

#### A CATASTROPHE.

No human being who saw that sight  
But felt a shudder of pale affright.  
He sat in a window, three stories high,  
A little baby, with no one nigh.

A stranger saw him and stopped to stare;  
A crowd soon gathered to watch him there.  
A gleam! a flutter!—in airy flight  
Came past the window a butterfly bright.

From fields of clover and perfumed air,  
Wayfaring insect, what brought you there?  
The baby saw it, and eagerly  
Reached out to catch it, with crowing glee.

With fat, pink fingers, reached out—and fell!  
The awful horror, no tongue can tell!  
Poor little baby, so sweet and bright!  
Pale faces quivered and lips grew white;

Weak women fainted, strong men grew weak;  
Up rose one woman's heart-piercing shriek.  
Hurrah for the awning! Upon the fly  
It caught the youngster and tossed him high.

The bounce prodigious made baby scowl;  
He caught his breath, sputtered up a howl,  
All blazed the awning that had outlaw;  
But a madder baby you never saw!

—*Felix Arkwright, in New Orleans Picayune.*

#### THE MUSICAL COW.

Mr. Wheaton came home one day, leading a new cow, that he had purchased in an adjoining town.

"Where did you find such a splendid cow?" inquired his son Sam, in a tone of admiration, which the appearance of the animal seemed to justify, as she was very finely shaped and handsome, with bright, intelligent eyes and a gentle manner.

"Why," said his father, "I heard that old Mr. Jonathan Caswell was selling off and going to give up farming, and I always knew that he kept good stock. So I stopped there, and finally made a bargain with him for this cow. He wanted a monstrous price; but he was decided about selling, so at last we came to terms. He recommended her so highly I'm almost afraid we shall be disappointed, though I guess he's generally pretty fair in a trade. You might go into the house," he added, "and give mother and Sally an invitation to come out and see her."

Sam accordingly ran down the path leading to the house, and seeing his mother and sister in the doorway, he shouted to them to come that minute to the barn, for there was something there to show them.

They immediately followed him, and were introduced to Quinny, which was the name of the new cow. They were both surprised and pleased at the beauty of her appearance and praised her so lavishly that Mr. Wheaton was more and more convinced that he had done a good thing in making such a purchase.

"Now, Sally," said he, "that big churn will be just what you need, for she gives from twenty to twenty-five quarts of milk a day, if I've heard the truth about her."

"That's a great deal, it seems to me," said Mrs. Wheaton.

"I know it is," replied her husband; "but some very extra cows give even more than that."

"We shall be obliged to have another pail and some more pans," said Sally; "for I shall make ever so much more butter now."

"You've taken hold of this butter business with so much spirit," said her father, "that I guess I'll let you have all the money for a spell, till you get enough to buy a carpet. I believe that I heard you and mother saying last winter that you wanted a new one."

"Good for you, father," cried Sam. "Oh! oh!" echoed Sally, "how nice that will be; and I don't mind the work one bit, because I shall be thinking all the time of what it is going to bring." And she clapped her hands and skipped gaily up and down the wide barn floor.

Mrs. Wheaton said nothing; but she smiled a smile of hope and approbation, and she and Sally returned to the house, exhilarated by the prospect which the new carpet spread before their imaginations.

Toward the close of the afternoon, at the usual hour for finishing the day's work, Sam called the cows from the pasture and milked them, and then attempted to perform the same service for the stranger, Quinny. But she seemed very restless and ill at ease, and behaved in such a singular manner that Sam's patience was nearly exhausted. With his utmost exertions, he could only obtain a small quantity of milk; and at last, thoroughly offended with her perverse conduct, he left her for the night, and proceeded to the house, to give vent to his disappointment and vexation.

"That's the wonderful cow that was to give twenty-five quarts of milk a day!" he exclaimed, with scornful accent; "and she hasn't given two quarts. I never saw a cow like this one. I can't do anything with her."

