

THE FIRST PARTY.

Do you notice that young fellow—
Eyes of blue and mustache yellow?
He's so happy that he can't conceal his joy.
Why?
He's a daddy!
He's a papa!
He's the father of a bouncing baby boy.
What a grin expands his features
As he greets his fellow creatures
When he meets them in the morning coming
down.
Met!
How he grips you!
How he grips you!
He is certainly the craziest man in town.
And he never tires of telling
What the baby weighed, or dwelling
On its beauty and its rare intelligence.
Yet—
We'll not tell him—
Though we're certain—
That it's like all other babies in looks and sense.
—Columbus Dispatch.

THE CALICO FROCK.

It wasn't a hot day, nor a cold day,
nor a damp day, but it was an atrocious
day, a clammy day, an unbearably
day, a day that made your clothes
stick to you like poor relations that
brought out cold sweats on pitchers
and goblets, that made your back a
race course for contemptible little
chills and the rest of your body a target
for a thousand invincible pins and
needles, that made the grasshopper a
burden and the dusty, begrimed city
a pandemonium, that made Solomon
Griggs, bachelor, of the firm of
Griggs, Makem & Co., the great clothing
merchants, shut up his ledger with a
bang and start for the country by the
next train, remarking to old Grimesby,
the head clerk, "that the city was stif-
fling." To which that worthy replied:
"So it is; but how about the fellows that
can't get out of it and must stay to be
choked?"—a problem which I suspect
our friend of the firm of Griggs, Makem
& Co. troubled his head very little
about, being just then busy in looking
into the dusty recesses of that picture
gallery which memory furnishes and
arranges for us all, at a single land-
scape hanging there. A low house with
mossy, overhanging eaves, standing on
the slope of a green hill, shaded by
branching elms, with level fields stretch-
ing off in the foreground toward the
sparkling water on one side and dusky
woods on the other, and there, dusty,
sweating, and tired, Solomon found
himself just about sunset. Out came a
ruddy-cheeked, smiling old lady in a
cap and apron, that had attained a
state of snowy perfection unknown to
city laundresses.

"Why, bless me, if it isn't little Sol,
—why, who'd a thought of seeing
you?" and she folded the stalwart
bearded man in as warm an embrace
as though he were in reality still the
little Sol of former days.
"And how do you do, Sol? Come in,
come in; don't stand out there. You
know the little path and the way to the
pantry yet, I dare say. Come in; you
needn't start back—it's only Rachel."
"But I didn't know you had any
young ladies with you, Aunt Hester."
"It's only Rachel, I tell you—Rachel
Hart, the seamstress. Are there no
women in your city, that you are
afraid to face a little country girl?"
"Little indeed, thought Solomon, as
he acknowledged his aunt's somewhat
peculiar introduction—and not pretty,
either—with large eyes of that uncer-
tain gray that sometimes beams darkly
blue and then deepens into brown
with a smooth low forehead, and
light brown hair drawn tightly across
each ear, just revealing its crimson tip;
a face irregularly featured, and rendered
still more striking by the singular
contrast between its extreme pallor
and the intensely scarlet lips—the per-
sonification of neatness, the embodi-
ment of reserve.

"An odd little person," thought Sol-
omon, "but it's none of my business,"
and dismissing her from his mind, he
proceeded to the much more important
business of making himself presentable
at Aunt Hester's tea-table.
Solomon did ample justice to the
snowy bread, golden butter, and luscious
strawberries, and later, as that
worthy was indulged in a stroll across
the fields, he lifted up his eyes and be-
held the little seamstress, whose exist-
ence he had quite forgotten, under a
venerable cherry tree, making desper-
ate efforts to seize a tempting branch
on its lowest boughs—revealing in her
gyrations a very neat foot and ankle,
and looking almost pretty with her
flushed cheeks and sparkling eyes.

Now Sol was a gallant man—decid-
edly the preux-chevalier of the firm of
Griggs, Makem & Co., so that when-
ever, as had once or twice happened,
a petticoat ventured into the moldy
shades of that establishment, Sol was
the man whom destiny and the other
partners selected to parley with the
enemy.
Advancing, therefore, with a happy
mixture of confidence and condescen-
sion, Sol plucked the cherries and was
about to present them when independ-
ence in a calico frock stepped back and
with a cool:
"Keep them yourself, sir; I don't
care for them."
"I thought you wanted them!"
stammered Sol.
"So I did, because they were difficult
to obtain. Had they been on your
aunt's table I would not have touched
them. It is the glow of triumph that
gives a pleasure to its zest. Eat the
cherries yourself, and good evening,
sir!"

