, and said: "You are bound to metamorphose me. Do so, Frances; I resign myself into your hands. Make the work complete, and burn away the barriers that separate us."

Frances kissed him, saying: "My dear love. Assume an humble mind, for earnestness tells. Tie your horse where the casual passerby may not be able to spy it from the road and have his curiosity aroused."

Rodney replied: "I have misgivings, Frances. I know not how to tread this path. Like Fitz James when he followed the impetuous chief, I apprehend a foe from every bush."

Rodney tied the mare to a fence, and Frances replied: "Your foe is yourself. Promise to go in meaning business."

"I promise," replied her lover; "but kiss me your aid and tender support."

Frances kissed him and replied: "I would die for you, Rodney."

Rodney returned her warm caress, saying:

*"What will not woman dare,
Whom youth and beauty lead like thee, Gulnare?"*

Conduct your corsair to his fate."

The lover passed thru a gateway, preceded by his love, and together they walked toward the house.

SECTION 5.

At the following noon, the father, mother and brother of Frances, were at table, and the dame was speaking as follows to her son: "You may serve the pie, if you please, Ludwig. On each plate put a piece of the apple and one of the blackberry."

At her words the son laid his napkin on the table, passed to her his father's eup and saucer, and arose to serve, saying: "I am happy to oblige you, mother."

He returned from another table with two plates. One of these he exchanged for the replenished cup, and carried the latter with the other plate to his father. While he was returning for his own plate, his mother said: "Do you prefer the cocoa to the tea, George?"

The husband inquired: "It is pleasant as a midday drink, but must yield to tea as a supping beverage."

By this time Ludwig had resumed his chair and napkin, and while with fork and biscuit he attacked the liter colored of his pieces, he said: "You must tell to us more of the happenings of last nite. You only remarked on them cursorily, at the breakfasting table."

"I was reluctant," replied his mother, "to discuss the subject fully in the presence of your uncle Gordon and your aunt Gertie; but as they are at home by this time, and perhaps yorning from Frances a like recital, I can with propriety enter upon the subject at large."

The husband replied: "Are Gordon and Gertie christians of the Holy Ghost?"

"Their conversation does not proclaim them such," answered his wife. "They are, I think, of the deciding kind. But you inquire of Rodney. I awaited his return with Frances, and was somewhat surprised that she succeeded in the design she had formed to bring him into the house in the role of seeker. We kneeled by the selfsame couch where you, my husband, was pardoned; and we prayed. Frances laid aside her cloak, hat and gloves, and kneeling on one side with me on the other, we besant the condescension of the Lord. We did not pray in vain, tho for more than half of an hour in a silence that was only broken by the sobs of our daunter and the whispered breathings of her lover. At last the gift unspeakable was given, and the strong young man of twenty-four years cried like a child or a woman. We also wept, to the influence of the spirit communicated itself to Frances and myself. From all, the tears gushed forth unaccountably, without limit. The heart of Frances was moved for her lover, and touched of itself, to its very centre. Her affections are powerful; her feelings are deep and overmastering."

Her husband replied: "When you came to bed, I could not but remark how different was the atmosphere you braut; and you, perhaps, wondered at the time why I became so impulsive and demonstrative; but I was touched by that with which you had been moved."

"I knew," replied the dame, "that your actions were prompted by more than human love. But what of Ludwig, our son? Have you not thaut, son, that your time was arrived, that your independence and irresponsibility should he supplanted by the service of the cross and an accountability to your Savior?"

The son replied: "I have not heard you to define a precise age at which a boy should yield."

"Nor will I fix a limit," replied his mother. "But you are of sixteen years and with good intelligence. I think your father would say that you are capable of repentance."

"I think him susceptible to spiritual feeling," observed the husband. "Yet, with any but precocious youths and maidens, an earlier age than sixteen offers no field to the evangelist for reaping; tho, indeed, such fields may be sown. And doubtless the time will come when members of churches, like you, wife, will bring in many sheaves, having gone forth with weeping. He who wins one soul is stronger for the church than a hundred who only deplore the incapacity of their minister."

