ANNE.

(SUDBURY MEETING HOUSE—16[illegible].)

Her eyes be like the violets,
Ablow in Sudbury lane;
When she doth smile, her face is sweet
As blossoms after rain;
With grief I think of my gray hairs
And wish me young again.

In comes she through the dark old door
Upon this Sabbath day;
And she doth bring the tender wind
That sings in bush and tree;
And hints of all the apple boughs
That kissed her by the way.

Our parson stands up straight and tall,
For our dear souls to pray,
And of the place where sinners go
Some grewsome things doth say;
Now she is highest heaven to me,
So hell is far away.

Most stiff and still the good folk sit
To hear the sermon through;
But if our God be such a God,
And if these things be true,
Why did He make her then so fair?
Why are her eyes so blue?

A flickering light the sun creeps in,
And finds her sitting there;
And touches soft her lilac gown,
And soft her yellow hair;
I look across to that old pew,
And have both praise and prayer.

Oh, violets in Sudbury lane,
Amid the grasses green,
This maid who stirs ye with her feet
Is far more fair, I ween!
I wonder how my forty years
Look by her sweet sixteen!

—*Lizette Woodworth Reese in New Volume.*

PROVING THE PROMISES.

"There's only half-a-dollar left now, Dan'l!"

"Dear heart! Well, I've been expectin' to hear that for some days. Half-a-dollar! It ain't much of a fortin', is it? But the Lord's rich; we must hold to that!"

"Yes; an' lots of folks is rich, too, but that don't help us any. I re'ly don't know what we're goin' to do!"

"Jest this, Eunice: 'Trust in the Lord an' do good, an' verily thou shalt be fed.' That's plain enough."

"You've always got some Scripture ready, Dan'l, an' I don't want to say nothin' agin it, but do be practical enough for once to help me plan. I want to get things enough with that fifty cents to keep us alive a few days longer, anyway. Now, what shall I buy?"

"Well, now. let's see. What do we most need?"

"Dear knows, there's so many things! We ain't got nothin' in the house but a little tea, an' sugar, an' oatmeal; well, there's salt, an' spice, an' a few such things that ain't very sustainin' food; an' we're out of ker'seen, you know; we had to set in the dark last night, an' night afore."

The old man sat silent a few moments. It was a dark outlook, surely—old, lame, and poverty-stricken.

"Well, wife, I'm dreadful sorry you're brought to such a strait, but you must jest buy 'cordin' to your means; git some of the cheapest things an' the most nourishin', an' mebbe by the time they're gone we'll hear from Silas."

"We've been a-sayin' that for three months, father."

"Yes, I know, but I ain't gin up hope o'hearin' yet; en' he knows the money he sent must be gone by this time."

"Well, we ain't never told him that what he sends is all our livin'; he don't dream of that; an' poor boy, he's more'n likely to be dead out in that wild west country; there's such dreadful things happenin' out there all the time."

"No, no, wife! I can't give in to that. Like as not he's on his way home, an' wants to surprise us."

"Well, he'll have to come 'fore another week goes by, or we'll be starved to death, an' then he'll be the one that's surprised. I've clean lost my courage, Dan'l!"

"Now, don't, dearie! Mebbe there's a letter in the office this very minnit, an' you ask soon as you git to the store. Too bad you've got to go out in the cold, an' the wind blows, too; better tie my comforter round your neck. Wish you could ketch a ride goin' or comin'."

But there were no sleighs going to the "Corners," and the old lady plodded on over the long half-mile, while her husband watched her as far as he could see.

There was no letter in the office to verify his hopeful prediction, and with a heavy heart the disappointed mother turned to make her humble purchases. A quart of beans, one pound of rice, and two of cornmeal, a half-pound of butter and two candles comprised the list, and there were a few cents left. It is just possible that some of the packages overweighed, but if they did, that was the storekeeper's own affair.

Uncle Dan'l, as he was called by every one, had never run in debt in his life, and had no thought of doing it now in the hour of his extremity; honest and proud he had been, and would be till the last.

"Poor heart! you're nigh beat out, ain't ye?" he said to his wife on her return. "Set right down by the stove; we've got a blessed good fire, anyway. An' there wasn't no letter? Hum! Well, I guess there will be one next week, or else the boy'll come himself."

So the old man talked hopefully to his wife, who, intent on her cooking and Saturday cleaning, grew more cheerful; and when they sat down to their late dinner of bean porridge, with dessert of boiled rice, they grew quite merry over it, like two children, as they were.

