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ADONIS LOVELADY'S CLAIM.

BY ABIGAIL SCOTT DUNWAY.

Why his mother called him Adonis, nobody knew; nor would you have ever imagined, to look at him, that the cognomen of Lovelady was any more appropriate than that of Adonis. Indeed, of all the men who had herded cattle in Brush Prairie precinct since the days that antedated all need of precinct divisions in Oregon Territory, Adonis Lovelady seemed the least capable of supporting such a title with any show of consistency. Rumor had it that he had once been a bouncing, roly-poly, well-rounded baby, the delight of his lady mother's heart, and the hope of his aristocratic father's ambition; but you never would have suspected, had you not known him until I did, that he had been born in the proud family of Colonel Lovelady, of Old Virginia, and that his mother belonged to the notable house of the Randolphs.

Adonis Lovelady had run away from the restraints of his aristocratic parental home in his boyhood. I do not know what induced him to run away, but I do know that when he had peregrinated about the country for half a dozen years, and had grown from a lubberly boy of sixteen into an angular and sinewy young man of twenty-two, he was very grateful for the destiny that landed him in the Territory of Oregon and settled him squarely upon a fine donation claim. And I also know that, however handsome he might have been at first, he had been the subject of so many hardships, misfortunes and disappointments generally that at forty he resembled, more than any other living thing, the gnarled and knotty oaks that grew as a wind-break in the gap of the Coast Range, hard by his virgin acres. His own mother would not have recognized him if she had met him; but that was of little consequence, seeing there was no prospect of her meeting him at all. His father had long ago given him up for dead, and I do not suppose that he would ever have been unearthed for public notice if it had not been for the Allgrace family, into which he was married by the free consent of Gracie Allgrace when he reached the age of twenty-three.

Gracie was, as I have been reliably informed, a very beautiful girl in her maiden days; but you would never think it, to see her now, good reader, for she has grown as anxious and angular as her husband, and the eternal unfitness of names in general is even more strikingly illustrated in her case than in that of Adonis himself. Their union has resulted in half a score of really fine-looking children, thereby proving that the parental stock was good in the abstract, however badly it had been warped and twisted from the graceful promise of its youth through the hard knocks of a rugged pioneer experience.

The donation claim of Adonis Lovelady consisted of three hundred and twenty acres of as beautiful land as ever nestled down upon the clayey subsoil of the departed ages, and the donation claim belonging to his wife was equal in area and natural advantages to his own, thereby giving the couple an equal start in life, and—other things being equal—placing them upon an equal road to liberty, prosperity and happiness.

Gracie Lovelady was not afflicted with any of the modern nonsense that fills the heads of silly women with the thought of being supported by husbands. She was a *worker*. She planted corn and potatoes, milked cows, made butter, and washed, sewed, churned, scrubbed, ironed and cooked for half a dozen bachelors, besides attending to the wants of her own numerous family of little Loveladys and waiting upon Adonis, her husband, with that sublimity of subservience which half spoils a sensible man and quite destroys the proper appreciation of all self-asserting womanhood in the mind of many an otherwise tolerant and tolerable husband.

The neighbors called Adonis Lovelady a shiftless fellow. His wife apologized for his shortcomings, saying he was a bad manager, but he meant well. He was not lazy about work, but he was injudicious in its application. He often did the right thing, but he almost always did it at the wrong time. He would make rails in harvest time and let the wheat get over ripe and go to waste, or he would build a *covert* in the threshing season and let the rain catch his grain in the sheaf. He would go a-hunting in the plowing season and a-fishing in planting time.

Mrs. Lovelady saw things differently, and sometimes essayed a little advice; but Adonis Lovelady did not take any more kindly to the idea of obeying the advice of his wife than he had in his youth of his mother. He liked to work by contraries. Had his wife understood his disposition when they were first married, she might have had her own way in everything by simply opposing him in that which she most desired him to do.

But she did not know how to "manage him" till it was too late to do so successfully.

