

(Written by a married man.)
My presence came just now
A little child—I know not how.
Familiar, too, he seemed; and yet
I could not tell where we had met.
His mien was innocent and mild—
I never saw a fairer child—
And yet, in most unseemly glee,
He cocked one wicked eye at me.

I knew him then. The pretty boy
Took aim with the same silver toy
That slays its thousands. "Wait!" cried I;
"Don't shoot at me, my son; on, be!"

"For you forgot it was your dart,
Sent once with your own matchless art,
That made me like the rest—a fool.
Since then, alas, I've been at school!"

"For she, ah, yes! she still is fair;
Untouched by gray her dusky hair.
Once girls was loving; now you see
She rules the house, and she rules me."

He said no word, but just took aim.
Straight to the mark his arrow came.
"Forget me now, sir, if you dare!"
Cried Cupid, running down the stair.

Deep in my heart there is a pain—
Methinks I am in love again!
Sweet, sweet, my pet; it is not true;
Those foolish words so deeply true.

I wonder if you are in league
With Cupid? Is it Love's intrigue?
I know not, care not, but I'll sign
Myself your humble Valentine,
—Puck.

MEG'S VALENTINE.

M EG was only one of the "hands" in the great factory of Weaver & Co., and with about the same regularity as the machinery she performed her daily tasks.

No task in the factory had ever given her so much as a sympathetic glance; the whirr of wheels and sound of machinery, the everlasting hum of machinery and singing of spindles did not encourage sympathy, and besides Meg was quiet, even timid, and her companions, after the first day of now and then a half curious, half critical inspection, paid no attention to her.

And yet Meg's "trouble" had been a romance; a sort of a flower which blooms sometimes along the hedgerows with the same beauty and sweetmness as in the conservatory.

Born was all Meg knew about her origin: brought up, at first in a charitable institution, later as the chore girl in a boarding house, which always smelled of dirt and rancidity; and still later as a boarder at the same place, because it was more like home to her after her long, hard day's work at the factory, where she had secured employment at the age of 15. Meg's life had been an uneventful one.

Meg was ignorant, her "schooling" having been encompassed by a six months' course at a grammar school in the neighborhood, and for which "educational advantage" she had toiled for the mistress of the boarding house until her health threatened to give way under the strain.

But, since somebody, back in the past of Meg's unknown ancestry, had sent a drop of ambitious blood flowing through her veins, within the six months she had learned to read easy words, both in print and writing, and she was proud of the fact.

She did glory in her power to read and spell out the meaning of such cheap books as came in her way, and, once, having watched a postman deliver a letter across the street, she was seized with a wish that was somewhat akin to pain to receive a letter from somebody—just to see if she could frame an answer.

She had never received a letter and thinking it over from this stand-point, Meg felt that she was very lonely and she vaguely wondered how it all came about that nobody in all the thousands which made up the big city—the big city was Meg's world—had cared whether she lived or died.

Once a sweet little girl, who was walking with her nurse, had looked up into her face and with that free-façony which knows nothing of rules and which has in it the element, nay, the very essence of fraternity, had pressed a tiny cluster of violets into her hand.

And so the days went on, to-day as yesterday, to-morrow as to-day, until one morning Meg overslept herself, by some method of calculation which did not consider in the light of dollars and cents added to her income, and she went to her breakfast late. The landlady was unusually pleasant when a boarder happened to be late at breakfast and, as became one in her exalted position, she made an offense of this kind on Meg's part an affair of great importance.

Not that Meg in all the years she had worked for Weaver & Co. had been late to breakfast more than three or four times, but the landlady never quite forgot that Meg had at one time been her willing slave and any dereliction on her part which was savored of independence was not a thing to lightly pass over.

On the morning in question, the landlady, much to Meg's surprise, greeted her in an affable manner and her grim mouth quivered with something which might, under favorable conditions, have been mistaken for a smile, but which had had

A TINY CLUSTER OF VIOLETS.

so little practice that it merely succeeded in being a grimace, as she told her to take her seat at the table and then proceeded to introduce her to a new boarder who had just paid a month's board in advance.

Meg acknowledged the introduction, and after the landlady had gone out ventured to look at her vis-à-vis, and discovered that he was a tall young man with a bronzed complexion and a pair of brown eyes which met hers frankly, and seemed to look right down into her foolishly beating heart, and after the tough steak had been served and he had gallantly filled a glass of water for her Meg made up her mind that he was different from those whom she constantly met beneath that roof and was undeniably "nice."

