LUKE—COLORADO PARK, 1873.

Wot's that you're readin'?—a novel? A novel—
darn my skin!
You a man grown and bearded, and histin' such
stuff ez that in—
Stuff about gals and their sweethearts! No won-
der you're thin ez a knife.
Look at me!—clar two hundred—and never read
one in my life!

That's my opinion o' novels. And ez to their
lyin' round here,
They belonged to the Jedge's daughter—the
Jedge who came up last year
On account of his lungs, and the mountains, and
the balsam o' pine and fir;
And his daughter—well, she read novels, and
that' what's the matter with her.

Yet she was sweet on the Jedge, and stuck by
him day and night,
Alone in the cabin up yer—till she grew like a
ghost, all white.
She was only a slip of a thing, ez light and ez up
and away
Ez rifle-smoke blown through the woods, but
she wasn't my kind—no way!

Speakin o' gals—d'ye mind that house ez you
rise the hill,
A mile and a half from White's and jist above
Matlingby's mill?
You do? Well, now, thar's a gal! What, you
saw her? O, come now, thar quit!
She was only bedev'lin you boys, for to me she
don't cotton one bit.

But what was I talkin' of? O! the Jedge and
his daughter—she read
Novels the whole day long, and I reckon she
read them abed,
And sometimes she read them out loud to the
Jedge on the porch where he sat,
And 'twas how "Lord Augustus" said this, and
how "Lady Blanche" she said that.

But the sickest of all that I heerd, was a yarn
that they read 'bout a chap,
"Leather stockin'" by name, and a hunter chock
full o' the greenest o' sap;
And they asked me to hear; but I says: "Miss
Mabel, not any for me;
When I likes I kin sling my own lies, and thet
chap and I shouldn't agree."

Yet somehow or other she always was sayin' I
brought her to mind
Of folks about whom she had read, or suthin'
belike of thet kind,
And thar warn't no end o' the names thet she
gave me thet summer up here,
"Robin Hood," "Leather-stocking," "Rob Roy,"
O, I tell you the critter was queer.

And yet ef she hadn't been spiled, she was
harmless enough in her way;
She could jabber in French to her dad, and they
said thet she knew how to play
And she worked me that shot-pouch up thar—
which the man doesn't liv ez kin use,
And slippers—you see 'em down yer—ez would
cradle an Injin's papoose.

Yet along o' them novels, you see, she was
wastin' and mopin' away,
And then she got shy with her tongue, and at
last had nothin' to say;
And whenever I happened around, her face it
was hid by a book,
And it warn't until she left that she gave me ez
much ez a look.

And this was the way it was: It was night when
I kem up here
To say to 'em all "good-by," for I reckoned to
go for deer
At "sun up" the day they left. So I shook 'em
all by the hand,
'Cept Mabel, and she was sick, ez they gave me
to understand.

But just ez I passed the house next morning at
dawn, some one,
Like a little waver o' mist, got up on the hill
with the sun;
Miss Mabel it was, alone—all wrapped in a
mantel o' lace—
And she stood there straight in the road, with a
touch o' the sun in her face.

And she looked at me right in the eye—I'd seen
suthin' like it before
When I hunted a wounded doe to the edge o'
the Clear Lake shore,
And I had my knee on its neck, and jist was
raisin' my knife
When it gave me a look like that—well, it got off
with its life.

"We are going to-day," she said, "and I thought
I would say good-bye
To you in your own house, Luke—these woods
and the bright blue sky!
You've always been kind to us, Luke, and papa
has found you still
As good as the air he breathes, and wholesome
as Laurel Tree Hill.

And we'll always think of you, Luke, as the
thing we could not take away—
The balsam that dwells in the woods, the rain-
bow that lives in the spray.
And you'll sometimes think of me, Luke, as you
know you once used to say,
As rifle-smoke blown through the woods, a mo-
ment but never to stay."

And then we shook hands. She turned but a
suddent she tottered and fell,
And I caught her sharp by the waist, and held
her a minit—well.
It was only a minit, you know, that ez cold and
ez white she lay
Ez a snowflake here on my breast, and then—
well, she melted away—

And was gone. * * * And thar are her
books; but I says not any for me,
Good enough, maybe for some, but them and I
mightn't agree.
They spiled a decent gal ez might hev made
some chap a wife;
And look at me—clar two hundred—and never
read one in my life!

—Bret Harte.

A Wise Choice.

"Cecile!"

"Yes, papa."

