

POETIC CHIPS.

The stove was cold and the kettle wouldn't boil. So she tilted the can and poured on a little oil. Gone to meet the man who blew out the gas.

There never was a goose so gray. But that, soon or late. An honest gander came that way.

Where in the man who with power or skill To stand the torrent of a woman's will; For if she will, she will, you may depend on't.

'Twas morning of election day. He came down feeling fresh and cheery. And bending o'er her chair, remarked.

When Eve brought tea to all mankind. Old Adam called her up as a kind. But when she scooped with love so kind.

While much has been said of the conductors. Who punches your ticket or gets your fare; And also of the polite barbers.

Who dozes your face with his wathair. We should not forget the corn doctor. Who tells you to sit in his easy chair.

Who tells you to sit in his easy chair. And takes what money you're able to spare; Be it more or less, he don't seem to care.

Her's was a face Whose occult charm no flatterer's art Could steal; as, light that falls Where waters part.

A face so fair. So haunted with sweet mysteries. Hadn't a face so fair from heavy eyelids.

Had breakfast on buckwheat cakes. Or died on beans.

AN OLD WOMAN'S STORY.

Many years ago a girl and her old great-grandmother sat together—the girl in tears.

Said Great-grandmother Hudson, sitting very straight, not lolling, at her seventy-eight years, as did her great-granddaughter of eighteen:

"Young folks think old folks are fools, but old folks know that young folks are."

"That's because you are old, grandma," sobbed Linda.

"No; it's because I was once young," said the old lady.

"But he's the only one I ever loved, or ever shall love," said Linda. "Papa, is so cruel to me. Why should he think ill of Lewia? He doesn't know anything about him. I shall die if we are separated."

"I was going to die, too, if we were separated," said great-grandma; "but I didn't."

"Oh, tell me, please," cried Linda, "had you a lover? Did they separate you? Oh!—she put her arm around her great-grandmother's knees—oh! I never knew you had a love story—that is, that kind of one."

"Yes," said the old lady, "I had a lover; and I had a mother and father."

"You can have many lovers, but never more than one father and one mother."

"Folks think of that when it's too late. When father said that Cecil was Lord knows who, and he should not come to see me, I remember I almost hated him for it."

"When mother said she did not like the young man either, I almost hated her."

"Cruel creatures that stood between me and my young lover—that was what my dear parents seemed to me then; just what yours seem to you, Linda, I have no doubt."

"And I was worse than you, my dear, ever so much worse; for it seemed so wicked to me that any one should take it for granted a man was not good, and worthy of love because he was a stranger, and I utterly refused all counsel, and made preparations to run away with Cecil and marry him at Gretas Green, a place in Scotland where runaway couples used to go at that time to be married by an old blacksmith."

"Everything was ready. I had my jewelry in my bosom, and my little bundle of clothing on my arm, and was creeping out of a little side door of our house, that led into the garden, when a hand came down on my shoulder and a voice cried out:

"My girl, my girl, is this the way you use us? and there was my father."

"Dear, dear, it's so many years ago—so many years ago—but I remember that moment so well."

"The long, dark hall, with its polished floor and low ceiling, and the tall clock standing in the corner at one end, ticking, ticking, ticking."

"Outside, the moon shining faint and white, and the dark ivy growing on the low stone wall, over which I meant to climb, and on the other side of which Cecil stood quietly waiting for me."

"My father's face was as white as that of a ghost in that light, and his hand shook as he held mine."

"Oh, father, father," I cried, "if you'd only let me have my will in this one thing. You can't make a girl love or hate by saying so."

"He stood, holding me firm and fast. "Do you think I want anything but your good?" said he. "Would I not be glad to have you happy? You little simpleton, do you know that if you had left my house this night, you would have gone to your ruin!"

"Outside was my lover and his kisses; inside my father, stern and hard, as it seemed to me."

"It seemed as though he led me back to prison when I had a chance of heaven before me, as he bolted the door."

"It is Kneelie who has betrayed me,"

I said; and though they would never admit it, I knew my maid had proved false."

"Well, they locked me up in my room. How often, I cried out: 'I shall die if I am separated from Cecil!'"

"I am very old, but when I think of it the old ache and pain come back again."