"You must be very gentle with her and not get fretful," said his mother. "It is natural that she should be uneasy at first; but in a few days she'll be as comfortable as the others."

"I don't know about that," insisted Sam. "I tell you she's a mighty queer cow, and I'm afraid father's been cheated."

"Oh! don't talk so, Sam," implored Sally. "How shall we ever get the carpet, if she don't turn out well!"

She spoke in so afflicted a tone that Sam bravely endeavored to hold his peace, and sought out his father, to make a report of his misgivings. Mr. Wheaton only laughed, and declared it was nothing but the change from her old home that had affected Quinny, and that 'twas reasonable to expect she would feel the influence of a strange place and act accordingly. So Sam dismissed his anxieties, and after supper went with his father to see the meadows and see if they were not almost ready for mowing.

Sally and her mother were in the kitchen, discussing household affairs,

when they heard a knock at the door, and immediately afterward a man entered, who was recognized by Mrs. Wheaton as Mr. Jonathan Caswell. When the customary salutations had been exchanged, he inquired: "Is Mr. Wheaton about home? I've come to see him in particular for somethin'."

"Yes," replied Mrs. Wheaton, "he's just gone to the lower end of the farm, and will be back again soon. Won't you sit down and rest and wait for him?"

"I guess I will, seein' as I'm here," said the old man. "I'm pretty tired, for I've hurried some to get here before dark." He took the chair that Sally offered, remarking to her mother: "Yer man come over and bought a cow of me this forenoon. How did ye like her, all of ye?"

"We liked her very much," answered Mrs. Wheaton. "I haven't seen such a handsome creature in a long time, for we have never kept any superior stock."

"I s'pose ye didn't have any trouble milkin' her," he said, with a slight smile.

"Yes, we did," replied Sally, hastily. "Sam, that's my brother, said she acted dreadfully. She only gave two quarts of milk, and he thinks father's been cheated."

"Oh! no; guess not," said he, while his smile deepened into a laugh, expressive of some secret cause of amusement. In a moment he continued: "When I told my wife I'd sold Quinny—she belonged to her, ye know—the first thing she asked me was if I'd told about milkin' her. And there 'twas. I hadn't thought to speak on't, and I was worked up enough, for I didn't know but what ye'd think I'd forgot a purpose. But when folks get so old and are runnin' down hill they can't bear things in mind as they can when they're young. So I started to come over here as soon as I could; and I should have reached here before, only two or three stopped me to talk about buyin' some of my truck, for they knew I'd advertised to sell off. We've got to be so lonesome that we've made up our minds to go and live with one of our darters, and I hope 'twill be for the best."

"Then there is some difficulty in milking this cow?" observed Mrs. Wheaton, as he seemed to be wandering from that part of the subject.

—*M. E. Hathaway, in the Independent.*

"I'll tell them," said Sally; "and 'tis so funny I can't help laughing."

"So 'tis," he replied; "and ye may depend on what I say, that this is the only fault she has. And I raaly don't think we ought to call this a fault, when 'tis only a love for music, as ye might say."

"I shall be perfectly satisfied," said Sally, "if I can only sing well enough to please her."

"Ah! well," repeated he, as he opened the door, "she always was a known' creeter, and we never expected to part with her; but, ye see, we're breakin' up and goin' to live with one of our darters, and I do hope 'twill be for the best."

"I hope so, certainly," said Mrs. Wheaton, as he went out, with a serious "farewell."

They watched him, as he slowly un-hitched the old horse, slowly clambered into the old wagon, and slowly drove out of sight, as if the "breakin' up" bore with great heaviness on body and mind. Sally was in high spirits when her father and Sam returned, merrily impatient to reveal the secret of Quinny's strange behavior.

"I'm sure this is good news for me, Sally," said Sam, on hearing the story. "I can't sing so as to charm a cow, and you'll be obliged to take the whole management of this case."

"That's what I intend," replied she; "but you must learn one tune—'From Greenland's Icy Mountains' or 'When I can Read My Title Clear'—so that you can take my place some times."

