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THE REVIEW

VOL. 7. NO. 54.

RICHIBUCTO, NEW BRUNSWICK, THURSDAY AUGUST 13. 1896.

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Another Version of Lady Clare.

[From the Cleveland Leader.] It was the time when lilies blow, And clouds are highest up in air; Lord Ronald had plenty of rocks, and so He bought a bike for Lady Clare.

I trow she didn't gaze with scorn Upon the present he had brought; I'll mount it early to-morrow morn, Out behind the house," she thought.

It's the nicest looking bike on earth, And it is stout as well as fair; Wonder how much the thing is worth? Thus ruminated Lady Clare.

In there came old Alice, the nurse, Said: "Who was this that went from thee?"

"Was only Ronny," said Lady Clare, "And see what he has bought for me."

"Oh, what a beaut!" said Alice, the nurse, "And a high-grade wheel, too, I declare!"

Now, you'll be right in line, I guess, As sure as your name is Lady Clare.

She clad herself in a russet gown, She looked not much like Lady Clare! She got on once, but she soon was down With burdocks mixed up in her hair.

The high-grade bike Lord Ronald had bought Leapt like a Texas steer; It skinned the shins of Lady Clare And stood her on her ear.

Down stepped Lord Ronald from his bike: "Oh, Lady Clare, you shame your worth, Your waist is all ripped up the back, While you are rooting in the earth."

"I'm going to ride this thing," she said, "As she felt around for her back hair; 'I'm going to ride the critter, or My name will not be Lady Clare."

He laughed a laugh of merry scorn, And turned and kissed her where she stood; He pinned her dress where it was torn, And from her nose wiped off the blood.

"If you must ride to-day, get on, And I," said he, "will hold you there Till you can run the thing alone, So you shall still be Lady Clare."

"SEVEN DRESSES."

By ELLA B. EVANS.

If it had not rained that afternoon it would probably have continued "six" until the end of the chapter.

It is in the "American Claimant," I believe, that Mark Twain says there is a great deal of valuable time wasted in the description of the weather, and so leaves it out of his story altogether, after supplying the reader in the preface with short extracts descriptive of the weather by notable writers from which he can choose at will particular descriptions to fill such vacancies in Mark Twain's story. Now, in "The American Claimant," the weather was quite a minor consideration, and neither the plot nor the development of the characters depended in the least upon it.

However, if it had not been for the rain I repeat, the "Seven Dresses" would have remained "six," and would have been so in the deepest obscurity, for the title would in all probability, never have adorned a magazine page.

If there was any one thing David Rhys objected to over and above another, it was a rainy day, and damp shoes were his special abomination; so, on that day, when a particularly unexpected shower caught him near *The Flambeau's* editorial rooms, his first thought was naturally to seek shelter, and enjoy a friendly chat at the same time in that *sanctum sanctorum*, the office of the editor-in-chief, his old schoolmate.

He found the arbitrator of the destinies of hundreds of literary aspirants, busy over a pile of papers, which he pushed aside upon the entrance of his friend, proceeding to enjoy his company and the

fumes of a good cigar with as much complacency and easy forgetfulness of work as though he were not being cursed every moment for his delay in announcing his decisions regarding certain manuscripts.

They talked of—what you will. There were reminiscences of the past, comment upon the present, and speculations as to the future to be gone through with, so the time sped by rapidly enough, until an hour had passed. Still it rained, with absolutely no indications of holding up, and so David Rhys stayed on, bearing with what patience he could muster his friend's many interruptions.

"You can have no idea of the trials of my position," said the editor; "yet I never get any sympathy. The greatest trial of all is this sort of thing," pointing to a pile of manuscripts. "It is assuming the character of fate, for the time being, and in a small way, you know, and the position is not always pleasant. It would be delightful if I could offer financial aid, or, at least, encouragement to all of my despairing would-be contributors, but you know how impossible that is. There is, generally speaking, only about one article out of every fifty that is worthy of acceptance, and so, in spite of the piteous letters that accompany many of them, I have to, *nolens volens*, reject the majority. I am often at a loss to keep my human sympathy from interfering with my judgment. Here is a case that is especially puzzling," picking up a neat typewritten manuscript. "The writer of this story is a lady of birth and breeding who belongs to a formerly wealthy Southern family, and who now earns by her unaided efforts everything that supports her mother and herself. She had tried everything. Literature seems to be her last resource. I did not learn this from her, but—well, in another way. Her story, 'Six Dresses' has little or no literary merit. There is some pathos, but the attempt at humor is terribly strained. One cannot be truly humorous when one sees nothing but trials and privations in life. I cannot publish the story, and yet I want to help her. What shall I do about it? Here, read it while I am gone," he added, as an urgent message summoned him.

