

proper conduct of all the Members of the Company, during the remainder of that day.

He, also takes this opportunity of thanking such of the Company, as assisted him in protecting the property of Mr. Ramsbotham, during the dreadful calamity, which happened to his Mills and Buildings.

It was the first opportunity which occurred since the formation of the Corps, where the Volunteers could distinguish themselves as useful, but he feels much sorrow to be obliged to notice the wicked and infamous conduct of some who whilst they professed to protect the Property of the Unfortunate, were the first to violate it: he flatters himself that such men do not belong to the first Company, if they do, he hopes those brave men who are Innocent of such an atrocious Outrage, will rescue their characters, from so foul an imputation, by detecting and giving up the offenders.

Captain Hailstone earnestly recommends to his Company as they are about to go upon permanent duty, that they will observe upon such duty, a *firm persevering* and *steady* conduct, a *cheerful obedience* to their officers. *Silence* in the Ranks, *Neatness* and *Cleanliness* in their Dress, a *proper care* and *attention* to their arms and accoutrements—and a *regular, sober* and *orderly* conduct in their Quarters, such are the characteristic sticks of a good soldier, and should the day arrive when Frenchmen dare to invade our sacred Rights, Captain Hailstone feels confident that the **FIRST COMPANY** of the Bradford Volunteers will be found in the path of Glory, and that they upon that day will fear *nothing*, but *God* and their own *Dishonour*.

April 23rd, 1804.

J. NICHOLSON, PRINTER, BRADFORD.

THE POET'S PRIVILEGE.

O, what a glorious gift the power of song,
 When the full heart, o'erburthened with its
 grief,
 Would pour its woes in song to find relief;
 When maddened with some soul-revolting
 wrong,
 Borne by the feeble from the tyrant strong;
 When love and hope and fear the bosom
 swell,
 How sweet to utter the unutterable
 In music with a spirit-winning tongue!
 O for the "Poet's eye"—the soul sublime,
 Ranging from earthly trammels almost
 freed!
 But mine it is to move with feebler wing,
 Yet do I glory in some power to climb,
 Where Poet's with unwearied pinions lead,
 Behold their flight, and hear the songs they
 sing.

RALPH GOODWIN.

AN EVENING WITH DRESSMAKERS.

Look here! Sea bathing for the Million! On Saturday next, at 3 o'clock p. m., a monster train will start for Morecambe Bay returning on the following Monday. Fares there and back three shillings and sixpence!!

Such was the substance of a small hand bill furtively placed on the counter under the very noses of my wife and daughter, whose business it was and is to attend to the customers.

On the succeeding day when I came home to dinner, my beloved wife was spitting blood and my daughter Polly, could taste nothing, having completely lost her appetite. Well, I considered the frailty of femanine nature; I knew that my spouse for a series of months had been much overworked; harrassed besides, by many business and household cares; a change, I thought would be beneficial in more ways than one, for her health was not only giving way but her temper also needed repair.

That she was spitting blood or at least endeavouring to do so, any one might see, but to hint that the alarming tinge of the saliva, might be caused by suction of the gums would be to betray a suspicion without the shadow of proof, and to show myself mean and callous to a degree far beyond the superlative.

In short, I was quite willing to let my wife go to sea, but very unwilling to take charge of the baby during her absence; and how to rid myself of both, that was the question. Mary, said I, sniffing the air, I sometimes think this house has a bad breath. I'm sure, it has, said Mary. Last summer, long before Mrs. Bean's child died of typhus fever, the Doctor told them to send her to the seaside, hinting that a very short time there would so fortify her constitution as to render her safe for life; well, they neglected, and the poor thing died,—served 'em right.

Bless me, said I, pondering on this righteous visitation, how negligent we are of ourselves and of those nearest to us. Don't you think, Mary, our youngest child is getting rickety.

Everybody, remarks it, said Mary, in a tone of unfeigned concern.

Indeed, said I, then why did not you name it before?

Because, said my wife abstractedly, there has been no suitable weather.

I like that! and so before a father may know that his child is growing irremediably deformed the weather must be consulted.

I did not say the weather was to be consulted, said my wife, rather angrily, I said there had been no suitable weather for taking an invalid to the country or the seaside.

But the weather, said I, is clearing up, and if you think seabathing would strengthen that dear child take him to Morecambe Bay on Saturday.

Well, John, I will think about it, the expences I dare say will be rather heavy, but

looking as I do at that dear child I will go, with your permission.

You have my permission, dearest, a thousand times over, and the only regret I feel is that you will have no suitable company.