Sally's "whole management of the case" was attended with such excellent success that the new carpet, which had figured so long as an aspiration and a day-dream, soon became a substantial reality, a present comfort and delight. True to the instincts of her feminine nature, she indulged in many another scheme of happy expenditure, while she sat morning and evening singing hymns for Quinny's pleasure and filling her pail to the brim with foaming milk.

Sam still persists in finding some fault with the new cow, because she never will be quiet without the singing; but Sally quite agrees with her former owner that it should not be called a fault, since it is only a remarkable love for music.

—*M. E. Hathaway, in the Independent.*

#### Scarcity of Labor in Louisiana.

The New Orleans *Times* of July 31 says: "Recent reports from the country disclose the fact that throughout the sugar and cotton growing areas of Louisiana, there is great scarcity of labor, very few planters having secured their full complement of hands. The scarcity is not so much immediate as prospective, experience demonstrating that it requires a smaller number of men to plant and cultivate than it does to harvest. Both the sugar and cotton crops have been 'jaded by,' and the sugar planters have now little else to do besides getting out his wood for the grinding season and overhauling his machinery. In another month, however, cotton will have fully matured, picking will commence, and during that season every available man and boy will be brought into requisition. It is estimated that on nearly every plantation a large amount of cotton is permitted to rot in the field, for the simple reason that a sufficient number of hands can not be secured to pick it. It is estimated that on some places 33 1/3 per cent. of the entire crop is lost in this way, particularly if the yield be heavy. An average hand can pick during a working day 300 pounds of seed cotton, yielding 100 pounds of lint, which, at 10 cents a pound, would be \$10. By this it will be seen that the addition of 10 hands during a month, estimating their time at 25 working days, would add \$2,600 to the gross earnings of the year, and at the same time involve no cost excepting their wages. It is a matter of some surprise that planters who have, of course, suffered this loss through a series of years, have made no effort to remedy the evil when practical relief in the premises is within the reach of all. For several years the Western States have been filled with crowds of migratory harvesters, who annually take off the crops in that region, commencing early in the season in Southern Illinois, where the grain first ripens, and as the season advances, moving northward. By this process they find constant employment through the entire summer, commencing in the vicinity of Cairo in the latter part of June, and ending their labors far up in Wisconsin, Iowa or Minnesota, some time in September. Usually the men are energetic, industrious, and in the main honest. It is estimated that 10,000 or 15,000 farm laborers are engaged in this occupation every year; but suppose that just as their season terminates an effort were made to secure their services in the South. In September, at the time when they are idle, our cotton is ready for picking. Ten thousand of these men in our fields would contribute to the aggregate yield 1,000,000 pounds of cotton lint a day, or in two months 115,555 bales. During the succeeding two months they could find constant employment in the cane fields, and be prepared to return to their homes at Christmas, after seven months of nearly constant labor in the field. There is little question that to one of this class no more varied, agreeable, nor remunerative theater of industry could be presented. It is certainly one which would afford all the advantages of travel enjoyed by the average tourist, and effective assistance to the planter at this critical time of the year would accomplish much toward solving the labor problem, and rendering the cultivation of the soil a certain road to wealth."

—*Daniel W. Voorhees is to lecture on Thomas Jefferson.*

#### THE PENNSYLVANIA MINERS.

Some of the Alleged Wrongs That Have Driven Them Into Rebellion—The Grinding Down of the Iron and Coal Workers.

(From the New York Sun.)

SCRANTON, August 7.—The head and front of the offending here has been the Lackawanna Iron and Coal Company. No other corporation has been so fertile in ingenious devices for its own enrichment and the impoverishment of its employees, none so merciless in the application of a cruel system of crushing out manhood. Its pitiless clutch upon the throat of labor has forced the toiler's scanty pennies from him under every protest.

