

THE COTTAGE GATE.

In the sultry time of mowing, When the fields are full of hay, Pretty Janet brings her sewing To the gate at close of day.

Do you wonder that she lingers— Often glances down the lane? Do you ask me why her fingers Seek to find their work a strain?

Love dreams held her in their tether, Love is often (as we know) Idle in the summer weather, Idle in the sunset glow.

Now the toil of day is over, Janet has not long to wait For a shadow on the clover, And a footstep at the gate.

How is this? The slightest sheeting Has been taken up anew; Very quiet is her greeting, Barely raised those eyes of blue.

Now he leans upon the railing, Tells her all about the hay; Till his plans seem unavailing— Very little will she say.

If you think it strange, my reader, Learn a lesson from the rose— From the garden's queenly leader, Fairest flower that ever blows.

Flower of the Daisy.

It was just a week before New Year and, perched on his three-legged stool in the counting-room of the great house of Worthington Brothers, old Joe Darling, the ancient book-keeper of the firm, was finishing his Saturday night's entries.

When thus engaged, a hand was laid on his shoulder, and turning his head, he saw his old, gray-haired employer, the sole proprietor of the firm, beside him.

"It's the last time, my old friend," said the merchant, pointing to the ledger; "the news this evening decides everything. Unless something happens before the first of January, Worthington Brothers must close doors and wind up business, Joe."

Old Joe started as he listened to these melancholy words and a tremor ran through him. "Don't say that! don't say that, Mr. Worthington!" he exclaimed. And he dabbed his bald forehead with his old bandanna handkerchief as he spoke.

"Happy New Year father, dear. I have caught you." Old Joe turned around. As he did so a pair of rosy lips pressed his cheek and two arms clung about his neck, belonging to a little fairy of seventeen.

"Why, you look like a sunbeam, Daisy," he said. And indeed the face resembled one so brilliant was the light of her eyes. Daisy was small, with a neat, cosy figure, in a plain but pretty dress; and you saw at a glance that this was one of these little fingered fairies, who are the blessings of the homes in which they rule.

which the savings of his old bookkeeper had been deposited. With a sigh he handed it to Joe Darling, and said: "I deeply regret this, my old friend. My ruin was enough."

Old Joe read the announcement with a sinking heart, and echoed the sigh of his old friend. "The Lord's will be done, sir!" he said; "you ought to have all, but I am now penniless. Your trouble is greater than mine. Any letters, sir, by to-night's mail? Any resources or important intelligence?"

"No resources, Joe, and bad news—almost worse than all." "Worse, sir?" "Yes, yes. You remember my son Charley—of course you remember him. You know he went about two years since to live with Van Zandt & Co., at Antwerp?"

"Yes, sir; what of him? Don't tell me—he is not dead, sir?" "No—that pang is spared me, but I have had very bad news of Charley, my old friend. I wrote recently, announcing our situation, and recommending his return, and Messrs Van Zandt & Co. replied that he had left them nearly a year ago."

"Left them?" "Yes, yes. He had fallen into evil courses and they reprimanded him—when he went off, no one knew whither. Letters were written to me by the house, but they must have been miscarried. Nothing has since been heard of Charley. I fear he has taken to more evil ways still. He may be dead, indeed! Unhappy that I am! All connected with me seem to turn out badly!"

The merchant uttered a groan. Old Joe looked at him with deep commiseration. "I am more fortunate than you are, Mr. Worthington," he said, in a low tone. "I had a son—a noble boy—he is dead, sir! You knew my Edmund! He was so handsome, so spirited, so bold; and he was lost at sea. He was a whaler—the ship foundered, and the crew were lost. My poor Edmund! We are truly unfortunate fathers, sir."

There the conversation ended, and the merchant and book-keeper separated. New Year's morning, and the snow was falling and the wind whirling around it like mad. A thousand goblins seemed laughing and turning somersaults and hailing each other as they sported round the gables and whistled through the key-holes and chimneys, wild with mirth, and old Joe Darling's small house, in a remote street of the great city, seemed especially honored by the hobgoblins, who shook the windows until they rattled again.

A great fire was burning and the breakfast table was set, and old Joe was rubbing his hands in front of the blaze and looking out of the window, when a voice behind him, with a rush of laughter in it and sounding like a silver bell, exclaimed: "Happy New Year father, dear. I have caught you."

