

OUR SEVENTH

Wednesday Surprise Sale

JUNE 26, WILL BE

BEDDING DAY

10 PER CENT OFF ON

Blankets, Comforts, Pillows, Cotton bats,
Ready-Sewed bats.

CLOVERDALE MERCANTILE CO.

Her Choice

By F. A. MITCHEL

Patience Goodman was a young Quaker widow of Philadelphia some 200 years ago and but twenty-three years of age. Patience's conscience and heart were so tender that when she found herself obliged to disappoint or pain any one she stood stock still. When she married Enoch Goodman it was as a dutiful maid in obedience to her father's mandate. She had preferred Pardon Fairweather, but parental authority was all powerful in those days, and she did not even encourage him.

When her husband died, as soon as it was proper for a man to ask her to be his wife Benediction Turner did so. Then came Fairweather, just one week later, and gave her the same invitation.

There was no parental authority now, for her father was dead and she had become her own mistress. She found herself obliged to give pain to one of her suitors. Each urged his suit and gave her to understand that if she refused him he would seek death. Pardon vowed he would seek it in battle with the Indians, who were lurking near the settlements with hostile intent, and Benediction declared that he would turn pirate.

Patience was horror stricken at these threats and almost felt it her duty to marry Benediction because by turning pirate he would certainly lose his soul, which was far more precious than a man's life, but she was unable to de-

cide upon any course, so she kept putting her lovers off with one excuse after another till they were worn out with delay, while she was worn out with their importunities.

Finally they both agreed that if she would tell which of them in her heart she preferred the one whom she did not prefer would abandon the field to the other without laying any blame upon her. But it was not a matter of blame from them, but a disinclination to give either of them pain. She declined to consent to this proposition, but said she would pray to be shown her duty. She prayed, but no sign came to guide her.

One day when she was making candles her two lovers came to her together, and Benediction said:

"Mistress Goodman, by thy indecision thee art giving both of us pain, whereas if thee would choose one of us that one would be happy. We pray thee therefore to choose between us, naming that one thee would wed."

The widow heaved a deep sigh, but did not reply for some time, evidently trying to say something and failing. Finally, taking up a candle in each hand, she made the following proposition:

"Take each of you one of these candles, light them at the same moment and the one that burns the longest him will I wed."

Thankful at the prospect of ending the suspense under which they lived, each took a candle. They had been cast in the same mold and were consequently of equal length. Each would burn from two to three hours. The widow brought her steel and flint and, lighting a blaze, touched it to each candle at the same moment. Then she told her suitors that when they had burned to the socket of their candlesticks she would send for them that they might see with their own eyes which would go out first and that one

she would wed.

"We need not fear, Patience," said Benediction, "that thee will tamper with the candles, because thee have only to choose between us without their deciding for you. Therefore we may safely leave them in your care."

"But," said Pardon, "we will come in at the end, that he who is favored and he who is not shall see with his own eyes."

Benediction went to the wood and walked back and forth with his hands clasped behind his back, sorely disturbed by anxiety. During the long period of his uncertainty there was no suspense like this. Pardon went into his library—there were but two books in it, the Bible and a copy of Shakespeare's plays—and, taking up the latter, read a few scenes from "Othello." In this way each passed the time till he should be summoned to learn his fate.

At last a messenger came from the widow that the candles were burning low, and each suitor repaired to the neat kitchen of Dame Goodman, where they were burning. Benediction turned white at seeing that his candle was but half an inch long, while that of his rival was an inch. Pardon's countenance did not change, but he cast a glance aside at the widow.

"It is not meet," groaned Benediction, "that I should remain longer here, since it is certain that I have lost." He went out, the widow still keeping her eyes fixed on the floor and her hands clasped over her bosom.

Then Pardon went to the table, looked first at one candle, then at the other, and, seeing a few tiny white grains that had been spilled on the dark polished wood, bent low to see what they were.

Wetting a finger, he put it on the grains and touched it to his tongue. He started, his face lighting up with a look of great happiness. Then he went to the widow, who stood still

bent, and put his arms about her, while her head sank upon his breast.

The grains on the table were salt. Placed on a wick so't causes a candle to burn slower.

There Were Others.

"John, I want the baby named Paul."
"My dear, Paul was a woman's water."
"Mercy! Did you think I meant that Paul? I'm naming him for Paul Jones."—Chicago Tribune.

Superstitious Miners.

Coal strikes have sometimes been threatened in England on curious grounds. In 1874 a woman was employed as a messenger at one of the collieries near Oswestry. As she commenced her day's work very early, she often met the miners on their way to the pit, and as the men considered it a bad omen to meet a woman first thing in the morning, trouble arose. By threats and persuasion they tried to get the offending female to give up her job, but, failing in this, they went in a body to the manager and flatly refused to go down until the woman had been dismissed.

50 YEARS' EXPERIENCE

PATENTS

TRADE MARKS
DESIGNS
COPYRIGHTS & C.

Anyone sending a sketch and description may quickly ascertain our opinion free whether an invention is probably patentable. Communications strictly confidential. HANDBOOK on Patents sent free. Oldest agency for securing patents. Patents taken through Munn & Co. receive special notice, without charge, in the

Scientific American.

A handsomely illustrated weekly. Largest circulation of any scientific journal. Terms, \$3 a year; four months, \$1. Sold by all newsdealers.

MUNN & Co. 361 Broadway, New York
Branch Office, 525 F St., Washington, D. C.