The young man, whose name was Atwood—"Mr. Tom Atwood," as he was called by the landlady—was dressed to talk as he went on eating his breakfast, and as Meg was the only one at the breakfast table he naturally talked to her, and she soon learned that he was head brakeman on one of the trains which rolled out of the city on the iron rails belonging to a great railway line, and that his home was in an Eastern city. She told him that she also belonged to the toiling masses, and before breakfast was finished they became very well acquainted, and Meg, as she pinned her veil down over her plain little hat, thought Mr. Atwood the very nicest gentleman whom she had ever met.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.



officials at that time, and his legal services in many of the trials of those times are still remembered.

When the Chicago and Alton Railroad was built through the county it did not pass through the new county seat, Mount Pulaski, nor the old one of Postville, but it did pass within a mile of the latter town. At this point a new town was founded and named in honor of Mr. Lincoln, who was a friend of the men who were its founders.

On the sale of lots in the new town on Aug. 1, 1853, Mr. Lincoln was present and expressed his interest in having no money with which to buy some of the town lots. However, two lots opposite the block set aside as the court house square were given to him by Messrs. Gillett, Hickox and Latham as an attorney fee for services in the work of securing the charter and deeds for the new city. These lots Mr. Lincoln owned until his death and were not sold by his heirs until about seven years ago.

LINCOLN AS A LABORER.

He Did Farm Work in Indiana for 25 Cents a Day.

By this time Abraham had become an important member of the family. He was remarkably strong for his years, and the work he could do in a day was a decided advantage to Thomas Lincoln, says McClure's Magazine. The ax which had been put into his hand to help in making the first clearing had never been allowed to drop; indeed, as he says himself, "from that till within his 23rd year he was almost constantly handling that most useful instrument." Besides, he drove the team, cut down the elm and linden brush with which the stock was often fed, learned to handle the old steel plow, to wield the sickle to thresh the wheat with a flail, to fan and clean it with a sheet, to go to mill and turn the bearned grain into flour; in short, he learned all the trades the settler's boy must know, and well enough so that when his father did not need him he could hire him to the neighbors. Thomas Lincoln also taught him the rudiments of carpentry and cabinet-making, and kept him busy some of the time as his assistant in his trade. There are houses still standing in and near Gentryville on which it is said he worked. The families of Lamar, Jones, Crawford, Gentry, Turnham and Richardson all claim the honor of having employed him upon their cabins. As he grew older he became one of the strongest and most popular "hands" in the vicinity, and much of his time was spent as "hired boy" on some neighbor's farm. For 25 cents a day—paid to his father—he was hostler, plowman, wood chopper and carpenter, besides helping the women with the "chores." For them, so say the legends, he was ready to carry water, make the fire, even tend the baby. No wonder that a laborer who never refused to do anything asked of him, who could "strike with a mallet heavier blows" and "sink an ax deeper into the wood" than anybody else in the community, and who at the same time was general help for the women, never lacked a job in Gentryville.

MAKING LINCOLN PRESENTABLE

Mrs. Lincoln "Fixed Up" the President-elect to Meet a Delegation.

In narrating "When Lincoln Was First Inaugurated" in the Ladies' Home Journal, Stephen Fiske writes interestingly of the memorable journey from Springfield, Ill., to the national capital, and tells of Mrs. Lincoln's efforts to have her husband look presentable when receiving a delegation that was to greet them upon reaching New York City.

"The train stopped," writes Mr. Fiske, "and through the windows immense crowds could be seen; the cheering downed the blowing off steam of the locomotive. Then Mrs. Lincoln opened her hand bag, said:

"'Almighty, I must fix you up a bit for these city folks.'

"Mr. Lincoln gently lifted her upon the seat before him; she parted, combed and brushed his hair and arranged his black necktie.

"'Do I look nice now, mother?' he affectionately asked.

"'Well, you'll do, Abraham,' replied Mrs. Lincoln critically. So she kissed her and lifted her down from the seat, and turned to meet Mayor Wood, courtly and suave, and to have his hand shaken by the other New York officials."

LOVE LOTTERY DAY.

One of the most charming and at the same time plausible versions of the relation of the modern valentine idea to that devoted Christian martyr, St. Valentine, is the following:

The early Christian fathers, in their attempts to conciliate their pagan compatriots, with most commendable tact and insight utilized many of the popular forms of mythological celebrations to commemorate Christian events.

One of the festivals, dear to the heart of every Roman, was the feast of Lupercalia, when they did honor to their gods Pan and Juno, not only with the banquet, dance and drama, but with a peculiar ceremony which provided a billet box into which were dropped slips of paper inscribed with the names of the ladies. The bachelors drew out these slips and the ladies whose names were on their papers were henceforth installed as their mistresses for twelve months to command them as best suited their sweet wills. This festival was to outdo for speed, too deep for tears, and it will go with her all her days, and—who knows?—will fade only when she is no more lonely, no more heart-hungry. Death is not the end; it is the beginning.

—Utica Globe.