"Seeking the lost, yes, kindly entreating," repeated the woman, by way of reply.

"But we pray you," said the husband, "to inform us of the understanding to which the lovers arrived, respecting Rodney's probation."

The dame replied: "His indiscretion cost him a delay of two months. He now waits for ten months from yesterday, thus fixing the wedding at July 9, 1901."

"Their marriage will fail on auspicious times," observed the husband, "if we may gauge the sunrise by the dawn. And beautiful is the thought that the gift which they possess they can transmit to their children, and put the little ones into God's care till the days of their accountability. Children, as you have said, should experience the spiritual circumcision. But we must return to our labors. If you, Ludwig, will attend the horses and hogs, I will return directly to the cornfield and the sicle."

The husband arose while concluding his speech, and the others imitated his example. While they stood, and while the youth assumed his hat and departed, the wife said to her husband: "I am hurdened in spirit, husband."

The man kissed her on either cheek, and said: "Dispel your troubles with gentle labor and holy meditation. I cannot minister to a mind diseased."

The husband smiled; the wife answered: "Life, George, is a varied scene; and without a husband how lonely and unsatisfied must woman be."

CHAPTER V.

Frances at last pronounces Rodney's probation ended 2. He is dotted by his parents—3. And his fiancée converses with her friend 4. The wedding dinner is discussed—5. And on the following day the bridegroom and his bride diagnose their position and prospects.

SECTION 1.

On a certain day in summer Rodney and Frances were sitting beneath a butternut tree, on a large stone, and Rodney held her by the waist. At this point in their conversation he was saying: "The burden of your lover is, that the period of his assaying is within three days of completion. The warfare of Jerusalem is wellnigh accomplished."

"Are three days wanting?" inquired Frances.

"So says the bond," replied Rodney.

"Let them be struck from the computation," said the damsel.

"Take me now, my lover; you have maintained your integrity. I cancel the deficiency of time, and am yours irrevocably. I am yours from now, my lover, tho you should commit, during these three days, the enormities of a Caligula or a Nero."

"Would you marry a bloody man and a tyrant?" inquired the lover.

Frances replied: "I would marry you alone, my Rodney. I pass over where stood the barriers of prudence and of purity, and offer myself at your feet, at your feet, my lord."

"In so young a bosom," said Rodney, kissing her brow, "how great, how comprehensive is the heart. You combine the passion of the virgins of Spain and Italy, with the continence of norlandic damsels. But relate to me the designs your mother has entertained re our wedding. Has she in view the triumphs of magnificence or the conquests of simplicity?"

Frances replied: "She has in view a table for forty persons comprising the contracting parties, their immediate relations and the nearest nabors."

"Our menage, then," replied Rodney, "will not be enriched with the gifts of numerous guests, as falls to the lot of many marriagers."

"My mother is decided on that point," answered Frances. "She is resolved that the feast which she prepares shall fill, and not deplete, her friends and nabors. Yet this method will not prevent the unsolicited offerings of friendship during the first days. But the suffing of the wind strikes a sad cord in my heart. I pray you to dispel my sadness and exorcise my melancholy."

Rodney drew her yet closer, smoothed the hair that was ruffled by the wind, and said: "These are not the melancholy days. And, for my part, I can not repine, when on my heart reclines one dearer to me than my life."

The damsel looked into his eyes, and responded: "I am impressed, dear Rodney, with the transitoriness of life. We marry, we rear, we god-speed, and we die. In heaven, in heaven is permanency.

*And constancy lives in realms above,
And life is thorny, and youth is vain."*

Rodney replied by saying: "Remember you not the lines of the Iowan poet?

*There is no death; the stars go down
To rise upon some other shore;
And brite in Heaven's jewelled crown,
They shine forever more.*

Talk not then of life, my love, as that which has an end."

Frances replied: "But, in rebuttal, I point you to Rachel. She and Jacob were one, yet frequently she was sorrowful, she died young, and what seemed like a beautiful and extended prospect of life, contracted to narrow and precipitous limits."