"Stop a moment!" said Sol, not a
little astonished; "that is—I mean—
permit me to accompany you!"
"No, you would expect me to enter-
tain you, and that would be too much
trouble."
"But, if instead, I should entertain
you?"
"You can not."
"Why?"
"You could tell me nothing new.
You are only a crucible for convert-
ing bales of cloth into the precious
ore that all the world goes mad after.
No doubt you are all very well in
your way, but there are alchemists
who could transmute our humdrum
daily life into golden verse or heaven-

ly thought. To such a one I might
listen, but you and I have nothing in
common."
"Not even our humanity?" asked
Solomon.

The stern face of the young girl
softened a little, but only for a mo-
ment.

"No!" she answered, angrily, "not
even that. I, you know, am made of
the inferior clay—you of the pure
porcelain. Do you not remember
how even good, kind Aunt Hester
told you there were no young ladies
with her, only the seamstress. You
are slightly bored already, and think
me old enough to amuse you for a
while; but if some of these gay ladies
—among whom I hear you are such a
favorite—were to come here you
would not even know me. Good
evening, sir."

"What a furious little radical,"
thought Sol; with an uneasy laugh, as
he watched her retreating figure. Af-
ter all, he was not quite sure that she
had not spoken the truth.

If the calico frock had been a flounced
silk, for instance, how many degrees
more deferential would have been his
manner in presenting the cherries?"

Query the second:
If the calico frock had been walking
down Broadway about 4 o'clock in the
afternoon would he, Solomon Griggs,
of Griggs, Makem & Co., as willingly
escort it as across those green fields,
where if the robins and bluebirds did
make remarks it was in their own lan-
guage?"

Sol. couldn't answer the question
satisfactorily, but he went to bed and
dreamed all night of the little Diogenes
in her calico frock.

That week and the next he waited
patiently for the first glimpse of that
remarkable garment coming around
the corner, but in vain. And when, in
such a very careless manner that it
was quite remarkable, he wondered
audibly "where that odd little girl lived
whom he saw on the eve of his arrival,"
Aunt Hester answered dryly: "Always
up—thereabouts" pointing with her
hand. She boarded, she believed, with
some queer sort of folk there, though,
for that matter, she was queer enough
herself. And this was absolutely all
she would say on the subject.

The next day Sol took it upon him-
self to wander up that way, "there-
abouts," and was rewarded with a
glimpse of the calico frock going
through a broken gate, and following
it closely, came up with the wearer as
she was about to enter the dilapidated
front door, at which piece of impertin-
ence she was so much incensed as to
turn very red, while tears actually
started to her eyes.

"What do you want?" she asked,
sharply enough.

"To see you!" replied Sol, who, taken
by surprise, could not think of nothing
but the truth.

"Well, you have seen me—now go!"
"But it's a warm day, and I am very
tired!"

"I can't help that. It's not my fault
—is it?"

"You might ask me to walk in and
sit down if you were not as hard hearted
as a Huron!"

"This is not my house."
"You would then if it were?"

"I don't say that."
"Well, then, I am thirsty; give me a
glass of water."

"There is the well, and an iron cup
fastened to it by a chain; help your-
self."

"You inhospitable little misan-
thrope!"

But she was gone, and the next time
he inquired for her Aunt Hester told
him, with a malicious twinkle of the
eye, that she was gone to the city.

Perhaps the good soul had been
troubled with visions of a future Mrs.
Griggs, and was not altogether dis-
pleased that an insurmountable barrier
was placed between "that old Rachel
Hart and her nephew Sol," who was a
good boy, but didn't know the ways of
women.

Be that as it may, her joy was short-
ly turned into mourning, for Solomon
received dispatches requiring his im-
mediate presence in the city. At least so
he said, for Aunt Hester was immov-
able in her conviction that "that Rachel
was somewhat at the bottom of it." She
even hinted as much to Solomon when
he bade her good-by; but he only
laughed, and told her to take care of
herself.