"My girl, he had eyes like black diamonds and an olive cheek, and red, soft, pouting lips, and your men with padded shoulders, and thin arms and legs, and hollow chests, wouldn't look like men standing beside him."

"Oh, he was a beauty, and, though you might not think it now, so was I."

"It was a dreary time, and my health broke down under it."

"I had a fever, and called for Cecil in my delirium, and when I was well again the doctor said I must have change of air, and mother decided to take me with her to the seaside; but first we were to go by the stage coach to London, and visit an aunt I had there."

"It was the day of stage coaches, and the day of highwaymen."

"Going over a certain common on our way, coaches had more than once been stopped; the men were armed always, and the women trembled when they saw horsemen riding towards them."

"Your money or your life," was their word, and they kept it."

"If we should meet the highwaymen," said my mother; but I was not afraid. I did not care whom we met, or what happened to me."

"We rode away from our home in the bright daylight, and we stopped for dinner and to change horses at an inn, and then we rode on again."

"It would be night long before we reached London."

"I sat in the coach with my head on my mother's shoulder, thinking of just one thing—Cecil and our parting."

"Should I never see him again, never, never, never?"

"If he knew where I was would he not follow me and carry me off by force?"

"Could I not somehow let him know, and escape from my aunt's house in London, and be married, so that no one could part us?"

"Oh, I was so miserable—so miserable!"

"Nothing like making plans that can come to nothing, and burst like bubbles when we have thought them out for wretchedness."

"The afternoon faded out and the sun set, and I saw nothing of it. The moon rose."

"See what a lovely moon," said my mother.

"But I had not cared to look at the moon since I saw her over the garden wall that night, my love on one side and I on the other. Ah, me."

"Rumble went the coach, crack went the whip."

"Suddenly there was a tumult. 'Gentlemen,' cried the guard—'gentlemen, I am afraid we are to have some trouble here. See to your weapons, gentlemen.'"

"Then the coach came to a stand. The shrieking women clung together."

"Four masked men rode to the door. The coachman and guard lay in the ditch."

"One of the gentlemen was bound, the other was old and lame."

"They were rifling his pockets while he screamed."

"They took out a gold watch and a purse, and a snuff box with diamonds on it."

"Don't fear, ladies," he said in a soft voice. "All we want is whatever valuables you may have about you."

"Mamma began to scream. The lady who sat next her fainted."

"We could not see the man's face for he was masked and we were in the shadow of the coach."

"Something shines on your finger, he said, 'let me see it.'"

"He caught at the chain on which I wore a locket with a curl of Cecil's hair."

"Don't take that," I cried. "Don't take that!"

"I clutched it. Our heads were close together. I saw his chin and mouth under his mask."

"At the same moment my face was thrust into the moonlight."

"Amy! I heard him whisper to himself, and I knew Cecil."

"Meantime something had happened. Two gentlemen had ridden up. The one who had been bound was free."

"For once the tables had been turned upon the robbers."

"Then one had hidden away, two were bound, and one lay bleeding."

"This last one was Cecil."

"How merciful is the gentler sex. It is so compassionate to the erring as well as the virtuous."

"For I had torn my hand from my mother's, and knelt beside Cecil."

"They thought I pitied a wounded robber, that was all."

"But this is what we whispered in the darkness: 'Amy, you know what I am now, but I loved you.'"

"And answered: 'Cecil, I hate your deeds without hating you.'"

"Those were the last words we ever spoke—the very last."

"Did you never see him again?" said the girl.

"Oh, Grandmama, never again?" The old woman looked into her eyes.

"He was a very bad man, my dear," she said. "Very bad, and I never saw him again."

"I believe he died a shameful death one day at the hands of the executioner."

"But, you see, it was because I have been young, not because I am old, that I said you young folks were fools."

"It was a good while, yes, a good while, after that night in the stage coach, before I came to my senses sufficiently to thank dear papa for his watchfulness over me, and be really glad that I had never been Cecil's wife."

"But I did at last, my dear—I did, at last; and I married my good husband, your great grandfather, whom you never saw, and we were always happy."

"The heart of woman is a mystery, and has been since Eve, my little girl."

THE MARKETS.

Table with market prices for various goods like Beef Cattle, Hogs, Sheep, etc. Columns include item names and prices.

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