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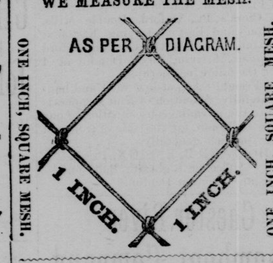

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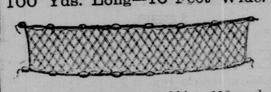

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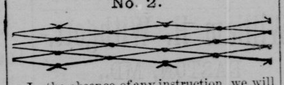

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A Father to His Son.

Aha! a traitor in the camp—
A rebel strangely bold—
A lisping, laughing, toddling scamp
Not more than four years old!

To think that I, who ruled alone
So proudly in the past,
Should be ejected from my throne
By my own son at last.

He trots his treason to and fro,
As only babies can—
"I'se doin' to be my mamma's beau
When I'se a gweat big man!"

You stingy boy! you've always had
A share in mamma's heart.
Would you begrudge your poor old dad
The tiniest little part?

And yet your confidence, my boy,
I fear is not misplaced—
And, what is more, I note with joy
Your excellence of taste.

Your mamma, I regret to see,
Inclines to take your part—
As if a dual monarchy
Should rule her gentle heart!

But when the years of youth have sped,
The bearded man, I trow,
Will quite forget he ever said
He'd be his mamma's beau.

Renounce your treason, little son—
Leave mamma's heart to me;
For there will come another one
To claim your loyalty.

And when that other comes to you,
God grant her love may shine
Through all your life as fair and true
As mamma's did through mine.

AN OLD MAN'S YARN.

I am not on bad terms with the young folks, but I am on first rate terms with the old ones. I fancy that I can clearly analyze the cause of this. I have my faults—who has not?—but I believe honestly that they are more the faults of the pocket than of the heart. A state of authorship is highly suggestive of a state of debt. All that I have to say is that, if the amount of brain bears any proportion to the amount of "little bills," then may I fairly assert pretensions to an exceedingly exalted position in the kingdom of literature. I claim the emperorship until some one appears with more extended credentials. Who's ambitious?

However, I fancy that the great cause of my cronyship among the old folks arises from the fact that, with all my faults, I never yet, not even under the influence of hatred, betrayed a confidence. I believe that if people generally were to follow my example, the world would be all the happier for it. More misery probably arises from "tittle-tattling" than from any other cause.

However, to our story. I am attached to one old gentleman in particular, and he seems quite delighted when I drop in of an evening to smoke a quiet pipe with him. He loves to talk of the past. I may probably one day take the trouble to put some of his yarns in a readable form; but I never thought of such a thing until this morning, when, finding myself still under the influence of a reminiscence of his early days, which he narrated last evening, I got a pen and scribbled the following, which is as near the original as I can remember, and which I have his permission to publish.

Fifty years ago there was a romping, rackety, tomboy of a thing, that used to get into more mischief, receive more scoldings and pettings, and make more noise in the old house than all the rest of the folks in it put together. This was our Kate.

Ah, Kate! Kate! she was always a sad lass, and yet her heart was like the Kingdom of Heaven, which shut its gate against every bad feeling. The worst that could be said against her was that she was a romp, and yet, bless her noisy tongue! we should have got up in a gloomy spirit if the young plague had ever omitted to rouse the house with her pestering, persevering rattle. She used to say that she couldn't understand how people could or ought to lie abed after the larks had turned out. Nothing but laudanum could have kept her there, and I've threatened to dose her many a time.

I think I can now hear her first morning salute: "Now then, lazy folks!" And then the young huzzy would almost drive me wild with her incorrigible rat-tat; and she kept at it, too, till I made a rush to the door with a spongeful of water. I cheated her once, though, for three mornings running. I tied a piece of string to my soap pot, and, on the first rat-tat-tat, gave it a rattle and said, "Yes, yes; I'm up." But she found me out, and never gave me the shadow of a chance ever after. "The artful, good for nothing fellow!" said she to the folks; "but I'll be up to him for the future." And so she was, the young pest. However, I really don't think I'm any the worse now for all this coercive early rising.

