

A Family Picture.

"Mary, dear, this is the very time for you to redeem your promise as to the Mordants. We are all alone and that smouldering fire and these comfortable chairs, with pussy purring on the rug, gives just the cosy air to beget storytelling, or castle-building, or dreaming, and since there are two of us, the two latter would be rather unsozial; so tonight we will have the history of that family. The picture of their lovely home stands out so fully before me that I feel quite eager to enter into its spirit of moving life and human sentiment and passions."

"I forewarn you, Nellie, that there is no romance connected with the story of those three lives, and if it interests you it will be from the intelligence, refinement and purity of character of those who have lived, joyed and sorrowed within the lonely home of the Mordants rather than from anything unusual in their history. I proposed to tell it to you simply that you might see that when the touchstone of truth is applied to human life, be its surroundings what they may, we usually find that sorrow, in some form, comes to all; and therewith learn to be content with what the Divine Father has allotted to us."

"I find, dear Mary, that I take to your moralizing much more kindly than of yore, but to-night I will have the story; so commence."

Mary Howard reached over and clasped the hand of the younger girl, and silently bent her eyes into the bed of dying embers, as if they were a link in memory to bear her backward to scenes long since passed into the things that were. For full ten minutes thus she sat, and when she raised her eyes and gave voice to her thoughts, Nellie saw from the liquid depths of their rich hazel that there was that in the history about to be related that touched the full chords of sympathy throughout the soul of her friend, and that, however simple it might be, it would certainly be given with the deepest interest of her being.

"Although but twelve when Laura Murry became Mrs. Mordant, I remember the bride as if it were yesterday, aye, and the bridegroom, too. He was not particularly handsome as to features, but a noble head, finely poised upon athletic shoulders, gave the beholder a sense of God's image upon man, and filled him with the idea of strength and power, which is always particularly agreeable to recognize in man. His face was the best type of English, with a ruddy-white complexion, while Laura's brought to mind the old Castilian race of Spain, although she traced her genealogy in America as far back as the settlement of Louisiana. She was quick-witted, spirited and so full of life that it seemed like a gushing spring overspreading all around it by the mere force of its own energy."

"This was her surface life as the world saw her; but deep down in her inner being lay the fires of strong passion. These had been latent until love for Charles Mordant awoke them into full force. To her this inner being was too sacred a thing for the vulgar gaze, so she closed the portals of her heart in upon it, and Charles Mordant and she only entered therein. The world knew that wealth had allied to riches and gave the verdict usually just, that money had begot money, and that nothing higher or holier cemented the marriage vows between them. They cared not for this. True, Charles was in the world and of it, but his home was to him the sanctuary of his heart and his wife's presiding genius, and he was rather gratified that the world knew naught of it. He knew that its breath would surely contaminate the air about it, even if it proved powerless to touch the substance itself."

"As to Laura, her world was in her husband. Her home was an Elysium, because her all was there. Thus their lives passed on and the world knew not of them, though the angel host looked smilingly down, and departed loved ones hovered ever around. There came a night when the household tread was hushed, and the heart of Charles Mordant suppressed its breathing in fear and glad expectancy. An hour of dread suspense and nervous hopes, a faint little cry, a mother's soft sigh of relief, and Mary, mother of Jesus, hovered low, and imprinted a mark upon the soul of the baby loaned to that house. Oh, what an event on earth; an immortal soul taking on mortality, an eternal existence entering a world of sin, sorrow and death. A boy child given unto mortal training. No wonder that heaven is stirred and earth passes in gratification at the high honor. Laura's life was now doubled; her world was divided; yet there was to her a oneness in father and son that rendered the division only a beautiful mystery—a charming link to life. With the widening of her heart's world her soul rather expanded to meet the demand than divided its affection. Charles Mordant was proudly content. He only felt that his soul was fuller, his life richer, even where he knew not that it was a wait before. Thus life glided on; and, had not a change come, you might have contended, almost without contradiction, that the spirit of beauty held a charmed life over that home."