"I re'ly b'lieve, wife, I can git down to meetin' to-day; it's wonderful how much better my lameness is."

"Well, father, do just as you feel about it, but it would be a dreadful pity to over-do agin."

"Yes, that's so; but it's been a power of Sundays sense I went, an' I guess I can stand it. We'll start early and mebbe we'll git a lift part of the way. I do miss the meetin's beyond all tellin' an' I guess the Lord'll help me to enjoyin' of 'em agin. I've been kinder prayin' along in my mind about it."

When they were ready to start, he said: "Don't forget the collection money, Eunice."

"Good land alive, Dan'l! Are you clean crazy that you want to give away your very last cent?"

"I dunno as I'm crazy, but I thought you said there was eleven cents left, and I guess we can afford to give a penny apiece out of that. I'd be ashamed to go to the Lord's house, an' so would you when you think on it."

"I ain't begrudged it when we've had it to give, but it does 'pear to me this ain't no time for givin';" but with a calmness born of despair, she went to the bureau drawer and took two cents from the limp little pocket-book, and handed one to her husband.

"There! I don't know as it makes any difference how the last of it goes; it ain't enough to have any words over, an' I don't want to get my mind riled up jest as I'm goin' to meetin', but it does seem to me that a man that's been honest an' hard-workin' all his life, an' always doin' an' givin' beyond his means an' hangin' onto the promises as you have, ought to have some good come to him 'fore ever he's dead; but instead of that, it's loss after loss, an' trial after trial."

"Now, wife, don't git down-sperited; there's good ahead on us yet—some on it a-comin' right now, for Deacon Bailey's drivin' down the hill an' beckonin' for us to come an' ride. He's a thoughtful creetur, bless him!"

The next morning Mrs. Bailey said to her husband: "Somehow, I feel worried about Uncle Daniel and his wife. I noticed yesterday how old and worn they looked—haggard, in fact. You don't suppose they're in any want, do you?"

"Really, I haven't given the matter a thought; but he's had a bad spell of lameness, you know."

"Yes; but she looks worse than he does, if anything."

"Well, their son sends them money; he's doing quite well out West now, so Uncle Daniel told me some time ago, and they hope he will come home before long."

"But Aunt Eunice said yesterday they hadn't heard from him so long that they were getting worried."

"That's too bad; but the old folks are not without funds anyhow, for I took up the collection yesterday, and they both put in money."

"Oh, then of course they're not in need. I am so glad, for I was getting quite troubled about them."

But at the dinner table Mrs. Bailey said: "I haven't got over my worry about Uncle Daniel's folks yet; they've been on my mind all the morning, and I think he's just the kind of a man to give his very last cent to the Lord, and enjoy doing it; and I do believe they're in need of some of the comforts of life. I wish I knew just what!"

"Now, what a woman you are to jump to conclusions," laughed her husband; "but if what you fancy is true, how are we going to set the matter right? I don't believe Uncle Daniel would accept charity very gracefully; he's the most sensitive man I know."

"Yes; but he might be grateful for help if the giver was unknown; we must think out some plan."

"Give 'm a surprise party," suggested Harry. "I saw her over at the store, Saturday, buying some beans, an' she got two candles. Think of it! She said they wasn't so dangerous as oil, but she paid for what she got anyway."

"I might put a barrel of provisions on their doorstep after dark," said the deacon. "I remember they had a few vegetables planted in the yard, but of course it was no supply for the winter; so wife, if you think best we'll make up a barrel full out of our cellar."

"And do put in some butter!" said Harry, who was an extravagant lover of that article. "Aunt Eunice bought the littlest pat of it you ever see—not morn'n I want to one meal. It's awful to have to skimp on butter!"

But when the things "that could go just as well as not" were brought forth, it was found needful to use two barrels; for apples and potatoes were abundant in the Deacon's cellar, and the owner was generous.

"But how will the old folks ever get them in the house?" said he, as he carried them up the cellar stair.

"Suppose I happen down there a little after?" said Harry, who had entered wholehearted into the packing. "Make up some errand for me, can't you?"

"I might send some of my fruit cake and a mince pie," said his mother. "Aunt Eunice would take that as just a neighborly kindness, I presume."

"All right; you're a famous planner! Won't it be fun to see the old people's wonder? Pity it's past Christmas; then they might think Santa Claus had come sure enough. However, I'll tell them that he got belated."