And she was handsome, too. But was ever the racket of a household not the handsomest girl about, at all events in the eyes of those whom she tormented? I'm not going to talk about ringlets, and lips, and necks, and cheeks, and eyes, and eye-lashes; she looked honest and happy, and if that won't make any woman handsome after a short acquaintance, why then you can manufacture one out of an animated Venus, with all the stock of Gauraud's store at her command.

An awful coquette she was, though. I believe she did more towards getting the boys to school than any amount of canes and "keepings in" could possibly have accomplished. There were three fine-looking lads who I know used to come an hour earlier every morning, and at least a mile out of their way, to see Kate to school and carry her slate and bag. When first they began this, didn't they look at one another like young bull dogs? and, although one of them had been "jolly well welted," it was ineffectual; the fears for his own black eyes couldn't keep him away from Kate's. So they formed a "loving" alliance. The smile of Kate was a coveted, yet a dreadful thing. The happy receiver knew "what he'd get" when they caught him "by himself." Ah, Kate, Kate, but you used to play the deuce with those poor boys! If they had but heard what she said about them over the supper table, almost making us choke ourselves with the young minx's cold bloodedness, why, murder and suicide might have followed.

She managed somehow—from my own experience I can't conceive how—to escape any severe attacks of the common contagion in her school-days; but she was caught at last, was our Kate; her turn came to blush and look foolish, and to distinguish one particular footstep and knock from all others. I fancied something was in the wind when one morning instead of the old clatter, which she still up kept from habit, I simply heard a single rap at my door, with "Come, get up," and then she passed on. I felt so wroth at not being fairly forced out of bed as usual, that I took an extra turn over, and didn't turn back again for an hour and a half.

"Well? Why, yes; I never felt better in my life," was her answer at breakfast to our father, who fancied she was sick or something. And then she sweetened my coffee twice over.

"Why, what on earth ails you, girl?" I heard the old lady say, a couple of days after. "How clumsy you've got lately! I declare, I shall get quite angry with you."

Kate pouted and went off to have a secret conference with Mary Housemaid. I noticed that she'd had a wonderful deal to say to Mary lately. A luminous thought flashed across my brain. "Kate's in love, or I'm a Dutchman."

What a regular joke! Kate in for it. What a jolly idea! Wouldn't I pay her off with a fearful interest for the way she used to banter me when I was "spooney" on the little girl at the cake shop? But it was a serious idea, too. Kate was now seventeen. Never was brother prouder of a sister. She was the pride and benefactress of the village, and the old home. I never contemplated such a thing as Kate leaving us till that moment. A new page in her career suddenly opened before me—that of the future welfare of that dear girl, whom I had carried in my arms when I was a boy, and whose praises I now daily listened to with pride.

But was Kate really in love? I wasn't going to put my foot into it, for Kate was an awful hand at talking, and she would have worried the soul out of me if I'd got on the wrong scent. So I kept my weather eye open. But it was no use, and I came to the conclusion that I might possibly be mistaken, after all. I one day tried to pump Mary, but she didn't know anything about it. Oh, of course not. But this had a wonderful effect. The next time I saw Kate after that she looked remarkably sheepish, and when I asked her to come out for a short walk, she had one of mother's caps to attend to, which she said must be finished. It's my firm opinion that that particular cap was never commenced. I believe that was the only story Kate ever told in her life.

"Oh, young lady," said I, as she left the room and bolted down stairs for another confidential confab with Mary, "very cunning you think yourself, don't you?"

I was in an awful state of curiosity all that day. I felt, I couldn't explain very clearly why, that Kate was over head and ears in love, and that that confounded Mary was in the secret, and that she'd told Kate about my attempt to pump her. I I experienced a strong inclination to throttle Mary.

However, love is no easy thing to keep hidden long, even when there is a strong motive to do so. My old chum, Tony Hastings, began to drop in oftener than usual, always bringing a scolding from his mother to Kate, because she didn't go and see her as frequently as she used to do. Tony seemed to have been suddenly struck with the idea that bunches of flowers and the last new novel were indispensable requisites for young ladies in general and, and Kate in particular; and one day, as I went suddely into the parlor, I saw Kate out of the corner of my eye slyly push something under the sofa cushion. I didn't get a chance to have a peep; but Tony was swaggering, a few days after, with a new gimcrack bead purse, which he'd "bought in town." Oh, yes, of course. Cunning dog, how I could have staggered him.

