THE RED CLOUD CHIEF.

M. L. THOMAS, Publisher.

RED CLOUD, - - NEBRASKA.

A COUNTRY THANKSGIVING SERMON.

Ay, goodman, close the great barn door;
The mellow harvest time is o'er;

The earth has given her treasures meet
Of golden corn and bearded wheat.

You and your neighbors well have wrought,
And of the summer's bounty caught,

Won from her smiles and from tears
Much moods, perhaps, for many years.

You come a tribute now to pay—
And bells proclaim Thanksgiving Day.

Well have you sown, well have you reaped;
And of the riches you have have heaped.

You think, perhaps, that you will give
A part, that others, too, may live.

But if such argument you use,
Your niggard bounty I refuse.

No gifts you on the altar lay,
In any sense are given away.

Lo! rings from heaven a voice abroad
"Who helps God's poor doth lend the Lord."

What is your wealth? He'd have you know
To hold it, you must let it go.

Think you the hand of Heaven struck cold
Will yet have power to clutch its gold?

Shrouds have no pockets, do they say?
Behold! I show you then the way.

Wait not till death shall shut the door,
But send your cargoes on before.

Lo! he that giveth of his hoard
To help God's poor doth lend the Lord.

To-day, my brethren—do not wait,
Just yonder stands Dame Kelley's gate;

And would you build a mansion fair
In heaven, send you lumber there;

Each stick that on her woodpile lies
May rise a dome beyond the skies;

You stop the rents within her walls,
And yonder rise your marble halls;

For every pane that stops the wind
There shineth one with jasper lined.

Your wealth is gone, your form lies cold,
But in the city paved with gold

Your hoard is held with hands divine,
It bears a name that marks it thine.

Behold the bargain ye have made,
With usury the debt is paid.

No moth doth eat, no thieves do steal,
No suffering heart doth envy feel;

Ring out the words, ye who of this hoard
Doth help God's poor doth lend the Lord!

Go, get your cargoes under way;
The bells ring out Thanksgiving Day.

THROUGH THE WOODS TO SCHOOL.

Long, long ago, in the glad spring weather,
When skies were sunny and winds were cool,
We romped and ran through the woods together,
Jessie and I, on our way to school.

Down through the boughs, the sunlight, break-ing,
Sent trembling shadows across our way,
And dear little birds their homes were making,
With song, pouring from spray to spray.

But Jessie and I, that fair May morning,
Went hand in hand in a heedless race,
And heard in the distance the school-bell's warning,
Calling us each to our empty place.

To-day, in the mellow autumn weather,
The sky was cloudy, the wind was cool,
We walked in the woods, we two together,
And talked of the happy days at school—

The school-house under the maples' shadow,
The beaten path to the school-yard gate
That wound its length, across the meadow,
To where its shadow, which we were late.

This grown up Jessie is calm and quiet,
A stately maiden, demure and tall,
Did she remember the old time riot,
The romp and scamper, the shout and call?

She held her flowers so above the clover,
And glanced about with an absent look,
And wished for my safe escort over
The stepping-stones in the meadow brook.

And I, it is true, let who will deride me,
I felt the tears from my heart arise
As I looked at the proud pale face beside me,
The languid figure, the listless eyes.

A pretty lady, and learned, very!
But I loved it who so sentimental had,
For the girl in the plaid frock, swift and merry,
Who ran with me through the woods to school.

—Mrs. Amos Dickey, in Swift's Companion.

A THANKSGIVING QUERY.

"Great land o' Goshen!" said old Joe Comstock, "what I want to know is, what's the use o' Thank'givin' when there ain't nothin' to be thankful for? And where's the good o' running arter an uncertainty? A rollin' stone gathers no moss."

"And a gangin' foot is aye gettin'," said Si Pettingill, the country storekeeper. Not but that he agreed with his old friend Joe in deploring the wickedness and selfishness of his only son's leaving the homestead and going out West. Si Pettingill hated to see an extra wrinkle in his neighbor's fine and aged face, who was only known as old Joe because there was a young Joe grown to manhood. It was only a week before Thank'giving, and a queer time for extra wrinkles, but Si couldn't afford to lose an opportunity for proving his knowledge of proverbs, and combating the oracular prophecy of one by that of another. The country store was the high center of argument. No subject was too solemn or too frivolous, too high or too low, too light or too profound, for discussion. The summer was done, and the harvest was ended, and, although the weather was too warm to admit of a fire in the big cylinder of sheet-iron that stood the year round as a rallying-point for the controversies of the country, it began to be noticeable that more tobacco was bought and used in that vicinity than for many a month back, and the arm-chairs and barrel-heads began to be occupied.

"They do say," said Monk, the miller, "that the heft and richness o' grain out there is most amazin', and the silo is that soft you can put yer arm clean down to yer elbow in it. If I was s'ung's Joe—" And here the miller paused, for his friend the farmer brought his hand down heavily on an adjacent box of snap.