Don't think of it, dear, said my Mary rather unguardedly; Mrs. Smith and I arranged yesterday to go together.

I wished my Mary had not confessed quite so much.

While granting this permission, I had experienced such feelings as swell the bosom of an Autocrat, but no sooner did I perceive that I was but giving my assent and seal to measures already discussed and carried, than I felt, like the Bourbon, how pitiable a wretch is your constitutional King.

After a wor of fuss, wife and daughter, baby and luggage, were on their way to the water, and I was left like the last rose of summer, very much the worse for the recent storms and buffetings. How I got over the intervals lying between 3 o'clock on Saturday, and 8 o'clock p. m. on Monday, I cannot even attempt to describe; but I remember, too well, the sense of loneliness that came over me at the above named time. The shop was closed, the children put to bed, the servant asleep in a chair, and a profound silence reigned through the whole house. Such periods have something terrible about them to Pater familias; the hush so strange and gravelike, oppressed and frightened me; the very mice that ventured to show themselves at their holes wore an amazed and fear-stricken look.

The train was not due till half-past eleven, and I knew from experience that excursion trains were always behind time.

Every moment I expected a ghost to appear, for I had been deep in table rapping for weeks, and the spirits had given promises of higher "manifestations" which I felt were about to be fulfilled. As I sat in the deepening twilight, I must confess that any noise usual in a large family, a brawl between the two boys, or even the unappeasable scream of an infant in the torments of flatulence, would have been preferable to that fearful, that awful deadness. The very air seemed thickening and solidifying around me; already it felt denser than water, while ever and for ever the clock let fall its sledge hammer, at long intervals, on the outraged and shuddering tympanum. In another hour I should probably have been a howling maniac, but luckily my eyes, just then, fell on a concertina lying upon a shelf.

In less than ten minutes all the terrors of isolation were forgotten; Rosseau's Dream, and God save the Emperor, had already been played and I was luxuriating in a river of sweet sounds, rising and falling, yet ever floating onwards on the long billows of the "Zauberflotte" when a professional, a wretch with a cultivated ear, living in the adjoining yard, sprang over the wall and bursting into the

house, knife in hand, threatened to slit the educated bellows, and my own windpipe also, if the horrid braying, as he called it, were not discontinued. With a deep sigh I put down the instrument, feeling for the moment that profound dejection that now and then comes to all men in advance of their era, for it is indeed saddening to be placed, as it were, in a world of infants, and be denied the fellowship of equal minds.

As I replaced the concertina on its shelf, I spied an envelope from which I drew a neat lady-like business card; on one side were the words, Mrs. Wellbeaten, Dress and Bonnet Maker; on the other an invitation to her house, addressed to Mrs. and Mr. Sprento. On the instant I resolved to repair the clay tenement and go thither.

In my youth I had known the lady; we were in fact, neighbours, and in the habit of seeing each other daily. Young as she was, she had penetration enough to perceive that she had made a conquest, for I betrayed my secret every way except in words. How long my passion would have remained tongue-tied by a sense of unworthiness I do not know, but I do know that I never told my love, "But let concealment like a worm ith' bud" feed; here truth insists on a slight alteration of the text, feed on my freckled cheek. That I loved her I am persuaded, for I had begun to hoard up money with a view to its future investment "In my cottage near a wood" where, in her sweet society, I had secretly determined to spend a long and happy life.

But my Zabeth had loftier, if less romantic aims, for as soon as a wool merchant, of twice my weight, offered her his purse and person, I fell like a dewdrop from a water-lily, into the broad river of humanity, where my individuality was as it were annihilated. I do not know that she ever seemed aware of my existence after that wool merchant had shown himself. Amazing as all this was at the time, it was nothing new, for my enemy was one of those magnificent animals that seem born for conquest; a rival in whom the lovers of Tennyson would recognize the "curled and oiled Assyrian Bull." Like most of that class, too, he was a go-a-head fellow, cash, health, reputation, were all wasted in fast living. His career, it is true, had all the noise and brilliancy of a pyrotechnic display, but it had also its brevity and its inglorious finale of smoke and stench. In eight years my Zabeth was a peniless widow with three children; her future a long line of hard labour and stint, with the parish poorhouse for a terminus.

Feeling a desire to appear to the best advantage, I went up stairs to rejuvenate; with this end in view I laid rather a heavy tax on the side locks to hide the baldness at the crown, and, what with one device and another, I coaxed myself into the belief that I was not a bad-looking fellow. Nay, in the vanity of my

heart, I must have fancied that Mrs. Well-beaten would experience a feeling of regret at having rejected me, for as I descended the stairs, I detected myself whistling in the exhortative mood, the Yankee ditty, "Oh Susannah, don't you cry for me."