However, I pretended to see nothing. My mind was now perfectly at ease. But I registered a vow to be down upon them like a thousand of brick one of these odd days. I had never, as I said, till then contemplated the idea of losing Kate, but if I had ever thought about her marrying, I would, if I had had any say in the matter, have picked Tony out for her husband from all the men I had ever known. He was a fine fellow, was Tony; a noble-looking fellow, frank, and as true as steel. He was comfortably off, too, and that is no bad thing in a future brother-in-law. I do not mean this in a selfish point of view, but as regards the influence it exercises over a woman's happiness, and one feels particularly interested when that woman is his pet sister.

Well to make a short story of it, the old lady's eyes began gradually to open, and she tried to open my father's too; but he said "Pooh! pooh! nothing of this kind, or I should have noticed it." (Depend upon it that our fathers and mothers are not half so sharp as they fancy they are.) But mother was not to be pooh-poohed out of a notion when it had once managed to work its way into her good old noddle. Once ridden with the idea that something more than myself brought Tony there so very regularly, she saw, as she might have seen a couple of months or so before, sufficient to confirm her in her tardy idea. She spoke to me about it one day in great confidence, and I replied, "Why, yes, of course. Why, I thought you knew all about that ever so long." Wasn't the old lady astonished, and didn't I feel like one in authority?

I bolted off to Kate instantly. "It's all found out," said I.

"What's found out?" said she, looking as innocent as a sheep.

"Why," says I, plump, and looking as saucy as I could, "Tony."

Just at that moment there was one thing, and that wasn't vermillion, that could have deepened the color on Katie's cheek, and that thing popped in the shape of Tony.

Tony saw that something was up. I said nothing, but maliciously sat and looked at the pair of them. Katie looked at the carpet, Tony stroked his beard, and a very handsome one it was to stroke, too.

"By the way," said I, breaking the silence, "by the way, Tony, I'm going to town to-morrow; just tell me where you bought that bead purse of yours; I want to get one as near like it as I can. It is a very nice purse, Tony."

Kate raised her head like a flash of lightning, and I guess there will never be a telegraph invented which will say half as much in twice the time as two pair of eyes did then in about half a second.

I roared with laughter; I couldn't keep it in. They saw the game was up, and owned to it like martyrs, but felt highly disgusted with my powers of perception and unpardonable duplicity. However, that was soon forgiven, and I left them alone and went to hint to mother that she'd better broach the subject to father, which she did with a vengeance, dilating much (poor, blind, old soul!) on his dullness and her own clear-sightedness.

Father was as much pleased as I was at such a match. So the time was named when we were to lose our pet. (Here the old man's voice faltered, as though that hour of parting still weighed upon his mind.) Tony was almost continually at our house, and Kate and mother never missed a day going to have a long chat with Mrs. Hastings. It was a busy, bustling time for the old ladies. The fat, venerable pony saw more of the town that week than he had ever seen in any three months before—quite sufficient to elicit his disapprobation of matrimonial enterprises. When I say it took five distinct trips to decide upon the pattern of a carpet, I consider that I have said quite enough to justify the old fellow's opinion.

"Poor Kate, poor Kate," he continued, and a big tear stood in his eye, "there wert a good lass. She's gone now."

And the old man busied himself in a corner refilling his pipe.

Who Is a Yankee?

The Boston Herald, in headlining the last victory of the Puritan over the Priscilla, referred to the 'Yankee' craft at least twice. What is a Yankee boat and who is a Yankee? Across the water this country is styled the Yankee nation. It is not so long ago that everybody north of the Potomac was a Yankee to those south; but if one west of the Alleghanies were now so styled he would probably resent it. In New York a New Englander is a Yankee. In Massachusetts it is generally somebody from Maine, and in sections of Maine it is a man who lives 'way down East,' where they pry the sun up with a crow-bar. Who is a Yankee, anyhow?—Washington Post.

Lost His Situation.

A young man who had been an usher in a theatre obtained a similar situation in a church, but he only kept it over one Sunday.

Deacon Dewgood, a bald-headed old fellow, entered the church and took his own pew while the usher was engaged elsewhere. Presently the usher spied him.

"Deacon," he whispered audibly, "I can give you your usual place in front if you wish it."

The next Sunday arother usher was on duty.

