

THE MAIL

A PAPER FOR THE PEOPLE.

TERRE HAUTE, - OCT. 24, 1885.

STICK TO YOUR BUSH.

When I was but a tiny boy,
And went to village school,
I thought myself, as boys will think,
That I was no man's fool.
But in the village there was one
Who was the fool all aile.
Poor fellow, he was Cruz Ben,
A man both little and tall.

But Ben was gaunt and gray, a fool
The village Solons cried:
He'd been a fool, and told the tale,
Even since his true love died.
But Ben was kind, I not afraid,
And Ben became my chum;
E'en though at times poor Ben took freaks,
His idiot tongue was dumb.

One day that tongue unloosed a truth
That made me then to wince,
And though it came from idiot's lips,
Has never left me since,
That day we became love gone.
And Ben got along
And boy-like, from bush to bush
Had wandered with the throng.

Ben stuck in silence, to one spot,
And I expected this to me:
"Stick to your bush if you of fruit
A bushful wad see."
And so I did, and proved the fact,
While through the world we push.
There's nothing better to be learned
Than this: "Stick to your bush."

[Inez Irving in N. Y. Mercury.]

A Wounded Life.

If the predictions of the neighbors, that she would "come to grief," had reached the ears of Eunice Brewster when she left Oldham, five years ago, for a life in the city, she would have laughed the cackling prophets to scorn in that rather exasperating way of hers. She had all the arrogance of youth, joined to high health, uncommon beauty and unbound hope.

Yet the prophesies had reached fulfillment, albeit there had been a spice of malice in their utterance. She had crept back in the October twilight on a broken wing to die beneath the shelter of that low-roofed, unpainted house which she had left with such disgust.

Her sister and aged father were startled by her sudden appearance, when they had believed her dead, and shocked beyond measure by the change wrought upon her, for the undeveloped beauty of five years ago had flowered brilliantly and faded in that time, and the wasted form, pale, thin cheeks and hollow cough seemed to indicate that her life would be short.

She shrank from recognition. She knew that Oldham had regarded her with disfavor through all her rather headstrong, motherless girlhood, and that some would rejoice over her downfall. But the promptings of natural affection had overcome petty considerations. A face to face view of death is apt to alter one's estimate of things.

Her father's mind had wakened. He clung to her, childishly calling her his little Eunice, and seemed to rest in her presence.

Eunice had always ruled Hulda, who was ten years her senior, in an imperious way, and the latter felt the old self-worth of the question, "What's the world to you?"

"He is dead," Eunice replied, abruptly. "You must not question me, Hulda, about my past. I cannot speak of it."

This was said with a touch of her old imperiousness. It set the seal upon her silence. Hulda rebelled against the decision in secret, but she had to submit.

The reaction from the effort to reach home set in at once, and Eunice could not rise from her bed the next day. The neighbors who came, eager to retail the news, were refused admission to her room, and were completely taken aback by Hulda's strict neutrality of speech, for she had neither art nor desire to invent a plausible story. There was no lack of inventive genius in Oldham, however, and in lieu of actual knowledge, a malicious story was started and circulated industriously.

Hulda had to bear a more galling cross in addition to her anxiety about her sister. A retailer of gossip had told her of the rumor that Eunice had gone to the bad. But she bore it meekly, as was her wont, remembering how little authority she had to contradict it.

Oldham did Eunice injustice, although its theories touched upon actual facts. It possessed no will power of discrimination, would have admitted no palliation of her conduct could it have known the whole truth.

Upon her entrance into a new life in the city, she had conducted herself with due discretion. For a year her path was chequered and uncertain. Then, through the influence of a lady who was interested in her, she obtained a situation in a large jewelry establishment as saleslady. As was to be expected, she drew customs. She could not be unaware of the attention she excited, or that men and women, especially the former, turned for a second look. At this conjuncture she displayed equal balance of character. The consciousness of beauty, instead of making her vain, gave her a higher standard of self-valuation and invested her with becoming dignity. While she threw in this atmosphere, she disdained to hold herself cheaply. She was chary of her words and smiles. Men spoke of her as they might of a wife or sister. She acquired grace of speech and bearing rapidly and the flower of her beauty expanded to wards perfection.