WHERE ABE PRACTICED LAW.

Old Courthouse at Lincoln, Ill., Has Connection with the Martyr.

The city of Lincoln, Ill., still contains one building in which Abraham Lincoln practiced law over forty years ago. It is known as the "Postville" court house, although that village was long ago absorbed by the present city.

The first county seat of Logan County was Postville, and the old court house,

which still stands in the western part of Lincoln, was occupied as such from 1839 to 1848. In the latter year the courts were removed twelve miles south to Mount Pulaski, which village was the county seat until 1855. At almost every term of court from the time of the organization

of the county a trial was held.

A few days before the time set for the wedding the weather, which had been in that condition known as "muggy," turned cold, and when Tom came around to bid Meg good-by before going out on his run for the last time before claiming her as his bride, he had a powder of snow on his collar and that strange, indescribable smell of cold on his clothing which made Meg snuggle up to him and say she was sorry he had to go out in the cold," and then, as she kissed him in that motherly way that comes natural to women when they love, she asked him to "be very careful and watch his footing as he ran across the tops of the cars, which were sure to be slippery because of the snow," and even though she had a heart and light of foot to make the final preparations for her union with the man she loved. She had told the foreman on the previous evening that she would not return to the factory and that hirling of men, who considered humanity of kind as merely adjuncts to money getting, had deigned to say in an interlocutory fashion: "Going to get married, hey?" Meg did not answer, but she felt such delight at leaving the huge building, where she had been merely as a piece of the machinery, that it seemed to her she had never known freedom and vaguely wondered if it really were she—Meg—who walked on air and was so happy that now and then she caught her heart lest it should beat aloud.

Now, when Tom's train would be in at 3:20 o'clock, and at 6, in the presence of only one or two of the boarders and the landlady, the ceremony was to be performed. Meg watched the clock, but when the hands pointed to 4:30 she concluded that the train was an hour late, and she would don the pretty gown so as to be all ready when Tom came. She smiled at her image in the glass as for the twentieth time she shook out the rustling skirt and then ran hastily down to again look at the clock. It was 5 o'clock now, and still Tom had not come, and at once something like a cold hand grasped Meg's heart and she trembled as one with



AND, AT LAST, SHE LET HIM GO.

ten the inclosed, and requested that it be sent to its present address."

Meg dropped the letter, and with the calmness of one who has fast hold of despair she read Tom's last message which, with many breaks and almost illegible tracery, read as follows: "Deer girl: I—of the company's hospital, and it stated that Thomas Atwood, a brakeman, had fallen between the cars while on his regular run and had been so badly injured that he had died shortly after being brought to the hospital. Before his death he had asked for pencil and paper and had written

a chill. Then the door bell rang and, with the glad cry of "There he is!" upon her lips, she sprang to meet—not Tom, but a stranger, and he looked odd and uneasy at poor Meg, and somehow she knew when he handed her an envelope containing a letter—her first letter—that something had befallen her lover, and she felt her way back to the little parlor and with shaking hands tore the letter open and slowly spelled out its contents. It was not long, but was written by Dr. —, of the company's hospital, and it stated that he had spent all his earnings, but since that time he had begun to put by a little, and now had \$300, and that he meant to work hard and get a promotion, so that they could some time have a home of their own," etc., just as humble, happy lovers always have done and always will do, and when they decided that they would put the \$100 and \$300 together, and as that was the 1st of February, they would get married on the 14th, a "valentine wedding," as Tom said, and then, when she said "she had had a valentine," he laughed out of a heart just bubbling over with sweetness, and love, and merriment, and told her "he would be her valentine and she would be his," and then he kissed her, and Meg was in such a state of delight that she forgot she ever had been lonely, and she wouldn't have changed places with a queen, even if the latter had insisted upon it.

As the time drew near for the wedding Meg had a pretty new dress made and, somewhat softened by the love affair which had gone forward directly under her supervision, the landlady had made preparations for a wedding supper which was to outdo any previous effort of the kind in the neighborhood. Indeed, she had resolved that for once she would be extravagant, and she got out several anagrams, which were headed "Bride's Cake," and set to work beating eggs and weighing sugar and flour which made the kitchen scullion to declare, in a confidential manner, to the garage man, that "Missus is peared to be half teched in her upper story," and gave to good—good—keep a tide hold on the brakes, and with—love forever and ever, I am—your valentine."

That was all; only the story of two humble lovers, and to-day Meg is again in the factory, and the landlady never quite forgot that Meg had at one time been her willing slave and any dereliction on her part which was savored of independence was not a thing to lightly pass over.

On the morning in question, the landlady, much to Meg's surprise, greeted her in an affable manner and her grim mouth quivered with something which might, under favorable conditions, have been mistaken for a smile, but which had had

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