The old couple sat in the firelight that evening talkikg over their affairs, Uncle Daniel being, as usual, the hopeful one, although he was suffering much pain in consequence of going into the adjoining woods to gather underbrush, having the privilege of using all he cared to collect, and the amount laid in early in the season was nearly exhausted.

"Havin' that firewood so handy is a wonderful blessin'," said the old man; "an' the Squire likes to have it got out of the woods, too. He's a clever man, is the Squire."

"But it nigh kills you to gather it, father; special when you're so lame; but we've got enough on hand to last as long as other things do, an' then—well, that'll be the end of our housekeeping, as far as I can see!"

"If the worst comes to the worst," said Uncle Daniel, finally, "I must see Squire Lee, an' see if he can 'low us a leetle more on the old house. It does 'pear to me as if it might be worth a trifle more'n the mortgage now on, seein' there's no back interest. 'Pears as if I couldn't bear to go out of it—not till our heavenly mansion is got ready for us; we must be sure an' be prepared for that move, wife; an' these light afflictions—"

"Hark, Dan'l! Ain't there somebody a-comin' in the gate?"

"I don't hear nothin' but the wind. As I was a sayin'—'pears as if I did hear a kind of a sound, Eunice."

"The dear land! What would a body think to find us without a light in the house." But, before she could rise from her chair, there came a knock on the door.

"Mercy me, I can't open it till I git a light!"

But her hand trembled, and match after match flared up, sputtered and went out before one performed its mission; and when she at last opened the door, there were words of apology on her lips for the delay, but when she saw two barrels only standing before her, she was dumb with surprise.

"Why, whatever's the matter, Eunice? Who's there?"

"Nobody—that is something; jest come here a minute, can't ye?"

Uncle Daniel hobbled to the door, and after the first shock of wonder was over, looked out to the road for some sign of the bringer, but all was deserted and silent, save for a merry whistle which seemed to be drawing nearer.

"Toler'ble heavy load for the ravens to bring, wasn't it?" said he, as he attempted to move one of the barrels.

"Somebody is a comin' now, Dan'l; it's Harry Bailey."

"Yes, it's me, sure enough; but, hey! What's the matter here? You ain't moving, I hope?"

"Why, no; but—well the fact is, we don't re'ly know the meanin' on't ourselves. These ere barrels has come here all of a sudden, an' we don't know why nor how."

"Well, ain't that jolly? Why, Uncle Daniel, they must be valetines—one for each of you, with somebody's love; you know it's Valetine's day. Just let me roll them in for you out of the cold; and Aunt Eunice, here's one of mother's famous mince pies; she made such a lot of 'em to-day. But my! her little present isn't nowhere compared with all this!" for Uncle Daniel had the barrels uncovered, and was gazing at the contents in speechless wonder, while the candle shook in his hand. Harry turned to go, and Aunt Eunice, got her wits together sufficiently to thank him for the pie and for his assistance, and then closing the door, attempted with her shaking hands to help unpack the barrels. There were vegetables of all kinds, apples, a roll of butter, generous pieces of corned pork and beef, and a sack of flour.

"I hope you ain't been a complainin' to nobody, Eunice!"

"Indeed I ain't! You know better'n than that Dan'l!"

"Yes, yes, so I did! Then the Lord's provided for us, sartin."

"Well, ain't that what you've always been a-sayin'—that he would pervide; an' now that He's gone an' done it, you're just as wonder struck as you can be. Them ain't no store things, neither; they've come from some farmer that's been wrought upon in his mind to do it," and poor Aunt Eunic sat down and cried.

"Don't, don't dearie!" said her husband. "Now don't go to feelin' like that. Why, I'm so happy an' thankful I don't know what to do."

"So be I; but there, I couldn't help cryin' I was so overcome. Do you s'pose Silas had anything to do with it?"

"No, it don't seem so to me; it ain't noways likely as we'll ever know where them things come from or who brought 'em; so we'll have to give thanks straight to the Lord, an' they won't go amiss. I tell you wife, His promises is sure!"

"An' I hope an' pray he'll forgive me for bein' so slow to believe 'em," said she, penitently; "but things did look so des'pert dark ahead an' no light comin' from nowheres."

"That's jest the time to prove the promises true, dearie."

Aunt Eunice dried her eyes and, pleased as any child, proceeded to look the articles all over again.