"What a bore!" thought Mr. Rhys, settling himself down comfortably in the editor's armchair. With attention given more closely to his excellent cigar than to the story, he read the first page.

"SIX DRESSES."

"Now, Jack, after the fashion of brothers, would call me a romantic goose for caring so much for this trifling of old dresses; but women think differently on these subjects, and I want to know what you will have to say about the dresses and about the story. For there is a story connected with them—a love story, and naturally there is a man in it.

"The packing is almost finished now, so Marie may go downstairs, and I will tell you all about it. I am going to sit in this comfortable chair here by the fire (why is it that low chairs are so much more seductive than high ones!) and you can sit on the stool at my feet. Certainly you may see the dresses, but they are hardly worth looking at. Several seasons ago the sleeves were not so voluminous nor the skirts so stiff as now, and these seem very simple and out of vogue.

"First let me give you a cup of tea; and you can amuse yourself with these chocolates if I bore you too long. It is a nice day for story-telling. There is no fear of callers in this storm, and we can have the whole afternoon to ourselves. Turn so. Do not look into my face, or I might have stage-fright. Why do I not begin? Chiefly because I do not know how. But I forget that the dresses are to tell the story."

"A monologue! Humph! Rather a daring thing for any but a finished writer to attempt."

Then he turned the page.

"First comes the little green wool with the silver braid, and the marks of the big pin where I fastened a bunch of white roses when I first wore it. It was a Sunday afternoon in May, and he afterward told me that he thought I looked like a goddess of the Spring. You see he was only a foolish boy in many respects. Do not be impatient. I am telling you the story now. It was just after evening service that I met him, there in front of St. Paul's. His cousin, who was an old friend, asked leave to introduce him."

The story began to be interesting, for suddenly it was illustrated by a picture that rose before David Rhys's vision. A quaint, old church, with dull-gray walls and steeples, thrown into sharp relief against the tender pink of the sunset sky; a churchyard, where the "graves in the grass" were covered with early spring violets; the silvery gleam of a river that flowed there at the foot of "God's garden

of sleep"; and, lastly the vision of a girl walking between those dark cedar thickets.

The remembrance was not a pleasant one, and so he brushed it aside and read on:

"No, I do not know how to describe him. After all he was just a man. Jack was with me that night, I remember, and he said he had never seen me acknowledge an introduction in so hopelessly awkward a manner. Brothers are always brutally frank; and I was confused, because Jack had heard me rave over the good-looking stranger across the aisle. Oh, dear! why will girls be so foolish and gushing? It always gets them into trouble. I do not believe that Jack will ever forget that."

"Yes, the blue blouse is very dainty, and he thought it becoming. This white skirt goes with it. See the mud stains about the hem. That is because I would always insist, when we went canoeing, upon scrambling down the bank in a wildly independent manner. As Jack says, I have always been awkward."

"What glorious days those were on the river! He (I hope you don't think I mean Jack) was a great athlete, and took boyish pride in his muscle. We used to paddle up under the shadow of the willows and read our German together. He had spent a year abroad, and felt himself quite a competent teacher; so he would pronounce a word, and I would repeat it after him. We did not get on very rapidly, for every word suggested a thought, and he and I used to discuss evolution and boating, metaphysics and baseball, with the gravity of judges, and the impartiality of—well, of a boy and girl."

He paused as he turned over another page. He was beginning to feel quite a sympathy for this unknown writer. So, she too, had known the delight of studying and reading under the shadow of willow trees on a gently flowing stream. Could he ever forget those summer days on the Savannah, where the river was filled with a golden light, and the woods with the glory of Southern foliage? Verily, to live was a delight.

