

A LADY OF THE PRESS.

BY FRANK B. WELCH.



HERE is a maid divinely fair
Whose equal ne'er
was seen.
Nor one so rough-
ly inclined
As this fate one, I
ween:
She's young in years
—she's three
And, oh! you'd
never guess
That one so young
and fair as she
Would scribble for
the press.

But truth is, I'm
pained to state,
She's got the fever bad;
From early morn till late at night
She works away like mad.
Whene'er I seek to press my suit
I'm filled with sore distress,
Because she has no time for me—
She scribbles for the press.

Some day I'll get my dander up
And plainly speak my mind,
Although I'm sure so sweet a maid
I nevermore could find;
But while she keeps her scribbling up
My thoughts I must express:
Young man, beware! and never love
A lady of the press.

SERGT. DELANY'S MARY.



ACE to face we sat for some time in the cars, speeding across country through Ohio. Old he was, but keen and bright of eye, erect of figure and ruddy in cheek. He sat well forward on the seat as though accoutrements still prevented any lounging of body. I noted him for an "old sage" in a moment. He made the first advance, with a preliminary "Hem!" an involuntary salute, the passing of his left palm over the upper lip, where a mustache ought to have been, and a slight Irish accent.

"Beg pardon, sir, but I think you're in the service?"

"Right you are," I replied, "and if I'm not mistaken, you've been there, too!"

Then the right hand went to the forehead in formal salute, and the man became rigid.

"Thankie, sir. I'm proud to say I've been that same, and prouder to know that I haven't lost the 'set up' of a soldier yet. Forty-two years eight months five days, boy and man, I saved the country in the field. Delany's my name—Sergeant Darcy Delany, — Cavalry, Second Dragoons, in the long ago times—an' their few officers nor men of the old army that don't know Sergeant Delany an' be willin' to speak a good word for him."

Then we talked and talked—he most—through several hours. In the congenial topic, the comradeship, and with that sort of patronage an old blade feels for the young soldier, he gave confidence that no other circumstances could have called forth, and taking the cream of his story I can connect what, to him at least, was all of his life.

"You could not have served so long and escaped wounds?" I said, to lead him on.

"I've me share of them, sir; sure they're part o' the trade—give em' an' take 'em—that's what we're for, ain't it? And the fun of givin' them even up the pain of takin' 'em, an' that squares all. But I'm a hale, hearty man yet, wid me head on me shoulders and me full complement of arms and legs, an' anything short of the wantin' of them don't count, or shouldn't."

I laughed. "I wish you could convince my wife that wounds are such trifles," I said.

"Ah! then ye're married, sir. Well, they used to say that a wife ruined a man for soldiering, but I never believed it, never!"

"No do I" was my reply. "I don't think I will do my duty any worse for having to earn honor for the little wife and daughter I'm going now to see."

"Wife and daughter! But you're the lucky man, sir. God care for them tenderly, and for you as you do



THEN THE RIGHT HAND WENT TO THE FORE-HEAD."

your duty by them. That's the service shows what's in a man; there's wounds to be got there that steel or lead can never make, an' too often there's no cure on earth for.

"Let me tell you of my wound in that line of duty, sir—the wound I gave myself. I was, fifty or more years ago, I was—if I do say it myself—as tight a lad as ever threw leg over a saddle and wore a blade, cocked me cap, carried a cane to cut the air, an' winked at the gurrls. But I was caught early and fast. I'm of Irish extraction, tho' maybe you mightn't think it, I was brought over here so young; but Irish I am, an' so the fightin' an' love-makin' small credit to me—it's just natheral as breathin'."

"I'd just got me corporal's stripes, an' we're stuck up with them like they were a Major General's, when the old Dragoons were quartered at —, an' there I met as nate a little Irish lass as ever stepped in shoe-leather. A week of hard courtin' an' I was a

married man, an' better enlistment papers I never signed. I always needed strict discipline at home an' on duty. I had it then, an' it's the makin' of me.