She arose—a brown-eyed, brown-haired girl, with a rare grace and sweetness of manner—and approached her father. Mr. Deswood pushed aside the heap of papers on the desk before him, and turned to his daughter with a look of impatience.

"What brings young Walton here so often?" he querried abruptly.

The girl's fair face flushed like a sea-shell.

"I—I cannot tell exactly—not now, papa—but I——"

"Humph! I shall make it my business to find out! See here, Cecile; I want no foolishness. Remember you are my only child, and I depend upon your marrying well. I am not as rich as I was, daughter; another year like the last will ruin me quite; then I should like to know what will become of you, reared with luxurious tastes, and with no idea of the value of money. Heaven help you, for no one on earth could be of any service. The fact is, daughter, your only hope lies in a wealthy marriage."

"Papa!"

"It is quite true, my dear, and I am depending upon that hope. It rests with you to save your old father from actual penury!"

"Don't, papa!" she sobbed, throwing her white arms about his neck. "I will do anything for you. I have no one else in the world, you know. But, papa, listen! I must tell you! I love Harry Walton! I cannot help it. He is good and noble and——"

"As poor as a church mouse!" sneered her father. "Never mention such a thing to me again, Cecile! It is impossible! Why, the fellow is only a beggarly newspaper writer, living on his wits! Cecile, I am ashamed of you! And there is Mr. Arden, who would give his eyes to win you. He is worth a cool million, and is——"

"Sixty years old," interrupted Cecile, indignantly, "and wears a wig, and takes snuff. Papa, there is no use talking! I can never, never marry Mr. Arden. I would die first!"

She stopped short in sudden confusion. The door of the room was open, and there upon the threshold stood a portly old gentleman—Mr. Arden himself. Mr. Deswood sprang to his feet.

"Why, Arden!" he cried, striving hard to conceal his own chagrin and embarrassment. "When did you arrive?"

"Your servant announced me," returned Mr. Arden grimly, "but you were so busily occupied that you did not hear. And how is Miss Cecile, this evening?" he added, advancing to meet her.

Cecile laid her mite of a hand in his for a moment.

"You look troubled, little girl," said the old man, kindly. "You must keep your smiles and sunshine. Clouds are not for the young and care free. May I see you after a little, my dear Miss Cecile," he added in a low tone.

Her cheeks flushed and then faded. She grew faint and giddy, but with an effort she controlled herself.

"I may as well have it over!" she said to herself. "No matter what the consequences may be I shall tell him the simple truth."

Outwardly she was calm, as she answered, quietly:

"Yes, sir; I will see you in the drawing room just as soon as you are ready."

The old man's thin lips were compressed tightly; he nodded his head grimly.

"Very well!" he returned; and then Cecile stole from the room.

It was nearly an hour later when Mr. Arden entered the drawing-room, to find the young girl standing at the window, pale and despairing, with her soft eyes full of tears. He came to her side, and took one of the passive little hands in his own.

"Cecile," he began, in a kind tone, "I came here to-day to ask you to be my wife. I am old; you are young and fair. You can think it over. If you consent I will settle upon you a handsome fortune, and give your father five thousand a year for his private income as long as he may live. I have not a living relative in the world. If you marry me, little one, you shall have everything that your heart can desire—money, costly dresses, rich jewels (the Arden diamonds are among the finest in the country), an elegant home; you can travel the whole world over, if you choose. And in return for all this, I only ask you to be my wife. I do not expect your love—if you can give me a little kindly affection, that is all I could hope for. Tell me, Cecile, will you—can you consent?"

She stood thinking for a time, with downcast eyes; but never for a moment did her loyal heart waver in its love for Henry Walton. He was good and noble, upright and honorable; his only fault was—poverty. He was ambitious and talented; the uphill work of a daily newspaper—the toil and the drudgery of it were good discipline for him, and the day was coming when Henry Walton would be known as one of the first editors and publishers in the land. But now, for the lack of capital, he was fettered and could only toil along, and hope for a brighter future.

"Mr. Arden," the girl's soft voice answered at last, "I know it is a great honor that you would bestow upon a foolish girl like me; but—but—I cannot marry you. I love Harry Walton—we are betrothed. We are poor but we can wait."

The old man's eyes were on her face with a keen, searching look. As she finished speaking he turned away.

"Do not be angry," she pleaded, "because I have told you the simple truth!"

He pressed her little hand to his lips, and without another word he was gone.

Cecile stood silent for a time; then she went up stairs to the library, where her father was sitting. She told him all that had passed between herself and Mr. Arden; but to her unbounbed astonishment, her father uttered not a word of reproof.