To half recline against downy cushions that filled the canoe; to be rocked by the tiny waves just enough to give zest to repose; to breathe in the life-giving fragrance of the pines that stretched skyward, tall and majestic, along the Carolina shore; to listen to the music of a loved voice, and above all, to watch the sunlight flicker through the low-hanging branches and change to gold the bronze of that beautiful hair—that was the rapture of life. And now this was the mere existence of life. Why did that memory haunt him again, to tantalize him with the sharp contrast between past and present?

He threw the manuscript impatiently down, and walked over to the window. The short winter afternoon was drawing to a close, but the lights had not yet been lighted and the streets looked dreary and cheerless, with the rain still pouring in torrents, and the few pedestrians hurrying along, wet and bedraggled with the mud. The prospect was cheerless enough, and again he turned to the desk, and picked up the story; as well to while away the time by reading that as in any other way, and he had nothing to do until seven.

"It was all brought back so vividly to me at the Southern Society's reception to Secretary Herbert, some time ago. There was a great big Russian from the flagship, who attempted to teach me his native tongue as we came down the stairs from the supper room. The place was so crowded that he was several steps behind me; and when we had to pause, he would lean over and whisper a Russian word, and I would look up and attempt to say it after him. Between times I could hear him murmuring elaborate compliments in French. I think it pleasant—the only word of his language I am sure I never knew was *douschka* (darling). But I grew as erratic as Jerome's 'Novel Notes.' I must go back to my story. This cap was his. Mine blew away one day, and he put this on my head and begged me for the forfeit kiss. I was so judgmental that I would not ask with him for a week. Then he got me to go to a hop at the Academy, and somehow I could not refuse."

Mr. Rhys yawned, and looked impatiently at the clock. The story was decidedly a bore, and the editor had been gone an unconsciously long time. Then his eye caught the name "Georgia," and with a half-awakened interest he read on.

"It was one of those warm, sultry nights that can exist only in Georgia, and only in June, so the ballroom soon grew too oppressive for comfort. My chaperon was lenient, and gave me permission to stroll out under the trees.

"I can see those grounds so well now, lit up by the Chinese lanterns and the girls' bright dresses. There were flashes of zig-zag lightning, and now and then the distant growl of thunder. I remember that particularly, because thunder-storms always made me nervous."

"We soon got tired of walking, and sat down on the old wooden steps of the side entrance to the chapel. We could just hear the music; and probably the correct thing for me to say would be that the refrain had sung through my brain ever since. But it hasn't. To tell the truth, I have no idea what it was, I only know that it was something bright and catchy, and that I was vaguely sorry I had missed that dance."

"Then I forgot all about it, for he began talking to me in the sweet, tender way that always made me serious in spite of myself. He was telling me that he loved me, and begging for one word of encouragement."

"It was then it came to me how much I really cared for him."

"Be honest with me, dear," he said. "It seems to me that I have been patient a long, long time."

"I remember how well he had looked in the ballroom that night, how thoughtful he had been for me during all these weeks, and how, for a moment, I could not see his face for the happy tears that filled my eyes."

The manuscript fell to the ground, and the reader buried his face in his hands. The present had faded away, and he was living again in the past. Ah! those old chapel steps in the moonlit garden of that Georgia town! How beautiful she had looked in her airy white gown, the moonlight turned to silver and how madly he had loved her—had loved her, only! But who was this woman whose descriptions so plainly brought to memory scenes he had thought forgotten? Again the papers were caught up. The name signed was "Ramelie," a *nom de plume* that told nothing. What more had she to say?

"I would be honest with him. Just then I started to get up, and found that something was holding me down. The thin silk on my gown had stuck hard and fast to some resin on the steps. How unromantic! When I finally got away I leaned against the chapel and laughed and laughed until my sides ached. No wonder you smile. He did not seem to appreciate the joke, however, and stood frowning upon me until a sudden shower sent us flying towards shelter."

"You can still see the resin stain on the white silk, and the dark spots on the gold fern leaves that were left by the raindrops."