A Young Grammarian.

Teacher to boy in grammar class—"John, correct the following sentence: 'It are very cold.'"

John, wiping the perspiration from his forehead with his shirt sleeve—"It are durned hot."

Peaches As a Crop.

A grower writes in the Every Evening: I have noticed in a number of papers published on the peninsula various statements in regard to the yield and profits of the peach crop marketed from a number of orchards throughout the "peach belt." Some of these statements are doubtless correct; but others are so highly colored as to deceive none but an enthusiast unacquainted with the marketing of fruit. Such statements are calculated to do harm to the fruit interests of the Peninsula, inasmuch as they lead inexperienced persons to make calculations on paper that are scarcely possible of realization. The farmers are led to purchase and plant trees extensively; to plant many more in fact than they are able to properly manure and cultivate. This leads to disappointment and pecuniary loss.

Another difficulty arises when these rosy statements are received as strictly true. The demand for trees becomes great, and the nurserymen naturally desire to dispose of their entire stock, and the over-anxious tree purchaser is led to take varieties that from their time of ripening or inferior quality when ripe prove an incumbrance, and the grower finds a large proportion of his orchard occupied by trees that are almost without value, and his years of culture and the use of his land prove a serious loss which he is often ill able to afford. The writer has had some interest for 20 years in peach culture and his greatest disappointments have arisen from this cause, Anxious to get trees he has taken such as he could get and after years of waiting expense he has found time and money wasted. This is not written to disparage the nurseryman; but to urge upon all who propose engaging in peach culture to be sure to purchase such varieties as are known to be reliable. It is much better to wait another year than to begin with the wrong kinds of fruit.

The writer believes in peach-growing. But success depends upon the application of the plainest principles that govern in everything pertaining to the successful prosecution of all human affairs; two of the most important of which are intelligence and industry. Without these, trees will become such an incumbrance that the more the careless grower plants, the poorer he will become.

Gen. Forrest's Poker Stories.

I was sitting in a room in the Maxwell House with Gen. N. B. Forrest several years before his death.

"Gen. Forrest," I asked, "it has often been said that previous to the war you were a terror at poker. How much did you ever win with one hand?"

He replied: "I have played a few heavy games and many a light one. In New Orleans on one hand I won $47,000."

"And what did you hold?"

"Three kings and two nines."

I have always regretted I didn't ask him what his opponent held, but I did not. He told me the following story, his eyes filling with tears during its recital: "When my wife and I went to Memphis, after the close of hostilities, we had $7.20, not a cent more or less. We spent one entire afternoon ransacking an old portfolio, hoping to find some uncollected account, or 'I. O. U.,' which I might realize. There wasn't a thing. I said to my wife: 'Rhoda, you have always been against me and poker; I never played a game since I first knew you that your absent face was not a haunting rebuke over one shoulder. Now, I have been invited to Sneed's to a dinner to-night, and I know there'll be cards. If you'll give me your blessing, this once, my dear, I feel mighty sure I can come home a richer man.'"

"Said she: 'Forrest, we've got along so far without that, so far as I have known, and by the Lord's help we'll still go on without it.'"

"'Yes,' said I, 'but the Lord has been slow of late, and seems to be gettin' slower; what d'ye say to this one time?' She never consented, but she didn't oppose it very strong, and I promised I wouldn't go over that $7.20. It was just as I expected. Four tables were running at Sneed's, and I won enough at 50 cent ante to go in at a higher table later on. Well, sir, as I won—and won right from the first—I just dropped the money into my hat on the floor, and when we broke up at daylight I put my hat on with the money in it, without counting it over, and went home. As I came near to my house, I caught a glimpse from the outside of my wife's white figure, waiting right where she had waited all night, pale and anxious, and when I went in I just took off my hat and poured $1,500 in her lap. I felt sorry for her, for she couldn't bless that night's doings; but sir—it was a great relief to me.'"—N. Y. Sun.

Wife—What makes you so late to-night, dear?

Husband (with indignation)—I've been arrested.

Wife—Arrested?

Husband—Yes. I bought an umbrella to-day and marked on it "Stolen from H. Smith." The first policeman I met arrested me. I told him my name was Smith, but he wouldn't believe me.

An inch of rain is counted one hundred tons of water to the acre. This is what might be called a heavy rain. Picayune.