"Faith, it didn't seem no more nor than from neville to retreat afore a year slipped around, and I was not only a sergeant but the father of a daughter. Mary we called her, after the old mother of me, that I loved well, but were ever a throublesome son to; and I say it bouldly, no prettier creature than our little Mary ever came on earth, and the graces of her as she grew were that astonishing that though her mother were a well-mannered, knowledgeable, brisk woman always, and I was ever a prompt soldier, yet where our Mary got her high-breedin' ways were continual the worst sort of puzzle to me.

"There may have been men, ther' is men—yourself, sir, for one—that loved and loves their little one well as I, but there were never a man loved daughter better nor I did mine, since God gave daughters to men. When she first came I were some put out that she weren't a boy, but she soon filled my heart to that degree that there weren't room to wish for or put another if it had been a boy had come—even if he'd a been twins. I taught her all a boy should know. She could swim, ride, shoot, run an' skate by the time she were 9 years old, so that n'er a boy in field nor garrison could anything like aquil her. An' she could whist too, she could that true and sweet twould charm the birds off the trees to hear her. I'd laugh to scorn when some old sour would be tellin' me the sayin' about 'whistling gurrls an' crowin' hens' always comin' to some bad end. 'Bad-luck back in yer teeth!' I'd say, 'harm can never come to my Mary,' an' I believed it. I always had a good strong lump of a notion of music myself, though mighty little of the talent for producin' it; but by hard work and a dale of practicin', an' after nigh drivin' my wife and all the garrison dear an' crazy, I learned to make a fair fist, or mouth I should say, with the fife, an' could give 'Yankee Doodle,' 'Garryowen,' an' such, to the satisfaction of myself and friends, except the regular band members. Well, she, Mary, could bate me out an' out with that same fife

"The wife never troubled me about me hardness, tho' twas a sorry time she had to live in peace with me. I knew no other trade nor soldierin' an' things didn't go well with us. I got a pension from the Government, an' that, with little else, we had to struggle on for a livin'. Not that I hadn't money by me, for I had, because Mary, somehow, kep' track of us, an' every month would come a letter with a fifty-dollar bill in it to me. No word—just the bank note. An' Christmas an' birthdays ther' be a straight hundred-dollar greenback I'd get. So I knew that, any way, my gurrl warn't come to want. But I didn't know what she might come to, an' I just barked that money an' it rolled up into the thousands in no time. As for touchin' it for me self, I'd a seen the wife o' me starvin' before me eyes; I'd a crawled, begged, died for a crust, afore I'd a touched it.

"The Bartons were a rich and high family. Often I swore in me anger that I'd go an' curse them an' tell them of the ruin of the gurrl and our lives. But the love that still stuck to me for Mary, an' the pride of me, held me back from exposin' the wound. We aged fast, the home, such as we could have, was darkan' still—I never missed the ould life—never wanted to hear the squeak of it or a child's voice. The wound me daughter an' me officer had given me was killin' me. That wound hurt me more and deadlier, nor any I ever got from Mexicans, reds or rebels, an' I had them on my body from all of 'em.

"It were just six years from the time I got that same death-wound, an' we were livin', sorter livin', in Philadelphia, with hard scratchin' oftentimes to make things meet for quathers an' rations, when I comes in late one night from a daw's laborin'; hard come down that, sir, for a born soldier. I came in late an' the wife says: 'You're wanted immediate to the Continental Hotel,'

"We lived well and happy, an' I never fought the worse for knowing they'd glory for me, dead or alive, an' that Mary was seventeen year old, an' the likes of her for beauty an' style weren't to be found in the country.

"She were seventeen, as I say, an' more nor well educated for the daughter of a man and woman still in the service. We were long quartered in garrison then, an' to please her independence, an' to fit her for takin' care of herself, we let her go to the town to learn the dressin' thrade—never a gurrl livin' had the fine, high taste in dress like to her.