With almost a shudder, he recalled the editor's words, "a strained attempt at humor." Strained, indeed. Then he read on, feverishly.

"After that he was very distant and cool for a long time—all the rest of the summer—until he heard I was going abroad, and came to tell me good-by."

"We were to leave early in the morning, so everything was packed up, and I had only this serge traveling suit to wear that last evening. Yes, the folds do need shaking out. Strange, that leaf must be from this very tree here—the one that shades the veranda. I remember we stood just under it. It was early in September and all the French windows were thrown open to attempt the breeze. I was feeling sad at the thought of going away for such a long time, and I suppose something in my manner encouraged him to talk again as he had done that night on the chapel steps."

"Everything would have gone well, but Lilly came to the window just then, and insisted upon his talking one of the chocolate caramels she had been making. 'Those caramels were not a success—mine never are—and these were unusually sticky. Still he was brave enough to try one, and foolish enough to attempt to talk at the same time. The result was, that his teeth stuck together with that caramel; and for a moment he could not say a word, which was manifestly unfortunate. I struggled hard with my desire to laugh. I almost prayed that I would not, but the sense of the ridiculous was too strong in me, and I could not have kept a straight face if my life depended upon it. My ringing peals of laughter brought them all to the window to ask what was the matter. Remember, I was hardly more than a child. We went back to the house and he soon left, in spite of my contrite and pleading looks."

"I did not see him again, and his few letters were strained and unnatural. It was spring when I came home, and I met him one day in front of St. Paul's, where we had met the first time. There was a flush on his face and he started towards

me; but I was angry that he had not written differently, and so I told myself that the flush and the light in his eyes were the sunset reflection, and that he was moving to avoid the press of the crowd. Then I was provoked at myself for having thought he was coming to speak to me and that made me refuse haughtily to recognize him at all."

Where had this author heard the story? Could she have told it? No, impossible! Could she have written it herself? He remembered that the editor had spoken of the direst poverty. Could it be that she was trying to sell her very memories to buy the necessities of life? But the story meant more than this—it meant something to him that suddenly filled him with a wild hope. Perhaps the sequel would tell the truth.

"The consciousness that I was looking my best helped me. I wore this dress. The embroidery came from Persia and it was made up in Paris. How well these rich tints bring out your bronze hair and ivory complexion. You must try it on presently. I remember taking a girlish delight in the thought there were palm leaves on it, and that they meant victory. Throw it across the lounge, dear; it is too pretty to be ill treated."

"A few nights later I went to the opera and wore this crimson silk. The opera cloak goes with it. No matter if it does lie crumpled on the floor, for I hate the very sight of it. Only, of course, because it is frightfully unbecoming. Something on the stage that night brought back a forgotten river scene, and I could not hear the orchestra for the lapping of the water against a canvas canoe and the measured splashing of the paddles. The prima donna's musical Italian changed to German verbs conjugated in a boy's rich tones. I grew dizzy and faint and shut my eyes. I opened them quickly, however, when I heard his name. My chaperon was saying: 'He is caught at last, I see. He is going to marry that pretty little Miss Bondurant.' Then I saw him across the house in the box with a very lovely girl, and he was looking at her with the expression he used to have only for me. I don't know what happened just then."

"Why, I believe I am almost going to sleep. It is getting dark and the fire has nearly gone out. Sit still; I will draw up shade. It is time to dress for dinner and I have not put away these things yet. The silk balls are falling from the fringes of the opera cloak. I did not know what I was doing that night, and must have twisted—Why, what is the matter, little girl? Your tea is cold and—look out! you have scattered the chocolates all over the floor. What! Crying! And for me? Don't bury your head so far down in the pillows, or you can't hear what I have to say. Sobbing still? You absurd child, there is no such thing as tragedy in the world. How Jack would laugh at you. Don't you know that I would not give up one of my gowns from Worth for all that half-worn pile? Indeed, indeed, I am not a heartbroken woman and there are no white hairs in my head."

Knowing the truth, how terrible to him was the pathos of it all. Could it be that she still loved him? Then poverty, poverty, poverty! How the words rang in his ears! And all this time he had had money in plenty; more than he knew what to do with.