"Another momentous night spread darkness over the earth, and hung a black pall over that house. Death entered, and Charles Mordant grew cold and rigid in its icy clasp, and the heart ceased its breathings and gave no responsive throbs to the wild wailing of Laura's agonized soul. The world looked on the dumb-stricken woman, and at last saw its error and did her justice. She heeded not its fiat, she knew not its voice. She shut herself up in her home, where every breath was a mournful pleasure, bringing freshly before her the voice whose admiration had invested them with a sacred charm, the hand whose touch had hallowed each shrub and tree, the feet whose tread had consecrated every spot of the house and grounds; nay, every beauty brought back the spirit that had embodied all of earth to her. Thus, you see, the loveliness you so much admire was in some kind her grief."

"As months upon months slowly wound over her poor, aching life upon the never-ceasing wheel of time, she gradually turned to his boy to watch the development of the father in this little embryo man. Slowly her life took on this new care, and slowly her heart learned anew its loving interest, and she grew placidly content. Another night came to her out of all the many nights of the world—a night gloriously beautiful in the resplendent light of moon and stars. The boy lay sleeping. The mother, keeping watch over her smiling son, filling her heart with bright promises for his future, felt that the light of life was once more passing into her soul. The shrubs and flowers upon which she gazed out from the window took on a new beauty from the fun and frolic of her boy amid their winding labyrinth through the hours of day, and as they lay sleeping in the smiling light of moon and stars, she turned a lovingly from their exquisite beauty to the nobler, lying, breathing beauty of the child, who was indeed all the world to her now. An unseen angel hovered over the boy, and, smiling, whispered in his ear: 'Thou art so like me, surely thou art of me a part; come with me.' The boy lay smiling, as if dreaming beautiful dreams, and the lambent light of heaven seemed gathering over his brow in a strange new beauty, and murmuring, he softly whispered: 'Take mamma, too.' She heard, and in a flood of fondness, bent low and kissed her idol."

"As the hours waned, the fair boy paled whiter and whiter, and just as the gray dawn came gliding from the east to usher in a new day, an angel entered upon the light of heaven; and the mother dropped to earth stricken and broken-hearted. In her piteous agony a little voice whispered: 'Take mamma, too,' and with it came thoughts of heaven, and prostrate she cast helpless wretches at the foot of the cross. The Saviour whispered peace, and she arose a subdued and comforted woman. Since that day her life has been rich in Christian charities, and though she cares for her lovely home and keeps the grounds as of yore, their beauties breathe to her of God's love and mercy to the children of men, and seem prototypes of unknown beauties above."

"Ah! Nellie, fleeting and unsatisfying are the joys of earth, if they be not sanctified by the Spirit of God." Tears were trembling in Nellie's eyes as Mary closed.

"Cousin Mary, I must know Mrs. Mordant; such a life must be a treasure in one's experience."

"Yes, darling, it is my wish that you should; few can teach you better the true value of life or the vast importance of eternity."

The Squatter's Spirit.

The spirit of the renowned old squatter still lingers in the land.

"Which road shall I take?" asked a traveler who sat on the steps of a cross-road store.

"Which one do you want?"

"I intended to ask which one should I take to lead me to the river?"

"Take your choice."

"Which one leads the river?"

"What river?"

"Why, the Arkansas."

"You want to know which one leads there?"

"Yes, sir."

"How long have you been in this country?"

"That makes no difference, my friend. I want to know something of the geography of this community."

"No, it makes no difference how long you have been here, but there ain't a geography of this neighborhood, but there was a lot of 'em in the school-house when it burned."

"How far is it to the river, any?"

"Well, any way, it's about 200 miles."

"Oh, how far is it?"

"You can make it as far as you please."

"I mean how near is it?"

"That'll sorter do. I don't know."

"Is this a temperance community?"

"Sorter."

"How long has it been since you had a drink?"

"It ain't been more than a month, but it seems like a couple of years."

"What would you give for a drink?"

"A common-sized mule."

"I've got some very fine stuff here in a bottle; have some?"

The native grasped the bottle eagerly and drank.

"What is it you want to know?"

"The road to the river."

The native took another drink and said:

"The river is right over yonder, but the ferryman will charge you like thunder if you ain't got no whisky. Good day."

When the traveler arrived at the ferry he found his friend of the store in the boat waiting for him.

"Hello! here we are again. What will you take to row me across?"

"How much have you got?"

"I mean, what is your price?"

"Three drinks and the cork."

"What do you want with the cork?"