After all, business could not have
been so very pressing, as he spent the
greater portion of his time wandering
through lanes and back streets, not
unfrequently dashing down alleys
with the inexplicable exclamation of
"That's her!" whence he always re-
turned very red in the face and sheep-
ish in expression.

Three months had passed away,
when he nearly ran against a little
woman, who looked up in his face with
a sardonic smile.

"Your eyesight is not so good in the
city, Mr. Griggs. You don't know me
here."

"Rachel—Miss Hart—I have been
looking for you everywhere. I—I—
where do you live?"

She hesitated a moment, then said,
shortly: "Come and see." And turn-
ing, led the way through narrow
streets, reeking with filth and teem-
ing with a wretched population, up a
flight of broken stairs, into a dingy
little room, whose only redeeming
feature was its perfect cleanliness.

"Will you be seated, Mr. Griggs?"
she asked, with a scornful smile. "Now
that you know my residence I trust to
have the pleasure of seeing you fre-
quently."

"And you live in this den?" asked
Solomon, heedless of her sarcasm.

"How do you support yourself?"
"By my needle."

"And how much does it take to
keep up this magnificent style of living?"

"By unremitting exertion I can earn
\$2 a week."

"Great heavens! why didn't you
come to me?"

"For two excellent reasons: First, I
should have known where to have found
you; second, I should not have come if I
had."

"Of course not. Your pride is to
you meat and drink. Still you might
have come. We are in want of
hands."

"I do not believe it. You wish to
cheat me into accepting alms."

"There is our advertisement; read
for yourself," pulling a paper from his
pocket.

"The sunken eyes gleamed eagerly;
she was human after all, and was
even then suffering from the pangs of
hunger."

"Mr. Griggs, I believe you are a
good man," she said, bursting into
tears: "I will work for you gladly; I am
starving."

And she did work, early and late,
in spite of Solomon's entreaties, refusing
to accept anything but her wages, de-
clining to receive his visits, sending
back his gifts, steadily refusing, above
all, to become his wife, though she had
softened wonderfully toward him.

"You are rich—I am poor!" she said
in reply to his passionate arguments.
"You are handsome—I am ugly; the
world would laugh, and your family
be justly offended."

"I have no family, and, as to the
world, let it laugh; I dare be happy in
spite of it."

"I will not have you."
"Do you not love me?"

"I will not have you," and with that
answer Solomon was obliged to rest
contented.

Time passed on—a financial crisis
came, and with hundreds of others,
down went the house of Griggs, Makem
& Co.

Solomon sat in his office gloomily
thinking of the woman whose love he
had so long and fruitlessly striven to
win, darkly wondering if it were not
better to cut short an aimless hopeless,
blighted life.

"Lady wants to see you, sir."
"Can't see her, sir. What the devil
can a woman want here? Shut the
door—if any one calls, say I'm out."

Suddenly a pair of arms were around
his neck and two clear gray eyes look-
ing lovingly in his, while the voice that
was sweetest to him whispered softly:
"When you were rich I rejected you.
Now that you are poor I came to ask if
you will take me?"

And Solomon, like a sensible man,
took the "calico frock."

—Took a Mean Advantage of Us.

Last Saturday, while laboriously en-
gaged in writing a leading editorial
with a dull pair of shears, the door
opened and in stepped a sinful-looking
man, who introduced himself as the
traveling agent for Blank & Co.'s
Circus and Aggregation of Living
Wonders. He wanted posters printed,
and the way he scattered paper around
and quoted prices was extraordinary
considering the state of the thermome-
ter. He then mildly hinted that he
would like to have a local notice in-
serted in this week's edition of the
Bladder, and casually inquired as to
the circulation of said sheet. Now if
there is anything upon earth that will
get a newspaper man down to hard,
earnest, unmitigated lying, it is that
little question in regard to circulation.