"And ain't his own land rich enough? Look at that there ten-acre field o' corn, and look at them punkins! Though, for that matter, where's the use o' corn for turkeys, or turkeys for Thank'givin', if a man's own flesh and blood flies in the face o' Providence like my Joe?"

"He ain't goin' before Thank'givin', surely?"

"He calklates to start to-morrow night," said the farmer, dolefully.

Then the group about the store expectorated with mournful precision, and shook their heads, and hoped he wouldn't regret such a precipitate abandonment of this world's blessings. Old Joe Comstock untied his fine pair of mules, and went jolting away to the Comstock farm, followed by the sympathizing remarks of his neighbors. And as the dust rolled away, another vehicle was seen approaching, a high-seated jaunty affair with yellow wheels, drawn by a long-clean-limbed creature that was out of sight before his points could be well discussed and criticised. In truth, the good folks upon the porch of the country store were more interested in the couple that were seated fashionably aloft upon the gay box of the wagon. A fleeting vision of laughing blue eyes, and yellow curls wantoning with the November wind, and the pale dark face of a stranger in close proximity to these charms, caused the wise heads upon the porch to wag again with melancholy unison.

"Tain't the natur' of the sile that young Joe complains of," said one.

"Nor yet the corn, nor the punkins," said another; "it's that he ain't got the stomach for 'em he used to has before that city fellow broke his wages in front of the widow Benson's door, and took a notion to Kitty."

"And I swan to man ef the widow ain't that set up about it she's hevin' black Sam to do her fall whitewashin'."

"She' better not count her chickens before they're hatched. That fellow don't mean to marry Kitty Benson; she'll fall between two stools, that's what Kitty'll do. She'll get shet of Joe, and lose that city chap, after all. Joe was in dead earnest, poor fellow, but this chap's only foolin'."

Which was not altogether true. The "city chap" had begun perhaps in rather a trifling mood. He considered the remarkable interest which he took in this little rustic was all due to his artistic perceptions. About six weeks before, in passing through the village, his horse had stumbled upon a big bowlder in front of the widow's door, and one of the yellow wheels had come to grief. It was the most natural thing in the world for Mr. Morton to knock at the nearest door, and equally natural that the widow should ask him in. Kitty lay sound asleep, with her curly head on the kitchen table, all the yellow tangle of it tumbled carelessly about the exquisite line of her brow and curve of her rounded cheek. Her brown lashes just merged into the flush upon her face, and her red lips were parted, showing the white even teeth within. Mr. Morton was suddenly seized with a colorist's enthusiasm. The low-ceiled room, with its wooden rafters smoke-seasoned richly, the quaint primitive furniture about him, the ruddy face and rustic attire of the widow as she held the candle so that it shone full upon the sleeping girl—all these impressed Mr. Morton's mind, entirely, as he believed, from an ideal point of view. He wished an artist friend of his might be there at the moment; he might make a pretty little penny by the inspiration; the whole thing was one of those happy little effects that a Greuze could make a masterpiece of.

"Laws a mercy!" said the widow, with kindly curiosity, "there ain't nobody hurt, I hope?"

"Only the wagon wheel," said Morton.

"And you want to git to town? Well, now, I reckon Joe Comstock must be up and about yet. I saw a light at the farm a bit ago. If Joe's up, he'll take you down to the railroad."

"Does every body go to bed here at nightfall?" said Mr. Morton, taking out his watch, but finding it hard to withdraw his eyes long enough from that picture in the candle-light to look at the time. "It can't be 8 o'clock."

"Well, you see, the young folks went chestnutting to-day, and they're about tuckered out; but if you'll wait a minute, I'll get a lantern, so's you can pick your way down the back lane. That's a short-cut to the Comstock farm; and if Joe's up, he'll take you down reasonable. He can't be done his chores yet."

"I hope he'll bangle long enough about his chores to be up when I get there," said Mr. Morton.

He had not taken his eyes from the sleeping beauty, and was suddenly surprised to see her lift her head from her arm and open wide her eyes upon him, while the flush deepened in her face, and even stole down upon her throat and the white bit of her neck that was visible.

"Joe never bangles about any thing," she said.

"Is he a friend of yours?" said Mr. Morton modulating his voice to a wonderfully gentle tone.

"Never mind what he is," replied Kitty, hotly; "but he's no bangler—of that you may be sure."

Here she slipped away and vanished up a dark little staircase, and suddenly all the charm went out of the picture.

"The central figure taken away," said Mr. Morton to himself, as he picked his way to the Comstock farm. "Of course the whole effect is marred; but it was a fine interior—very fine."

That "central figure" followed Mr. Morton to the farm, and all the way down to the railroad. He found Joe Comstock up and ready to accommodate him, and he had to concede with Kitty that Joe was no bangler; there was a quick capacity about the sturdy hands that handled the reins, and a natural grace and vigor in all his movements—the little that he had said was terse and to the point, but Mr. Morton found him taciturn and reserved after the first mile or two. He had ventured to speak of the idiomatics of the cottage.

"I think it probable the young girl was one of the nutting party of to-day," said Mr. Morton.

