

is quite certain of it, and even Mr. Scoville told me that you had evidently received a liberal education."

"I certainly have been liberally supplied with the means for education," replied Grey, smiling. "But everybody is certainly mistaken in supposing me to be a theological student, even Mrs. Tyler."

Miss Mulford was sorely perplexed. "To think we should make such a mistake," she said to her mother as she related the above conversation.

"We shall never hear the last of it if the young men hear of it, and they certainly will, for Nancy Tyler and Ruth Lindsay can never keep anything to themselves. What in the world can he be?"

"Why, a schoolmaster to be sure, Bet," said her father, who overheard her remarks. "What upon air do you take him for? For my part I don't see nothin' uncommon about the man."

Miss Mulford pursed up her rosy lips, but made no reply until after he left the room, for she dreaded his ridicule.

"Pa's ideas are so old-fashioned, so commonplace," she observed, "that he cannot appreciate anything but what he calls common sense. He has no taste, no imagination, and there is no use in talking to him."

Miss Mulford was soon on her way to the deacon's. She was anxious to inform Mrs. Tyler and Phebe of their mistake, and impress upon Nancy the importance of keeping it secret, for she knew that it would be a never-ending subject of merriment to several young men whose pretensions had of late been somewhat overlooked by the young ladies in the interest excited by Mr. Grey.

"Mrs. Tyler and her daughter's exclamations of 'You don't say so! Why do tell?' were interrupted by Nancy, who came bounding into the room, in a manner which would have called forth severe censure from the deacon."

"There girls, what do you think now; they say that Mr. Grey is the best dancer in town?"

"The best dancer! What do you mean?" exclaimed the young ladies in a breath.

"Why, Mary Stevens had a party last night. All the North Side young people were there, and Mr. Stevens played for them to dance. Ruth is cousin to Mary you know, and she and Mr. Grey were invited. Ruth says he is a beautiful dancer, I wish I could dance," and she began to pirouette across the room to the utter astonishment of her mother.

"Gracious goodness! What upon air does the child mean! Are you gospel hardened? You, the daughter of a deacon! What would your father say?"

"But mother, you used to dance when you was young. Mrs. Howd has been telling Ruth and me about your balls this morning."

"Yes, but folks warn't so enlightened then as they are now. But I must say that Eunice Howd might be in better business than talking over such nonsense if she did but know it," replied the irritated lady.

"Certainly she might, but then, what can you expect from such people," said Miss Mulford. "But what is your opinion of social parties, do you object to them, Mrs. Tyler?"

"Why, as for that matter, I don't see any great harm in them, though the deacon is kinder dubious about the gals going."

CHAPTER VI.

In the course of a few weeks the young people of the Centre district seemed to be seized with a mania for parties. Several had been given which were pronounced capital, but Miss Mulford determined that hers should excel anything heretofore seen in the good town of S—.

A week had been spent in making preparations. Tempy, the colored woman, was engaged to wait on the company, and her roguish boy, black Sam, stood grinning in the kitchen, waiting for Miss Mulford to finish writing the invitations of which he was to be the bearer.

"Ma," said the young lady as she folded her last note, "I shall not ask Ruth Lindsay."

"Why not, my dear, she is your father's favorite, you know."

"Because, I have invited only the first people. In other places people of our rank do not associate with everybody and anything. Society is divided into classes; something of the kind ought to be done here; we are a hundred years behind the times, but pa can never be made to understand these things, so we will say nothing to him. If he finds fault leave him to me. I can manage him."

This propensity to manage was the most serious fault in Miss Mulford's character. She had a large development of what our phrenological friends term secretiveness and approbation. She never attempted to attain her ends by simple straight-forward means, but always had some plan, some hidden manoeuvre. Yet by those who worship the form rather than the indwelling spirit of beauty, she was considered beautiful. On the evening of the party, when she saw her rooms filled with the elite of the town, and among them Grey, she threw aside her previous manner and introduced that gentleman to her friends with such unaffected pleasure and seemed so forgetful of herself in her efforts to amuse her guests, that he began to think he had judged her too hastily and endeavored to atone for his error by the assiduity of his attentions.

He was so busy with this thought that he did not observe Ruth's absence until he heard one of the girls inquiring for her. Suspecting her to be in the next room he made his way

through the crowd and ran his eye over groups of fair, young faces, but the sweet face of Ruth was not to be seen. At length he found Nancy Tyler seated in a corner with such an expression of gravity on her face, as would have caused the deacon's heart to rejoice: to use one of his favourite quotations, "like the young roe upon the mountains of Bethel."

