

Current Literature.

PAYING THE CHURCH DEBT.

"Oh! husband, I heard such a sermon to-day, My dear Mr. Stiggins, who said we would pay Next Sabbath the debt on our church, and said he,

"Whoever subscribes—O, how happy he'll be,"

"And all may this glorious privilege share By naming the sum he surely can spare;

And dear Mr. Stiggins said all can afford To give back what only belongs to the Lord, Who will pay treble—besides if we should Just sacrifice something, we'd feel the more good."

"Yes, wife, of that privilege all should partake A sacrifice for such a cause we must make; I, being unselfish, will let you, I guess, Feel good—so we'll sacrifice your new silk dress."

"Oh husband, I couldn't. My six won't suffice, Our pastor meant you would with joy sacrifice A few of your pleasures, I tho't you'd be glad To give up your pipe and your papers so bad."

Rummaging.

"Kitty! Kitty!" cried her aunt, "What are you doing in the garret? Come down child, do. There's not one thing there you would care about, and I do hate to have people rummaging about my things," she added in a lower tone, quite unheard by her niece, who ran gaily down.

"Oh, aunt! such treasures! Are you going to sit down now? I'll bring my work." And she ran into her room to brush off the dust from her black dress. "Aunt Catty," she began, after they were seated in a bare parlor, which Kitty contemplated with an inward shudder, "I wish you would tell me about Great-Aunt Katharine."

"What shall I tell you about her?" "Oh! everything. Why she was so queer and unkind to you and papa, and what became of the beautiful old place and furniture; and why you, poor thing, were cut off with a shilling."

"In the first place," said Miss Randall, rather grimly, "she never was unkind to your father; she gave him a good education, and he was a man; and what more could he want? and I think, too. But the place; why, do tell, Kitty Randall, if you didn't know it went to the Masons? Jane Mason was her other niece, and had a large family of children; and I suppose it was all right. But as for me, who had always lived with her from a baby—well, I suppose we were too much alike. If she nagged, I answered back, spoke my mind, instead of holding my tongue. However, I'll try to be just to poor Aunt Katharine. I don't believe in my heart that she would have let these trifles influence her will, though in the long years they do turn love into something very much like hate. But it was more than that. I suppose I may as well tell you, Kitty. I was engaged to the wrong man."

"Aunt! You engaged! Why did nobody ever tell me about it?" "Who was there to tell you, Kitty? Your poor father was ill so long he couldn't remember the past—my past at any rate."

"But do tell me all now, dear Aunt Catty."

"There's not much to interest you, child. I was thirty, and plain as a hedge fence, and lovers had never troubled me much; so when this man—never mind his name—began to make up to me, and seemed to care so much, and admire and respect, you know, he made a fool of me, a perfect fool."

"Aunt Katharine hated him. She did everything to induce me to break it off. I couldn't think why. He was a very reasonable man, my dear, and had made both his other wives happy; and I was just set on him, I am ashamed to say."

"Finally, she told me all. It was an uncle of this very man, the same name even, who had ruined her life, and had made her the queer, crabbed woman she was. She was only sixteen when he persuaded her into a marriage, to be concealed until she was of age or grandpa could be brought round; but before that time came her fine young gentleman had settled his fate by committing forgery and being sentenced for twenty years."

"Aunt Katharine never owned the marriage, though she might have easily got a divorce, and she gave him a large sum to promise in writing never to claim her, and she burned the certificate. And as for letting me marry the nephew of this man, and having him drop in upon us at any time, why, she wouldn't, and she ended by declaring that it was my fortune James Lavater (there the name is out) wanted, and not me, and that not one cent of her money should ever go to forgers and fortune hunters."

"Matters didn't mend. Neither gave up. We couldn't; we were born so. It was just as impossible to either as to sit crooked or to make our hair curl; and we were just alike. I felt for aunt; I must say; but I saw no reason why her bad luck should keep me from happiness. Well, Kitty, it wasn't many weeks after that aunt died. Died in a moment, of heart disease. Nobody knew she had it, unless maybe herself, for she looked strange and shaken for some days, and I guess she felt it coming on. At the funeral I saw a stranger, an old man, standing close by the grave. You'd have

thought he was chief mourner, and James Lavater, my James, went up to him looking very red, and they walked off together, talking low."