"More'n likely," said Joe.

"Isn't her name Benson?—Kitty Benson?"

"I shouldn't wonder if 'twas'" said Joe, and relapsed into gruff monosyllables. The road was rough and dark, and the drive was exceedingly disagreeable. Mr. Morton was glad to fall back upon his memory and imagination for amusement. The bit of interior he could recall vividly enough to reproduce to his friend Sydney that night, if he should happen to meet him at the reception. There was every shade of brown in the sketch, from the ochre in the rafters to the lighter tints in the girl's hair. Kitty had been asleep for three hours at least, and Joe Comstock was dreaming of her under his patchwork quilt, when Mr. Morton reached the city. It was long after midnight when he got to the reception, and at least one young heart there had lost all zest in the entertainment—two hearts, for an old one in the vicinity had grown exceedingly heavy as the hours wore away.

"It's strange Mr. Morton don't come, Madeline," Mrs. Van Vleet said to her daughter.

"Yes, mamma," said poor Madeline.

"Didn't he say he would be be here, Madeline?"

"Oh yes, mamma; please don't say any more about it;" and then the elder lady walked majestically away, the feathers upon her head nodding in mournful unison with her thoughts. And at that moment Mr. Morton entered, making his way to a group of exquisitely dressed and beautiful women, who received him with enthusiasm: there really were so very few available parties that season, and Mr. Morton was so unexceptionable in every way, and had shown some decided inclination to "range himself," and make somebody comfortable in their mind about the wretchedly uncertain and procrastinating future. He was still in the market, though his attentions had been rather pronounced of late to Miss Van Vleet; but she was cold and reserved, and must take her chance—the tournament was open to all; so all these beautiful women fluttered their fans, and in their softly modulated musical voices said charming things to the tardy arrival. But Mr. Morton, with many a winning smile and whispered compliment, went listlessly by. His face wore that vacuous and bored expression which is considered in society an evidence of cultivation, but in truth it was only that he was still absorbed in artistic reflections. He went on to the further end of the room, where, in feverish, haughty, uncompromising but agonizing reserve, sat Miss Van Vleet. Her mother had nudged and frowned and beckoned, all to no purpose, when Mr. Morton entered the room.

"You can at least allow yourself to be seen," said her mother, acrimoniously.

"If he wants me, he can find me," said Madeline, with a sharp pang of fear and distrust, which deepened when at last he reached her side, and said, in the most commonplace way in the world,

"Did you save that waltz for me?" And when she looked up in his face with a thrill of delight, and found no response there, only that vague, listless, dreamy expression, her own beautiful face grew almost haggard with the intensity of her emotion; it was all she could do to keep the hot, wretched tears out of her eyes.

"Why are you so absent to-night?" she said at last. "What is it you are thinking of?" And then, as they are whirling—no, not whirling, but languidly stepping about—in the waltz, he told her of his accident, and described to her minutely the bit of interior which had so charmed him.

"The queer, quaint old room," he went on to say, "with its smoke-colored rafters, and the country-woman holding the lamp over the beautiful sleeper, was something striking in its way; and when the eyes were opened and full of opaline and changing lights, brought about, no doubt, by the effect of the candle, I assure you that it was delightful. I was really glad, Miss Van Vleet, that a matter of pure art should so occupy and divert my mind under the vexatious circumstances. And there is Sydney now—you'll excuse me, won't you, if I go over to him?"

Certainly she would excuse him. What else could the poor girl do?

Mr. Morton led Madeline to her mother, and that ponderous female eagerly whispered: "Has he spoken, Madeline—only tell me, dear, has he spoken?"

"Of course not, mamma; how could he, in the waltz?"

"He was talking so earnestly. I never saw him quite so earnest before. I thought perhaps he had spoken."

You see that word "spoken" was so much—so vexatiously much! A man could talk the core of a woman's heart out, and yet at the end of it all not have "spoken."

"He is talking just as earnestly with Mr. Sydney now, mamma; he is interested in art just now." The bitterness in the voice of her daughter tinged acridly the thoughts of poor Mrs. Van Vleet.

"I shall not accept the Colonel's invitation for Thanksgiving," she said, dolefully. In the mean while Mr. Morton was endeavoring generously to give his friend Sydney the subject for a sketch, and the artist was listening with that quizzical, amused air that was characteristic of him.

"See here, Morton," said Sydney at last, "a horseshoe is a sign of good luck, and your steed shed one, it appears, at the door of this rustic beauty. I believe your heart followed it. Go in and win, old fellow, and then send for me to paint her portrait. I am not much given to interiors."

Shortly after that Mr. Morton took leave of his acquaintances in general, and Madeline in particular, and was soon tossing in his luxurious bed, dreaming in unison with the simple rustic under the patchwork quilt at the farm. It was not the dark eyes or carefully manipulated locks of Miss Van Vleet that flitted through the dreams of Mr. Morton; half-opened eyes of blue, and dishevelled curly locks, colored and arranged by the wind and the sun, haunted him as they did poor Joe.