"Alone! Miss Nancy," said he, as he took a seat by her side. "Why do you look so grave, and where in this crowd shall I find Ruth?"

"You will not find her here, for she is at home, and I wish I had staid at home too. I am sure I should have been a great deal happier than I am here. But mother and Phebe wouldn't hear a word about it."

"Is Ruth ill?" he inquired eagerly.

"No. But the truth is, she was not invited."

"Not invited! Why, what offence can she have given to Miss Mulford?"

"Offence! Ruth never did anything wrong in her life," said Nancy, half offended herself at his question. "Ruth's father," she continued, "died in the poor house, and Betsey Mulford says people of our station, should not degrade themselves by associating with the lower classes. Phebe and she take a great deal of late about 'defining our positions,' and a 'becoming self respect,' and all such sort of things which I do not understand. But the long and short of it is, that Ruth is not good enough to associate with them. Just as if she wasn't worth a dozen of us any time!"

"Certainly, you and she together are worth any two dozen of them," he replied warmly.

"I will go immediately to Howd's and tell her that you at least, do not forget her."

Nancy was delighted; she loved Ruth dearly, and was convinced that Mr. Grey's attentions to her friend were the principal cause of Miss Mulford's present neglect.

Mr. Grey's absence was not observed for sometime, but at length the question became general, "Where is Mr. Grey?" No one knew, for Nancy, who was now the merriest of them all, kept silence.

Miss Mulford was seriously vexed; she anxiously watched the door expecting every moment to see him return. The hour of refreshment came, but no Mr. Grey. The hour of departure came, but still no Mr. Grey.

Miss Mulford however forgot her disappointment as she listened to the banterings of her young friends on the subject of Mr. Grey's pointed attentions in the early part of the evening and his subsequent disappearance.

"You have not sent him off in despair, have you Betsey?" said one of the girls as she drew on her bonnet.

Miss Mulford playfully shook her finger at her friend; but Nancy, who overheard the question, replied:

"If she has, I dare say Mr. Howd, has laughed him out of it by this time. He was disappointed in not finding Ruth here, and told me he was going to call on her. I thought he would return, but the Howds are such good company, you know that it is difficult to get away. Good night and pleasant dreams, Betsey!" she cried as she left the room with her sister.

Miss Mulford tossed her head and observed, "It is just like that tiresome Mr. Howd! He is always sending for Mr. Grey on business. I dare say he sent for him to-night."

If Miss Mulford did not succeed in regulating society according to her refined ideas, she at least, succeeded in dividing the good people of S—, into two distinct parties. One of these was very certain that she herself was destined to become the future Mrs. Grey; the other maintained with equal certainty that Ruth was to be that favored person.

Mr. Grey was invariably requested to accompany one or the other of the above mentioned ladies to the different parties; and as he was invariably complied, the good people were kept in a most delightful state of excitement.

The mania for party giving and party going continued to increase, notwithstanding the deacon loudly raised his voice against it, and pronounced the good town of S—, a second vanity fair; yea a very Gomorrah; but alas! no one heeded him.

CHAPTER VII.

One Saturday afternoon, about two weeks before his term of engagement had expired, Mr. Grey was sitting in the village post office reading. The stage came rattling up to the door and a young man sprang to the ground, entered the house, and ere he was aware seized both his hands, while a merry laugh sounded in his ears and a well known voice exclaimed:

"Found! found at last! Oh! most worthy disciple of Ichabod Crane!"

"Fred Woodruff" cried Mr. Grey, springing up and warmly returning his greeting. "What in the name of all that is beautiful brought you here?"

"The beautiful! Ah, you have hit it, Harry," replied his friend laughing. "I fancied you had found some wood nymph in this out-of-the-way place who realized our early visions of the beautiful. I was determined to see with my own eyes the bright reality, that perfect woman who can satisfy the fastidious taste of Harry Grey, and transform the most fashionable, as well as the most sage of all my sage friends into a hamdrum pedagogue for the last five months. Eh! Harry, can I be gratified?"