Old Joe turned around. As he did so a pair of rosy lips pressed his cheek and two arms clung about his neck, belonging to a little fairy of seventeen. "Why, you look like a sunbeam, Daisy," he said. And indeed the face resembled one so brilliant was the light of her eyes. Daisy was small, with a neat, cosy figure, in a plain but pretty dress; and you saw at a glance that this was one of these little fingered fairies, who are the blessings of the homes in which they rule.

dear young friends," said Uncle John. "I must inform you is strictly true in every particular. "There once lived in the city of Baghdad an old merchant whose name was Barilzai, which, being interpreted, is Worthy Man. Abon-ben-darling, whose caravans brought to Baghdad all the treasures of the East. But misfortune came. The caravans were overwhelmed in the sands of the desert. The moment was near when Barilzai would probably be compelled to strew dust upon his head and wander through the streets of Baghdad, crying, 'Barilzai, the merchant, is ruined!'"

His only son had been lost at sea, and the heart of Abon-ben-darling was sad. "Abon-ben-darling is miserable!" he said; "there is no man more miserable!" As he thus spoke, his daughter Paribanou approached him. The name of Paribanou, my children, signifies the Flower of the Daisy. She came now to Abon-ben-darling, and kissing him in the Eastern fashion, said: "Oh! Father! Behold the feast is set, and the holy cedar tree blazes; the tapers therein shine like stars, and many gifts hang down from the branches of the wondrous tree!"

"And there is a gift that our father will value more than all else—a package with his name on it from a distant land!" They did not look at Daisy, who was trembling, and whose hand scarce possessed strength to draw a letter from her bosom. Uncle John continued: "And Abon-ben-darling said: 'Where is this package, my child?' to which the Flower of the Daisy replied: 'Father, dear, it is here! See, I take it from the boughs of the holy cedar tree, and give it to you!'"

As Uncle John uttered the words, Daisy sprang forward with a letter in her hand. "Here father dear!" she cried, bursting into tears and laughter. "It nearly killed me to tell you! Oh, take it, take it! Our Edmund is not dead!" And throwing her arms around old Joe's neck, she sobbed upon his bosom, while with eyes full of wonder, he read the letter from his son. As he read on, he seemed to doubt whether he was reading a real letter. His eyes closed; he uttered a sigh and would have fainted had not Uncle John caught him in his arms.

The letter was written to Daisy by her brother Edmund. He had been picked up in the Pacific and carried to the South Seas by a trading vessel; thence he had worked his way to California, encountered Charles Worthington roaming about in the gold regions—they had speculated there and were coming home on the next steamer. That was the letter. As Joe grew faint, Pet suddenly ran behind his mother's apron, uttering an appalling scream. At the door stood a tall young man with a ferocious beard.

"How are you, father and mother, and Daisy?" They ran into his arms, uttering cries and sobs. The sailor was home again, never to leave them more; and as Daisy rested in her dear brother's arms with her rosy cheeks upon his breast, she said, laughing and crying: "Father, dear, how do you like your New Year's gift?"

The windows shook as she spoke. It was, doubtless, the merry goblins, highly pleased with themselves and everybody else; and the holy night—the happy, blessed night—went on its way full of joy and gratitude. A year afterward, strange to say, saw the house of Worthington Brothers prosperous, and old Joe happy, and Charles the husband of the Flower of the Daisy. And again the cedar tree was lit and spread around its cheerful light, and the loud wild laughter, and the merry goblins seemed to shout: "A happy New Year."

In Naples the papers tell a very pretty story of the Queen of Italy. It appears that as she was driving to the royal wood of Licola, the coachman mistook the road, and one of the gentlemen asked a countryman the way. The man, seeing the fine carriage and horses and the servants' livery and all the gay company, thought he was being fooled. "As if you did not know!" he said, with a grin. The Queen laughed, and assured him they were lost. Then only did the countryman descend to point out the way, after which he walked off as if fearing to be laughed at again.

"Give him 20 francs for his trouble," said the Queen to one of her escort, who going up to the man, said: "Here, my man, is a little present from the Queen of Italy, who thanks you."

TRAT GIRL.

Mrs. Sabra Gaston sat, knitting, in her parlor. It was not a modern parlor, with draped doors, ecrin window curtains, embroidered screens and quaint chairs; but an old-fashioned parlor, with emblems mahogany and hair-cloth furniture; an open fire-place, with brass andirons and cross-stick, and window-shades of stiff, green paper.

But Mrs. Gaston would have been amazed if you had told her that there could be anything handsomer in parlor furnishing than orthodox hair-cloth. To her it was unquestionably the correct thing, and she was never more satisfied than when her capable hands could find nothing more to do in the way of housework, and she brought her sewing in here and sat down.