All went well till the passion of love dawned upon her soul, and would have continued so had she not been made the victim of a grievous wrong. Her love for Gerald Fletcher recreates her. Her dormant capacity for affection awoke. She worshipped him as women have worshipped men in all ages to their undoing. She could have died to secure his happiness.

For one happy year she believed herself his lawful wife; and with her head pillow'd upon her breast she reposed in the security of his love and protection.

But one day the door of her room at the hotel, which had been her home ever since her marriage, opened to admit a strange visitor, a diminutive, faded beauty, who eyed the superb physical development of the woman before her, jealously, gazing over the awful look that came into the face of her rival when she produced a certificate of her marriage with Gerald Fletcher five years before. It needed but one glance into his ashken face, as he at that moment entered, to convince Eunice of the truth of the story.

She had a nature capable of extremes. What need to dwell upon the first mad denning sense of wrong and reckless despair of that intense, passionate nature,

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nor how faith in both God and man wavered and fled, since her being had proved ignoble? Why recount the steps taken on a downward course, or describe her awful lapse from innocence and purity? Her mad endeavor to stifle all womanly impulse toward a pure, holy love? It is the old, sad story of woman's betrayal and man's selfishness.

After weeks of pain and patient suffering, Eunice began to rally. As Spring advanced, it became evident that the boon of death was to be denied her. Her native air and Hulda's careful nursing had aided a naturally fine constitution to resist the disease.

The pure blood circulating in her veins eliminated some of the poison from her diseased mind. The resentment against Gerald Fletcher died away within her. Blending fragrances from that Eden whose pathway she had trodden for a season, were wafted to her across the dark gulf of sin from which she had escaped. They purified her nature. Her wounded heart bathed itself in the fullness of that remembered love, and now in its passionate flood-tide, but flowing softly and tenderly over her being.

The womanly attributes of her nature, which in her despair she sought to stifle, seemed to revive under its influence. A pitiful longing for the purity she had lost came over her. His transgression seemed white, to her quickened sensibilities, compared with the evil she had wrought upon herself.

So through the Summer and Autumn that followed her recovery, this finely strung nature sought to bring the dis cords of her soul into harmony.

The first snow storm of the season was gathering in the air and the December twilight was closing in earlier than usual. Among the passengers who alighted at the Oldham station was a stranger whose metropolitan air attracted some attention among the loungers.

Having engaged a room at the hotel and ascertained the erection of Enoch Brewster's domicile, which was three quarters of a mile distant, he set off on foot.

His brisk pace slackened when he came to the foot of the hill over which the low-roofed house was visible in the gathering gloom. Some uncertainty was apparent. The fiery impatience which had urged him forth upon his quest for the woman he had wronged, seemed all at once to diminish. But the elements urged him on. Gusts of wind swept over the hill, whirling the snow in his face in seeming impatience with his indecision.

A careless question at the hotel had assured him that Eunice was at home. He longed, yet dreaded to see her. It was not a pleasant prospect to face her and ask for pardon, with the memory before him, of the tearless flashing eyes and scathing denunciations, with which she had parted from him three years before. He summoned a recollection that lay behind that of a soft chisel against his, of warm, clinging arms and passionate kisses, of a love given without measure. It gave him courage out there in the storm and darkness. To have and to hold that love again, this time lawfully, would be almost worth his hope of heaven.

The low, curtained windows at his left were lighted. Standing on the flat door stone, he felt mechanically in the darkness for bell or knocker, then wrapped lightly at the door.

The step he heard presented renewed his sorrowful figure standing outside. It was Eunice who stood there. Her face was a shadow, but he knew the contour of the graceful shoulder and the proudly poised head. He took a step nearer, while she scanned him searching.

"Eunice!" he said gently. He could see that she started at the well remembered voice he heard.

"Gerald Fletcher," she said in a quiet tone, which indicated no lack of self-possession.

A guest of wind threatened to extinguish the lamp. "Will you come in?" she invited in a tone that somehow did not increase his courage.

"I have been seeking you for weeks," he explained, as he removed his overcoat and hat. "I had a particular wish to see you. It occurred to me to come to your native place on my quest."

"Your visit is quite unexpected," she remarked, as she took up the lamp and led the way into the next room, where were her father and Hulda.