And now reader, while we journey together to this Dressmaker's, let us talk of old sweet-hearts and their ways.

Has it ever been your fate to meet one face to face, after ten, fifteen, or as in my case, five and twenty years of total estrangement; if so, what were your feelings, what were hers? But the question in that form is perhaps absurd enough, for characters vary, and with character, thoughts, feelings, actions. The proud, worldly woman, who took you up as a pearl fisher takes up an oyster, and dashed you down when she found you valueless, can meet you anywhere. Should you encounter her in the street, she does not speak, or smile, or frown; she does not seek your eye or shrink from it, but she ignores you; when she gazes on you she gazes on vacancy.

Then there is that waxen beauty, with her small graceful head and doll-like face, the girl that you worshipped when you read novels and attended the theatre, but whom you relinquished when you discovered that human life was more serious than a comedy, and that to waltz well, was not the only end of your creation. Yet this lady meets you with a half-pitying smile, believing to this hour that you are a miserable, repentant, heart-broken man.

Besides these, there is perhaps yet another, whom this world is pleased to call an old maid. What parted you we will not say, perhaps a word hastily spoken and for ever repented of; the whisper of an evil tongue; or the "pride which not a world could bow." Well, you are married, you have a lovely wife, many beautiful children, a prosperous business, the esteem and friendship of good men; yet gladly would you tell this Lone One that all is not lost; that you have a faith in her goodness and purity that nothing can shake; a friendship that in the hour of need would put forth a hand from the ends of the earth to help or soothe; an esteem and a reverence that will endure to the end. You would fain tell her all this, but you cannot, you see her sometimes, but unluckily, you think, she never sees you. Be not deceived, she sees you afar off, she knows too well, your visage, your voice, your tread.

When she turns aside to gaze with an absorbing interest at surgical instruments, or carpenters' tools, I charge you, on your manhood to let her alone. Would you know why she does not speak, I will tell you; the lump is in her throat and she cannot. Yet mysterious ties bind you to her; strange yearnings that you cannot understand, stir you when you do but even fancy you see her.

Far away on the wild, lone, moorland, as you sit in the warm sunshine of the holy Sabbath,

she comes unbidden to your side. There, as the stormy tumults of every-day life subside into a calm, your heart turns to her, you know not why, as the needle when at rest points to the mystic pole. Whenever and wherever you rise above the low level of outward life, there she is, looking on you from serene heights, as one that has waited for your coming. The wife that works side by side with you in harness, fighting with you the rude hard battle of life, you can love, but it is only with a finite and an earthly affection. Deeper and deeper still lie within you the seeds of an infinite and eternal love, that may lie dormant here, but will hereafter spring up, and grace with flowers the gardens of paradise.

Twin souls are ye, prisoned in the heaving and troubled womb of Time, blindly feeling each other in the dark, but as yet scarce knowing that ye are akin, and little dreaming that the mysterious mother is binding your souls together with sweet bonds that will last through eternity.

She, too, knows not her soul's mate, for lovers have come and departed, and still she sits alone, saying, "He comes not yet."

First came a youth, sweet voiced, smooth tongued, angel-visaged, fair as Belial and as false and hollow. He talked of love, of marriage, but friends came to his rescue; friends who told him his love was poor and plain; and that he was handsome and beauty an article of commerce. The youth looked again at his glass, and into his arithmetic, kissed the weeper and went his way, the God of this world smiling on his votary.

Then came a small soul, fearful and unbelieving, who looked admiringly at his mistress, then sorrowfully at his maiden sister, and saw not in the wide world bread for both. So he, too, departed, and the forsaken one wept afresh, remembering, in her sorrow, that you went not away like these, but with the arrow in your proud breaking, bleeding heart. Some day she will know that your strong, instinctive, unreasoning love, would have rushed through, or overleapt, like the Nubian lion, the barriers of straw and reeds that scares them away. Some day she will know that they loved her not, or only a little, after the fashion of their sickly, selfish, timid natures.

After these came an old man with a bloated purse, and a loveless withered heart, offering her all the delights of harlotry without its shame, but she broke away from rejoicing friends, and ran to her room to kneel down and pray. There her poor heart beat loudly, awfully, like an alarm bell at midnight, and the tumult within her was like that of startled multitudes rushing to arms, while a voice that sounded like thine shouted in her ears, "treason, treason." The old man got his brief answer and went, for she remembered the olden time, the days spent in Eden, when at sight of you her eyes were filled with happy

tears, when all labours were light and pleasant, all duties delightful, when the rich dowry of your love raised her so far above the reach of fortune, that her life of stint and thankless toil was one perpetual song of joy and thanksgiving!