"Well, ther' came a young leftenant to our troup; a gay, handsome, brave chap he were, Barton by name. I respected him as an officer, an' soon I loved him as a man.

"It were some ten months after he joined, when one night I went to my quarters in the barracks, and Mary wasn't there to sit down at table with me. I'd been at the stables afore I went in, an' Leftenant Barton had come to me with his bright smile an' friendly way, houldin' out his hand. 'Good-by, Sergeant,' says he, 'I'm off to-night. Off where, sir?' says I. 'I resigned two weeks ago,' says he, 'an' my papers have just come in,' he says.

"I were more sorry than words could tell to be losin' him, an' that unsettled me. I'm quick-spoken, too, an' when I went in the wife says to me, says she, 'You're late, but there's the ilegant sthew for ye,' says she.

"The devil fly away with yer sthew, Mrs. Delany!" says I. "Where's me daughter?"

"How should I know?" says she. "I s'pose she's kep' late. Ate yer sthew, man, an' don't be cursin' at me, for I won't take it off youner no man," says she.

"I'm mortil fond of Irish sthew, sir, an' the woman don't live can bate Mrs. Delany makin' it. But with this an' that I were that put about I never enjoyed bite less nor I did that same evening.

"Eight o'clock came, and no Mary. I worried more and more each minute. Then the wife came out from the room in front with a bit of a note which had just been handed to her. I read it: 'Dear father and mother, I have gone away with Mr. Barton, whom I love more than I do you—'. I never stopped to read the more there was of it. I tore it into bits. I threw it from the window, and as the breeze floated it away it seemed to carry my life with it.

"Before I could find my voice to give tongue to the curses that were swellin' up in my heart and throat, I heard quick feet running up the bare stairway of the barracks, and then Mary burst in on us—in silks and satins and laces she was, like to a queen dressed for a ball.

"Oh, father! daddy!" she called me by the name she gave me in her baby days, and that she knew I best loved to hear—'daddy! mother!' she

cried, "I couldn't go, after all, without seeing you once more. We—

"Her mother would have taken the girl to her arms, but I stepped betwixt them.

"Silence!" I said. "You're no daughter of mine from this hour. Mrs. Delany, don't touch her—don't look at her—don't dare to spake to her. Go from us, girl. I'll hear no word out of your mouth. Go, before I disgrace me manhood an' uniform by strikin' ye dead. Go, before I curse ye!"

"The wife knew what I was when me temper was up, an' it cowed the spirit in her. The girl knew, too—knew far too well to spake to me then. She looked at me, turned, and went away.

"Ah! sorrow an' wounds an' pain like to that is hard to bear. It's the broken heart I carried in me breast them days, an' long after. Comrades and friends tried to speak to me of her and of him, but I swore I'd kill the first man named the name of aifur of them to me—an' I'd a done it. I could not live and face the men an' officers who had known an' respected us for so long. I had the right to ask for my discharge after that length of service I did. I did it an' got it, an' we went away among strangers, to hide our sorrow and our shame. I sought to find a spot where never a one should know our faces or our history.

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"An' when Mary onwrapped the baby there was something fell on the floor, an' I picked it up, an', man alive! if it weren't that ould life, that I'd never missed, tho' Mary had snatched it up, as a remembrance like, as she was being driven from her father's home on her wedding night. Always she had treasured it an' it had been the first thing she'd put in the hands of her own little baby. Faith, I waked the whole house an' neighborhood with that same fife an' 'Yankee Doodle' an' 'Garryowen' that blessed night, an' it's a good thing the police were all sound sleepers, or seemed to be, for what with me feelin' an' bein' out of practice, I played bad enough to wake the dead.

"There's little more left to tell, sir. Our troubles and trials were all over. The next mornin', at the hotel, we all a-settin' there, I says to them: 'It must be mighty expensive travelin' in Europe an' livin' in hotels like this. Now, if ye young people are wantin' a few hundreds, or, for all of that, a few thousands, I've a matter of five thousand dollars an' more, that I've been a layin' by for six years, an' ye're welcome to it, for it's more yours nor mine, anyway,' says I.

