

Poetry.

MY LITTLE WIFE.

My little wife once, (tis strange, but 'tis true),
Sweet little, dear little, love-troubled Jane,
So deeply absorbed in her day-dreaming grew,
The bell chimed and ceased, yet she heard not its strain;
And I walking near her,
(May love ever cheer her
Who thinks all such wandering of sin void and free),
Strove hard to persuade her
That he who had made her
Had destined her heart-love for no one but me,
My little wife—well, perhaps this was wrong—
Sweet little, dear little, warm-hearted Jane,
Sat on the hill-side till her shadow grew long,
Nor tired of the preacher that thus could detain.
I argued so neatly,
And proved so completely
That none but poor Andrew her husband could be,
She smiled when I blessed her,
And blushed when I kissed her,
And owned that she loved and would wed none
but me.
My little wife, if not always quite sure—
Sweet little, dear little, heart-cheering Jane—
That joy will not tarry where people are poor,
But only where beauty and her satellites reign.
In each baby-treasure
She finds a new treasure;
If purse and domain should by chance disagree,
She smiles, bravely humming,
"A better time's coming."
Aid trusts in good health, in the future, and me.

The Pearl of Orr's Island:
A Story of the Coast of Maine.

BY MRS. HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

CHAPTER XXIV.

(Continued.)

CHAPTER XXIII.

Our little Mara was tender, self-devoting, humble, and religious, but she was woman after all to the tips of her fingers, quick to feel slights, and determined, with the intensest determination, that no man should wrest from her one of those few humble rights and privileges, which Nature allows to woman.
Something swelled and trembled in her when she felt the confident pressure of that bold arm around her waist,—like the instinct of a wild bird to fly. Something in the deep, manly voice, the determined, self-confident air, aroused a vague feeling of defiance and resistance in her which she could scarcely explain to herself. Was he to assume a right to her without even asking? When he did not come to tea nor long after, and Mrs. Pennell and her grandfather wondered, she laughed, and said gayly—
"Oh, he knows he'll have time enough to see me. Sally seems more like a stranger."

But when Moses came home after moon-rise, determined to go and console Mara for his absence, he was surprised to hear the sound of a rapid and pleasant conversation in which a masculine and feminine voice were intermingled in a lively duet.
Coming a little nearer, he saw Mara sitting knitting in the door way, and a very good-looking young man seated on a stone at her feet, with his straw hat flung on the ground, while he was looking up into her face, as young men often do into pretty faces seen by moonlight. Mara rose and introduced Mr. Adams, of Boston, to Mr. Moses Pennell.

Moses measured the young man with his eye as if he could have shot him with a good will. And his temper was not at all bettered as he observed that he had the easy air of a man of fashion and culture, and learned by a few moments of the succeeding conversation, that the acquaintance had commenced during Mara's winter visit to Boston.
"I was staying a day or two at Mr. Sewell's," he said, carelessly, "and the night was so fine I could not resist the temptation to row over."

It was now Moses' turn to listen to a conversation in which he could hear little part, it being about persons, and places, and things unfamiliar to him; and though he could give no earthly reason why the conversation was not the most proper in the world,—yet he found that it made him angry.

In the pauses, Mara inquired, prettily, how he found the Kittridges, and reproved him playfully for staying, in despite of his promise to come home.

Moses answered with an effort to appear easy and playful, that there was no reason, it appeared, to hurry on her account, since she had been so pleasantly engaged.

"That is true," said Mara, quietly; "but then grandpapa and grandmamma expected you, and they have gone to bed, as you know they always do after tea."

"Oh yes; but then as you had been gone two or three months, naturally they wanted to see a little of you at first."
The stranger now joined in the conversation, and began talking with Moses about his experience in foreign parts, in a manner which showed a man of sense and breeding. Moses had a jealous fear of people of breeding, an apprehension lest they should look down on one whose life had been laid out of the course of their conventional ideas; and therefore, though he had sufficient ability and vigor of mind to acquit himself to advantage in this conversation, it gave him all the while a secret uneasiness.

After a few moments, he rose up moodily, and saying that he was very much fatigued, he went into the house to retire.

Mr. Adams rose to go also, and Moses might have felt in a more Christian frame of mind, had he listened to the last words of the conversation between him and Mara.

"Do you remain long in Harpswell?" she asked.
"That depends on circumstances," he replied. "If I do, may I be permitted to visit you?"

"As a friend—yes," said Mara; "I shall always be happy to see you."