To this Rodney answered: "We can only pray to our God, Jehovah of armies, that he will lengthen and illumine our days."

"But to enlarge, to season, our natures," replied Frances, "He will subject us to suffering. If it mite be so, would life not be ideally happy, with the wife always feeling about her the husbandic arm, hearing his strong tones (or imbibing his stronger silence) and remaining forever the clinging clematis around its majestic oak?"

"The man must sometimes part from his wife," replied Rodney; "but partings only intensify the bliss of reunion. Had we not recently braved a winter, we could not so fully enjoy these estival days and halcyon hours."

"May we perfect ourselves in love, dear Rodney," replied Frances, "I long to be free from sin; for sin alone is the cause of suffering, and when without sin we cease to suffer."

Rodney replied: "I beg to question your ratiocination. If I press too titely with my arm, I cause pain; yet I mite not mean to offend."

"If I knew, intuitively," answered Frances, "that the pressure was the result of too much love, I would forget the pain of my body in the gratification of my mind. The motive of the doer governs the emotion of the one undergoing, however severe the performance. But let us

repair to the house; for the mother undertook to get supper, we must be there betimes to help in soiling, and then to wash the dishes."

Then Rodney said: "But kiss me, Frances, to confirm my gracious acceptance on discounted time."

They arose from the stone, and Frances kissed him, saying: "To look into your eyes, where the soul shines forth, and to press your lips, thru which the soul finds utterance, will ever be the delight of your love and the privilege of your wife."

Rodney replied: "I would quote something on kissing, if the muse was propitious. By the way, how is this of the latin poet?"

*Still would I steep my lips in bliss,
And dwell an age on every kiss;
Nor then my soul would sated be,
Still would I kiss and cling to thee."*

"I would say," replied Frances, as they walked away, "that your latin friend was passably gallant, and hily poetic."

SECTION 2.

Later by three days than the foregoing event, Mr. and Mrs. Cozmel were in the kitchen of their home; and the latter, while she ironed a cambric shirt, was saying: "What reasons did Cyrus adduce, to support his argument for the maintenance of standing armies?"

The husband replied: "He scouted the idea of keeping a country defended by militia alone, nor would he allow himself to temporize between the militia and the regular systems. For I argued that, tho a country should have dicipline and art for its defense, that dicipline and that art should be divested of the licentiousness and debauchery peculiar to a regular army. As mankind, when subdued by religion, will tend to an equality, the business of the soldier should be practised by the lawyer and the blacksmith, the merchant and the farmer, promiscuously; that culture and refinement, and the leavening influence of respectable women and intelligent wives should be introduced therein; and that, as in Germany, military service should be the lot of all, and the contempt of none."

"Mankind will never be equal," replied Mrs. Cozmel. "The best christians are infected with caste; and even they who suffer from, and condemn, the pride of the wealthy, would be its ready votaries, if their means began to permit."

"Yet social equality must precede the millenium," said Mr. Cozmel.

As he spoke Rodney entered the room from upstairs, and, carrying a whisk to his mother, said: "Will you brush my coat, mother?"

"Certainly," replied the woman, but first taking the used iron to the stove.

While she brushed his collar and back, the father observed: "Is the matrimonial road at last ready for travel?"

Rodney replied: "The work of the pioneer is performed, sir; the enjoyment of the citizen is about to succeed."

"At what hour," said his mother, "will the bond be affixed? I can tell you, son, that you are entering a labarinth where are many minotaurs to devour the unwary."

"You alarm me, mother," replied the son, "but perhaps you are speaking from the wife's standpoint. The contracting words will be spoken at noon. The dinner is fixed at one."

"We will try to arrive in season," said Mrs. Cozmel.

Rodney observed in reply: "You and Amy should lay aside your labors entirely, to-day; and, you with father, and Amy with Horace, arrive in time to visit, and enjoy the conversation of old acquaintances."