"That was aunt's husband. I found it out afterward, and that he had been hovering about the neighborhood for a week or two. And the next thing that came out was that the Masons were to have the old place and furniture; but the \$60,000 which were to have gone to me were nowhere. Aunt had drawn that whole sum out of government securities, a little while before her death, and it was all gone."

"Of course I knew that the good for nothing husband had seen her, and either frightened or coaxed her into giving it to him. He left the country right afterward."

"How perfectly outrageous!" cried Kitty. "Did she leave you no'ing?"

"My dear, she left me a trunk and some old clothes in it. One dress in particular she stated she hoped I would wear when I married. She needn't have troubled herself to write that bitter sneer in the will she made only two days before her death. Of course you know I never was married. Aunt Katharine judged James Lavater aright. Perhaps there is something in a name. After home and fortune went, the lover soon followed. Never mind the details."

"I went away just then as a hospital nurse, Kitty, and it did me good."

"You know I had a little property from my mother, and I came to her old neighborhood when the war was over, and hired this house. I had \$1,200 a year to live on, and peace and independence, if nothing else. I don't say I have not been lonely and sad, Kitty; but if you can content yourself here and put up with my figdety ways, there'll be some brightness left after all, in your old aunt's life."

Kitty felt the appeal, and responded with a caress; but answered in a hesitating voice:

"You know, darling aunt, you are all I have to cling to now, and this seems my right place; but—but I must speak frankly."

"Freely and fully my dear. I like plain speaking."

"In the first place, aunt, the money question. I must pay my share."

Aunt looked thoughtful, then nodded.

"I see, dear. You would be most welcome to what I have; but I know what it is to be born independent. You shall do as you like."

"Oh! you dear sensible thing," cried Kitty giving her a hug. "Now, that is comfortable. Let us have it all over at once. You say you have twelve hundred a year. I will put in another twelve hundred, and we can live nicely on that, in a very small way. Can't we?"

"Kitty, Kitty, that's twice too much."

"Not one cent, aunt, I couldn't possibly live on less. We will have two maids, and make a pretty garden, with lots of roses and vines."

"Earwigs and slugs," replied aunt grimly.

"And the maids will quarrel. Well, go on. You haven't got through, I can see."

"Just one thing more," floundered Kitty. "This house (don't feel bad, dear) is so hopelessly ugly."

"Ugly! Well, I declare! Kitty Randall, do you mean to drive me crazy with modern art. Are you going to tack Japanese fans and idiotic paper parasols all over the walls? Must I have a row of kitchen pie plates on the mantle shelf and stick a sunflower in the middle of the dinner table? Are you an aesthetic young lady, Kitty?"

Kitty laughed heartily.

"Don't be afraid, aunt. I only want my earwigs and slugs, and the maids shan't quarrel; but I want some low chairs and a pretty little table and lamp, and a place to put my various pictures and pretty things. And I want to send away this dreadful stove and have an open wood fire. I saw some beauties of andirons and fender in the attic, aunt."

"Wood fires make a lot of dirt, Kitty."

"The new girl can sweep it up. Let us put this carpet in your room, and stain the floor and put down rugs. It's so much cleaner. I see you are going to say 'yes,' you dear. There is just one thing more. I saw a trunk in the attic—the trunk I guess; and a most beautiful old silk dress—the dress, aunt?"

"Yes, Kitty, the dress. What now! Am I to wear it to church, with a peacock feather in my hat?"

"Not quite. I was only thinking what a lovely sofa cover it would make."

"Kitty! a pink and white brocade?"

"Not exactly. Have it dyed."

"I never thought of that," said Miss Randall, opening her eyes very wide. "It's not a bad idea. A good, sensible brown."

"Or a soft olive or lavender," suggested Kitty.

"You must choose a pretty paper, first you know, and then color to harmonize. Oh! you dear, good aunt! I do believe, you are going to let me have my way, and turn this house into a distractingly lovely little home."

"Distractingly, indeed!" sighed Aunt Catty.