"No more?"
"No more," replied Mara.
"I had hoped," he said, "that you would reconsider."

"It is impossible," said she; and soft voices can pronounce that word, impossible in a very fateful and decided manner.

"Well, God bless you then, Miss Lincoln," he said, and was gone.

Mara stood in the door-way and saw him loosen his boat from its moorings and float off in the moonlight, with a long train of silver sparkles behind.

A moment after Moses was looking gloomily over her shoulder.

"Who is that puppy?" he said.

"He is not a puppy, but a very fine young man," said Mara.

"Well, that very fine young man, then?"

"I thought I told you. He is a Mr. Adams of Boston, and a distant connection of the Sewells. I met him when I was visiting at Judge Sewell's in Boston."

"You seemed to be having a very pleasant time together?"

"We were," said Mara, quietly.

"It's a pity I came home as I did. I am sorry I interrupted you," said Moses, with a sarcastic laugh.

"You did not interrupt us; he had been here almost two hours."

Now Mara saw plainly enough that Moses was displeased and hurt, and had it been in the days of her fourteenth summer she would have thrown her arms around his neck, and said, "Moses, I don't care a fig for that man, and I love you better than all the world." But this, the young lady of seventeen would not do; so she wished him good-night very prettily, and pretended not to see anything about it.

Mara was as near being a saint as human dust ever is; but—she was a woman saint, and therefore may be excused for a little gentle vindictiveness. She was, in a merciful way, rather glad that Moses had gone to bed dissatisfied, and rather glad that he did not know what she might have told him—quite resolved that he should not know at present. Was he to know that she liked nobody so much as him? Not he, unless he loved her more than all the world, and said so first.

Mara was resolved upon that. He might go where he liked—flirt with whom he liked—come back as late as he pleased—never would she, by word or look, give him reason to think she cared.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Moses passed rather a restless and uneasy night on his return to the home-roof which had sheltered his childhood.

All his life past, and all his life expected, seemed to boil and seethe and ferment in his thoughts, and to go round and round in never-ceasing circles before him.

Moses was *par excellence* proud, ambitious, and wilful. These words, generally supposed to describe positive vices of the mind, in fact are only the overaction of certain very valuable portions of our nature, since one can conceive all three to raise a man immensely in the scale of moral being, simply by being applied to right objects.

He who is too proud even to admit a mean thought—who is ambitious only of ideal excellence—who has an inflexible will only in the pursuit of truth and righteousness—may be a saint and a hero.

There was no God in his estimate of life—and a sort of secret unsuspected determination at the bottom of his heart that there should be none.

He feared religion, from a suspicion which he entertained that it might hamper some of his future schemes.

He did not wish to put himself under its rules, lest he might find them in some future time inconveniently strict.

With such determinations and feelings, the Bible—necessarily an excessively uninteresting book to him—he never read, and satisfied himself with determining in a general way that it was not worth reading, and as was the custom with many young men in America, at that period announced himself as a skeptic, and seemed to value himself not a little on this distinction.

Not that Moses was, after all, without "the angel in him." He had a good deal of the susceptibility to poetic feeling, the power of vague and dreamy aspiration, the longing after the good and beautiful, which is God's witness in the soul. A noble sentiment in poetry, a fine scene in nature, had power to bring tears in his great dark eyes, and he had, under the influence of such things, brief inspired moments in which he vaguely longed to do or be, something grand or noble.

But this, however, was something apart from the real purpose of his life,—a sort of voice crying in the wilderness,—to which he gave little heed.
Practically, he was determined with all his might, to have a good time in this life, whatever another might be,—if there were time, and that he would do it by the strength of his right arm. Wealth he saw to be the lamp of Aladdin, which commanded all other things. And the pursuit of wealth was therefore the first step in his programme.

As for plans of the heart and domestic life, Moses was one of that very common class who had more desire to be loved than power of loving. His cravings and dreams were not for somebody to be devoted to, but for somebody who should be devoted to him. And, like most people who possess this characteristic, he mistook it for an affectionate disposition.

Now the chief treasure of his heart had always been his little sister Mara, chiefly from his conviction that he was the one absorbing thought and love of her heart.

He had never figured life to himself otherwise than with Mara at his side, his unquestioning devoted friend.

Of course he and his plans, his ways and wants, would always be in the future as they always had been, her sole thought.

These sleeping partnerships in the interchange of affection, which support one's heart with a basis of uncounted wealth, and leave one free to come and go, and buy and sell without exaction or interference, are a convenience certainly, and the loss of them in any way is like the sudden breaking of a bank in which all one's deposits are laid.