She was a good woman, who meant to do her duty and be at peace with all the world; but to-day there was a cloud on her usually serene brow. "Take boarders!" she murmured to herself, drawing out her seam-needle and laying it thoughtfully across her lips, as she swayed back and forth in the low rocker. "I never did and never thought I should; but perhaps I would like it for a little change. Brother Ben writes that it's a Mr. Walcott, who is out of health, and his wife, child and daughter. That daughter is what I object to. I sympathize with sick and suffering people, and have always been called a master hand at doctoring up ailing folks with herbs and a few little comforting notions of mine. I don't object to him. The wife isn't a bit stuck up. Ben says, though they're well-to-do people; and I'm fond of children. But a young lady, with her pert notions, making fun of everything that is old-fashioned and respectable, and with six tucked skirts and ruffled fixings in the wash every week, I never could abide. In fact, if it wasn't for that girl I'd take 'em."

After awhile, she rose and went through the house, looking observantly about her. "I s'pose it would look sort of pleasant to city folks, after the heat and dust of town," she said. "If so, I don't suppose it's my duty to keep it away from 'em." They were mostly low, wide rooms, exquisitely clean and comfortable, perfectly quiet, and looking out upon rich, green grass, rows of current bushes and low-boughed apple trees.

A fat cat and two white kittens filled the seat of a chintz-covered rocking chair; a curly, brown dog lay on the wide, blue door-stone, winking sleepily at the flies; a canary hung in the perch; but, though there was a man's straw hat in a big arm-chair in the door yard, Mrs. Gaston was alone in the pleasant old farm-house. "I'll let Forest decide," she said at last. Pretty soon, a cheery whistle sprang up among the apple trees, and a young man, in his shirt sleeves, with a rake over his shoulder, came up idly between the rows of currant bushes.

"Hay's all made and in, mother. Tomorrow I'll take hold of that transplanting." He had a handsome, brown face, a pair of frank blue eyes, a pleasant, cheery voice, and you could have sworn that he was his widowed mother's idol. "Forest, you tell me what to do. Shall I take those city folks to board or not?" Mrs. Gaston spoke with emphasis. Forest laughed, showed a set of white teeth, and an engaging dimple in one bronzed cheek. "Do just as you're a mind to, mother," proceeding to cool his heated head by drenching his curly hair with glittering cold water from the well at the door. It dripped in showers upon the green grass.

"I think I would if it wasn't for that girl, Forest. Girls are so full of airs—city girls, I mean." "Perhaps she won't be very bad. Just bring me a towel, won't you, mother?" "I think I'll take 'em," she said, after a moment, coming back with the towel. "Somehow it seems as if I'd better." "Well, be sure you get good help. They'll make lots of work," remarked Forest, as he walked off. As appeared, he was really indifferent in the matter. All the spring he had been planning to go to Nantucket during the coming month, and would soon be gone. If his mother chose to receive these people and stay at home, instead of going on a visit to his grandfather, on the adjacent farm, as previously arranged, he did not care.

That evening came another letter from Brother Ben. "DEAR SABRA—Told my friend you'd take them, and they are coming right along. Try to nurse up the 'Squire; he's very poorly. His wife is a good little soul, but she don't know anything about sickness. Handie's a nice little boy, and you'll like Amy. I'll try and run out by and by; but business is very pressing this summer." "Well, I'll have to bake, do up the window curtains, and put clean sheets and slips on the beds, then they may come any time," said Mrs. Gaston, after a moment's thought. "Like Amy? That's the daughter, I suppose. Likely. I actually dread that girl! I know! I've seen too many city young ladies." Just then wheels rumbled up and stopped at the door. "Sakes alive! the stage!" Yes, and out stepped a pale gentleman with a little boy in his arms, and two ladies. Forest had gone; Mrs. Gaston stood alone in the doorway. "Is this Mrs. Gaston? We are the Walcotts. Your brother," began the pale gentleman, breathlessly, putting down the little boy. "Come right in!" cried Mrs. Gaston. "You're all tuckered out. I'm glad to see you all, though I wasn't quite ready," she confessed, tipping the cats out of the chintz rocker, and placing it by the open window of the sitting-room for Mr. Walcott.

children can't wait when they are hungry," she said. She then bustled away, and had a bountiful meal on the table in less than half an hour. As soon as supper was over, Mrs. Gaston showed her boarders into the parlor, and then went up stairs to spread the beds with fresh sheets and pillow-slips. She was rather surprised to find at the end of the hall three formidable trunks, where the driver of the stage had deposited them, after conducting his passengers to the door. Suddenly the hall door opened, and Forest put in a laughing face.