There were a few more lines of the story, but he did not read them, for just then the editor came in. David Rhys grasped him excitedly by the hand.

"Tell me her name?" he demanded.

"Katherine Mortimer," the editor was surprised into answering.

He was still more surprised when his friend said, suddenly:

"I will give you a hundred dollars for this story and the author's address."

"Why, what are you going to do with it?"

"I am going to have it changed to 'Seven Dresses,' and the seventh is going to be a wedding dress. That is all."

Vacation Time.

Is drawing near and is gladly welcomed by all, especially those whose duty in life has caused them to greatly run down their system to meet the requirements, physical and mental, forced upon them. With these and others, it is important, whether at home, at the seashore or in the country, that some thought be given to diet, and as further assistance to nature a good building up medicine like Hood's Sarsaparilla had best be resorted to. If the digestion is poor, liver deranged and frequent headaches seem to be the rule, Hood's will change all these and enable everyone to return to their home and business in a refreshed state of mind and bodily health.

They Deserve Pity.

SAFETY AND LIFE DEPEND UPON PAINE'S CELERY COMPOUND

We must sympathize with and pity the poor, weary and jaded sufferer, whose life is made miserable and almost unbearable in hot weather.

The healthiest of us have all we can do to withstand enervating effects of scorching days and sweltering nights. The sick mortals—heaven help them—must suffer increased agony during these hot days!

The troubles that bring low the majority of people at this season are nervous prostration, nervous debility, dyspepsia, indigestion, headache, and a host of trials that result from impure and poisoned blood.

The above troubles attack men and women because their supply of nerve force is almost exhausted. Loss of this nerve force and feebleness is at the root of almost every case of sickness.

A true nerve medicine is what is needed if health is to be restored, and the dark grave avoided. Paine's Celery Compound is a perfect and unfailing restorer of nerve force and power to the weakened and debilitated system. It quickly cures prostration, sleeplessness, headache, indigestion, dyspepsia, it cleanses the poison ed blood and gives new life and permanent vitality and strength.

Paine's Celery Compound combines the most efficient alteratives, laxatives and diuretics, and soon restores the sick one to perfect health. To-day it is earth's most reliable medicine; it is made for your special benefit, poor sufferer, and it will impart that state of health you are so earnestly longing for.

As there are vile liquid imitations sold in many places, insist upon your dealer giving you "Paine's the kind that cures."

St. Nicholas River Notes.

The farmers are busily engaged hay-making.

Mrs. A. Miles, of Boston, is visiting friends in this vicinity.

Quite a number attended the service rendered by Rev. Wm. Hamilton, in the hall, on Wednesday evening.

A fine dwelling house has been erected by Mr. Wm. Masterton.

Mr. Stothart Wright is visiting friends here.

Mrs. L. Kirby and her daughter, Myrtiss of Boston, Mass., are visiting the former's brother, Mr. A. McLean.

Mrs. A. McWilliams, of Grand Rapids Minn., is visiting at her parents, Mr. and Mrs. R. Lawson.

We hear with regret that Miss Murphy does not intend returning to take charge of our school for next term. There is talk of the school in upper district being in operation next term. A special meeting was held in the school house on Wednesday, which was largely attended. Mr. Daniel Collins filled the chair, and the necessary business was transacted.

While a number of folk were crossing the bridge last evening, three shots were fired from a shooting-iron by some one on the shore, which very much alarmed some ladies who were present. One lady fell into a swoon, and had to be laid on the siding until water was administered.

The Lay of a Bachelor.

A bachelor old and cranky was sitting alone in his room. His toes with the gout were aching, and his face was overspread with gloom. No little one's shouts to disturb him—from noises the house was free. In fact, from cello to attic it was as still as still could be. No medical aid was lacking. His servants answered his ring, respectfully heard his orders and supplied him with everything. But still there was something wanting which he could not command—the kindly words of compassion, the touch of the gentle hand. And he said, as his brow grew darker and he rang for a fireling nurse: "Well, marriage may be a failure, but this is a damned sight worse."

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Children Cry for Pitcher's Castoria.