Joe awoke the next morning and resolved once for all to make an end to these witcheries that half maddened as they gladdened him. He would pluck up courage and settle the matter, so that his dreams might be savored with sober certainty. He knew that no great obstacles lay in his way. His folks were willing, and so were hers; there was nobody to say him nay but Kitty herself, and he wasn't much afraid of that. It was only the pesky bother of getting it over with. What was the use of it, anyway? His people knew, and hers did, and Kitty must know—she couldn't help it; now where was the good of keeping a fellow on a hot gridiron? The very thoughts of coming right out with it made him hot all over, and he guessed he'd wait a day or two. There was the ten-acre field to stack, and by that time Joe was wild to see Kitty; and thinking it all over that October day as he gave an extra pull and twist to the last green binding, and found the whole sweet October afternoon before him, and looking about him with a big throb of tenderness that embraced the brown rich earth, and the blue sky with the light diaphanous clouds that dipped lazily down, and the yellow ears of corn that peeped at him from their snug nests in the cones of leaves, and the yellower pumpkins that gathered about his feet, and the far twitter of the swallows in the eaves of his red-roofed home—that embraced even Kitty herself, half a mile away—Joe's heart was full, and he got courage, and if he'd only gone there and then asked Kitty, all might have been well; but he must needs go home and don his Sunday-go-to-meeten' clothes for the occasion, which took half the heart out of his resolve, and in the mean while a long-limbed horse was making quick work of the road that led to Kitty's door, and a man who was easy in his Sunday clothes every day in the week was bent upon the same decision. The stiff collar rasped Joe's neck as he went slowly to the village; his coat was too tight in the sleeves; he grew redder and redder, till he knew that the doomed Thanksgiving turkey gobbler's comb was nothing to him; the perspiration rolled from his honest rubicund face, and he began to wish he'd find Kitty out when he got there; he could talk to her mother, and she could talk to Kitty, and it would come kind of easier somehow. And suddenly he stepped aside; there was a rush of wheels in his ears, high yellow wheels, and a vision of somebody hailing him politely, somebody with an easy way of wearing good clothes, and something about him that would have persuaded Joe to take off his hat to him if he hadn't been too mad and flustered and curious and afraid. Joe went moodily on, and suddenly his scarlet face grew pale and the blood in his veins grew cold, when before Kitty's door he saw the high-wheeled newly mended wagon of the city fellow he had driven to the railroad the other night, and his long-limbed newly shod horse pawing the ground before Kitty's gate; and presently out came Kitty herself, shawled and hooded, her eyes sparkling, her cheeks glowing, and beside her was the stranger, who nodded pleasantly to Joe. Kitty nodded kindly too, he thought, and it seemed to him Mrs. Benson called to him to come in. Joe wouldn't be certain about these things. His head whirled around as Kitty drove away; it seemed to him the whole world took a somersault, and left him sick and sore, so that he could just get strength to crawl home to the farm, and doff his Sunday clothes, throw them in a heap on the bed, himself upon them, and there lie through the long October afternoon, the prey to a misery he had never dreamed of.

The sun went down, the fowls went to roost, and an old hoary owl that might have had more heart laughed mockingly at Joe through his bed-room window. And then Joe, who dawdled so over the asking for a sweetheart, made up his mind quickly enough to more rueful work, for that very night when he went down to supper, and never ate a mouthful, he declared to the good folks assembled there that he intended to go out West to settle—he was sick of the land hereabouts.

"What the plague's the matter with the land?" said his father. "It's the same as 'twas yesterday, and then you talked of plowin' up the meadow next spring, and drainin' the gully, and the Lord knows what and all. What's come to you now, Joe?"

Alas! what, indeed, had come to poor Joe? He never made the least effort to regain his footing with Kitty. He gave up all hope of the sweet future that had seemed to him his birthright. To marry Kitty Benson, and settle down on the old homestead as his father and grandfather had done before him, seemed as natural to Joe as seed-time and harvest. He never had the slightest desire to swerve from the somewhat tame and monotonous life these people led from year to year. Even now his soul was yearning for it, when it was full of rebellion and riot, and bent upon breaking down every barrier that lay between the big tumultuous waves within him and those of the unknown world beyond.

The weary days went on, each of them heavier and more desolate. In fair weather or foul Joe walked and wandered, aimless, listless and forlorn, choosing the most desolate places, shunning and forbidding all companionship of man or beast.

"There's that roan colt," said old Joe Comstock, "that was like the apple of his eye to Joe; it ain't no more to him now than a polecat. And if 'twa'n't for me the hull o' that ten-acre field might ha' gone to thunder with rot and mold. Don't talk to me o' Thank'givin'; when one's own flesh and blood turns agin you that way, what is there to be thankful for?"

