

## THE BEWITCHED CLOCK.

About half-past 11 o'clock on Sunday night, a human leg, enveloped in blue broadcloth, might have been seen entering Cephas Barberry's kitchen window. The leg was followed finally by the entire person of a lively Yankee, attired in his Sunday go-to-meeting clothes. It was, in short, Joe Mayweed who thus burglariously, in the dead of night, won his way into the deacon's kitchen.

"Wonder how much the old deacon made by ordering me not to darken his door again!" soliloquized the young man; "promised him I wouldn't, but didn't say nothing about winders. Winders is just as good as doors, if there ain't no nails to tear your trousers onto. Wonder if Sal 'll come down? The critter promised me. I'm afraid to move here, 'cause I might break my shins over something or nother, and wake the old folks. Cold enough to freeze a Polar bear here. Oh, here comes Sally!"

The beautiful maiden descended with a pleasant smile, a tallow candle and a box of matches. After receiving a rapturous greeting, she made up a roaring fire in the cooking stove, and the happy couple sat down to enjoy the sweet interchange of views and hopes. But the course of true love ran no smoother in old Barberry's kitchen than it did elsewhere, and Joe, who was making up his mind to treat himself to a kiss, was startled by the voice of the Deacon, her father, shouting from her chamber door:

"Sally, what are you getting up in the middle of the night for?"

"Tell him it's most morning," whispered Joe.

"I can't tell a fib," said Sally.

"I'll make it a truth, then," said Joe, and running to the huge old-fashioned clock that stood in the corner, he set it at five.

"Look at the clock and tell me what time it is," cried the old gentleman up-stairs.

"It's five by the clock," answered Sally, and corroborating her words, the clock struck five.

The lovers sat down again and resumed the conversation. Suddenly the staircase began to creak. "Good gracious! it's father."

"The Deacon, by thunder!" cried Joe. "Hide me, Sal!"

"Where can I hide you?" cried the distracted girl.

"Oh, I know," said he. "I'll squeeze into the clock-case."

And without another word he concealed himself in the case and drew the door behind him.

The Deacon was dressed, and setting himself down by the cooking stove, pulled out his pipe lighted it, and commenced smoking very liberally and calmly.

"Five o'clock, eh?" said he. "Well, I shall have time to smoke three or four pipes then I'll go and feed the critters." "Hadin't you better go and feed the critters first, sir, and smoke afterwards," suggested the dutiful Sally.

"No, smoking clears my head and wakes me up," answered the Deacon, who seemed not a whit disposed to hurry his enjoyment.

Bur-r-r—whizz—ding—ding! went the clock.

"Tormented lightning!" cried the Deacon, starting up, and dropping his pipe on the stove.

"What in creation's that?"

"It's only the clock striking five," said Sally tremulously.

Whizz! ding! ding! ding! went the old clock furiously.

"Powers of mercy!" cried the Deacon. "Striking five!" it's struck a hundred already."

"Deacon Barberry!" exclaimed the Deacon's better half, who had hastily robed herself, and now came plunging down the staircase in the wildest state of alarm. "What is the matter of the clock?"

"Goodness only knows," replied the old man. "It's been in the family these 300 years and never did I know it to carry on so before."

Whizz! bang! bang! bang! went the clock.

"It'll burst itself!" cried the old lady, shedding a flood of tears, "and there won't be nothing left of it."

"It is bewitched," said the Deacon, who retained a leaven of New England superstition in

his nature. "Anyhow," he said, after a pause, advancing resolutely toward the clock, "I'll see what's got into it!"

"Oh, don't," cried the daughter, affectionately seizing one of his coat tails, while his faithful wife hung to the other.

"Don't!" chorused both the women together. "Let go my raiment!" shouted the Deacon, "I ain't afraid of the powers of darkness."

But the women would not let go, so the Deacon slipped off his coat and while, from the sudden cessation of resistance, they fell heavily on the floor, he darted forward and laid his hand on the door of the clock-case. But no human power could open it. Joe was holding it inside with a death grasp. The Deacon began to be dreadfully frightened. He gave one more tug. An unearthly yell, as of a fiend in distress, came from the inside, and then the clock-case pitched head foremost on the floor, smashed its face and wrecked its proportions.

The current of air extinguished the light—the Deacon, the old lady and Sally fled up-stairs, and Joe Mayweed, extricating himself from the clock, effected his retreat in the same way he had entered. The next day all Apple-town was alive with the story of how Deacon Barberry's clock had been bewitched; and though many believed this version, some, and especially Joe Mayweed, effected to discredit the whole affair, hinting that the Deacon had been trying the experiment of tasting frozen, cider, and that the vagaries of the clock-case existed only in a distempered imagination.

