

## JOHN HAMPTON'S BARREL.

History will some day do justice to John Hampton and his barrel. Two or three different persons have gone over Niagara falls in a barrel and claimed to be the sole and only originator of the idea, but the fact is incontestable that John Hampton had his barrel prepared twenty years before the country heard of it from any other source. If he did not go over the falls amid the cheers of a vast crowd and bob around in the whirlpool until drawn ashore it was because he had other and more agreeable business on hand.

John Hampton was an old bachelor, living on a farm just outside of the village of Orian, when the Widow Davis came to live on the farm adjoining. He did not fall in love with her at first sight. The feeling came slowly and gradually, like an old shed getting ready to fall down. As a neighbor he had lent and borrowed a hundred times, and as a neighbor he had dropped in and talked over farm matters two or three times a week for six months before it dawned upon him that he was in love. If John had fallen in love with a girl he would have proceeded in the orthodox fashion, but as the person was a widow and as he had read that the way to capture a widow was to strike straight from the shoulder, within thirty-six hours he appeared before her and bluntly said:

"Widder, I love you. Will you marry me?"

"No, sir; I won't!" was the equally blunt reply. Then John realized that the straight from the shoulder business was a fraud and a delusion. He took up his hat and walked off. Under the circumstances the widow could excuse him for taking a short cut across the garden and trampling over her cucumbers and uprooting her onions.

It was a week before he could yell at his oxen in his usual enthusiastic way. Then he woke up to the fact that he still lived and loved and that there was hope for him if he worked things right. It was a lightning rod man who finally gave him the tip.

"Never try to rush a widder," was the sage advice given him by the man of thunderstorms. "A widder can neither be rushed like you'd buy a cow nor courted as if she were a love sick girl. You've got to get her sympathy first."

Three days later the news reached the Widow Davis that John was in bed as the result of an interview with a wandering bull. The bull hadn't quite killed him, but he was unconscious and using her name at intervals of two or three minutes. The widow sent him a freshly killed chicken and a tumbler of current jelly and hoped he would soon recover. John chuckled as he realized that he had made a fair start on the new programme. At the end of a week he limped over to receive her sympathies and congratulations, and the future looked rosy for him. Two weeks later he was in bed again. As told to the widow, he had slid off the roof of his barn and struck the earth with a thud that was heard for a mile around. He had cried out her name when falling, and her name was the first word to pass his lips when he finally opened his eyes.

During the week John Hampton was in bed he was the recipient of several messages of condolence and several dishes prepared by the widow's own hands, and when he got out again he figured that his chances had improved 50 per cent. Encouraged by this feeling, he limped over to the Widow Davis' and again asked for her hand and heart, but again he was turned down. She was sorry for him, and she hoped he would find some one to love him, but she felt that the best she could do was to be a sister to him. It wasn't a lightning rod man, but a sewing machine agent, to whom John Hampton turned for advice on this second occasion, and he couldn't have done better.

"Why it's as easy as rolling off a log," replied the man when the facts were in his possession.

During the next four days the Widow Davis heard various reports concerning the man for whom she had a sisterly affection. He looked and acted strangely, and his friends feared suicide; he had given an order to the village cooper for a big barrel and would not explain its intended use.

One day things came to a climax. John Hampton drove up to the widow's house with his barrel in the wagon. It was an overgrown, swell front barrel—a barrel big enough to furnish shelter to a yearling calf. The staves had been painted blue and the heads red, and it looked as if it had just escaped from a circus. The widow glanced from the barrel to John and paled a little. If the barrel looked "circusy" John looked desperate, and she realized that the two were connected in some desperate enterprise.

"Widder Davis," began the man as he looked straight into her eyes, "my love has been rejected. There is nothing left for me but death and I am going to die like a man."

"I—I wouldn't," she replied as she looked at the barrel and wondered what part it was to play in the tragedy.

"But I will. I am going to Niagara Falls. When I get there I am going to be barreled up and sent over the falls to my death. There will be thousands to ask why I want

to die. When I enter that barrel your name shall be on my lips. I shall remember the custard pie, the currant jelly, the spring chicken and the rice pudding, and bless you for your kindness. May I hope that you will think of me when I am floating around?"

John had repeated this little speech a hundred times over during the last two days, and he got it off without a break. It touched the widow's heart, just as the sewing machine agent said it would. She blushed and looked this way and that and finally said:

"I was wanting a vinegar barrel this fall and meant to ask you to get me one next time you went to town."

"A dead man can't be hunting up vinegar barrels."

"But a live one can," replied the widow with a smile. "I think, John—I think—"

"What do you think, Lucy?"

"I think you'd better roll that barrel under the wagon shed and leave it here. I like the color of it and I'm sure it will hold vinegar enough to last us two or three years."

"Us!" exclaimed John as he clambered out of the wagon.

"Did I say so? Well, we'll have to let it go at that. As I was saying, it's a very nice barrel, and when I think of it going over Niagara Falls to be all smashed up and lost, of course—"

"Why, of course," said the sewing machine man when he came that way again.

## THE GOOD OLD MAID

Said to be Longer Arriving Than She Used to be.

That imaginary line which is supposed to mark the division between girlhood and the "old maid" is being set farther and farther back, until there have arisen grave doubts if it will not disappear entirely, says The London (Ont.) Advertiser. Once 25 was the limit of girlhood. Now it is 30. And it means little or nothing. Once it was supposed to mean that, being passed, it became a bar to matrimony. No novelist chose a heroine over 25. Of course, he intended to marry his heroine to his hero, and marriage after 25 on the woman's part was something to be avoided, as something which did not find a counterpart in real life.