"My father and sister, an old acquaintance mine from New York," she said with quiet dignity.

He was a strongly built man of about forty, dark-faced and handsome. Hulda felt a shy constraint in the presence of the dignified stranger, besides whom her sister stood, looking fully his equal.

A rather embarrassing silence followed the introduction, which was relieved somewhat by Enoch's remarks about the weather, to which Fletcher made brief replies.

He had met something worse even than the hard, cold defiance he had expected. Her attitude towards him was intangible, unexplainable. It did not quite savor of indifference, yet it seemed to place an infinite distance between them.

Hulda slipped out and kindled a fire in the stove of the old-fashioned best room, called, by courtesy, the parlor.

Later Eunice and Gerald stood in the bright glow of the wood fire, with their eyes upon the blaze, nervously themselves for the coming ordeal.

Gerald broke the silence.

"Eunice, are you sorry to see me?" he asked.

She turned slowly toward him. She let her eyes rest upon his face. It was older, graver. Beneath the troubled expression in his eyes the still flame of that old-time passion was burning.

"What reason have I to be glad?" she asked, with a sadness he did not yet understand.

"I come to you a free man," he said. "Freed by death. I come asking for- giveness, longing to make all the reparation in my power for the wrong I did you, anxious to spend the rest of my life in winning back the love and esteem I forfeited."

"To make me your honorable wife?" she asked slowly, with that inscrutable calm.

"To make you my honorable wife," he repeated. "If you do not despise me too wholly to receive my name, Oh, Eunice!" with a sudden access of passionate entreaty in his voice, "has the old love, whose strength and sweet-ness tempted me into dishonor, died out past re-kindling?"

He took an eager step towards her, she motioned him back quietly. Was he to guess what a tumult was raging beneath that strange calm?

"You shrink from me," he cried, passionately. "I see your love is dead, died prematurely by my own hand. I was a blind fool to think that you were a woman to condone such a wrong. My punishment is just; to love you

through life madly and hopelessly."

He paced the room in strong agitation.

She sat silent, still, with every fiber in her heart responding to his passionate appeal while the glibly details of that dark period of her life thrust themselves hideously before her vision, barring her from grasping the proffered happiness.

He stood still suddenly. "Why do you not upbraid me?" he cried. "I can bear reproaches, denunciations, anything but this horrible silence."

She turned her face again toward him, but it was no longer calm. The anguish of a terrible inward struggle was written upon it. There was a painfully pathetic expression in the eyes that might easily overflow in tears, the sensitive lips quivered.

"You do not understand," she said, speaking weakly, as one exhausted by the rude beating of a storm. "You offer to make me your honorable wife. You little dream what my life has been since I parted from you."

She paused, trying to summon resolution to proceed. What a coward she felt as she noted the change that had already come over him. It spoke much for the truth and nobility of her nature that she felt constrained to make the confession, even though it must lower her forever in his estimation.

"You shall know the worst," she went on, speaking rapidly, as if she feared to fail. "You will despise me, but I cannot deceive you. For two years I was numbered with those whose gilded cage and flaunting attire are the price of their soul's purity. I laughed at truth and honor in man or woman. I tried to drown my heart in longing for the love I had lost. In midnight revels my laugh rang loudest where all was a hollow mockery of gaiety. At times my self-contempt would drive me to the verge of self destruction, from which I think some pitying angel held me back, giving me time for repentance.

"My health failed. I came home to die, as I thought. . . . It has been reserved for me to look once again upon the face of the man I love, to hear from his lips an offer of honorable marriage, and although I am powerless to place an unsullied hand in his, this desire to right the wrong is like balm to my heart."

A feeling of terror crept over Gerald as he listened. The extent and scope of his own wrong-doing revealed itself with new and startling distinctness. Driven out, as she had been from the shelter and security of his love, to face the world again, with the safeguard against temptation weakened, how could he judge her?

A wilder tumult than that of the incresing storm was raging in his breast. He had received a shock. He had placed her upon a far higher plane in thought than he himself occupied. His love had been selfish, yet tinctured with thorough respect, for had she not thought herself his wife? He must take new bearings now. His mental equipment labored to adjust themselves to the altered aspect of things.

It was to be the test of his nobility. Was his love for her grand and strong enough to surmount the barrier and keep her away under its shelter?