"As full of nonsense as ever, Fred. I am sorry to disappoint you, but you are mistaken in your fancies," replied Mr. Grey. "I have realized something more important, perhaps, than our boyish visions of beauty," he continued laughing. "A large addition to my somewhat limited knowledge of human nature; the acquaintance of three or four original charac-

ters; the warm friendship of several pleasant families; besides, I am now convinced, that I shall be perfectly content to reside in the country and assist my father in his agricultural pursuits, which, as you know, has ever been his earnest desire; a point, which seemed somewhat doubtful, after four years spent in college among such rattle-heads as yourself."

"So you have been trying experiments Harry! Well I am glad to hear it. That old man who so nobly declares that a farmer needs as good an education as any other man, and who has made the trial in the person of his only son, ought not to be disappointed. But how came you to think of teaching school, my dear fellow, and why did you not write to me before last week?"

"Oh! I was as innocent of any thought of teaching school ten minutes before I engaged as you are at this moment. I spent several weeks after I left college in traveling. I was on my way home and reached B— too late for the direct stage I took a seat in a carriage, that runs within about two miles of this place. It was so crowded that I was glad to be set down and leaving my luggage at a farmer's, walked to this village. I suppose school-master was written on my phiz, for two men were standing on yonder little piazza when I entered, and almost the first word was the offer of a school. They were genuine Yankees, and one of them was such a comical looking character and twisted his face into such ridiculous shapes when speaking, that I could not resist its fascinations and was engaged as a veritable Domine, ere I was aware of it."

Frederick Woodruff had little secretiveness, and before nine o'clock that night every man, woman and child in the district, save such as were stone-deaf or too young to talk, were rejoicing in the knowledge that Grey was the son of Grey of F., of whom Esquire Mulford bought his red oxen. The landlord himself had been over to the esquire's on purpose to tell them.

The next day Frederick Woodruff accompanied his friend to meeting. As they entered Mr. Howd's slip, he caught a glimpse of a sweet face, which was immediately turned away and hidden by one of the prettiest and neatest straw bonnets imaginable. Poor Fred! or rather as the deacon would say, *parvase Fred!*

Mr. Scoville, was both eloquent and impressive, and Fredrick tried his best to listen, but, *malgre* all his efforts, his thoughts would revert to that bewitching little bonnet, and he could not help wishing that she would look round once more, just that he might satisfy himself as to whether her eyes were blue or hazel. When the services are over she will be obliged to look up, he thought, but he was mistaken.

She stood with her back towards him, arranging Mrs. Howd's cloak, and Harry was in such a provoking hurry to get out, that Frederick lost all patience. Howd hurried after them and urgently pressed them to go home with him. Harry was about to decline, but Frederick gave him such an expressive glance, that he consented.

Girls can't wear cottage bonnets forever, he thought, as he entered Howd's door. True enough! and soon Ruth entered the room with no other covering than her own rich, brown hair. Frederick was presented in due form.

It is sufficient to say, he left the house that night almost certain that her eyes were blue, though at times they did seem a shade or so darker, and what was still more satisfactory, his friend assured him after tormenting him a reasonable length of time, that Ruth was nothing to him but a very agreeable friend.

After calling at Esquire Mulford's and some other places, Frederick returned home, leaving Grey to follow at his own time. The school closed and the schoolmaster's management and system of instruction received the decided approbation of the whole board, excepting the deacon.

Mr. Grey exchanged kind farewells with his friends, not unfrequently accompanied on their part by hints of his returning before long to fulfill an engagement of a different nature. He replied with a smile, "that he should certainly visit them in the course of the ensuing summer."

CHAPTER VIII.

One lovely afternoon, late in the summer, an elegant carriage drove rapidly through the main street of S— and drew up at Howd's. A gentleman sprang out, and the dozen pair of eyes, peeping out from behind the curtains of the neighboring houses, at once recognized Mr. Grey. He carefully assisted a lady to alight, and entered the house.

Curiosity was at its height. It was in vain that the next neighbours, the Smiths kept watch and watch, with a zeal which would have gained them credit on board a man of war; they could discover nothing, save that the carriage was taken round to the stable, Mr. Howd's son Joel, and the parlor windows opened by Ruth. The two eldest Miss Smiths walked over to the esquire's to carry the result of their observations.

They found Phebe Tyler and Miss Mulford, and after many ingenious queries and surmises the four ladies unanimously decided the strange lady must be Mr. Grey's sister.

The Miss Smiths were about to return home, when Miss Mulford suddenly remembered that she had an errand at a house just beyond their father's and proposed that Miss Tyler and she should accompany them back.