It will be observed that among the fiction heroines of the present day will be found a number who have gone to the 30 year limit. It was recognized long ago that a woman did not lose her attractions because she had gone over this imaginary line, but the setting back of the line waited long after the recognition.

Balzac has laid down the theory that a woman at 30 is at her most fascinating age. She probably will not have so long a train of admirers. She may have fewer partners at a ball. Once in a while a young man may make her feel like a grandmother by coming to her for advice in his own love affairs.

The setting back of the imaginary line has followed the practice of late marriage. If a young man married at the age of 21 and a young woman at the age of 18, then the young woman of 25 would have been waiting seven years, and probably it would be justifiable to consider that she would not accept a husband.

But when marriage is the last thing of which a girl of 18 and a young man of 21 are thinking, and when 30 on the part of the man and 25 for the woman is closer to the average age at which matrimony is undertaken, then necessarily the age limit goes back. It should be set back still farther, to 35, if it should be considered as existing at all.

The young and inexperienced girl is not the attraction of the hour, it is claimed by experts in these matters. She waits until she reaches a more mature and more experienced age, and meanwhile the centre of the stage is held by her older sister. In fact, the older sister is sometimes credited with a feeling of pity for the young girl who comes into the world in muslin and blue ribbons with so much to learn.

One of these older sisters expresses this pity as follows:

"One thing I am thankful for, and that is that I am no longer a bread-and-butter miss."

"There is no period of her existence, I think, wherein woman appears to less advantage. It is impossible for a girl of 18 not to be conscious, and she has so little knowledge of the world that she is unable to hide her awkwardness."

"It is amusing, even pathetic, to see the efforts of the poor thing to appear natural and at ease and to say her little say without betraying that she has prepared it beforehand."

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Tom—My brother took part in that guessing contest, but they ruled him out as a professional. Theresa—How is he a professional? Tom—He's connected with the Weather Bureau.

## CRUEL BACKACHES.

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Mrs. Walter Book, wife of the postmaster at Silverdale, is well known to all residents of that locality, and the family is well known throughout Lincoln county where they have resided, and been identified with its history for four generations. In speaking of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, Mrs. Book says:—"In giving my testimony I do so frankly and without reserve, as I am convinced of the complete reliability of the pills. For a couple of years I had been troubled with a severe pain in my back which sometimes extended to my stomach and gave me great distress. At times I was completely incapacitated with it. I felt much discouraged because I had been treated by a good doctor and had taken a number of advertised medicines without obtaining a cure. Finally I decided to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and almost from the first I noticed an improvement, and by the time I had used five boxes the old complaint was a thing of the past and I was feeling better than I had for years. I keep the pills in the house and whenever I feel the need of a medicine take a few and always find them a splendid tonic and regulator of the system."

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are the greatest blood builder and nerve tonic in the whole wide world. That is a fact beyond dispute—and it accounts for the fact that there is no corner in the whole civilized world where some sufferer has not been cured by building up the blood by these pills. There is no other medicine so widely used. And there is no trouble due to poor, watery blood, or weak nerves that Dr. Williams' Pink Pills will not cure. Protect yourself by seeing that the full name "Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People," is printed on the wrapper around every box. Sold by all medicine dealers or sent post paid at 50c. per box or six boxes for \$2.50, by writing direct to the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

## Bull Whipped by Stallion.

A story of a horse that is a real hero comes from this county. Bob Hunt, a well-known stockman, owns a beautiful gray stallion and a fine Jersey bull. The latter is a vicious animal, and on more than one occasion has shown a pugnacious disposition. Usually a pitchfork serves to frighten him off from about the barn or pasture.

On a recent Thursday Mr. Hunt, in company with a small boy, was crossing the pasture leading to the stallion. Suddenly the bull appeared upon the scene and showed evidence of wanting to fight. Mr. Hunt gave the halter rein to the boy and thought he would drive the irate animal away. The bull started to flee, but changed his mind after running a short distance, and discovering his pursuer did not have the dreaded pitchfork he lowered his head and charged upon his master. Mr. Hunt attempted to run and fell. The bull butted him as he passed, and and it looked for a moment as if Mr. Hunt would be gored to death. The boy dropped the rein of the stallion and started off for help. It was then that the noble animal proved himself faithful to his master, and was a real hero. Rearing up on his hind feet with a snort of defiance, he bore down upon the bull which, in the meantime, had returned a second time upon Mr. Hunt and was about to trample him to death. The horse bit a large piece of 'beef and hair' out of the bull's back at the opportune moment, and wheeling, planted both rear heels in the ribs of his opponent almost sending him to the earth and causing him to roar with pain. The bull left his prostrate victim and fled in terror, with the horse pursuing him and taking chunks of hide and flesh every few steps until he had been chased to the bottom. The horse then returned to his master.—Jackson (Tenn.) Correspondence of the New Orleans Times-Democrat.

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"Are there any marks by which the boy can be identified?" asked the police superintendent, making copious notes of the case. "No," said the father of the missing youth, who had run away from home; "but there will be when I get hold of him again."

"My dear child, you really should not eat your pudding so quickly." "Why not, mamma?" "Because it is dangerous. I once knew a little boy about your age who was eating his pudding so quickly that he died before he had finished it." "And what did they do with the rest of the pudding, mamma?"