"What's these, mother? Are these what the young lady keeps her war paint in? By George!" lifting the handle of one, there ain't a man in the country could back them up those stairs." "I don't know what's to be done," said Mrs. Gaston, helplessly. "Let them be for the present, Forest." This matter was easily adjusted by a suggestion from Mrs. Walcott. "Well, mother," said Forest that evening, having just returned from the village. "have you found the young lady very formidable? I couldn't get back to take a peep at her."

"Bless us, I couldn't tell how she looks to save my life!" replied Mrs. Gaston; "I've been in such a stir ever since they came. But about those trunks, Forest. Mrs. Walcott says the heaviest one is full of books, and can be left anywhere on the ground floor. The others were lighter, and I got grandpa's man to take them up. To think of their lugging half a ton of books about with them!" Forest's bright face suddenly grew luminous. "Perhaps the young lady wears green glasses and is studying medicine!" he laughed. Then, seriously, and rapping the table smartly with his knife-handle, as he ate a late supper: "I'll bet they are the right kind!"

"Yes," said Mrs. Gaston, looking pleased. "I forgot you were fond of books, too." In spite of serious charges laid upon herself, Mrs. Gaston slept past her usual hour, and rose in a hurry. Of course, she was not yet provided with any domestic help, and had commenced her preparations for breakfast, somewhat hurried and worried, when the kitchen door swung open and a little figure in the neat print dress and a large gingham apron entered the room. "It seems that we came upon you unexpectedly, Mrs. Gaston, and you are unprovided with help," said Amy Walcott, "so you must let me help you to get breakfast. I am used to all kinds of housework. What shall I do first?"

"Well," said Mrs. Gaston, more amazed than she could show. "There's everything to do—coffee to boil, biscuit to make, ham and eggs to fry, potatoes to put on, buckwheat—"

"I will make the biscuit," said Amy, rolling up her sleeves deftly, and exposing two pretty arms, "if you'll please tell me where the flour and baking powder and pans are. And then I'll fry the eggs, she added, sifting flour handily. "I always make sour milk biscuit; perhaps you don't know anything about these," suggested Mrs. Gaston. "I guess I can manage them. I've studied chemistry a little," replied Amy. Studied chemistry to learn how to cook! Mrs. Gaston looked bewildered, but commenced cutting ham, and then turned to go to the barn for fresh eggs.

"Let me go!" cried Amy, clapping her pan of biscuits in the oven. "I haven't found any hen's eggs since I was a little girl." And she ran away, "as if she was ten years old," Mrs. Gaston said, afterward. "Has your help come, mother?" asked Forest, coming in with a pail of water. "There's the nicest sort of a little woman out in the barn, hunting hen's eggs." "Why, Forest, it's Miss Walcott! She made the coffee and biscuits—"

The door opened and Amy came in, her apron held up, her face, of dimpled snow and roses, smiling. "Splendid luck!" she laughed. "I've found thirteen—just a baker's dozen." Forest looked and then and there fell in love. He couldn't help it, he told his mother if Amy Walcott had been the Queen of England. "I'll fry them and lay the table, Mrs. Gaston," said then run upstairs and dress Handie, said Amy. "I have the whole care of him, mamma's health is so poor and papa so needs her attention of late. Then: "You needn't fry buckwheats for us, Mrs. Gaston; there'll be plenty of breakfast without. But I'll put on a little of the oatmeal for papa, if you please. He is very fond of it, and it isn't much trouble to cook any time, is it?"

"Bless you! no, child! And the breakfast's ready like magic." The biscuits (made by chemistry, Mrs. Gaston said with awe) turned out perfection; and the oatmeal and creamy milk furnished Mr. Walcott was such a satisfactory breakfast that he seemed heartened up wonderfully at once. Before dinner the stout daughter of a neighbor came into Mrs. Gaston's kitchen, and set her mind at rest as to the labor to be performed. She was able to make her boarders feel at home and entirely comfortable, and in return they seemed to take pains to make themselves exquisitely agreeable. But it was only the ordinary result of good breeding which made the Walcotts so agreeable to the Gastons—the constant unselfishness and gentle consideration of others which never fails to please the most unrefined.

neither unrefined nor uneducated, they did lack the liberal culture of old and modern literature. The Walcotts opened to them a delightful world, which did not end in Amy's removal to the gloomy parlor with graceful draperies, art panels, statuettes and gem pictures. She grew as dear to Forest's mother as to himself—indeed, she always declared she loved her first; and when two years of loving consummated in marriage, Mrs. Gaston had no prejudice against the alterations made in the old house, and the suggestions of Forest's wife, she gave her preference to bamboo and velvet in the furnishing of the new parlor, and willingly assigned the black and white cloth to a spare room, and with a pane here, a bay-window there, and a half-dozen in roses, the old farm house in its most picturesque, as well as the happiest of homes.