"But—yes, Kitty. You are young and have the tastes of your times. I'll not thwart you. If you sit by the fire, I shan't miss my neat little stove perhaps. If you are happy maybe I'll get to like the new fangled ways."

"Do let me kiss you, dear Aunt Catty. I am so glad. I wish I could set to work this moment."

"Well, dear, you can. There is that brocade. Rip it up."

"Just the thing!" cried Kitty delighted, but her aunt stopped her.

"Only, child, don't rummage. I do hate to have my things tossed and tumbled about. There's nothing in the garret but old broken things, no good at all. Promise me to leave them all alone."

"All right, aunt." Kitty ran gaily up

stairs. She meant to be very good; but she could not help just looking at this old screen, delightfully capable of restoration, or that old clock, banished for its irregular life, but which when set in order, would look so well in the hall! The hall! Kitty's countenance fell! How could anything really be done to such a poky, common little house? Kitty sighed as she lifted out the heavy brocade, and wished these decorations might be applied to a somewhat worthier home, something picturesque and artistic.

However, she had gained much, and it was with a bright face she stood before her aunt, laden with the old-fashioned finery.

"See, Aunt, it is a perfect beauty. I brought down this lovely scarf, too. It would make such a table cover. Did you know it was there?"

"I never took one thing out of the trunk," said Miss Randall, gravely. "It was a bitter gift to me, and I scarcely know why I did not leave it behind at the Masons. What a weight it is! I have always supposed it was her wedding dress. I think it will be a relief to me to send the stuff to the dye-pot. The mere thought of its pink and white floweriness has always turned me a little sick. Just look how it is lined throughout, and what a shape!" Aunt Catty seized the scissors and began to rip vigorously.

"I wonder," she ejaculated, "whether Aunt Katharine really thought I would make a guy of myself by wearing that thing to be married in."

"Oh, no! Aunt, you would have had to rip and alter it, of course; but with white satin you know, and plenty of tulle, it might have been made lovely."

"With my yellow cheeks!" said Aunt Catty, with a snort. She ripped on.

"Kitty!"

Kitty who had been daintily detaching the old lace border from neck and sleeve, looked up startled, to see Aunt Catty sitting perfectly limp and pallid, staring at the silk, from which protruded various stiff, greenish corners. What was it? Kitty's mind was quick. She jumped up; she tore recklessly at the beautiful silk; the lining fell apart, Miss Randall sat paralyzed.

They fell around her. Greenbacks without number! Fifty dollars, one hundred dollars—by twenties and forties they came; and Kitty growing methodical, gathered them all up and put them all into Aunt's lap.

"I do believe the whole sixty thousand are here," she cried.

They were. Sleeves, waist, all were pulled apart, and the carefully padded bills extracted. Just over the heart was stitched a little note:

DEAR NIECE: Think kindly of me if you can. If your James Lavater is a bit better man than mine, you will find the real worth of this wedding dress. If he is what I think him, you are well quit of him and you may thank me. In any case you are sure to find the money soon, for it wouldn't be you not to rip up and dye my old silk and make it of some use. Nicee, may you be a happier woman—whether maid, wife or widow—than your unfortunate

AUNT KATHARINE.

Poor Aunt Catty, she could hardly recover from the shock and surprise; but when she did it had a wonderful softening effect upon her. A dozen bitter little angularities and queeresses, which had grown out of her time of indignity and disappointment dropped away at once and forever. She looked younger and sweeter than she ever had, her niece thought, when she emerged at last, from a long cry behind her handkerchief, cheered by the knowledge that Aunt Katharine had not insulted and forsaken her, as all these years she had thought; but in reality saved her from what might have been an unhappy marriage, applied the test to a heart which shrank back in good time, thank heaven! And now instead of a sour forgotten old maid, lonely and drear as she had considered herself, she waked to the truth that she was a rich, healthy, independent woman, with a lovely niece to pet and spoil, and delight in; a niece who was wildly dancing around the room waving a greenback over her head, and crying, with merry triumph: "Aunt Catty, never say again that you hate rummaging!"—Independent.

Mites of Bees.