It was well on in November, and the landscape was somewhat sere and worn. The day was waning, and it seemed to Mr. Morton as they drove along that the warmth had all fled from the scene about them and nestled in Kitty's hair. There was a subdued and timid expression in her face that lent it an unusual charm. The curves about her mouth drooped like those of an aggrieved child, and she had not spoken a word for the last mile or two. Mr. Morton could hesitate no longer. It would be an easy thing, he thought, to wear away the usual exuberant gayety that detracted from Kitty's present charm of manner. What could be sweeter, more lady-like, and prim than her down-cast eyes, the droop of her sweet lips, and the half-regretful shadow upon her face? With just one little sigh for poor Madeline Van Vleet, he shifted the reins to one hand, and with the other took from his vest pocket a ring. A yellow beam of the setting sun caught the gem, and it suddenly shone like a star. Kitty's eyes began to glisten in unison; but she drew back as he caught her hand.

"Nay, darling," he said, tenderly, "do not tremble; it is yours. You know that I love you; you will be my little wife—"

But in the mean while the long-limbed animal, which had been somewhat restive, and required the two hands of his driver, took advantage of this little by-play and accelerated his speed. Mr. Morton had not time to put the ring upon Kitty's resisting finger, when he found his horse pulling heavily upon the reins. He determined to sell this needless brute of his. The thought lay heavily upon his now ardent sensibilities that this sweet girl by his side he had never yet held to his heart, nor had her sweet lips been given to his own, and now the moment was gone, and the joy was still denied him, for the horse went plunging on. A curve of the road brought the cottage in sight. Black Sam was still whitewashing—great Heaven! not the big bowlder? Yes, nothing less; he had some whitewash to spare, and he was lathering it thick upon this rock in the road, making it seem big as a mountain. Mr. Morton's face grew pale, and not too soon—the evil was upon him in the instant he had feared it; the horse plunged back upon his haunches, his fine ears stood erect, his clean-cut limbs trembled; then with one bound he sped along, grazing the white phantom in the road, and disappearing in a cloud of dust. Mr. Morton clung to the reins, and Kitty clung to Mr. Morton. The widow Benson looked after them with clasped hands and straining eyes, while black Sam, now almost white with whitewash and terror, held his brush aloft in a mute appeal for Divine help in this dire extremity.

Mr. Morton knew now that nothing could save them. A few minutes—four at the furthest—and all would be over. The gully just below the Comstock farm was a bleak and dreary place, well fitted for the tragedy. He remembered a chestnut tree that hung desolate and bare over its brink, and broken rocks and black pools of stagnant water lay below. Here would his strong bones splinter, and the deft and cunning mechanism at his side be rudely rent and distorted. In these few seconds, that seemed a parenthesis between time and eternity, a whole lifetime passed in regret and retrospection. To get rid of the reproachful eyes of Madeline, Mr. Morton shut his own; but Kitty's whole heart went out in a prayer to Joe—which was answered right on the brink of the gully by the melancholy shadow of Joe himself, that clutched at the head of the horse, was dragged onward a step or two, then pulled aside, and finally was left victor, the beast, quite subdued now and trembling, in a lather of foam. Mr. Morton was trembling as well as his beast, and it was difficult for him to quite understand the exact tenor of the scene before him. Kitty lay white and limp in Joe Comstock's arms; her hands were clasped about his neck; her hat was gone long ago, and her curly hair was all tumbled about her face, which was still as white as the accursed bowlder before her mother's door; and once in a while she sobbed out, "Joe! dear Joe!" and Joe soothed her, and held her closer, and murmured, "Kitty! dear Kitty!" and the yellow light of the waning November day catching the diamond again, it gleamed upon Kitty's finger, that lay caressingly upon the sturdy neck of Joe Comstock; and presently the little hand shifted about, and Kitty saw the gem too, and slipping down from the arms of Joe, and slipping, too, the ring from her finger, she held it out to Mr. Morton with that same shy, sad, subdued, and altogether irreproachable expression that he had admired a few miserable moments since.

"Keep it, Kitty," said Mr. Morton; "keep it in any case. You'll allow her to accept this little present, won't you, Joe?"

"If it's all the same, I'd as lief she didn't," said Joe, with honest simplicity.

And I'm glad Kitty didn't get the ring; she could well do without it, and there was a slim and tapering finger far away that had grown slimmer and more tapering for lack of this gem. The night of the accident it lay listlessly in the lap of Miss Van Vleet, and it did not seem from the apathy of her face and manner that any thing could induce her to lift that fair, frail finger. The bell rang, but hope had cheated her so often, not a hair of her beautiful head or a muscle moved in response. She had ceased to expect the visitor she coveted, and all others were indifferent to her.

"I am so glad," said a voice, "to find you alone, Madeline."

The voice was so tender it made her heart beat, although she knew how deceptive that tenderness might be. How sweet it was, nevertheless!

Another organ began to thump in the room above, and the mild mahogany of Mrs. Van Vleet's complexion deepened with anxiety and suspense as the important moments wore away. At last the light step of her daughter was at the door, and Madeline's face told the story. It was radiant with joy.

"Has he spoken?" said her mother, in a husky whisper. "Great Heaven! has he indeed spoken?"