Kilwarden, who was passing in his carriage, but hesitated to follow their enthusiastic leader to the castle, and dispersed at the first volley from a party of soldiers. Emmet, in disgust at the outrages and pusillanimity of the insurgents, abandoned them, and escaped to the Wicklow mountains. After the failure of the first blow he checked the other movements which had been projected, husbanding his resources in the hope of soon renewing the revolt. He might have evaded the pursuit of the government, but a tender attachment which subsisted between him and Miss Curran, the daughter of the celebrated barrister, induced him to return to Dublin to bid her farewell before leaving the country. He was tracked, apprehended, tried, and convicted of high treason. He defended his own cause, delivering an address to the judge and jury of remarkable eloquence and pathos, and met his fate with courage. His fate and that of Miss Curran are the subjects of two of the finest of Moore's Irish Melodies.

Robert Emmet had three sisters and five brothers residents of this country. The brothers were all distinguished men, the most eminent being Thomas Addis Emmet, who was at the head of the New York bar and Master of Chancery, until that office was abolished. His daughter, Miss Margaret Emmet, died at the age of ninety years, March 1, 1883, in New York, surrounded by the surviving members of her distinguished family. She was the last of the Emmets who were born in Ireland.

Thomas Witherell Palmer was born January 25, 1830, one of a family of nine children. His father, Thomas Palmer, was a well-known business man of Michigan, and his mother, whose maiden name was Mary A. Witherell, was the sister of the late Judge Witherell, of the Wayne circuit court. The senator-elect was educated at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. After leaving college he made a pedestrian tour in Spain, and supplemented this useful experience with a residence in South America of several months' duration. He began a real-estate business in Detroit, in the year 1853. Two years afterward he married a daughter of the late Charles P. Merrill, owner of one of the largest lumber businesses in Michigan, and became associated with his father-in-law in its management and ownership. Mr. Palmer and his wife inherited Mr. Merrill's business interests on the death of that gentleman, and the senator-elect continues the sale of lumber at various points in the state, where he is represented by agents acting as local partners. Mr. Palmer has served one term as a member of the board of estimates and one as state senator. He was defeated as a candidate for congress in the campaign of 1876. As a man of culture, successful in business, an able speaker, and possession pleasing social characteristics, Senator-elect Palmer is likely to make his mark in the senate of the United States.

Due d'Annale.

The Due d'Annale is the fourth son of King Louis Philippe, and is the abiest of the Orleansprinces. He is now sixty-one years of age, his profession is that of a soldier, and before the revolution of 1848 he had rendered valuable assistance in the conquest of Algeria. The events which drove his father into exile also caused him to take up his residence in England, where he resided from 1848 to 1871.

After the overthrow of the Second Empire the Due d'Annale returned to France, was elected a member of the National Assembly and resumed his position as a general of the French army. In this capacity he acted as president of the court martial which condemned Marshal Bazaine to death for his alleged treachery in the surrender of Metz. Up to the year 1879 the Due d'Annale commanded the seventh corps d'armee. His present position is that of inspector-general. He is a man of great wealth, an accomplished scholar, a member of the French Academy and an author. At the present time there seems to be a doubt whether the House of Deputies will succeed in their desire to effect the exile of all the Orleans princes, the Due d'Annale among the number. The heir to the throne in the Orleans family is the Comte de Paris, son of the Duke of Orleans, eldest son of King Louis Philippe.

Senator Manderson.

Comparisons which reflect upon the membership of the Senate as at present constituted, are not uncommon. Whether just or not—and it should be remembered that there is in human nature the disposition to magnify the men and things of the past—the course of the elections thus far indicates that while the best men in the Senate of the present Congress, with but few exceptions, will be members of the next, the senators to succeed those retiring or falling of reelection, are, generally speaking, men of the age, culture and antecedents which promise the thorough, vigorous and sagacious treatment of subjects for legislative action. This remark holds good of both political parties, and is made without the entirely unnecessary institution of a comparison between the future and the present Senate.

The senator-elect from Nebraska, Charles F. Manderson, is an able man and a brilliant speaker. He was elected on the seventeenth joint ballot as a Republican, and accepted the office in a speech which has made an impression of his excellent ability. The country may expect to hear impressively from Senator Manderson.

Out of Luck.

