

DOMESTIC GREETING.

As he comes the married man
He's met by wife at door,
With a kiss and a loving kiss,
And—"Hats off, the son is here!"

And did you think to stop at Brown's?
And get yesterday? And dear,
Fred's boots are all worn out!

"I'm glad you are so early, John,
So much I miss you, dear;
Has a letter from home come;
She's coming to live here."

"How very glad you look, dear John;
I know you would be.
The flour's out, the butter, and
You must send home some tea."

"That plumber has been here again—
If you don't pay he'll sue;
And the rent is due, and call in
To say your rent was due."

"Fred's trousers are all cotton, John;
You thought they were all wool;
Oh! that reminds me that your son
Was whipped to-day at school."

"The roof has leaked and spoiled the rug
In the upper room;
And just now the careless thing!
Let the mirror fall!"

"Tea, as she was moving
(The largest one, dear John),
Of course it broke; it made a hole;
The lamp it fell upon.

"What makes you look so grave, my love?
Take you and your wife;
Your feet and only then may I say
Jane broke your meerschaum pipe."

"Oh, John! that horrid, horrid read;
You do not love me, dear;
I wish that I—hoo-hoo—were dead—
You must come as any bear."

Boston Transcripts.

THE MORTGAGED FARM.

"Six o'clock!" said Marion Hilyard, looking up suddenly, as the tall, old-fashioned clock in the corner rang out its shrill announcement: "six o'clock, and oh! mother, here is Jemmy Lane, punctual to the very moment. Now we shall have good news from Jack, I hope."

She ran out to the gate, flushed and eager, to receive the letter from the country carrier; and, returning, seated herself on a low stool at her mother's feet, and broke the envelope.

On the first glance at its contents, a shade of disappointment dimmed her bright face.

Instead of reading the note aloud, she glanced hurriedly over the brief lines, and then silently, with quivering lip, placed it in her mother's hand and turned aside to a window.

"This is what Mrs. Hilyard read: 'DEAR MARY:—I see you are a few days since, when to my surprise, he expressed his desire to apply his money to the redemption of the mortgage, saying that he required it to be paid off before he could be profitable to him than the holding of the farm. I have, therefore, been compelled to offer the mortgage to a gentleman of my acquaintance, and consider it my duty to inform you of the same, in order that you may lose no time in making arrangements for removal.'

ANNE HARRIS.

Mrs. Hilyard returned the letter to its envelope with a trembling hand and a dazed, bewildered look, as though unable to realize the blow which had so suddenly fallen upon them.

Her eyes met Marion's, and the girl threw herself upon her knees by her mother's side, and burst into a passion of tears.

"Oh, mother, mother! what shall we do? What will become of us?"

"The Lord will provide," said Mrs. Hilyard, raising her overflowing eyes to the motto on the wall, embroidered by Marion's own hand.

"Where is your faith, my child, that it should fail you in this the very hour of need?"

Mother, it is not so much the loss of our home, nor the poverty and trial in store which grieves me, but that Jack—your own son, my own brother—should have so changed. Oh, mother, I know that our Father in Heaven will not desert us, but to whom on earth can we turn when even Jack can become worldly and heartless?"

At this moment a little blue-eyed girl burst into the room with: "Mama—Mama! here is Miss Melia Anderson at the gate, in a hurry. She says will you step out a minute, for she wants to tell you about old Mr. Millard being smanstruck; and she doesn't leave her horse without somebody to hold him."

Marion was in no condition to listen to Miss Melia—the greatest gossip in the neighborhood; so Mrs. Hilyard, drying her eyes, was in civility composed to receive the informal visitor. Marion had made ready under the win-dow-sill behind a screen of clinging roses, could have heard every word spoken; but, absorbed in her grief, she paid no attention until the name of Wat Hinton struck upon her ear.

"It's true, for certain; for Maria had it from his own sister, Aggie Hinton. Says Maria, in her wild way, 'If he comes back with all that money'—you know his Uncle Samuel left him most of it."

"Yes, and I'll say my jealousy and pride are folly. I have never had a happy moment since I parted from you, Marion, and I have come back at last to beg your forgiveness, and to beg, too, for the love which I forfeited, but which I cannot live without."

"I am glad to have so unexpectedly found you here in this dear old spot," he said. "I arrived at home only an hour ago, and could not rest until I had seen you."

He met his eyes, bent upon her with a strange earnestness, and her pale cheek flushed faintly, but she could not have spoken a word.

"Marion," he said, suddenly, "have you no welcome for me? Is it possible that you cannot forgive me?"

"Forgive you?"

"Yes; and my jealous jealousy and pride are folly. I have never had a happy moment since I parted from you, Marion, and I have come back at last to beg your forgiveness, and to beg, too, for the love which I forfeited, but which I cannot live without."

"I do not understand you, Wat. I do not know why you should speak that to me, when—when you are going to be married."

"Who told you that of me, Marion?"

"I came from Agnes, your own sister."

"Yes, sir."

"Do you drink?" continued the merchant, eyeing him sharply.

"Never!"

"Do you use tobacco in any form?"

"Here the young man pushed the quid into the mouth of his host, and replied with a smile, that was childlike and bland. "I never use the weed, and never did. I consider it the lowest and most shocking habit that a man can be addicted to."

"Do you frequent the policy shops?"

"No, sir; never."

"Do you go to the National Theater, dog fights, or boxing exhibitions?"

"Never was at any in my life," was the emphatic answer.