"Only the most congenial temperaments should venture to visit together," replied his mother, having resumed her ironing; "for, believe me, the boredom and the rudeness of social intercourse arise largely from the non-observance of this rule."

Rodney replied: "I trust that you will find them congenial who have discovered a congeniality in me."

At this point his father said: "Concerning your settlement, I have not hitherto spoken with much explicitness; and you have shown a commendable restraint in waiting acquiescent till I mite choose to divulge our intentions. But now it is proper to inform you that the wooded lot and the house erected thereon will be transferred to you by deed. The said document will await your return from the honeymoonic journey; and you will find the house prepared for your reception in that simple style of upholstery to which your twenty-four years of life have accustomed you. The land is as Nature left it; but your industry will transform its appearance and improve its value."

To this Rodney answered: "You surprise and delite me, sir, with the liberality of your settlement. I am not averse to earning my living in the manner recommended to our progenitor, Adam, and practised by my father. My fiancee is a woman taut in the culinary art, and endowed by her parents with frugal and industrious notions of life."

"The alliance in one woman," said Mrs. Cozmel, "of refinement and humility, of elevation of character and love for mild physical labor, is a rare preparation for the wife of a bourgeois. If her parents add nothing to this, her dot is already munificent. But Horace has your horse ready at the door, so I resign you to another, and aggrandize both."

Mrs. Cozmel kissed her son, and her husband said: "Being masculine, I am not permitted to indulge in feminine tokens of regard; but believe that I wish you well."

He took his son's hand in his and shook it warmly. Rodney returned the caress of his mother, and now assuming his hat and rite glove, left the room; his parents followed.

SECTION 3.

During the forenoon Frances and her friend Phoebe entered the parlor of the former's home, and sitting together on the sofa, Phoebe inquired: "How long before we dress?"

"As soon as mother comes," replied Frances; "she is superintending the cuisine till the arrival of your mother."

Phoebe replied by saying: "Your life abundantly proves, Frances, that if one seeks first the Kingdom of God and its riteousness, the rest will follow."

"I endeavor to be duly thankful for divine favors," replied Frances. "Yet the natural heart goes from longing to longing. To-day we concentrate our desires upon a husband; to-morrow we shall repine for lack of children. If they are given, anxieties for their welfare ensue; and only the grave encloses our discontent."

"Phoebe replied again: "One like you, Frances, beginning life auspiciously, with youth, with health, with a husband, should not mourn the possibility of being childless."

"Do not take me up so shortly, Phoebe," replied Frances; "I but confess to you what forms of discontent loom up before me sometimes. I know they are of Satan; but humanity has often an inclination to embrace what is evil and what it hates.

We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

At this point in their conversation they were interrupted by the entrance of Frances' mother and another woman. Mrs. Harding said: "The time is arrived. Precede me, ladies, to the second storey, where in Frances' bedroom are arrayed the wonders of the trousseau. I wish to catch my breath and wipe away a tear."

Frances arose, and kissing her mother, left the room accompanied by her friend. Then the woman spoke, who had come with Mrs. Harding, saying: "Does it not wring your heart to see your daughter leave the scenes of her maidenhood and her virginity, to enter the wider domain? One I godsped from our roof; it was a new and trying experience. But life is a succession of surprises. We remember when we were married, Lucretia. We thought—did you not?—that the honeymoon would prove to be at once the epitome and the summum bonum of life; yet it was only the beginning of revelations, only the Novembriic snowflakes preceding the drifts of winter."

"I remember," replied Mrs. Harding; "but to see our flesh and blood going from us contentedly, glad to go, pains me most. How instinctive for the damsel to cleave to her lover, and wellnigh to forget them who gave her birth and years of loving tendance. I will go up stairs, leaving to you the management of the ground floor."

Her companion observed in reply: "I note the absence of presents. When we were married, if you like me, we were tolerably equipped by the coerced munificence of our guests."

"It is better now," said Mrs. Harding. "On my daughter's wedding day, I would be a giver only."

Another woman now entered the parlor and said to Mrs. Harding's companion: "We are seeking your advice, for counsel."