The greatest roam man of them all—the tramp.

His First Wife.

I buried my first womern
In the spring, and in the fall
I was married to my second
And haint settled yit at all.
For I'm allus thinkin', thinkin'
Of the first one's peaceful ways,
A bilin' soap and singin'
Of the Lord's amazin' grace.

And I'm thinkin' of her constant,
Dyein' carpet chain and stuff,
And a makin' up rag carpets
When the floor was good enough;
And I mind her he'p a feedin'
And I recollect her now
A drappin' corn and keepin'
Clos't behind me and the plough.

And I'm allus thinkin' of her
Reddin' up around the house,
Er cookin' for the farm hands,
And a drivin' up the cows;
And there she lays out yender
By the lower medder fence,
Where the cows was barely grazin'
And they're usin' ever sence.

And when I look acrost there—
Say it's when the clover's ripe,
And I'm settin' in the evenin'
On the porch here with my pipe.
And the other'n hollers "Henry!"
Why, they ain't no sadder thing
Than to think of my first womern
And her funeral last spring.

—James Whitcomb Riley.

A Romance.

The Washington Correspondent of the New York World gives the following interesting romance connected with the life of the late R. T. Merrick.

"I heard of a romance connected with the life of the late Richard T. Merrick, of this District, who was so prominent as Tilden's counsel before the Electoral Commission. Mr. Merrick in early life was a lawyer in Chicago. While there he was very popular in society, and was regarded as one of the most brilliant and promising young men at the Chicago bar. The real reason for his leaving Chicago and coming back East has never been known outside of a limited circle of his friends. It appears that he became during his stay in Chicago engaged to the daughter of one of the most prominent owners of real estate in that city. She was an only daughter. Her father was one of the very rich men of that time. She was handsome, brilliant and accomplished. Mr. Merrick proposed for her hand and was accepted. The young lady's family was very strict. Mr. Merrick was of a convivial turn. The result was an occasional excess, which however, never appeared to have had any effect upon his attention to business. The news of one of these outbreaks reached the ears of his betrothed. She abruptly broke off the engagement. She probably was influenced in this by her family. Mr. Merrick made repeated efforts to secure an explanation. Failing in this, in a fit of outraged pride he left Chicago forever. He made a great success before the District bar here, and was very devoted to the wife that he afterwards found in Washington. The Chicago lady afterwards fell heir to a property of many millions. She is to-day the wife of one of the leading and most brilliant members of our diplomatic service.

Fun and Frolic.

Society gossip is only chin-deep.—Barker's Gazette.

A stockyard hog-thief is certainly a pork-reacher.

A country seat that always rents—a barbed wire fence.

It was a very contemptuous lawyer of this city who alluded to our judiciary as a second-rate bench show.—Life.

Oscar Wilde and Baalam's mule were both made "too utter" at certain periods of their lives.—National Weekly.

Bartholdi's statue "Liberty" would not make a very good base ball player. She stays off her base too long.—Ex.

Revivalist Sam Jones says: "I'd rather be in heaven learning my A B C's than in hell reading Greek." Who wouldn't?

The ennuied millionaire who finds it difficult to kill time, might gain many useful hints by watching a gang of men who are working by the day on a government job.—Philadelphia Call.

"Los Angelos," says a California exchange, "is becoming uncomfortable for tramps." Imagine, if you can, the uncomfortableness of a town that is uncomfortable for a tramp.—Puck.

An Augusta, Ga., man is training monkeys to play base ball. The beauty of a monkey base ball player is if he muffs the ball with the first pair of hands he can catch it with the second.

Ella Wheeler, who was married a few months ago, in one of her recent poems, wants to know: "Oh! what shall make me laugh again?" If it has come to be as bad as that, so soon after the honey moon, Ella had better get a divorce.

Ward C. White, the most successful dairyman in Wisconsin, says: "I always speak to a cow as I do to a lady."—Farm and Garden. It is also possible that he speaks to a lady the same as he does to a cow; but the line should be drawn somewhere.

"Joseph," said one tattered tramp to another, "what is the difference between the great elephant which was recently killed and yourself?"

"Because one is broken up and the t'other is broken down."

"Naw; it's because one is Jumbo and the other is bum Joe."

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