Whether Miss Mulford had ever read the old Grecian story of Proserpine gathering flowers, we know not, but when opposite Mr. Howd's she was seized with a sudden passion for gathering daisies. She lingered sometime, but as neither god or mortal appeared to bear her off, she, at length, walked on.

As soon as they disappeared behind the trees, that skirted the road beyond Mr. Howd's, Mr. Grey accompanied by the strange lady and Ruth, came out of the house, and proceeded rapidly down the street until they reached the deacon's. Here they entered, and after exchanging a warm greeting with Nancy, Mr. Grey introduced his wife. Nancy was delighted and Mrs. Tyler astonished. They soon took leave and proceeded to make further calls.

Great was the astonishment, we forbear to say, indignation of Misses Mulford and Tyler, when Nancy came running to meet them on their return, and told them who had called. How her tongue ran, as she described how happy Mr. Grey looked, and how pretty and pleasant his wife was. "Why, her voice was as sweet as a bird's; and wasn't it so strange that he should come back married?"

Miss Mulford threw up her head and replied sharply, that she did not see anything very strange about it. He was only a farmer after all!

The next day Mr. Grey and his bride left the village taking Ruth Lindsay with them, who became a great favorite with old Mr. Grey. "Somehow or other," the old man would say, "he could not help loving her as if she were his own daughter."

But it certainly was not Mr. Grey who assisted Ruth to alight. No, it was a stranger; and yes—it was his friend, the young gentleman who had been seen at meeting with him one day the winter previous.

Again the curiosity of the good people of S—, was excited by a carriage stopping at Mr. Howd's.

On the anniversary of her party, Miss Mulford received an invitation to attend the wedding of Ruth Lindsay, who on that evening became the bride of Frederick Woodruff, Esquire, attorney and counsellor at law.

Communications.

Mr. Editor,

The Petition from the Free Church to the British Parliament which lately occupied a large space in the columns of your Journal, was, no doubt, highly interesting and edifying, to a number of your readers; nevertheless a "per contra" extract or two, might not be amiss, as being suitable to the palate of a few old, well tried friends of the Gleaner. I therefore request you will insert the two extracts marked thus *, from the accompanying papers; which, together, may occupy about as much of your paper, as the Free Church Petition.

Yours truly,

Bathurst, 26th August 1845.

From the Glasgow Courier.

There is nothing particularly attractive about Free Church discussions, which, as a general rule, we would rather avoid than covet, though they will be occasionally forced upon us. Some three weeks ago the Marquis of Breadalbane entertained the Upper House with a recital of the grievances of that querulous body. The petition which he then presented was sufficiently provocative of criticism, but we allowed it to pass: the subject of sites has again been raised, however, and we feel that we cannot suffer the speech of Mr P. Stewart on Friday last to go unnoticed.

That eloquent person, whose zeal for churches of any kind was never before heard of, is, like his august ally, Fox Maule, dripping wet with ultra-Presbyterianism. Substantially these illustrious patriots care not one straw about the matter, but the Free Church is now a dissenting institution, and as it may be made a political instrument, there is some wisdom in cultivating its favor. The question raised by Mr P. Stewart and the Marquis of Breadalbane, at the instance of Dr. McFarlane and the General Assembly of the new seceders is embodied in the following extracts, which we take from the petition presented to the House of Lords:—

"That your petitioners desire nothing from such proprietors but the liberty to purchase, on any reasonable terms, sites for their churches, in order that their congregations may be able to discharge the religious duty of assembling themselves together for the public worship of God in circumstances of decent comfort, free from outward distractions."

"That the petitioners make this appeal in firm reliance on the principles of religious toleration, which form a distinguishing characteristic of the British constitution, and which cannot be violated without inflicting the deepest injury on the political rights and the best feelings of British subjects."

Let us consider these clauses *seriatim*.

The first supposes, on the part of the Free Church, the right to appropriate some particular portion of a man's property which he is unwilling to part with, provided it gives what it considers a "reasonable" price for the same. Without this condition it would be simple robbery, and with it it is a compulsory sale, a kind of transaction which all men dislike, and against which no class of men would be more ready to reclaim were the practice extended to themselves than Free Churchmen; but is it true that they have any such right? We deny it *toto*. The proprietor of a piece of ground has as good a right to refuse to sell it to parties who desire to build a church upon it as to those who would erect a cotton mill, and you might as well set up the cry of persecution in the one case as in the other. Here in Britain