"I think it would be well, dear, for you to build the house and barn and make the fences and plant the orchards on my half of our claim," she said, when they first moved on to the claim. "For you know, dear, that in case anything should happen to you, like debt, for instance, we would then be sure of a home for our old age, to say nothing of a support for our children, if we should have any."

Adonis Lovelady, who had been thinking favorably of the same thing, instantly changed his mind.

"I'll have nobody saying that I live with my wife!" he said, testily. "The improvements shall go on my own donation claim."

And they did. Things went on very well for half a dozen years. Mrs. Lovelady had an excellent lot of cows, and her butter brought a good price. Her vegetable garden was a success, and her chickens proved a tolerable source of revenue. But after a while her health failed. Too many babies and too much laborious drudgery will in time break down the health of the strongest "supported and protected" farmer's wife in America.

Mrs. Lovelady could no longer cultivate her kitchen garden, and Adonis never had time to do it. He was always hurried and always tired. His wife could never make him understand that a day's hunting in planting time, even if successful, was not to be compared, in profits, to a potato crop or a cabbage patch in the Fall.

The little Loveladys became more and more clamorous for food as they grew older, and Mrs. Lovelady was compelled to part with a cow from time to time to purchase the groceries and clothing which she had always, while in health, procured in exchange for butter.

"It is like killing the goose that lays the golden egg," she once ventured to say in mild remonstrance, when the sale of a favorite cow was pending.

But Adonis Lovelady was offended at what he called her "meddling," and she did not attempt to interfere again.

The years rolled on, and a mortgage hung heavily over the donation claim of the head of the family. Mrs. Lovelady recovered her health in sufficient degree to resume her labors, but the interest on the mortgage ate up the proceeds of her toil; and while the tenth child was an infant of tender age, and her own feeble strength was well-nigh exhausted, the half-section of land which her husband had so prided himself upon possessing, was sold under the Sheriff's hammer for a sum barely sufficient to cover the debt that hung over it.

Adonis Lovelady had no heart to begin again, he said, especially if compelled to live with his wife upon her own acres in order to have a home. Mrs. Lovelady was sorely perplexed. Her older children were clamorous for books and dress, and her younger ones required all her feeble strength to provide for their daily wants.

"Make me a deed to your claim, Gracie," said Adonis at last, "and then I'll go to work and improve it."

"If you had put the improvements on my claim in the first place, I could always have kept a roof over your head, you know, dear," was the hesitating reply.

Adonis Lovelady whimpered and shed tears and bewailed his hard fate and fretted over his lack of appreciation by the worn-out mother of his ten children, and in every conceivable way made her life burdensome, until, to get rid of his importunities, and in spite of her better judgment, she affixed her name to a document assigning to him the ownership, control and custody of her own homestead.

I agree with you, good lady reader, that in so doing she acted very unwisely; but wait until you, under like circumstances, are subjected to a like temptation, and you will see that you will do no better.

Adonis Lovelady had other debts of which his wife was not aware. One of them was a doctor's bill of four years' standing, which had been run when the twins were born, and which somehow made Mrs. Lovelady feel very culpable when it came to her notice, as though she ought to apologize to the doctor for the temerity that had not scrupled to burden her husband with so many responsibilities when he was a bad manager and unable to meet the expense.

"Why didn't you keep your donation claim in your own name and compel your shiftless lout of a husband to chop cord-wood to pay the bill?" bluntly asked the practical doctor.

Mrs. Lovelady shed tears of bitter humiliation and did not answer. How could she?

The rickety cabin which Adonis Lovelady erected on his wife's former property served for a time as a shelter; but the family could not eat or wear it, nor would creditors grant the perplexed husband and father another year of grace.

Mrs. Lovelady's land claim was in due time advertised for sale under the Sheriff's hammer.

This brought Mr. Allgrace, the father of Mrs. Lovelady, to the front. And I, being in search of a ranch, was driven out to the land claim in question in company with the father and mother of the supported and protected woman, whom we found in tears and destitution.