"I tell you what, Dan'l, we'll have a regular old-fashioned biled dinner tomorrow. Won't that be good?"

"Indeed it will, an' it'll be a Thanksgiving dinner, too."

And then, regardless of dyspepsia and disturbed sleep, the old couple ate a generous lunch of mince pie, fruit cake and apples and sat and talked half the night.

The next day was very stormy, but Deacon Bailey had an errand to the "corners," and stopped on the way home.

"Here's a letter that has just come, Uncle Daniel. I brought it right along, thinking you might not get over today."

"Oh, I'm powerful glad you did. It's from Silas, the dear boy! Do set down, deacon, while we read it."

The letter contained a money-order, and many loving messages, but, best of all, the assurance that he was coming home in the spring to stay, having saved enough to buy a nice farm.

"I'm glad to hear that," said the caller. "Can I be of any help to you in the meantime? Jack can bring a load of wood."

"Thank you, thank you kindly, deacon! We've enough at present; we're amazin' comfortable, an' now we've heard from Silas, we're happy. Surely goodness an' mercy follers us!"

They had the "biled dinner," and it was truly eaten with thankfulness and gratitude to the unknown giver, for in the guilelessness of their child-like hearts they never suspected that the barrels came from the deacon's.—*Zion's Herald.*

Not Guilty.

A Kentucky advocate is defending his client, who is charged with stealing a hank of yarn: "Gentlemen of the jury, do you think my client, Thomas Flinn, of Muddy Creek and Mississippi, would be guilty o' stealin' a hank o' cotton yarn? Gentlemen of the jury, I reckon not—I s'pose not. In no means, gentlemen—not at all. *He are not guilty.* Tom Flinn! Good heavings, gentlemen, you all know Tom Flinn, and on honor now, gentlemen—do you think he'd do it? No, gentlemen, I s'pose not. I reckon not. Thomas Flinn! Why, great snakes and alligators! Tom's a whole team on Muddy Creek and a hoss to let. And do you think he'd sneak off with a miserable hank o' cotting yarn? Well, gentlemen, I reckon not—I s'pose not. I reckon my client was a-howling, gentlemen, on the mountains o' Kentucky, and Napoleon were a-fighting the battles o' Europe—do you think, gentlemen, my client, Mr. Thomas Flinn, gentlemen, could be guilty o' hookin'—yes, hookin', gentlemen—that pitiful, low, mean hank o' cotting yarn? Oppossible! Gentlemen, I reckon, I reckon I know my client, Thomas Flinn! He's got the fastest nag and purtiest sister, gentlemen, in all Muddy Creek and Mississippi! That, gentlemen, are a fact. Yes, gentlemen that are a fact. You kin bet on that, gentlemen. Yes, gentlemen, you can bet your bones on that! Now, 'pon honor, gentlemen, do you think my client are guilty? Gentlemen, I reckon not—I s'pose not. Why, gentlemen of this jury, my client Thomas Finn am no more guilty o' stealin' that hank o' cotting yarn than a toad are got a tail!" [Verdict for defendant, case dismissed, court adjourned.]—*New York Clipper.*

A Pointed Admission.

On the Way to Colorado Springs: Algernon (his first western trip)—Aw, I suppose you see a good many queer people round here, don't you?

Native—Waal, yes, stranger—when the trains from the East come in.—*Life.*

THE WORLD OF BOOKS.

Not So Much Difference.

The New York *Evening Sun* pokes fun at the Chicago *Times* for the broad and generous grounds on which its list of the literary women residing in Chicago is made up. The *Sun* says:

Mrs. Franklin McVeagh heads the list, and her title is due to having entertained Oscar Wilde. Mrs. George S. Lord is allied to the cause of æsthetic dress. Mrs. Wilson Baker studies Volapuk and contributes to the Ohio press. Mrs. J. C. Harris has written a paper on "The Higher Education of Women." Mrs. J. S. Blackwelder is a student of Norse mythology and will make an address at some commencement exercises in Kansas City. Miss Lillie Potter is a linguist and travelled with the young lady who wrote *We Two in Europe.* Mrs. Milward Adams is a teacher of Delsarte. Mrs. Benjamin F. Felix entertained Lucy Larcom. Mrs. Helen Shedd gave a "conversation" to or for Mr. Bronson Alcott. Mrs. Daniel Shorey is fond of philosophy and Herbert Spencer. Mrs. Gene Harding took her children for "intellectual advancement to Europe." Mrs. Henry D. Lloyd has a class of young ladies with meet with her to study history. Mrs. P. C. Harford is fond of the French language. Mrs. Mary S. Willard was once the editor of the *Union Signal.* Mrs. E. E. Marean "heads the cause of Pundita Ramabai." Mrs. E. A. West is the president of the Athena club. Mrs. Levi P. Doud is a member of the Plymouth church, and is a "perfect encyclopædia of general information." Mrs. George Sherwood has written several poems and a child's story. Mrs. George H. Meech is a niece of Story, the sculptor, and is fond of Browning. Mrs. Charles Hutchinson is an alumnus of Dearborn seminary, and is devoted to art. Mrs. Mary E. Burt has written a book called *Browning's Women.* This record has seemed too good to break.