Well done! poor yearning heart! she has tasted the manna that falls from heaven, and she will not fill herself with swinish husks.

Bless me, reader, what street is this? I have grown hoarse with talking of your old flames, forgetting I am seeking one of my own. Ah, here is Mrs. Wellbeaten's door.

With a daring hand and a bold heart I raised the knocker and knocked.

A gigantic lass, evidently from the rural districts, opened the door and asked me who I was.

The question puzzled me not a little; for years, at church and in the market, I had been so overshadowed by Mrs. Sprento that the query was very seldom put, and the right answer not cut and dried.

Even before the introduction of crinolines, I should hardly have had the self-assertion to announce myself as Mr. Sprento, and after that event my poor claims to notice were, I considered, totally extinguished, and I felt myself more than ever an appendage. But the uncultivated hoyden was little disposed to make allowances for my confusion of mind, and thinking, probably, that I was deaf, she asked the question again with variations and aggravations, that increased my mental disquiet.

Is it a man or a woman, asked a voice, that I knew for Mrs. Wellbeaten.

It's some deaf and dumb person begging, said the ex-milkmaid.

No, said I, reddening with shame, it is not a beggar but Mrs. Sprento's husband.

Is it a man, again asked the mistress, in a tone that would be answered.

No, said the apprentice, it's only Mrs. Sprento's husband.

Oh, indeed! said my Zabeth of old days, Mr. Sprento, is it? Lucy take the muslin dress off the arm-chair; pray come forward, sir, and be seated. I stepped forward into the work-room, at the door of which I encountered Zabeth, who had risen to receive me. She smiled, and once more I clasped that little hand to whose pressure for a quarter of a century I had been a stranger. Once more I looked on that bright fair face, still fair and bright, and wearing that nameless, thoughtful sweetness, that trials, rightly and meekly borne, alone can give. Once more looked into the depths of those earnest eyes, and upwards to that serene and lofty brow; a brow that gave to her person, slight and fragile, the majesty of Juno.

Well, you are anxious, perhaps, to know what I saw there—nothing!

In the clasp of that hand, in that open

gracious smile, in the beam of those mild eyes, there was visible the pleasure one feels in meeting an old neighbour and acquaintance; traces of other pleasure, other feeling, there were none.

What! no spark, no dying ember of an old fire? No, I was indeed defunct.

Mrs. Wellbeaten, said I, my wife is gone to the sea-side, and will not return till near midnight; I have endured her absence till I can endure it no longer, and I come to seek in your society a refuge from the miseries of solitude.

You are welcome, Mr. Sprento; and if you will not think me too selfish, I will own that I wish you were often compelled to make my house your asylum, for indeed I take little pleasure in the visits of my own sex.

In my youth I did once attempt, insanely enough, to express in measures the dimensions of a measureless love, and describe in numbers, graces of mind and person, that baffled all description, and defied numeration tables to represent their multitude. This effusion I sent to the Editor of a Local Journal, who, counting it a literary curiosity of the age, inserted it in his next impression, and although I am not, I trust a vain man, yet I do maintain that when seen in its printed form and at a certain distance, it bore a striking resemblance to genuine poetry. Need I say that I carefully cut out the lines and sent them to Zabeth, and that Zabeth, amid its rubbishly absurdities, found traces of sense and discernment, and passages worthy of being printed in letters of gold. To this circumstance I partly ascribe the cordial welcome I received, and to it especially the flattering words just recorded, words that would seem to imply that I was very agreeable company.

Indeed, Mrs. Wellbeaten, said I, how is it you like the ladies so little, for my own part I always prefer them to gentlemen; but tastes vary you know.

If you could stay with us an hour or two you would probably discover the cause for yourself, said Zabeth.

I came with the intention of staying three!

Then you shall go forward into our sanctum, you will there be out of the way, and without being seen yourself you will be able to hear everything.

So saying, without rising from her seat, she pushed open a door, and pointed to a chair in a line with her own, but within a neat little sitting-room.

There, Sprento, when the street-door opens you can shut that, and hear my friends talk, and if what you hear should beget a desire to see them, you can peep through that little curtained window in the partition, and gratify your curiosity.

Zabeth had hardly finished speaking when a knock was heard at the door, and a patroness was announced.

[CONCLUSION NEXT MONTH.]