"Women are blasted idiots in money matters!" said Mr. Allgrace, desperately. "What in the name of common sense did you sign over your claim to Adonis for, Gracie? Didn't you have sense enough to know he couldn't keep it?"

"You forget yourself, sir! Adonis Lovelady is my husband!" said Mrs. Lovelady, with an imperious gesture in ill keeping with her angular form and grim visage.

"That hasn't prevented him from being a darned fool!" was the father's apt rejoinder.

"Then we're well mated," said Gracie, with a bitter smile.

"Well mated! I'd say so! Half a score o' clamorous young ones, and not a rood o' land to bless yourselves with!"

"I deeded my claim to Mr. Lovelady because he wouldn't go to work on my land, father. It was too humiliating to his pride. A man ought to be the head of the family, you know."

"Stuff and nonsense!" retorted Mr. Allgrace. "A man that's worthy to be the head of a family never bothers his head about his imaginary dignity. How much is the indebtedness of this paragon of conceit and incapacity that you call the head of the family?"

"I don't know."

"Then ask him, and find out."

"He won't tell me. He thinks it isn't my business to know."

"I'd like to know whose business it is, then, with all these mouths to feed and nothing to go upon!"

Adonis Lovelady entered at this juncture, looking crestfallen and sheepish. Hot words passed for several minutes between the father-in-law and himself. I shall not repeat their language. Suffice it to say that each consigned the other to places where the thermometer would hardly indicate the heat.

"I shall bid high enough upon this land claim," said Mr. Allgrace, "to free it from encumbrance, and then I'll turn it over to my daughter for her inheritance, retaining the control of it in my own possession till she gets sense enough in her head to know that she's somebody on her own account."

"And compel me to live with my wife?" asked Adonis Lovelady, with a lugubrious look that I regret my inability to transfer to paper.

"You can live with your wife or go to thunder!" was the contemptuous response. "I have no patience with any such nonsense. If you'd been man enough to make a living and be somebody, in your own person, you'd never have been in this fix. I always notice that the men of smallest mental caliber and greatest incapacity to get on in the world are the greatest sticklers for their imaginary rights!"

I had good reason, as the reader knows, to refrain from bidding when Mrs. Lovelady's claim was sold under the hammer.

Mr. Allgrace kept his word. He bought the claim and paid the debts, and gave his daughter an order upon his account at bank for money to fence and plow and build and plant an orchard.

Adonis Lovelady was very indignant at first, but he gradually became accustomed to the new order of things. It never will be possible to make a good manager of him, but he has learned in these later years to rely upon the superior judgment of his wife, and has altogether given up the idea of ever again owning a donation claim on his own account.

Mrs. Lovelady has regained her health and spirits, and is driving ahead with her business in a practical, quiet, womanly way, bringing health and prosperity to herself and family, and causing her husband to prosper in a manner that, under the old regime, would not have been possible.

I wish every Mrs. Lovelady had a father like Mr. Allgrace. But, as very few women in like circumstances are blessed with parents who can or will assist them, my next desire is that the inherent individual rights of married women may hereafter be respected, and that men and women will learn at once that both sexes will be largely benefited by granting to both the liberty that is now monopolized by one class.

The death in New York is announced of Eliza Bliss, who brought out Mark Twain's "Innocents Abroad" after all the other publishers of note in New York, Boston and Philadelphia had refused it. Bliss' Company, the American, made \$70,000 with the book.

Miss Nellie Holbrook has made a Republican campaign tour of Connecticut, and reports the enthusiasm as great.

FROM "LITTLE RHODY."

"KESIAH SHELTON" ELABORATES HIS VIEWS OF THE WOMAN SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT.