It had never occurred to Moses how or in what capacity he should always stand banker to the whole wealth of love that there was in Mara's heart, and what provision he should make on his part for returning this incalculable debt.

But the interview of this evening had raised a new thought in his mind. Mara, as he saw that day, was no longer a little girl in a pink sun-bonnet. She was a woman,—a little one it is true, but every inch a woman,—and a woman invested with a singular poetic charm of appearance, which more than beauty, has the power of awakening feeling in the other sex.

He felt in himself—in the experience of that one day—that there was something subtle and veiled about her, which set the imagination at work; that the wistful plaintive expression of her dark eyes, and a thousand little shy and tremulous movements of her face, affected him more than the most brilliant of Sally Kittridge's sprightly sallies. Yes, there would be people falling in love with her fast enough, he thought even here, where she is as secluded as a pearl in an oyster-shell. It seems means were found to come after her, and then all the love of her heart—that priceless love—would go to another.

Mara would be absorbed in some one else, would love some one else, as he knew she could, with heart and soul and mind and strength. When he thought of this, it affected him much as it would if one were turned out of a warm smiling apartment into a bleak December storm. What should he do, if that treasure which he had taken most for granted in all his valuations of life should suddenly be found to belong to another? Who was this fellow that seemed so free to visit her, and what had passed between them? Was Mara in love with him, or going to be? There was no saying how the consideration of this question enhanced in our hero's opinion both her beauty and all her other good qualities.

Such a brave little heart! such a good, clear little head! and such a pretty hand and foot! She was always so cheerful, so unselfish, so devoted! When had he ever seen her angry, except when she had taken upon some childish quarrel of his, and fought for him like a little Spartan? Then she was pious, too. She was born religious, thought our hero, who in common with many men professing scepticism for their own part, set a great value on religion in that unknown future person whom they are fond of designating in advance as "my wife." Yes, Moses meant his wife should be pious, and pray for him, while he did as he pleased.

"Now there's that witch of a Sally Kittridge," he said to himself; "I would not have such a girl for a wife. Nothing to her but foam and frisk,—no heart more than a bobolink! But isn't she amusing? By George! isn't she, though?"

"But," thought Moses, "it's time I settled this matter, who is to be my wife. I won't marry till I'm rich,—that's flat. My wife isn't to rub and grub. So at it I must go to raise the wind. I wonder if old Sewell really does know anything about my parents. Miss Emily would have it that there was some mystery that he had the key of; but I never could get anything from him. He always put me off in such a smooth way that I could not tell whether he did or did not. But, now, supposing I have relatives, family connections, then who knows but what there may be property coming to me? That's an idea worth looking after, surely."

There's no saying with what vividness ideas and images go through one's wakeful brain when the midnight moon is making an exact shadow of your window-sash, with panes of light, on your chamber-floor. How vividly we all have loved and hated and planned and hoped and feared and desired and dreamed, as we tossed and turned to and fro upon such watchful, still nights.

In the stillness, the tide upon one side of the Island replied to the dash on the other side in unbroken symphony, and Moses began to remember all the stories gossips had told him of how he had been floated ashore there, like a fragment of tropical sea-weed borne landward by a great gale. He positively wondered at himself that he had never thought of it more, and the more he meditated, the more mysterious and inexplicable he felt. Then he had heard Miss Roxie once speaking something about a bracelet, he was sure he had, but afterwards it was hushed up, and no one seemed to know anything about it when he inquired.

But in those days he was a boy,—he was nobody,—now he was a young man. He could go to Mr. Sewell, and demand as his right a fair answer to any questions he might ask. If he found, as was quite likely, that there was nothing to be known, his mind would be thus far settled,—he should trust only to his own resources.

So far as the state of the young man's finances were concerned, it would be considered in those simple times and regions an auspicious beginning of life. The sum intrusted to him by Captain Kittridge had

been more than doubled by the liberality of Zephaniah Pennell, and Moses had traded upon it in foreign parts with a skill and energy that brought a very fair return, and gave him, in the eyes of the shrewd, thrifty neighbors, the prestige of a young man who was marked for success in the world.

He had already formed an advantageous arrangement with his grandfather and Captain Kittridge, by which a ship was to be built, which he should command—and thus the old Saturday afternoon dream of their childhood be fulfilled.