Before the one addressed could reply, Mrs. Harding observed, with a smile: "I leave you to your devices."

She spoke and left the room, whereupon the last comer said: "How does she bear the deprivation so imminent?"

"With a true mother's absence of philosophy," replied the other. "But Lucretia is of hot blood and of strong affections."

The last comer replied: "We have not in our times the philosophy of Job nor the buoyancy of Alexander. But come and be our culinary president."

As they left the room the other replied: "It is a pleasant event, anyway, enlivening the monotony of pastoral and agricultural life. I attend you, Martha, but I distrust my powers of direction."

SECTION 4.

In the course of the day Frances and Rodney, their parents, their friends and neighbors, and their pastor, were sitting by a long table on which savory soup was steaming; and the mother of Phoebe, when all of the others were seated, remained standing and said: "The first course is on the table, Mr. Jenwig, and awaiting the attention of the company."

"Let us rise," replied the minister, "and sing our imploration of the blessing."

All arose who were sitting, and sang as follows :

*Be present at our table, Lord,
Be here and everywhere adore !
These creatures bless, and grow : that we
May feast in Paradise with Thee.*

When the benediction had been sung, to which the pastor contributed a passable tenor, the company sat again ; and while they crumbled biscuits into their soup, or buttered them, Mr. Jenwig observed : " I perceive, Mrs. Harding, that the table is full. All who were hidden came."

To this Mrs. Harding replied : " All came, sir, excepting your wife, Mrs. Jenwig."

" I find your suegra, Mrs. Harding, to be an excellent substitute," replied Mr. Jenwig.

The dowager, Mrs. Harding, observed : " When my last daughter bowed at Hymen's altar, and was bound with a golden band, I supposed that my last attendance at weddings was arrived ; but God has permitted to me another sadness."

" You very properly associate a wedding with pensiveness," said Mr. Jenwig, " for the happiest, the sweetest events of our lives have the deepest tinge of sadness."

The sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thaut.

But I presume that when your daughters married, and you gave weddings for them, the rule was to invite only the elite, and to expect a suitable present from each."

" Such was the rule," replied Mrs. Harding. " At my own wedding, I remember, a lady presented me with this ring—intended for a different finger, I fancy, from that which carries it ; but I found the golden band of conjugality loose, and have worn the lady's gift to guard it."

" I trust," said Mr. Jenwig, " that your granddaughter opposite may wear her ring as long."

In reply to this, Mrs. Cozmel observed : " I fear, sir, that the women of this generation are not made for wearing, as was that to which Mrs. Harding and I belong."

Mr. Jenwig replied : " I must beg to dissent from your opinion, Mrs. Cozmel, altho many particular cases lend support to the tenability of your supposition. Mrs. Harding will admit that her granddaughter is of promise equal to any in her generation in the matter of longevity. The young women of to-day, on the whole, succeed in combining form with health, and grace with solidity."

A man at another part of the table now spoke in reply : " But are not women of to-day the continuation of maidens who have been stuffed with bookish lore, so that their minds are hopelessly incapable to discern the fitness of cream for butter, of pies for the oven, or of clothes for the board of ironing ? "

The mother of Frances observed at this point : " John is a confirmed womanhater."

Mr. Jenwig said : " Doubtless many are filled to emptiness, but by no means the average maiden ; for one who spends her days on her lap dog and her toilette, there are twenty who offer their young energies to their mothers for direction. But of course, when a maiden has been shot by Cupid, she is not regular in her service, nor does the sympathizing mother censure the forgetfulness."

The mother of Phoebe now arose and said: "The soup has braut with it a tirade against woman, who is, after all, an indispensable commodity; be pleased to finish, that we may usher in the vegetables and the meats, which, I trust, will turn the tables on stern man."

At her word several other women arose, and began to gather the emptied plates, or to refill them, while the remainder of the company leaned from the table or hastened the discussion of their food.

SECTION 5.

During the following forenoon Rodney and Frances were walking down a street, and as they walked, Frances said: "But what is your chief reason for counselling the trip of the honeymoon, instead of repairing at once from the wedding table to the connubial home?"