"Can you tell the size of diamonds from the ring of clubs?"

"I know how to tell whatever of cards."

"Do you ever bet?"

"No, sir, I don't."

"Suppose," said the merchant, "a man should offer to bet \$1,000 to \$10 that a three-legged goat could outrun a greyhound, what would you take him?"

"Oh, Walter, it cannot, cannot be true!"

"No, sir."

"Then you won't do for this establishment; we don't want you—we never hire fools!"

"That won't be so good next time."

Just Before Dawn.

"Ah! Heaven does indeed temper the to the shore, lamb," patiently said old Mr. Dixie, after the other evening at a tea fight, after putting away her twenty-eight cup of Young Hyson. "Why, what do you mean?"

"You know that young widow, Mrs. Biffen, who lives across the street from us? Well, she has had nothing but sorrow, trouble and distress for the past five years. First her father was killed in a fall, and for his mother, as I understand it, if he had not received his letter, Jack is not fitted to be a farmer, and could never have made much of the farm, as he certainly will do with the mill. He came up with me in order to attend to the matter. Forgive me that I neglected to inform you, but I left him behind in the maple-field, talking with Aggie."

Marion started up with a glad cry.

Coming down the opposite declivity of the hill, she was some, joyously having his hand, in two minutes she was sobbing in her mother's arms, sobbing from a fullness of joy such as she had never in her life before known.

They hastened to the house, all three eager to gladden the heart of the mother.

Jack sprang up to the steps and took her in his arms, while Wat lifted Myra, who had run to meet them in frantic delight.

Marion crossed the threshold, the old clock rang out a welcome chime. "Seven o'clock!" said the girl, softly.

ness that fate could have even a greater sorrow than this in store for her.

One year ago she had parted from her accepted lover, Wat Hinton, in mutual anger both sides. Wat had become jealous, and had spoken sharply to her, and in a manner which she considered hère.

"What a lifetime of misery and happiness in one hour!" she murmured.

BURDETTE AMONG THE FARMERS.

Mr. Thistlepool's Early Spring Experiences.

Bob Burdette, of the Burlington Hawk-Eye, paints this pretty pastoral picture:

It is spring, and the annual warfare begins. Earth, with the coming of the snow, has become jealous, and so they had drifted apart, both miserable, until Wat had broken the last link by going to the West.

She heard of him from time to time through his family, but no word or message to herself ever came. In all this while she had looked forward with a faint, yearning hope to the possibility of his return, time returning, and of all being made to forget them.

But now this last hope was rudely taken from the ground. Wat was going to be married. He had forgotten her, and was lost to her forever.

"Oh, it is hard—so hard to bear!" thought Marion, as, with hands unconsciously tightly clasped, she passed slowly under the apple boughs of the old orchard. "Life is bitter. It has taken all from me. It can have no more to give. Only my dear mother, and Myra! For their sakes I must be strong, and try to bear it."

She could scarcely look back upon the day before her eyes which were not connected with some association of Wat.

There was the walnut tree which he and Jack used to climb, and there the clear, laughing brook in which he had taught her to steer the little boat which he had made for her, laden with grain, down to Jack's famous water-mill, at the roots of that old willow.

Further up was the real "grist and saw-mill," which Jack had always been so fond of owning, and which everybody would be such a good investment for one who could manage it properly.

And then Marion, seated on the bench in the rustic arbor, turned and looked long and yearningly at the old farmhouse peeping from the great beeches across the orchard. No other place on earth could ever be home to her. And her mother? Oh, it would be harder still for her, whose life of fifty years had been spent under that roof.

"The old-fashioned peachbowl potatoes are the best for a sour crop, but the early ones should be planted for the first early."

Then several new kinds of bugs who had not made any record yet, climb over the fence, and come up to inquire about the staple crops of the neighborhood, and, before he can get through with them, Prof. Tice sends him a circular stating that there won't be a drop of rain for the next month. This almost seems like a miracle, but he is beginning to feel a little resigned when a dispatch is received from the Department of Agriculture at Washington, saying that all indications point to a summer of unprecedented, almost incessant and long continued rain and floods, and advising him to plant no root crops at all. While he is trying to find words to express his emotion, a neighbor drops in to tell him that all the peach trees in the country are white-kinned, and that the bark is choking, according to him, in the northern part of the township. Then his wife comes out to tell him the dog has fallen into the well, and when the poor man gets to the door-yard his children with much shouting and excitement meet him, and tell him there are a couple of cats, of the pole denomination in the spring-house, and another under the barn. With tears and groans he returns to the field, but by that time it has begun to snow so hard he can't see the horses. He stands at the door for the house with his wife, when he meets a man who bounces him for a sharp whetstone as of some one calling to a dog, and she saw through tear-dimmed eyes the figure of a man hurrying along the pathway in the meadow. She drew back behind the screen of the honey-suckle.

The path led past the arbor, but at the foot of the steep bank she would not be discovered in her retreat. So there was a sound of footsteps ascending the bank, and the sound of the girl's voice, as she was to tell him the figure of a tall young man who had almost run into her in this very hour of need.

Marion pale, and the stranger with a flush rising on his handsome face. Then he said, as he held out his hand, "Marion, don't you know me?"

She gave him her hand in silence. It was Wat. And suddenly with the sight of him came the full bitterness of her sorrow, in the consciousness that he was lost to her forever. She was nothing to him now, and he must be nothing to her.

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FARM NOTES.

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