**HOW TO MAKE YOURSELF UNHAPPY.**—In the first place, if you want to make yourself miserable, be selfish. Think all the time of yourself and your things. Don't care about anything else. Have no feelings for any but yourself. Never think of enjoying the satisfaction of seeing others happy; but rather, if you see a smiling face, be jealous lest another should enjoy what you have not. Envy every one who is better off than yourself; think unkindly toward them, and speak lightly of them. Be constantly afraid lest some one should encroach on your rights; be watchful against it, and if any should come near your things snap at them like a mad dog. Contend earnestly for every thing that is your own, that may not be worth a pin. Never yield a point. Be very sensitive, and take everything that is said to you in playfulness in the most serious manner. Be jealous of your friends lest they should not think enough of you; and if at any time they should seem to neglect you, put the worst construction upon their conduct.

**DISCOURAGING BOYS SMOKING.**—Since the ordinance prohibiting smoking by boys on the streets, and selling of tobacco to those under 16 years of age, has been enforced in Santa Cruz, cigarette smoking has almost entirely disappeared from view. It is a fact that many youngsters smoke just for the "manliness" of the act, and do so publicly, with a pride, so long as the old man ain't in sight. The ordinance nips this youthful pride and incentive, and when banished to the rear to smoke, the boy can't see the "manliness" of the act so clearly, and so cares much less about it. This town should have just such an ordinance, and parents should ask for it. The boys themselves will be very thankful for the interference in a few years, if not now, and will then recognize the wisdom of the act.—*San Mateo Journal.*

**RUBBER FOR VENEERS.**—The uses of India rubber seem to be almost indefinite. It is now said that perfect imitations of rosewood and other fine veneers are made from the hard compounds of rubber with varieties of color, such as are not to be found in any of the ornamental woods. They are without seam to any pattern. Sometimes they have cloth on the back, being thus rendered strong enough for many articles without any frame-work of wood. They will not warp or crack in the hottest room; and the facility with which they can be applied, with little or no labor in finishing, gives them an immense advantage over rival products.

## DUTIES OF LIFE.

"Life is real. Life is earnest, and the grave is not its goal." So says the grand old poet.

Life is what we make it. Then we should be up and doing, making the best of everything that we can, filling our various stations in life, as noble men and women, putting on the armor of strength to fight the battles of life bravely. Who has ever accomplished anything by idly repining, bemoaning their situation as worse than others? Who cannot look around and see conditions worse than thiers? We should realize that life is a duty which we cannot shirk, if we would leave behind a name worthy to be loved. It is true that life is short, but in the given space we may do much that is good or bad. Many, to-day, in many ways, are seeking the favor of the world; many gathering princely fortunes. I often wonder if they ever pause and think how many of God's children will suffer by their gain, and then I wonder again if they think who will be the gainer on the final reckoning day. Life duties are around us on every side. Let us take them up as best we can. To-day, when skepticism and so much immorality are poisoning the hearts of our youths, we should feel that life is not a dream, but a living reality. Some author has said: Life is not a brief sojourn, but a continued existence. Every act we do casts its shadow upon the future; every thought is a link in binding us to eternity; every moment is a seed, whose garnering shall be our immortal destiny.

Oh, mothers of this great land, let us wake up and feel that much is depending upon us! The babes at our breast, who look to us now with such trusting love, will in a short time stand before the world as men and women. I think if mothers would study to gain their children's love and put before them good books, and strive to make home pleasant instead of filling their minds with so much silly show and dress, we would have better men and women. It is the children who will soon take our places. Then the grandest duty for us is to patiently and lovingly guard them. Let us then look at life as we should, striving to be happy, and making others so; feeling that it is a duty we owe to God, to our fellow-creatures and to ourselves to be ever-active workers in all that tends to elevate and better the cause of humanity. And at last, when our summons shall come, we can feel that in some hearts, at least, we will be kindly remembered.—*M. J. C., in Literal Press.*

**WORMWOOD AS AN INSECTIFUGE.**—M. Poyrot having observed that the immense tracts of wormwood (sagebrush), upon the American plains are free from insects of every description, is experimenting with the plant as a preventive of phylloxera. He finds no difficulty in cultivating the wormwood, and he proposes to mix the stalks with manure, or simply bury them in the ground in the neighborhood of the vines. His suggestions have been sent to the Phylloxera Committee of the French Academy.

**VARNISH FOR METAL.**—A brilliant black is produced on iron and steel by applying, with a fine hair brush, a mixture of turpentine and sulphur boiled together. When the turpentine evaporates there remains on the metal a thin layer of clear sulphur, which unites closely with the iron when heated for a time over a spirit or gas flame. This varnish protects the metal perfectly, and is quite durable.

**THE LONGEST SPAN OF WIRE.**—The longest span of telegraph wire in the world is stretched across the Kistnah river from hill to hill, each hill being 1,200 ft. high, between Bezwah and Sectanagram, in India. The span is a little over 6,000 ft. in length. The only mechanical contrivance used in stretching this cable across the river was a common windlass.