A mere exhibit of nominal per diem wages would show that the ironworkers in this employ are doing pretty well as the rates of wages run in all fields of labor, and, indeed, the amounts they are paid are generally somewhat in excess of the average earnings of the coal miners in this region. But it must be borne in mind that the ironworkers have not been making full time any more than the miners, and, where the amount of toil that a man gives in return for a specified sum necessary for the maintenance of his family is practically a matter of indifference to him, so long as he gets that needed sum, \$10 for 10 days of work and 10 of idleness is really no whit better to him than ten dollars won by twenty days of steady work. The best paid men about the works—apart from the foreman and bosses, whom it is always policy to pay well—are the skilled workmen employed in "charging" in the steel works, who make about \$45 a month if they have full work, and the heaters in the rail mill, who get \$2 a day; but neither of these average much over half time employment. For "puddling" iron, \$2.70 per ton is paid. That goes to two men, who are expected to "puddle" a ton of 2,240 pounds—and ten pounds over for good weight—in twelve hours. Puddlers make from \$28 to \$32 per month. The heaters of seven-inch iron get only 17 cents per ton—equivalent to about 160 a day when they have work. Furnace men get \$1.05 a day; helpers, \$1; laborers, from 65 to 80 cents; blacksmiths and skillful machinists, \$1.50; boys, \$2 to \$4 per week. Actually men's earnings in the different branches run from \$14 to \$32 per month. As has been said, this is better than the miners' average, but here the triumph of the company's rascality is begun.

The primary, the lot dodge is probably the best illustration. The company owns a vast tract of territory, double the amount permitted by its charter, it is said, the excess standing under fictitious titles of individual ownership. Parts of these vast possessions are Sanderson's Hill and Shanty Hill. The former is reserved for wealthy men's residences, and is the prettiest part of the town. To keep it exclusive and insure the shutting out of the poorer class, lots here are held at fancy prices, from \$2,000 to \$10,000 each, unimproved. Consequently the laborers have nothing to do here. But they have much to do with Shanty Hill. That is where most of them live. Shanty Hill is a barren, bleak, stony slope, cheerless and ugly. It is, perhaps, valued at not more than 10 cents an acre for purposes of taxation. But the company cuts it up into small lots and rented them to its employees at from \$3 to \$4 per month ground rent. Even at these excessive prices, no leases were given. Every tenant was and is held liable to expulsion on ten days' notice. Sometimes, after men had erected their little cabins on these lots they were ordered to move them to new sites, seemingly for no other purpose than to involve them in expense and keep them poor. One man, a puddler, says: "It cost me \$250 to build my house. I had still about \$125 saved up. The company made me move to a lot away off, and it cost me \$100 to do so. I have since paid them \$75 in ground rent. The lot may be worth \$20 in good times." A few have carefully picked the stones from their lots and built them into a wall, dug up the soil and freed it from rocks, and even carried earth from a distance to make garden plots. Then the company has come down upon them. Big wagons were sent to carry away for some improvement about the works the stones they had piled into a wall. If their gardens were nice or their potato patches flourishing, they were ordered to either pay more rent or to move their houses, at ten days' notice, to give place to somebody who would.

But why did the men establish their homes there under such hard conditions? it will be asked. Because the company forced them to do so; discharged them from employment if they did not submit.

The worst feature of the company's policy is its gigantic store. Here its employees must trade, or, if they are suspected of the heinous offence of buying elsewhere the few necessities of life they can afford, they are told to "take their time," which means close up accounts and be discharged. The store is in several vast departments. There is one for dry goods, another for crockery, glassware and groceries; another for hardware, boots and shoes; another for tailoring, etc. There is even an undertaker department, but that is nominally an outside concern, for the reason that by that means its bills may be put in the form of "orders" on the company, which charges five per cent. on them. Although that five per cent. is nominally deducted from the bill, it is actually allowed for in making the bill, and so comes out of the miner's pocket, as is the case on all orders. The "order" business is one of the most grievous outrages of all. An order signed by the miner is not necessary. Any body, butcher, baker, physician, or any body else who holds a claim against a miner

or an ironworker in the company's employ, may send in a bill, and if the company chooses to pay it, with a deduction of five per cent. for the trouble, the man must submit or be discharged, and turned out of his home on the company's land. Of course the makers of such bills serve the company by making them extortionate, and even if they stop a little short of that, they at least take good care to save their interests from the 5 per cent. deduction. The State and local taxes imposed upon the men are, by a State law, collected in this manner from the company, the Collector getting 2 per cent., and the company in this instance only 3 per cent.