"Married life," said Rodney, "should be introduced by some novel and pleasant experience serving as a remembrance in after times, when perhaps we shall have troubles, and be weary, and si for the past or the future. Besides, the honeymoonic excursion allows the people about home to effervesce and grow calm again."

"That is true," replied Frances. "The people at home are prone to discuss. Our life will be ushered in auspiciously, too, if the remaining days of the sweet moon prove as ecstatic as the hours we have already spent. The marital life of man and woman is very analogous to the spiritual life of man before God. God bears him into the spiritual world on a wave of joy, of shouting and ecstasy; man and woman—you and I, dear Rodney—enter the mysterious demesne with thrilling pulses and swelling hearts. And we shall not always enjoy this; there are barren tracts on every land. We must cross the wastes, but we remember the nascent, the incipient joy. So God withdraws from man at times; hut can man forget that time when the power of the Hiest overshadowed him? *Can we forget, can we forget?*"

Rodney answered by saying: "You distinguish with nicety. Your philosophy is feminine in tenderness, but masculine in vigor."

"Why should not the masculine form an alloy in my nature?" replied Frances. "We say that the perfect man must unite in himself the strength or force of the male, with the gentleness of the female, personality. Why can not a reversed assertion be made?"

"Because, my love," said Rodney, "tho man is man and woman, woman is woman alone. In this department of filosofy, permit me to say, you share the incompleteness of Horatio."

"Had I not an angelic temperament," said Frances, "I should surely be transported by your animadversions. But love, dear Rodney, renders my heart impervious to your satire."

Rodney replied:

*"Yet not belong
To me the arrows of satiric song."*

Let us then, love, rejoice in our present, and not filosophize on the past and future. So I aver this, that no bridegroom ever hraut thru Kingston a completer bride than I am bringing. If you deny this I will cease all argument."

"Frances replied: "The soft impeachment must obtain, then; for I want always to argue love's argument with you. But I will make a statement truer than yours, and easier on modesty: not every couple

who have passed historic Kingston on their route of bliss, began their first married morning with God's word and godly thanksgiving."

"Your calendar is in error," replied Rodney. "Yesterday, love, was our first married day, tho the morning was not ours. We should have ended our first day with reading and prayer, I have no doubt, to have done the strict rite."

Frances replied: "Your unspeakable punctiliousness will persist in rising up, like Banquo's ghost, to bring on admired disorder. Let us strike from our conjugal calendar that piece of a day as one altogether unprofitable. And in truth, Rodney, let us endeavor to keep in view, as we view the river adown this lovely street, that time in our lives when the unfortunate and the disagreeable will have been eliminated, and naut but happiness be our portion. And is not that woman unfortunate who marries a man whose nature does not command her own. What a delite for woman to obey whom she loves and honors! May God make brite in every woman's soul her divine inheritance of trusting and obeying."

"Nature indeed gave to you, my love," said the young husband, "that obedience which commands, and that sweet compliance which is powerful to subjugate. Like Eve to Adam, you render your service *with sweet, reluctant, amorous delay*. But, Frances, the car of Phœbus is rolling rapidly toward the zenith, and we must be ready with the west-bound at 9:45; so let us turn off this beautiful street; on which if ever a princess trod, it was my sweet bride *whose hair was like to sunlit gold, and blue as heaven her eye*. Our way lies here."

As Rodney finished speaking, they turned to the rite into another street, and hurried onward to their hotel.

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EPILOGUE.

Who wishes further to explore the fate,
Of patient Rodney and his prudent mate ;
How well they journeyed on the dual road,
And carried sunshine to their new abode :
What happy toils, what pleasant sweet repose
By day succeeded and with evening rose ;—
Who all would know, the nation's stream descend,
By Adams' town, and to their dwelling wend.
There, while my hero, like Ulysses wise,
Informs the celibate what makes a prize,
Frances to virgins warm will have begun
A recipe to win, while being won.

