

ONE BY ONE.

One by one the sands are flowing,
One by one the moments fall;
Some are coming, some are going—
Do not strive to grasp them all.

One by one thy duties wait thee,
Let thy whole strength go to eugh;
Let no future dreams await thee;
Learn thou first what these can teach.

One by one bright gifts from Heaven,
Joys are sent thee here below;
Take them readily when given,
Ready, too, to let them go.

One by one thy griefs shall meet thee—
Do not fear an armed band,
One will fade as others greet thee,
Shadows passing through the land.

Do not laugh at life's long sorrow,
See how small each moment's pain;
God will help thee for to-morrow,
Every day begin again.

Every hour that floats so slowly
Has its task to do or bear;
Luminous the crown, and holy,
If thou set each gem with care.

Do not linger with regretting,
Or for passion's hours despond,
Nor, the daily toil forgetting,
Look too eagerly beyond.

Hours are golden links, God's token
Reaching heaven; but one by one
Take them, lest the chain be broken,
Ere thy pilgrimage be done!

—Dickens.

OUR NEW NEIGHBORS AT PONKAPOG.

When I saw the little house building an eighth of a mile beyond my own, on the old Bay road, I wondered who were to be the tenants. The modest structure was set well back from the road, among the trees, as if the inmates were to care nothing whatever for a view of the stylish equipages which swept by during the summer season. For my part I like to see the passing, in town or country; but each has his own taste. The proprietor, who seemed to be also the architect of the new house, superintended the various details of the work with an assiduity that gave me a high opinion of his intelligence and executive ability, and I congratulated myself on the prospect of having some very agreeable neighbors.

It was quite early in the spring, if I remember, when they moved into the cottage—a newly married couple, evidently; the wife very young, pretty, and with the air of a lady; the husband somewhat older, but still in the first flush of manhood. It was understood in the village that they came from Baltimore; but no one knew them personally, and they brought no letters of introduction. (For obvious reasons I refrain from mentioning names.) It was clear that for the present, at least, their own company was entirely sufficient for them. They made no advancements toward the acquaintance of any of the families in the neighborhood, and consequently were left to themselves; that apparently was what they desired, and why they came to Ponkapog. For, after its black bass, wild duck and teal, solitude is the chief staple of Ponkapog. Perhaps its perfect rural loveliness should be included.

Lying high up under the wings of the Blue hills, and in the odorless breath of pine and cedar, it chances to be the most enchanting bit of genuine country, within 50 miles of Boston; which, moreover, can be reached in half an hour's ride by railway. But the railway station (heaven be praised) is two miles distant; and the seclusion is without a flaw. Ponkapog has one mail a day; two mails a day would render the place uninhabitable.

The village—it looks like a compact village at a distance, but unravels and disappears the moment you drive into it—has quite a large floating population. I do not allude to the perch and pickerel. Along the old Bay road, a highway even in colonial days, there are a

number of attractive cottages straggling off toward Milton which are occupied for the summer by people from the city. These birds of passage are a distinct class from the permanent inhabitants, and the two seldom closely assimilate unless there has been some previous connection.

It seemed as if our new neighbors were to come under the head of permanent inhabitants; they had built their own house, and had the air of intending to live in it all the year round.

"Are you going to call on them?" I asked my wife one morning.

"When they call on us," she replied lightly. "But it is our place to call first, they being strangers."

This was said as seriously as the circumstances demanded; but my wife turned it off with a laugh, and I said no more, always trusting to her intuitions in these matters.

She was right. She would not have been received, and a cool "not at home" would have been a bitter social pill to us, if we had gone out of our way to be courteous.

I saw a great deal of our neighbors, nevertheless. Their cottage was between us and the postoffice, where he was never to be met with by chance—and I caught frequent glimpses of the two working in the garden. Floriculture did not appear so much an object as exercise. Possibly it was neither; maybe they were engaged in digging for specimens for those arrow-heads and flint hatchets which are continually coming to the surface hereabouts. There is scarcely an acre in which the plowshare has not turned up some primitive stone weapon or domestic utensil, disdainfully left to us by the red men who once held this domain—an ancient tribe called the Pankapogs, a forlorn descendant of which, one Polly Crowl, figures in the annual blue book, down to the close of the Southern war, as a State pensioner. I quote from the local historiographer.

Whether they were developing a kitchen garden, or emulating Prof. Schlemm at Mycena, the new-comers were evidently persons of refined musical taste; the lady had a voice of remarkable sweetness, although of no great compass, and I used often to linger of a morning by the high gate and listen to her executing an operatic air, conjecturally at some window up stairs, for the house was not visible from the public road. The husband, somewhere about the grounds, would occasionally respond with two or three bars. It was all quite an ideal, Arcadian business. They seemed very happy together, these two persons who asked no odds whatever of the community in which they had settled themselves.