"Yes mamma," said Madeline, toying with a brilliant gem upon her finger.

"Thank God!" said Mrs. Van Vleet, devoutly. "Then I will immediately accept the Colonel's invitation for Thanksgiving."

"And by the hokey!" said old Joe Comstock, "we'll have a Thank'givin' yet. I'm blest if that there boy o' mine didn't say last night, 'Pappy,' sez he, 'we'll begin a fence down by that there gully, and drain the hull marsh by this time next year;' and I jest nodded, for I couldn't speak when I found that there Western scheme o' his had gone to thunder; and, gentlemen, I'm open to a treat all round; but I ask it, in all honesty, what is Thank'givin' if there ain't nothin' to be thankful for?"—*Harper's Weekly.*

Matching a Pattern---The Happy Thought of a Dry-Goods Clerk.

One of the fascinating young men in an up-town dry-goods store is in trouble. It is the custom in the establishment from which he has just been dismissed to discharge a man who fails to sell to one of three successive customers. "Swapping" is the expressive technical term by which this failure is known to the dry-goods business. The rule is not universal, but it is by no means exceptional in dry-goods stores. However unjust it may be, it has a wonderfully stimulating effect on the elegant young men amenable to it, and when they can not sell goods it is a safe inference that the customer is either supernaturally obdurate, impecunious, or miserly. The young man referred to had "first call" one Friday morning; that is, the first customer who entered the store was, by the rule of rotation, his exclusive victim. Next morning this privilege would fall to the lot of some other clerk, and so on to the end of the list. The first customer "swapped" him, and then went out without investing a cent. The second was in an equally unpropitious state of mind, and retired without making a purchase. On the decision of the third hung his fate. His ample check blanched as she darkened the doorway, for a more unlikely purchaser could with difficulty have been found. An old striped shawl was thrown carelessly over her shoulders, and partially concealed a roll of calico, which the palpitary heart of the clerk instinctively felt that she came to have matched. Now, if there is any thing in the dry-goods business more harrowing than another, it is to match goods. The exact shade and texture has to be found, and last but not least, the price must correspond. A feeling of sickening despair permeated the heaving breast of the unfortunate clerk as he asked, "Well, ma'am?" She had down five yards and a half of calico of an eccentric pattern, and intimated that the success of dressmaking enterprise hinged on her fortune in finding another yard and a half of the same material. The eyes of six expectant clerks were upon the doomed man. He felt that the crisis of his peril had come. With an appearance of calmness that belied the turmoil of his feelings, he dived under the counter and handed out endless rolls of calico, varying from the radiant strawberry and moss-rose marked to the soberest gray. But he came not within thirteen supplementary colors of the required pattern. He burrowed in the cavernous depths of lower shelves, and ransacked upper ones from the top round of a giddy step-ladder, but he found it not. An hour and a half had gone by, and his stock was nearly exhausted. The proprietor of the store and the bookkeeper and porter had come to witness his death struggle. Six times had the wearied lady started for the door, and six times he called her back and resumed his frenzied search. The last calico was unrolled, and he was about to drop his hat and gracefully step down and out, when a happy thought struck him. "Excuse me, madam," said he, "there's one piece I overlooked. Let me see that goods;" and he took her bundle, and, diving under the counter, hacked off a yard and a half with the energy and promptness of rekindled hope. "Here 'tis, madam; exactly what you required," said he, confidently, spreading out the purloined goods. She looked at it attentively for five minutes. "It does look like the pattern," said she, "but still I think it's not what I want. It's a good deal coarser than mine. If I can't get any thing nearer to the pattern I'll come back and take it. Good morning." She did come back in an hour, but not to buy the goods. He tried to dodge behind the counter, but, with the keen-sightedness of womanly revenge, she spotted him, and he was ignominiously hauled out and arraigned before his employer. The worst of it was that the latter, in view of the unprofitable energy shown in his attempt to effect a sale, had concluded not to discharge him. With the evidence of his guilt unmistakable, however, it would be fatal to the discipline of the house to keep him, and he was promptly dismissed. Until the old lady succeeds in getting a warrant for his arrest, his name is charitably suppressed.—*London Truth.*

Remarkable Experience of an Aged Colored Man.

The St. Louis *Republican* of the 15th says:

Mr. William Johnson, a colored man now residing in Alton, called on a friend at the *Republican* office yesterday, and in course of conversation related some rather interesting circumstances in a not uneventful life. Mr. Johnston was born in Aberdeen, Scotland, in 1806, and his accent is unmistakably Scotch, with no touch of the African in it. When a boy of 15 he made the continental tour as servant to George Gordon, Marquis of Huntley, and acquired some knowledge of the French and Italian languages. He saw Lord Byron on his last visit to Aberdeen previous to final departure from England, and heard him make a few remarks to the eager crowd from the balcony of Marischal College. The personal appearance, voice and words of the great poet are still vividly remembered. In 1822 he resided in St. Louis, and was engaged in walling up a well on what is now Morgan Street, when the earth caved in upon him and he was buried alive for thirty-seven and three-quarter hours. He was brought out insensible, and waking from the swoon, found himself in a room with a large number of white people and one colored man, the latter, the founder and pastor of the First African Baptist Church in St. Louis. Johnston fancied he had arrived in heaven, and that the reverend gentleman was the devil, come to carry him to less comfortable quarters. He recollects that he begged piteously to be spared the transfer. His experience in the well cost him the sight of one eye, several severe wounds, and permanent internal injury. He was, however, soon able to resume his trade. After doing some work on the old Court-house he was engaged in the construction of the Catholic Cathedral on Walnut Street, and laid the last course of stone in the tower—now surmounted by a wooden spire. Good stone-masons were scarce here in those days, especially for such lofty work; and when he had put the final touches to it and descended, Bishop Rosatti gave him a five-dollar gold piece and a liberal amount of wine. He soon afterward removed to Alton, where in 1837 he buried Elijah P. Lovejoy, the now famous first martyr in the Abolition cause. He also officiated at the reinterment of the remains some 20 years since.

Mr. Johnston, though somewhat crippled in body, is sound and clear in mind, and converses intelligently upon all subjects with which he is familiar. He was admitted to the ancient and honorable order of Freemasons in Aberdeen, shortly after he gained his majority.

No matter how handsome a family monument a man may have in the cemetery, he never wants to lie on his back and look up at it.

ABSTEMIOUS and facetious are said to be the only two words in which the vowels follow one another.

From Rev. J. E. Rankin, D. D.

Washington, D. C., June 19th, 1876. The Rev. J. E. Rankin, D. D., of Washington, D. C., certified as follows: "I have known of several persons who regarded themselves as greatly benefited and some of them as permanently cured of diseases of the kidneys and urinary organs by the medicine prepared by Charles Long, of Charlotte, N. Y. I have known, too, of its use in similar cases by physicians of the highest character and standing. I do not doubt that it has great virtue." In a previous communication to the undersigned, Dr. Rankin referred at length to the beneficial treatment of a case in his own family, pronounced Bright's Disease, to all appearance, with the Safe Kidney and Liver Cure, and said: "The treatment I want in the interest of humanity, to describe and recommend."

Consumption Cured.

An old physician, retired from practice, having had placed in his hands by an East India missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy for the speedy and permanent cure for Consumption, Bronchitis, Catarrh, Asthma, and all throat and Lung Affections, also a positive and radical cure for Nervous Debility and all Nervous Complaints, after having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, has felt it his duty to make it known to his suffering fellows. Actuated by this motive and a desire to relieve human suffering, I will send free of charge, to all who desire it, this recipe, in German, French, or English, with full directions for preparing and using. Sent by mail by addressing, with stamp, naming this paper, W. W. Beaman, 40 Power's Block, Rochester, N. Y.

A GREAT MEDICAL WORK ON MANHOOD, etc. Free. Pamphlet, 125 pages. Author, Dr. Hartman, Erie, Pa.

VEGETINE is the great health restorer. Composed exclusively of barks, roots and herbs. It is very pleasant to take, strong enough for the feeble, and children like it.

CREW JACKSON'S Best Sweet Navy Tobacco.

"Don't be satisfied with Gallantry Stove Polish."

BIG PAY to agents to sell Jones' Patent Steel Plate Scales. Warranted 5 years. Address Jones of Binghamton, Binghamton, N. Y.

$5 to $20 Daily at home. Samples worth $5 free. Address Stinson & Co., Portland, Me.

GUNS Revolvers, Illustrated Catalogue free. Great Western Gun Works, Pittsburgh, Pa.

$66 A WEEK in your own town. Terms and $5 outfit free. Address H. Hallett & Co., Portland, Me.

$2000 A YEAR easy made in each county. Good business men and agents. Address J. B. CHAPMAN, 54 Walnut St., Cincinnati, O.

2 Agents Wanted—each county, for Russian Linen Water Proof LAMP CHIMNEY. Also other goods. COX, JONES & CO., St. Louis, Mo.

THE CHILD'S Unfolded Prayer. The most beautiful thing ever issued. Sent for 25c. Address Prayer, Box 1, Station D, New York.

WANTED: AGENTS to make $50 weekly selling our Patent Self-Adjusting Scissors. Sample sent free. Address J. H. BERRY & CO., Portland, Me.

A GOOD PLAN. Capitalists desirous of investing money in a business that will pay from 50 to 100 per cent. per annum, address Lawrence & Co., Hanover Place, New York.

BOOSEYS MUSIC. WM. A. POND & CO., Union Square, N. Y.

BONES and CRACKLINGS Wanted by the Ton. BATCHELOR & SONS, Philadelphia, Pa.

$10 to $10,000 Invested in Syndicate Operations in Stocks. The plan and the wonderful operations with which the profits of from $10 to $10,000 are made, are explained in the advertisement of Messrs. Hecker & Co., Bankers, 34 Broad St., N. Y. Sent free. Address as above.