"I would suggest," says Professor Cook to the Rural New Yorker, "placing pieces of fresh meat, greased paper, etc., in the hives in hopes to attract the pests, which when massed on these decoys could easily be killed. If thought best, the traps could be screened by placing them in a box made of fine wire gauze so that the bees could not reach them. In such screens I should try placing pasteboard smeared with a thin coat of thick syrup, to see if the mites had a sugar tooth to lure them to destruction. On such a sticky surface it would be well to sprinkle flour, sugar, etc. If we can find in this manner some substance that will attract these little destroyers and call them off the bees the battle is won."

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A WOMAN'S WOES. A Tale of suffering, with a Sequel of Happiness—Some Domestic Experiences.

The following letter to the Kansas City Times describing the striking, almost dramatic experience of an American lady is so interesting and pictures so clearly the feelings and emotions of others that we reproduce it entire. It will be found very readable and instructive:

MESSRS. EDITORS:

Did I not know that this land is filled with women who are unhappy and cannot tell the reason; are miserable when they have every reason to be joyous, I should not venture to address you this letter. I believe, however, I can offer some suggestion that will be valuable to all women and invaluable to many. When I was fifteen years old I presume I was happier and healthier than most girls in America to-day. I hardly knew what pain was except by hearsay. But the situation changed suddenly and severely. I became aware that something was undermining my life. I felt strange sensations that would come and go and then return with greater power than before. My side pained me at times and again I would feel a dull aching between the shoulders. I had darting pains through my temples and a pressure on top of my head. I lost sleep, appetite and flesh, and my friends feared I was going into a decline. I know that the feelings I then had are not an uncommon occurrence among women, both young and old, but I did not realize what it meant at that time, and so was careless—with what results will appear. From then until within the past two years I have seen but few comfortable days, and I am now fifty-five years old.

A few years after the events above stated my heart began to trouble me. At times I would feel acute darting pains and a gurgling as if water was forming. My entire right side enlarged and I felt sharp cutting pangs through my lungs and around my shoulder blades. I could only breathe in catches or gasps and then with the greatest effort. I was without appetite one day and the next very hungry, but always constipated. During all those years I did not know what these troubles meant nor did I realize how terribly they must end. Of course I tried to overcome them; consulted doctors and used remedies, but it was of no avail. My troubles increased with the years; I had a severe pain in the small of the back; my teeth became loosened; my tongue swelled to twice its natural size; my gums were like sponges, bleeding freely at times, and my lungs and nose both had on different occasions. At that time I felt cold chills running up my back and I constantly expectorated a brown mucous substance that was very offensive. The fluids I passed were frequently like bloody milk and then again almost solid albumen. For thirty years I did not know what it was to be free from headache. Occasionally I would have a feeling of suffocation followed by hot flashes and a profuse perspiration. God only knows what I suffered for I cannot describe it. I only know that I existed and that my tired life was ebbing away with nothing to arrest decay.

I was in this condition a little over two years ago and neither myself nor my friends expected or hoped for anything but death. Picture, if you can nearly forty years of agony and you can understand why we felt in that way. But a brighter day came. I began a new manner of treatment and I saw new results. My pain became less intense. The most severe symptoms decreased. My hope revived and I seemed awakening to another life. I continued to improve until my health and strength returned thus enabling me to carry out a desire which I consider a duty in writing you this letter and saying that my life, health and hope for coming years are due wholly to Warner's Safe Cure, which has done wonders for me, and also restored many of my friends.

Many who may read these lines will possibly think I am over-enthusiastic. Is it possible to be over-enthusiastic after being delivered from a life of misery and brought into a world of comfort and happiness? Was the blind man mentioned in the Bible, whose sight was restored, too enthusiastic. The fact is I am only doing what I believe to be my duty in making my experience public, for I know there are myriads of women who are going into the same dark path unless they are warned in time and saved as I have been. This is a most serious matter and one which concerns the welfare of the nation as well as the happiness of the people. If the mothers of this land are unhealthy America will become a nation of invalids, and any means which can so safely and surely avert this danger as that which I have described, should be gladly welcomed by all true men and women.

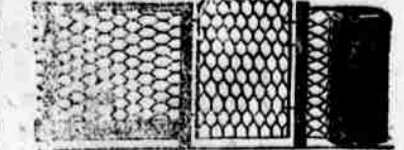
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