After the men's accounts at the company's stores are made up for the month they or their wives are supposed to be at liberty to get goods at the store, provided there is any thing left after the ground rent and various orders and percentages are deducted from their earnings. As many as 600 or 700 of these poor people may be seen outside the store, standing in line, in sunshine, rain or snow, awaiting their turn, on the earlier days of the month, when work is getting on. Each in turn drops his or her pass-book through a slit into a box. The clerks draw the books from the bottom, call out the name of the person on each and ask, "What do you want?" The order is filled approximately to the buyer's desires, but at the clerk's sweet will. No samples are shown, no choice is allowed, and if any remonstrance is made the prompt order is, "Get out—no time to talk. If you don't like it, go and get your time."

"They treat us like dogs, sir," said several of the men, "especially our women. They are brutal to them often, but what can we do?" Everything at the store is 15 or 20 per cent. higher than the same articles are in outside, independent stores selling for cash in the town. Sometimes the difference is even greater. Just before the strike, when potatoes were selling for forty cents a bushel in the town, the company charged eighty cents. Shoes it charged fifty cents per pair more than other stores. So all through the list of the necessities and poorest luxuries of life needed here. Yet there is no credit in the company's store. No man in the employ of the company is ever permitted to get all his wages except when he quits its service. A miner or an ironworker may have \$100 due him in the store, and for his urgent necessities require \$50 of that amount. If he asks for \$50 he may get \$20, or perhaps \$25, just as the manager of the store sees fit, and if he remonstrates or begs for more, the reply is, "Take your time, then, and get out." At least a month's wages the company aims to hold always in hand, but it never pays any interest on that amount retained. If a man's family, in the flush of unusual possession, during the early part of the month, lets its appetite get the better of its prudence, during the latter part of the month and up to another pay-day man, wife and children must go hungry, even though he may have ample means to his credit in the store.

From their squalid misery the company employees look up to the magnificent mansions on the hill above the store, built by their oppressors; the \$1,000,000 house erected by Joseph H. Scranton, and the princely abode of J. C. Platt (former Superintendent of the company's store). They remember that this company was bankrupt in 1844, that since then it has paid enormous dividends, and is now possessed, openly and covertly, of property variously estimated at from \$25,000,000 to \$40,000,000, although its nominal capital is only \$2,000,000. With all this, they see themselves more wretchedly and hopelessly poor than they were when the company was bankrupt.

Under such circumstances it is not strange that the company has, ever since the beginning of the trouble here, been nervously apprehensive of its employees wreaking their vengeance upon its stores. Two hundred men were kept on guard day and night to protect them. The military have been required to bivouac near them. The doors are kept closed, and the men can not get the wages due them except by marking themselves as men never again to enter the company's service, and this they are loth to do, as they hope ultimately to effect an improvement in the terms accorded them, and they are too poor to go elsewhere to seek work.

#### The Apollo of Long Branch.

Mr. Fred. May, whose little coffee and pistol affair with James Gordon Bennett is still fresh in the minds of the public, is one of the celebrities of the Branch this year. May is a very handsome young man in evening dress, but when he emerges from the bathing-houses clad in the acrobatic costume in which he enters the water, he creates universal havoc in the breasts of the fair lookers on. He is tall and finely proportioned, with limbs as clean-cut as those of some crack racer, and an Apollo-like head, set on broad shoulders. He is, altogether, a magnificent specimen of manly beauty, and he has but to appear in his scanty garb of mauve-color with short sleeves and legs, to create