The whole Christ a world boiled down
and rolled into one pill might be given
to an editor to swallow and he would
rise superior to its influence and lie
like a trooper when asked how many
papers he circulated. So far in life we
have taken a low grade with the
fraternity of liars, but on this occasion,
with business as dull and pulseless as
an ordinary town-councilman, we even
outstepped the bounds of prudence, and
gathering strength as we went we
swelled our circulation until it rivaled
even that of the *New York Sun*. And
then the bogus agent went into
convulsions of laughter and clapping
us on the shoulder yelled, "Let up,
or you'll kill me! Don't you know
me? I just wanted to hear you lie once
more! I don't want any printing, I'm
Sam Miller, late of Hot Springs News
and your old partner of other days." Know
him—O Memory, thou art not
yet dead! Know him—what emotions
that question arouses? When we shook
hands and "bunked" with him one
night on a through freight and intro-
duced to his brotherly notice the super-
iority of the Texas louse over the Ar-
kansas flea, did he not reciprocate by
giving us the benefit of the seven-year
itch? When we worked together in
New Mexico and wore the same shirt
alternately, did he not deprecate with
the said piece of apparel one night and
leave the writer to rustle around next
day, wrapped in a sheet? When we
met him some years ago, among the
Choctaw Indians, elegantly attired in
a gunny-sack, cut a la chemise, doctor-
ing Chief Young-Man-Caught-in-a-Trap
for ringbone and spavin, did we not
unite forces with him and assist in
planting our common patient 'neath
the whispering sage-brush? And when
the bereaved and weeping widow
grasped the wretched Samvel by his
loose, flowing robe and swore that she
would make him her chief if it took all
summer, didn't we fly with him and as-
sist in leading the extra ponies? Didn't
we steal our editorials from the same
paper and then accuse one another of
newspaper piracy? And yet, in spite
of all these old associations, he has the
manners to disguise himself in a boiled
shirt and store clothes and come around
and start us by a lying about the circula-
tion of our paper. Know him? If he
had worn the rimless stove-pipe hat he
wore when we saw him last, we would
have known him anywhere.—Sam Mil-
ler, in *Waukegan Evening Bulletin*.

—An American Accomplishment.

It is quite a trick to jump off a train
going say at thirty miles an hour, and
the Americans take a pride in cultivat-
ing dexterity in this trick. It takes
considerable practice before it can be
done successfully. The way to jump
is always with the train and always on
the left-hand side of the latter, letting
the right foot rest on the step, and the
left foot swing from the step. Then
jump so that the left foot will touch
the ground first, and the right foot to im-
mediately follow it, so as to be able to
run. Some of the men jump from the
middle of the train or the front, but
most of them go to the rear car and
jump, so that if they fall they will not
roll under the cars. A correspondent
says: "The best man I ever saw, and he
only man who could hold his feet and
stop himself without running at all,
was Charlie Phillips. He could jump
from a train running thirty-five miles
an hour, and stop without running a
foot."—*Court Journal*.

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cure for life.

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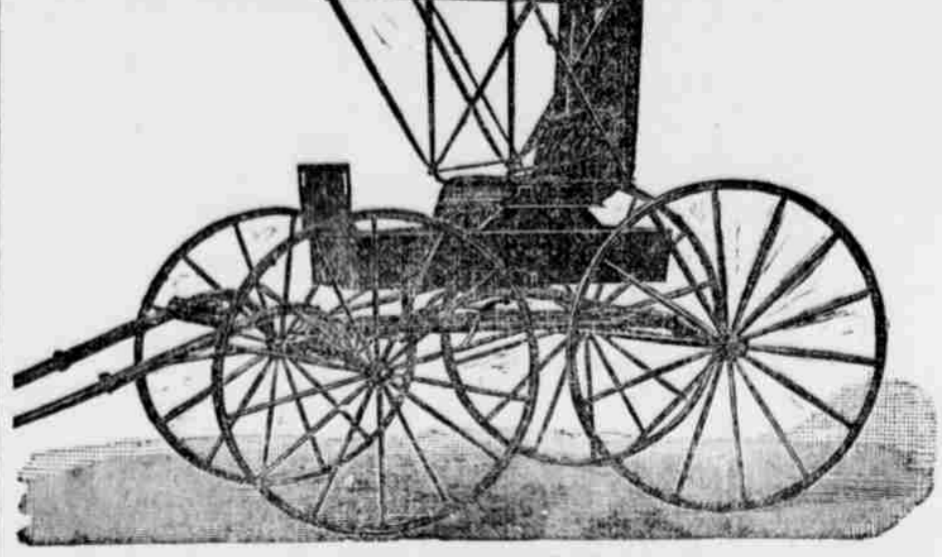
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