"An' with that the arms of Mary were about my neck an' her streamin' tears were on my cheeks. 'Oh, you dear, proud old daddy!' she sobbed, 'an' you would never touch that money in all your sore need! I might have known it—thinking as you did of me—but oh, daddy, how could you think that!'

"So then I had to explain an' beg off an' make excuses like a whipped boy, to dry the eyes of my darlin'. That money, sir, went to buy a little farm where the wife an' me live now—live like major generals, both of us, an' two happier ould souls ain't on top this earth.

"There's a boy now, sir. I'm going to see him christened Darcy Delany Barton—that's why I'm thrashin' now; the ould wife is too stricken with the rheumatis to come, but it shows that the Liffinten, as I love to call him, an' my Mary, ain't ever grown ashamed of the battered ould dragon."

"I had a flask, with something in it—for medicinal purposes only. Could I do less than ask this noble old soldier to join me in a toast to the health, wealth, happiness and honor of young Darcy Delany Barton?

I so did.

"Well, sir, talkin' mighty dry work, an' me throat's dry as a lime kiln. That's proud an' willin' I'd be to join ye in a sup for good luck to the young soldier, an' to you an' yours; but, d'ye see, sir, I wouldn't touch the drop now. Five minutes or less will bring me to them, an' licker's good enough in its way, but the kiss of Mary an' them babies is strengthin' sweetness that the least drop of dilutin' spoils the flavor to me lips. Thank ye all the same, sir."

A few moments more and we drew up at the station. The sergeant stepped from the cars, and as the train moved on I could still see him the happy center of a beautiful, loving family group.

D'n't Bother Him Much.

Lightning struck a New Jersey farmer the other day and left him none the worse for the tussle, except that he complained as though his mules had run away and dragged him through the fence feet foremost. People who survive New Jersey mosquitoes for half a century can stand most anything.—*Ram's Horn*.

LEECHES are caught for market in swampy places, mostly with rakes, though sometimes animals are driven into shallow waters infested by them in order that they may be fastened upon by leeches and bring them out by the quantity.

you left our roof.' And I gathered my strength to put it into my feet that I might go from her.

"No," said a voice that I knew well even after all them years. "No, but she is and was Mary Barton ever since that same night, ould Sargent Darcy Delany, an' round afore me came the fine, grand Liffinten an' puts his arm into mine an' give me the square look of a true man right into me eyes, while his other arm reaches out an' grasps Mary about the waist.

"I managed, somehow, to clear away the tears that were blidin' me. I felt a little pat on my knee an' I looked down to see a little angel face a' d' hear the sweet voice 'Dradad,' an' it seemed as if my Mary, 4 years ould again, were standin' there at my feet.

"Tis me, dradad," says the little one, an' I takes her up, an' Mary an' Barton helps me into a sof' an' I sits there—me as never shed a tear for sorrow, nor shame, nor poverty, nor sufferin'—I sits there cryin' the eyes out of me head for very joy.

"They told me how they had been married before ever me child had sought me that night, six long years before. How, when I had driven her away, they went to England an' France an' them other countries, so Mary could put the top gold on all her accomplishments. How Barton's father and mother had come to them in Paris when little Mary were born, an' how they all loved and prided in my daughter, the wife of their son. They told me all this as I sat nursing the wee lass of my own Mary, an' God forgive me, I sat an' listened, never thinkin' of the poor ould lonesome wife that I had left in our shabby home an' that was waitin' for me.

"But Mary thought of her, an' soon we were in a carriage an' drivin' toward the mother fast as horses could take us. I went in first, with the baby fast asleep in me arms. The wife had gone to bed in the back room, but she heard me, an' calls out: 'Is that you, Sergeant? an' do ye bring good news? Ye'll find the sthew keepin' hot for ye on the stove-step.'

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