AGENTS WANTED FOR A TOUR AROUND THE WORLD BY GENERAL GRANT. PRICE ONLY $3. This is the fastest selling book ever published. Only complete and authentic edition. Agents wanted everywhere. Address NATIONAL PUBLISHING CO., St. Louis, Mo.

$1000 REWARD for any case of Bleeding, Blind, Itching or Protruding Piles that DeHing's Pile Remedy fails to cure. Advertisement in full entitling a box of ointment free, sent by mail on receipt of 25 cents. Sold by all druggists. Sent by mail by J. F. MILLER, M. D., Propr., S. W. cor. Tenth and Arch Sts., Philadelphia, Pa.

CUSHING'S MANUAL Of Parliamentary Practice. This is the universally acknowledged authority in the United States on rules and usages of deliberative bodies, and is the only work on the subject which has been adopted by any legislature in the United States. Price, $1.50; sent by mail on receipt of price. THOMPSON, BROWN & CO., Publishers, Boston, Mass.

A BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY. Gentlemen of business ability whose time is not now fully occupied, would do well to consider the offers made by the Equitable Life Assurance Society to local agents. The average annual new business of this Company for the past eight years, has been larger than that of any other company in existence. It has recently made its policies incontestable after three years; and has gained a world-wide reputation for great financial strength and promptness in the payment of its death claims. Letters should be addressed to the Equitable Life Assurance Society, 120 Broadway, New York.

VEGETINE WILL CURE RHEUMATISM.

MR. ALBERT CROWER, the well-known Druggist and Apothecary of Newport, Me., advises his every one troubled with rheumatism to try VEGETINE.

Read His Statement:

SPRINGVALE, ME., Oct. 12, 1876.

MR. H. R. STEVENS:

Dear Sir—Three years ago last fall I was taken sick with rheumatism, was unable to work until the next April. From that time until three years ago this fall, I suffered terribly from the disease. There would be weeks at a time that I could not move one foot. These attacks were quite often. I suffered much from that a man could endure. Some time ago I commenced taking VEGETINE, and finished up until I had taken six bottles. I have had no return of the rheumatism since. I am as well as ever, and I attribute my cure to VEGETINE. I am willing to testify to the above facts if you desire. This statement is given without any solicitation on my part. Yours truly, ALBERT CROWER, Firm of A. Crower & Co., Druggists and Apothecaries.

VEGETINE HAS ENTIRELY CURED ME.

BOSTON, Oct., 1870.

MR. H. R. STEVENS:

Dear Sir—My daughter, after having a severe attack of Whooping Cough, was left in a feeble state of health. Being advised by a friend she tried the VEGETINE, and after using a few bottles was fully restored to health. I have been a great sufferer from Rheumatism. I have taken several bottles of the VEGETINE for this complaint, and am happy to say it has entirely cured me. I have recommended the VEGETINE to others with the same good results. It is a great, GREAT and PURIFIER of the blood; it is pleasant to take and I can cheerfully recommend it. JAMES MOORE, 364 Athens street.

"VEGETINE," says a Boston physician, "has no equal as a blood purifier. Hearing of its many wonderful cures, after all other remedies had failed, I visited the laboratory and overlooked many of its ingredients. It is prepared from barks, roots and herbs, each of which is highly effective, and they are compounded in such a manner as to produce astonishing results."

VEGETINE PREPARED BY H. R. STEVENS, Boston, Mass.

Vegetine is Sold by All Druggists.

WE LOAN MONEY ON FARMS. City, Village and Farm Property. Correspondence solicited. AGENTS WANTED. AT SIX PER CENT.

AGENTS READ THIS. Wanted per agent a history of Rev. Dr. Newman's Life. Address Rev. Dr. Newman, Washington, D. C.

WANTED, AGENTS for our Kentucky New Book. THE HOUSEHOLD ENCYCLOPEDIA. A complete work of reference for every family. Sample free. Address Bradley, Garretson & Co., Louisville, Ky.

CURE FEVER AND AGUE. Dr. Bond's Ague Cure. Guaranteed to cure Fever and Ague, Chills and Fever, Dumb Ague, Bilious Fever, etc. $50 offered for a case it will not cure. Sold everywhere by druggists. Sent by express, prepaid, $1 per bottle. DR. BOND MED. CO., Peoria, Ill.

ITS FAME LIMITED TO NO COUNTRY, SECT OR RACE. PERRY DAVIS' PAIN-KILLER! A FAMILY MEDICINE. ALL DRUGGISTS AND DEALERS.

GRANT'S TOUR AROUND THE WORLD. The very book authorized by General Grant himself. AGENTS WANTED. Address NATIONAL PUBLISHING CO., St. Louis, Mo.

60,000 CHALLENGE WASHERS. Sample dozen, $1. Sell like wildfire. AGENTS WANTED. Address S. W. FALMER & CO., Augusta, Maine.

The Only Positive Cure For Chills and Fever. THAT DOES NOT contain Quinine, Arsenic or Poison. This famous drug has been used in