She sat with bowed head, waiting for the altered tones that should proclaim she was relinquished. Who can tell what waves and billows swept over her as the starving heart so cruelly defrauded reached out hungrily for love.

And yet this wronged, sinning, suffering woman, this repentant Magdalene, had risen to a noble height. There were unfathomable depths in her, York-like, which nothing, brother up by her deep suffering, and clothed as she was in sweet humility, she was worthy to sit at the feet of the Christ.

Some sense of all this dawned upon Gerald's mind. He paused in his thoughtful musings and stood looking down upon the bowed head.

She felt the presence near her, and in thought groveled before him as Guinevere before the shameless king, forgetting, in her self-abasement, that it was no shameless Arthur who stood there, but a man convicted of sin also.

A large pity for her was swelling in his breast as he stood there, mutely cognizant of every detail of dress, form and attitude. A new sentiment of protecting tenderness was arising in his heart. To him she was an angel no longer, but a suffering woman, on an equality with himself, whose life he had wounded sorely.

Not down on her he looks, nor up to an ideal, but straight into her eyes, and all his love is real.

She felt a gentle hand upon her head. It passed caressingly over the soft brown hair. How the touch thrilled her.

"Your confession brands me still deeper," he said, brokenly, "since I was the first transgressor. And this, not indifference, is the barrier on your side?" he questioned, with eagerness.

"Indifference!" she repeated, lifting her head so that her eyes, full of mingled sorrow and tenderness, looked straight into his. "Such love as I felt for you must live forever, I think. It has sunned myself in its warmth during these months of recovery. It first drove me to despair, but in turn it became my salvation."

"Then, Eunice," he said, as he gathered her to his breast, "if this is true, you shall never go out of these arms again!"

"You will still make me your wife?" she questioned, while half the burden seemed rolling from her soul.

"You are the one woman in the world for me," he returned. "In spite of all, I trust you entirely. We will begin life together on a higher plane. We will bury this unhappy memory deep beneath our mutual affection. We will help each other to redeem the past."

The tall clock in the silence that followed, two erring but generous souls had come to a mutual understanding. Henceforth life would have a new significance.

It was close on midnight when he took his leave. The storm had abated. The stars were reappearing high overhead. A beautiful dawn, yet far beneath the horizon, was coming, which was to symbolize that already arisen in two troubled souls. Who shall say that sin is an unalloyed evil, when out of its depths may come such a result as this?

Oldham had to reconsider his decision when he heard of the quiet marriage ceremony in Enoch Brewster's old-fashioned parlor, and saw the carriage with Gerald Fletcher and his bride on its way to the depot.

A year has passed. Enoch is laid away to rest, and good, patient Hulda has a home with Eunice and her husband. The dark chapter is yet a sealed book.

DON'T EAT IN A HURRY.

A health journal says that people ought to take three-quarters of an hour for dinner. This is well if there is enough dinner to hold out so long.

The penalty for hurrying meals, as most people do, is a grievous attack of dyspepsia. In such a case you will have to resort to Brown's Iron Bitters for cure, as did Mr. J. R. Pinkston, Shorters Depot, Ala., who writes, "I found relief in Brown's Iron Bitters after years of suffering from dyspepsia."

TWO TRUTHS.

"Darling," he said, "I never meant to hurt you," and his eyes grew wet.

"I would not hurt you for the world! Am I to blame if I forget?"

"Forgive my selfish tears," she cried, "Forgive! I know that it was not that you would mean to hurt me, love; I knew it was that you forgot."

But all the same, deep in her heart Rankles this though, and rankles yet:

When love is at its best, one loves So much that he cannot forget.

Wooing His Wife.

Although Farmer Tucker had long dreamed of a visit to Chautauqua, when he found himself at the Mecca of devout excursions, the brawny man was tempted to doubt his own identity. The holiday surroundings were wholly unlike anything to which he was accustomed in his prosy New England home, the rich, crowded programme offered was in striking contrast to the dull monotony of farm life. When the son of toil first entered the auditorium, and saw the rustic amphitheatre crowded with thousands of people listening breathlessly to the full, sweet tone of the grand organ, his cramped, selfish heart was strangely touched and expanded. For an instant the wish