Two prospectors owned a mining claim in the Paradise Mountains, which they concluded to dispose of to the highest bidder for cash. As there were rich croppings on the claim, two miners who had saved up a few hundred dollars bought the claim. When the money was paid and the deed signed, the sellers banded to buyers to play a game of draw poker. The latter agreed to that proposition, and in a few hours had won back every dollar they paid for the claim. Next day the buyers went to work on their purchase, and in a short time uncovered a small lead which carries ore that assays very high in silver. The sellers came to the conclusion that luck was against them, so they left this part of the state.—Nevada Silver State.

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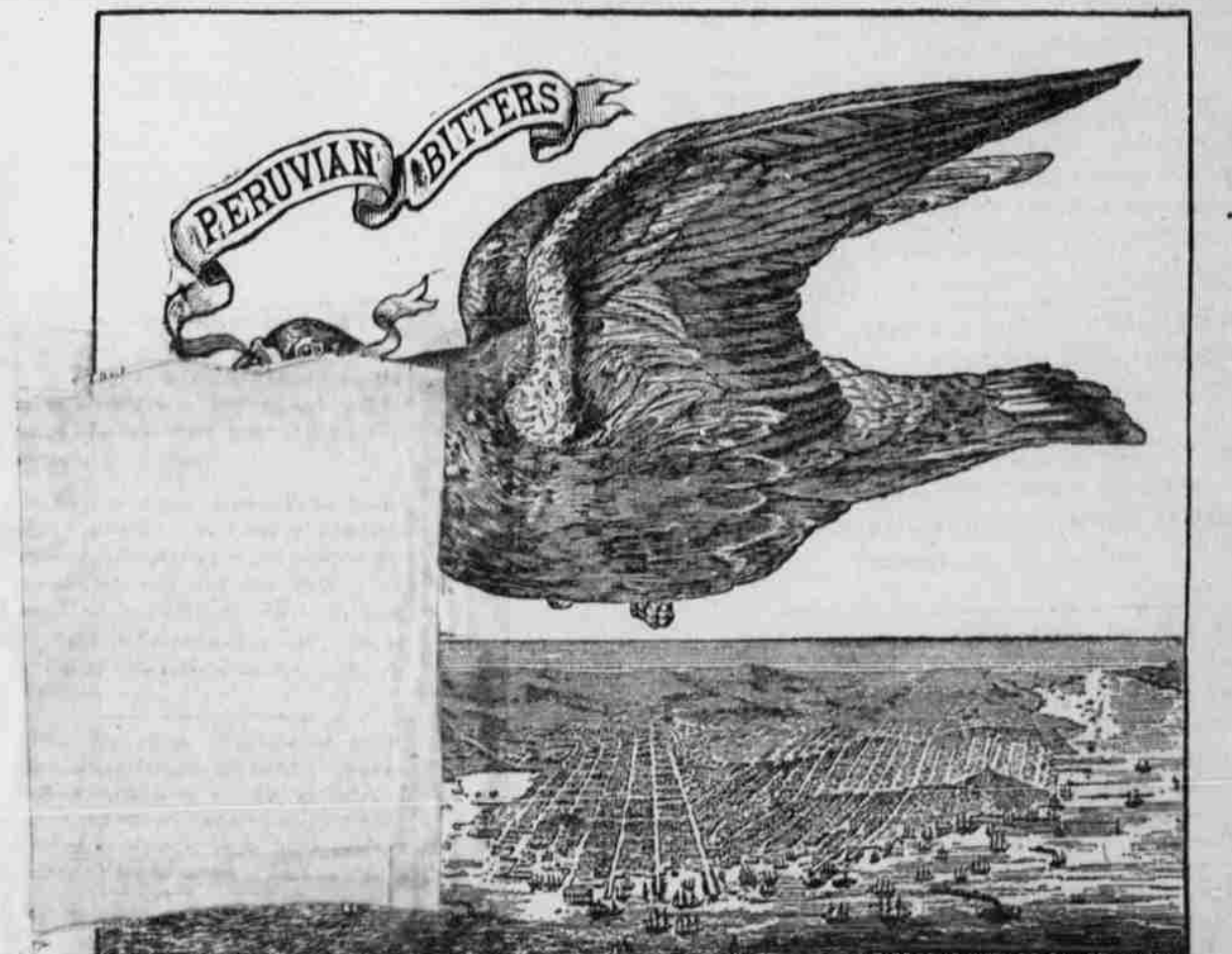
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