Elsewhere in the same issue, but editorially, the *Sun* says:

What is the reason that we have run short of first-chop poets in our town? We have a mob of rhymers, at least a thousand strong, and it always gives us joy to see their eyes rolling in a fine frenzy, or to aid them in the throes of creation. But will any one of them admit that any other one of them deserves a place in the front rank or a crown like that of the immortals? Put the question to the first one you meet if you would like to raise a storm. Ask O. what he thinks of A., or P. for his judgment of Q., or C. for his private opinion of Z., and you will get new views of the vitriolic qualities of the English language. In times not far off we had rare poets in this town. We had William Cullen Bryant, Fitz Greene Halleck, Edgar Allan Poe, George P. Morris, Nat. Willis, H. T. Tuckerman and others. But where, between the Battery and the Harlem, are the equals of such poets to be found among us in these days?

From this it does not appear that the degree of difference between the literary women of Chicago and the poets of New York is so very great after all.

Bill Nye on James Whitcomb Riley.

In the New York *World* of Sunday, Bill Nye writes as follows of his intimate friend, the Hoosier poet:

The question as to who is writing the poetry of the future, the poetry which embodies the pathos common to all humanity in a local dialect, which is distinctly American, is pretty well answered by the tender and touching, but withal simple and powerful work of James Whitcomb Riley. Many who know him by his work, however, have a very erroneous idea of his personality. With the power to reach and touch all hearts with his pathos, he is a thorough boy with those he knows and knows well. Many people believe themselves to be quite intimate with him who really know nothing of him at all, for those who are most free to approach him and lean upon him, and confide in him by the day, are apt to go away with a wrong impression sometimes. Nothing freezes him up sooner than the fresh and gurgling human pest who yearns to say he is intimate with some one who is well known, the curculio which builds its nest in the rind of another's reputation. Such a person would meet a cool and quiet little gentleman who would look out the window during the interview and lock the door after it had terminated, but a two-year old child, with its natural sincerity and well-kept hair and nose, would be sitting on Riley's back in two minutes and knowing him at his best inside of ten minutes. Like most men who have learned to despise all that is fraudulent and false, he flies to the unbought love of children and studies and remembers their candid failures to be polite, their direct and dangerous comments on eminent freaks and withal their prophetic power of penetrating motives and discovering their genuine friends.

Notes and Announcements.

It is understood that James Russell Lowell is about to publish a volume of essays.

The London *Academy* says freely and confidently that "there is nothing that indicates that Dr. Holmes is getting played out in his last book of poems."

It is proposed to celebrate Pope's 200th birthday at Twickenham. There will be a gathering together of curiosities, pictures and engravings relating to the poet and his surroundings.

Mark Twain contributes the following autograph letter to his *Library of Wit and Humor*: "The selections from my writings included in this book were not made by me, but by the assistant compilers. This is the reason there are [illegible]."

We have received a copy of a very handy little *Ready Reckoner*, from *The Timberman*, 161 Randolph street, Chicago. It is well printed and strongly bound, vest-pocket size, and contains 44 pages of tables, including dimension tables, tables of logs reduced to board measure, miscellaneous tables, including number of pieces to a full 1,000 feet of lumber, table showing freights of lumber, weights of windows, doors, blinds, etc., all for 25 cents, post free.

Books Received.

John Ward, Preacher. A novel, by Margaret Deland, author of *The Old Garden.* (Third edition.) 12mo., pp. 474. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. $1.50. St. John: Alfred Morrissey.

In Nesting Time. By Olive Thorne Miller. 16mo., pp. 275. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co $1.2[illegible] St. John: Alfred Morrissey.