There was a queerness, a sort of mystery, about this couple, which I admit piqued my curiosity, though, as a rule, I have no morbid interest in the affairs of my neighbors. They behaved like a pair of lovers who had run off and got married clandestinely. I willingly acquitted them, the one and the other of having no legal right to do so; for, to change a word in the lines of the poet,

"It is joy to think the best
We may of human kind."

Admitting the hypothesis of elopement, there was no mystery in there neither sending nor receiving letters? But where did they get their groceries? I do not mean the money to pay for them—that is an enigma apart—but the groceries themselves. No express wagon, no butcher's cart, no vehicle of any description was ever observed to stop at their domicile. Yet they did not order family stores at the sole establishment in the village—an inexhaustible little shop which (I advertise gratis) can turn out anything in the way of groceries, from a handsaw to a pocket-handkerchief. I confess that I allowed this unimportant detail of their house-keeping to occupy more of my speculation than was creditable to me.

In several respects our neighbors reminded me of those inexplicable persons we sometimes come across in great cities, though seldom or never in suburban places, where the field may be supposed too restricted for their operations—persons who have no perceptible means of subsistence, and manage to live royally on nothing a

year. They hold no government bonds, they possess no real estate (our neighbors did own their house), they toil not, neither do they spin; yet they reap all the numerous soft advantages that usually result from honest toil and skillful spinning. How do they do it? But this is a digression, and I am quite of the opinion of the old lady in "David Copperfield" who says "Let us have no meanderings!"

Though my wife had declined to risk a ceremonious call on our neighbors as a family, I saw no reason why I should not speak to the husband as an individual, when I happened to encounter him by the wayside. I made several approaches to do so, when it occurred to my penetration that my neighbor had the air of trying to avoid me. I resolved to put the suspicion to the test, and one forenoon, when he was sauntering along on the opposite side of the road, in the vicinity of Fisher's saw-mill, I deliberately crossed over to address him. The brusque manner in which he hurried away was not to be misunderstood. Of course I was not going to force myself upon him.

It was at this time that I began to form uncharitable suppositions touching our neighbors, and would have been as well pleased if some of my choicest fruit trees had not overhung their wall. I determined to keep my eyes open later in the season, when the fruit should be ripe to pluck. In some folks, a sense of the delicate shades of difference between *meum et tuum* does not seem to be very strongly developed in the moon of cherries, to use the old Indian phrase.

I was sufficiently magnanimous not to impart any of these sinister impressions to the families with whom we were on visiting terms; for I despise a gossip. I would say nothing against the persons up the road until I had something definite to say. My interest in them was—well, not exactly extinguished, but burning low. I met the gentleman at intervals, and passed him without recognition; at rarer intervals I saw the lady.

After a while I not only missed my occasional glimpse of her pretty, slim figure, always draped in some soft black stuff, with a bit of scarlet at the throat, but I inferred that she did not go about the house singing in her light-hearted manner, as formerly. What had happened? Had the honeymoon suffered eclipse already? Was she ill? I fancied she was ill, and that I detected a certain anxiety in her husband, who spent the mornings digging solitarily in the garden, and seemed to have relinquished those long jaunts to the brow of the Blue hill, where there is a superb view combined with several venerable rattlesnakes with 12 rattles.

As the days went by it became certain the lady was confined to the house, seriously ill, possibly a confirmed invalid. Whether she was attended by a physician from Canton or Milton, I am unable to say; but neither the gig with the large white allopathic horse, nor the gig with the homoeopathic sorrel mare, was ever seen hitched at the gate during the day. If a physician had charge of the case, he visited his patient only at night. All this moved my sympathy, and I reproached myself with having had thoughts of my neighbors. Trouble had come to them early. I would have liked to offer them such small, friendly services as lay in my power; but the memory of the repulse I had sustained rankled in me. So I hesitated.

One morning my two boys burst into the library with their eyes sparkling.

"You know the old elm down the road?" cried one.

"Yea."

"The elm with the hang-bird's nest?" shrieked the other.

"Well, we both just climbed up, and there's three young ones in it."

Then I smiled to think that our new neighbors had got such a promising little family.—*T. B. Aldrich, in Atlantic.*

A NEW YORK woman says with much truth: "Were it not for the self-sacrificing women of the land who marry and support so many men, the number of tramps would be largely increased."