Long before he came to the wedding, Brother Ben, still deep in city trade, was written to inquire "how Sabra liked the Walcotts." "Exceedingly!" she answered, "and that girl has been the blessing of our life." "Not Home Like." "Is this a bar-room?" asked a strapping fellow in a coon-skin cap and a buttoned suit, as he eyed the piles of gin and glittering bottles. "Certainly, sir; what'll you have?" answered and inquired the white-aproned attendant. "I reckon not," responded the coon-skin, glancing around suspiciously. "Where's the barrels you sit on?" "We keep the barrels in the cellar, sir." "Where's the gang, sittin' around the stove and ready to waltz up at the sign of coin?"

"We don't allow any sitting around here. When a gentleman drinks he gets out." "Where's the man with his coon-skin gone out?" demanded coon-skin in a whisper. "We don't have such parties. Can he do anything for you?" "Ain't you got any old noses so?" "Where?" asked the visitor with a worried expression. "No, we haven't," responded the white-aproned keeper firmly. "Will the man who tomhaws strangers be in directly?" interrogated coon-skin, after a short pause. "Don't know any such man. If you want anything ask for it."

"But the fellow that shoots the game out of your mouth without spilling a drop of poison, where might he be?" "Perhaps you had better go ask for him from here. I think you had better go out." "Say them words again, pardner. They sounds like it. That's natural." "Get out, or I'll throw you out." "Oh, now you're whisperin', stranger. Sing it over to me. Club me once or twice. Put a bullet through this right lung. Put a skewer through that left kidney of mine. You're a shoutin' nosy. Gimme some judgment sunrise. To tell to me again. Why didn't you declare yourself at first, pardner? Why didn't you hold back? Throw me the tan-bark, or And he poured out an allopathic dose and downed it, paid for it and walked off. A Montana man can't enjoy his whiskey in a bar-room that doesn't some way remind him of home.—[Albany Argus, Oct. 11, 1867.]

Washington Irving on Mary of Scots. My DEAR SIR: I am infinitely obliged to you for the copy of your life of "Mary Queen of Scots," which you have had the kindness to send me. I have read it with intense though painful interest. Indeed when I had once commenced I could not lay it down until I had finished it, which I did late last evening. You have faithfully and conscientiously accomplished a generous undertaking, the vindication of the memory of one of the loveliest, but most unfortunate of woman who, after suffering every wrong and outrage while living, has been basely vilified in history. You have also cleared up some of the dark points of her story, on which malignity had succeeded in casting a shade, and have shown her as worthy of love as of pity.

It is one of the special offices of our literature to call up before its fresh and unbiased tribunal the historical questions of the Old World, to rejudge its judgments and reverse decisions on which death and time had seemed to set a seal. Such an office you have honestly and impartially executed in regard to poor Mary and her persecutors, and I am much taken if the world does not pronounce you a "righteous judge." In the meantime I shall look with great interest for the volume of Mary's letters, etc., with which you promise to follow up the biography.

Very truly, my dear sir, your obliged friend, DONALD McLEOD, Esq. Another Good Boy. A Detroit grocer was the other day hungrily waiting for his clerk to return from dinner and give him a chance at his noonday meal, when a boy came into the store with a basket in his hand, and said: "I seed a boy brag up this 'ere basket from the door and run, and I after him and made him give it up." "My lad, you are an honest boy." "Yes, sir." "And you look like a good boy." "Yes, sir." "And good boys should always be encouraged. In a box in the back room there are eight dozen eggs. You may take them home to your mother and keep the basket."

The grocer had been saving those few days and weeks to reward some one. In rewarding a good boy he also got eight dozen bad eggs carried out of the neighborhood free of cost, and he chuckled a littled chuck as he walked homewards. The afternoon waned, night came and went, and once more the grocer ate his dinner. When he returned he was picking his teeth and wearing a complacent smile. His eye caught a basket of eight dozen eggs as he entered the store, and he queried: "Been buying some eggs?" "Yes; got hold of those from a farmer's boy," replied the clerk. "E lame boy with a blue cap on?" "Yes." The grocer sat down and examined the eggs. The shells had been washed clean, but they were the same eggs that good boy had lugged home the day before.