The next evening father and daughter sat alone in the drawing-room, when the door-bell rang. A servant announced Mr. Arden and Mr. Walton, and the two gentlemen entered the room.

Mr. Arden bustled forward.

"I am a blunt old man," he began at once, "and I wish to get the business upon which I have called settled without delay. Cecile, did you think for a moment that I was brute enough to wish to drag a lovely young girl like you into a loveless marriage with an old man. My dear, when I found how noble you stood by your colors, and told me to my face that you loved Walton here—no, my child, you need not blush, there is no shame in honest love—I made up my mind that all your troubles should be set right. I laid the plan before your father; and with his approbation went to work. Mr. Harry Walton is to-day the sole owner of a large publishing house, and you, Cecile, are to be my heiress when I am called away from this [illegible]. I see no reason why the wedding should be postponed; long engagements are usually pieces of folly, and delays are dangerous. When shall I dance at your wedding, Cecile?"

And the old man stooped and kissed the girl's snow white brow, but Cecile could not speak, so intense was her surprise and happiness.

The wedding took place not long after. Harry Walton is a flourishing publisher now, and doing a fine business; and old Mr. Arden died last week, leaving Cecile sole heiress to half a million.

Cecile's choice was between love and gold, and she chose the better part. For riches often taketh wings and flieth away, but true love—which is far better—endureth forever.

There are 1943 establishments in the United States engaged in the manufacture of agricultural implements. The capital invested amounts in round numbers to $63,000,000, and 40,000 hands draw in wages $15,360,000, while $31,53,000 is annually paid for lumber, iron, steel and unspecified materials. The total value of the annual product is placed at $69,640,486.

Choosing His Wife.

A young man was courting two young ladies at one time, and loved them both so well that he was in a considerable quandry which one to marry. He was certain that he could get either one, for they both encouraged his attentions. He finally concluded to try a little stratagem. So one day he mounted his horse, rode out to see his fair friends and hitched his horse at the gate of the first one. Going into the house in pretended haste, he told the girl his horse was sick, and asked if she could give him any bread scrapings out of the tray, as that was a good remedy. "Oh, la yes, lots of 'em," was the answer, and going to the kitchen she soon returned with a panful of dry dough. He took them and disposed of them in some way, concluding that a girl raised to such waste in the kitchen would be neither a neat nor economical wife. The next girl had the same trial, but this was his answer: "No, sir, I always wash out my tray when I finish making up the dough." He very wisely chose the latter girl for his wife. A straw shows which way the wind blows.

NOTICE.

To the Farmers and Mechanics of Oregon, Washington Territory and Idaho:

We wish to call your attention to the fact that our annual Catalogue and price list for 1882-83 is now ready for distribution. It will be found very valuable and instructive reading, and will be furnished gratuitously. Send your name and postoffice address to FARMERS and MECHANICS' STORE, 184 First street, Portland, Oregon.

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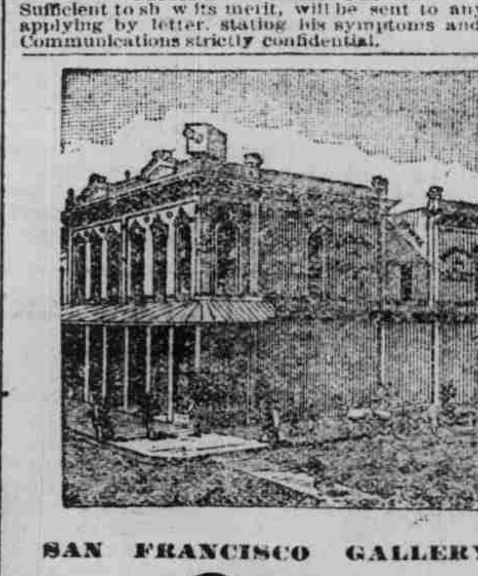

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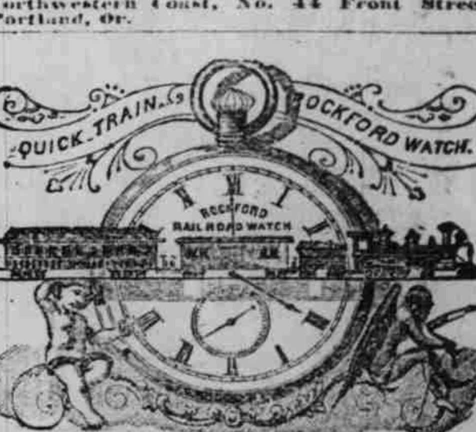

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