PROVIDENCE, R. I., September 15, 1880.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW NORTHWEST:

I have just read your recent scolding about "unfragrant lilies," and will enlarge upon my views of that great question, the suffrage movement. I do not believe in suffrage for either man or woman, with no limitation but that of a certain age. I do believe, and always have done so, that, the same conditions being complied with by each, one should be allowed the privilege of voting that is accorded to the other. The fact of negroes' being allowed to vote without restriction is by many considered as overwhelming argument in favor of woman's being granted a like privilege at once. Aside from enfranchising unregenerate rebels, I consider the full and unrestricted enfranchisement of the negroes the greatest mistake of the age. I do not believe in perpetuating blunders. Neither do I believe in following precedents, when to do so is to the possible detriment of our future welfare; so the fact that man has for all time voted "early and often," without educational or (in many States) any restriction, would not to me be an argument in favor of continuing that plan. It is never too late to improve, and there is no time as precious or opportune as to-day. I would restrict the coming voters, each and all alike, and with as wise restrictions as possible. When the imbecile and ignorant voters die off, let not the coming politicians stumble darkly and ignorantly through the very ruts left by them. "The world moves." Let us move also, and not lose the treasures of life by our sloth.

The equal rights movement has brought to public view much heretofore unsuspected "brilliance and wisdom" from both sexes. An attempt was made before our Legislature last Winter to drive the "entering wedge"—i. e., that women should be allowed to vote upon all school questions. One of the "wise men" sternly opposed it, as being dangerous and liable to cause untold woes—but he professed loudly that he was honestly in favor of full suffrage, yet to allow the daughters of Eve (why not of Adam, too? don't they earn their living by the sweat of their brows?) a voice upon certain questions only would cause—would cause—well, after all, words failed him to depict the future state of society, under such unwise conditions, that was revealed to him. Wise seer, what was it thou didst see?

It is hoped that he has recuperated during the Summer, and will exhibit as much brilliancy as ever the coming session. Did you dream that the small State of Rhode Island could contain such strength of intellect? Well, he does live near the Massachusetts line, and perhaps breathes in culture and judgment during our frequent "northers." You know when Butler gets to spouting there is considerable thrown upon the breeze, and if at that time our wise man should be setting on the much-disputed line, with face turned northward seeking inspiration for Winter use, he might soon be filled to repletion.

In Massachusetts, women have been granted the "privilege" of voting upon the school question, and it would be interesting to know what proportion of women that have talked "women's rights" have availed themselves of the right now granted. Some say, "We don't care for that tid-bit." "We have no children," or "Our children are now out, so we have no interest in schools." What, no interest in schools? For shame, I say; it was well said that selfishness is the bane of the world. The woman who has whined, or ranted, or has deviously pretended that she thought she was wronged by the deprivation of a voter's privilege, and now refuses to avail herself of the opportunity even of partial suffrage, should hide her head and seek some secluded spot where she may never be heard of more. Partial suffrage is the "entering wedge," and each and every wisely-cast "woman's vote" is a telling blow that strikes home and opens the way for more and greater liberties to follow. Every woman that has talked "women's rights" and now ignores even this partial privilege granted in some States, does now deliberately block the wheel of progress that she has been pretending to help along. One of the most effective arguments against school suffrage for women in our State was that although many signatures "prayed" our Legislature for the right, yet in reality it would prove, as in other States, that but few cared for it after all.

It is inconceivable to me how a woman who "would talk the legs off an iron skillet" when once started upon the subject of woman's wrongs and woman's rights, can, when asked if she has been "enrolled," assume a look of astonishment and make evasive or contemptuous answer: "I pray thee have me excused, for I do not care to vote until I can vote upon all questions." "I don't care who is on the School Committee. I don't want the office, I am sure." "I never cared to vote, but petitioned to help those that did." "I think the poll tax should be abolished. I shall not pay to vote." "I am too old; couldn't vote long anyway." "I am young; there is time enough." And so on *ad libitum, ad nauseam*. Pardon, if I have offended any one. I love sincerity, truth and honor. Yours,
KESIAH SHELTON.