As he thought of it, there arose in his mind a picture of Mara, with her golden hair and plaintive eyes and little white hands, reigning as a fairy queen in the captain's cabin, with a sort of wish to carry her off and make sure that no one else ever should get her from him.

But these midnight dreams were all sobered down by the plain matter-of-fact beams of the morning sun, and nothing remained of immediate definite purpose except the resolve which came strongly upon Moses as he looked across the blue band of Harpswell Bay, that he would go that morning and have a talk with Mr. Sewell.
To be continued.

Agricultural.

A Few Words on Haying.

A considerable amount of hay has already been safely mowed away, but yet the great bulk of the hay crop of the country is still to be harvested. Its cutting, curing, and gathering will form no inconsiderable portion of the labor of the farm during the first half of the present month. Fortunately, the general introduction of mowing machines and of "hay elevators" greatly facilitate the operations, and the work need no longer be dreaded. These machines, too, enable us to cut at the right time, and to secure the crop in the best and most expeditious manner.

The "right time" to cut, however, is a matter not fully determined. There are those who think that our ordinary meadow grasses should be allowed to stand till the seeds are nearly or fully ripe. There can be little doubt that this practice gives the largest amount of produce per acre. On the other hand, the great majority of experienced farmers are in favor of cutting while the grasses are in flower, or, at the latest, as soon as the seed is formed, and while it is in the milk.

Much has been written on this subject, and many experiments made to decide the question, but as yet we have no certain proof as to the best time to cut grass for hay. The reason of this is, that the old methods of chemical analysis employed to determine the amount of nutritive substances in grass cut at different times, are now thought to be inaccurate. The results, therefore, can not be relied upon. Till further experiments are made, we must rely on practical experience.

Our own opinion is that there is some danger of cutting grass too soon. We should prefer to wait till the seed is partly formed, rather than to cut while the grass is in blossom. On the other hand, we should prefer to cut while in blossom, rather than to wait till the seed is even approximating to ripeness. It is better to be too early than too late.

It must not be forgotten, too, that when grass is cut early the aftergrowth is much heavier.

Many farmers contend that it is injurious to timothy or permanent meadows to cut too close—certainly not closer than an inch.

As to the best method of curing hay, there is also much difference of opinion. It seems to be decided, however, that if properly cured the less the grass is exposed to the hot sun and drying winds the better. Hay is often dried too much. If cured so that it will keep well in the mow, that is all that is desirable. If cut with the machine in the morning after the dew is off, and left spread on the ground till one or two o'clock, it can be drawn into winrows with the horse-rake, and put into small cocks towards evening, and then put in the barn the next day or the day after. If the grass is very heavy, it will need turning while lying spread out on the ground, before it is ready to rake up.

CLOVER HAY.

As a general rule, clover hay is undervalued in this country. For sheep, there is no hay equal to it, and even for horses, when properly cured, it is excellent.

To cure a heavy crop of clover is more difficult than to cure a crop of grass. At all events, it occupies more time. Clover is quite succulent. We have determined the quantity of water in many samples and found it to amount to from 75 to 80 per cent. It takes some time to get rid of this large quantity of water, though in our dry, hot climate clover can be cured much more readily than in Western Europe, and England and Ireland.

Clover, from its succulent nature and tender leaves, is more liable to scorch when exposed too much to a hot sun than timothy or other grasses. For this reason it should be cured in the cock as much as possible. Another point to be observed is the saving of the leaves. These are the most valuable portion of the plant, and unfortunately fall off easily when not carefully handled. For this reason, when cut with a scythe, clover should not be spread out. It must be allowed to remain in the sward, and be turned in the afternoon before putting into cocks. It is then left in the cocks till sufficiently cured, which will be in three or four days, according to circumstances. It is well to turn the cocks before drawing them in.

In England, where the weather is often very "catching," clover hay is mixed with straw in stacking, a thin layer being spread between the layers of clover. The dry straw absorbs the juices of the clover, and the cattle eat straw and all with a relish. A quart of salt to each load can also be scattered upon it to advantage.

Another method practiced by the English farmers in stacking clover hay may be mentioned. When the hay is so damp that there is danger of its heating excessively, a large four bushel sack is filled with cut straw and placed upright in the centre of the stack, the clover being placed round it. As the stack rises with each additional layer of hay, pull up the sack, and so on to the top. This will leave a chimney in the centre of the stack, through which the gases and moisture can escape. In this country, such a practice is seldom needed, but may occasionally be resorted to with advantage.—*Genesee Farmer.*

Miscellaneous.

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