The Easton Star.

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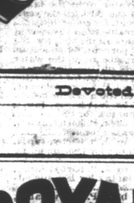

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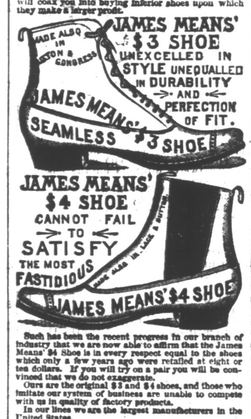

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LOSS AND GAIN.

I sorrowed that the golden day was dead,
Its light no more the country side adorning;
But whilst I grieved, behold!—the East grew red
With morning.

I sighed that merry Spring was forced to go,
And doff the wreaths that did so well become her;
But while I murmured at her absence, lo!—
'Twas Summer.

I murmured because the daffodils were killed
By burning skies that scorched my early posies;
But whilst for these I pined my hands were filled
With roses.

Half broken-hearted I bewailed the end
Of friendships than which none had once seemed nearer;
But whilst I wept I found a newer friend
And dearer.

And thus I learned old pleasures are estranged
Only that something better may be given;
Until at last we find this earth exchanged
For Heaven.

Ella Thorneycroft Fowler.

BROKERS' BONDS.

BY CLYDE RAYMOND.

'Going to church tomorrow?' remarked Jack Linwood, stopping before a small, white, frame law-office, where sat the good-looking, young proprietor enjoying the cool evening breeze and a capital cigar together. 'We're to have some fine singing, I hear.'

'Yes,' returned the latter carelessly, puffing away without interruption, as he motioned the young man to a chair that stood near his own. 'Where's it coming from?'

'Oh, it isn't any home talent,' laughed Jack lightly, dropping into the vacant seat. 'Some one from the East, I believe, who is passing through the place, and has kindly consented to favor us, etc., by particular request. A very fine soprano, I understand, though I didn't catch her name. And that reminds me,' he added in a very different tone, 'I met one of our own charming singers as I came down the street—pretty Rose Burton. By the way, how long before there will be a change in that familiar little name, Paul?'

The young lawyer laughed slightly, though a faint blush stole into his handsome face.

'How can I tell?' said he, brushing the ashes from his cigar with a fine assumption of unconsciousness. 'The young lady has not made me her confidant, and I have no other means of knowing.'

'Nonsense, Paul,' retorted Jack Linwood dryly, with an impatient gesture of his blonde head. 'What's the use of talking chaff with me? Do you think I haven't read the whole story in those pretty, dark eyes of hers? And you're not the fellow to trifle with a girl's heart. You're a fortunate man, Paul Danforth'—with a touch of unconscious bitterness in his pleasant voice. 'There isn't a better, lovelier girl in all the world than pretty, dark-eyed little Rose.'

For a moment Paul did not answer. He was quite still, touching ashlars with the point of his cigar, and when he spoke it was quietly, with a strange expression gathering in his deep brown eyes. Then he turned slightly to meet the glance which he knew was bent searchingly upon his face.

'You're right there, Jack,' he replied briefly and emphatically.

And then, with some questions of a business nature, he led the conversation away from pretty Rose Burton and himself; and Jack, who had lately fallen into a strangely restless and fidgety way of moving about, rose with an abrupt 'Good evening,' and continued his stroll down the village street, leaving Paul once more to the company of his own thoughts.

To judge from the expression of his darkly handsome face, they were not any too pleasant; and, after about ten minutes of them, he sprung up impatiently, set the chairs inside the little office, locked the door and then followed Jack's example—only going down a different street—a quiet, pretty little street, which led out toward the open, wild-rose dotted prairie.

It was a nice, enjoyable little place, this pretty Western town; and, as he strolled along, the sound of a piano, or the tones of some sweet, musical voice floated out to him through more than one open, daintily curtained window.

Presently a soft, clear, girlish voice came to him on the odorous evening air—a well-known voice, singing a tender, impassioned love song—and involuntarily his steps grew slower, until he paused at the gate, with his arms folded on the broad, square post, to listen.

He could see the pretty singer in the mellow light of the shaded parlor lamp—the clear, brunette cheek softly flushed with the warmth of her own feelings, called up by the words she sang; the sweet lips, eloquent with music; the dark, tender eyes, liquid and radiant with the story of a love, which, as Jack had declared, they had unconsciously and sweetly declared so often that Paul could not be ignorant of it.

And as he looked and listened his thoughts were far away, where they had been ever since Jack had told him of the fair stranger from the East who was to sing in the village church on the following morning.

He was angry, bitterly angry, with himself because he could not banish from his thoughts the fair, false image which those words had brought with renewed and startling vividness before them.

He saw again, in fancy, the beautiful, dazzling face, with its sapphire eyes, and its exquisite, siren smile; he saw shining golden hair falling in witching little rings over the snowy brow, and he seemed to hear again that sweet, birdlike, wondrous voice which might have made her one of the famous queens of opera, if she had cared to use it so—that voice which had charmed away his very senses!

'Oh, Clarice!' he murmured, a low moan of passionate despair shaking his form from head to foot as he leaned there, with his dark, handsome head bowed upon his folded arms. 'Why, why were you so false? with all your beauty, all your sweetness! How could you thrill me with your promises of love, given the smiles of an angel, only to ruin my life, at last, with the heartlessness of a beautiful demon!'

For a moment he stood there, dry, stifled sobs shaking his strong form; then he lifted his head proudly once more, and a look of stern endurance slowly settled over the pale, handsome features.

'It was not for this I put all the past behind my back and made an exile of myself,' he muttered grimly. 'There will be no more of this contemptible weakness in the future. Here and now I cast her false image from my heart forever!'

He turned, glanced once more at Rose through the open window, and seemed undecided whether to go in, or pass on without letting her know he had been so near.

He was about to do the latter, when Rose—warned, perhaps, by some subtle instinct of her love—suddenly left the piano, and fluttered swiftly as a humming-bird out of the room, and down through the sweet, rose-scented dusk, straight to the little gate.

'Why, Mr. Danforth!' she cried, with a thrill of delight in her soft, girlish tones. 'I never dreamed that you were here listening to my singing.'

And a deep blush told him, even in that half-darkness, that she remembered all that her song had revealed of her heart's sweetest dreams.

'Should they be in vain, even as his own had been?' Paul asked himself, with a sort of despairing pity.

And then, as desperately, he answered the question without a moment's hesitation.

Holding her little hand in his, with the low gate between them, he asked her if she could ever care for him enough to be his wife after knowing the little story which he felt in honor bound to tell her.

'I loved a girl once as false and heartless as she was beautiful,' he said in low, measured accents, steadying his voice by a great effort. 'It was for that I turned my back upon all the dear old scenes and associations of my past, and came out here to begin a new life—to forget her,' and his voice sunk with sibilant bitterness. She had promised to be my wife, Rose—think of that,' he went on, turning with a sudden throb of pain in his low tones, which thrilled her heart with the tenderest pity. 'Yet one day she sent me a letter such as a very fiend might have written, so cold and utterly heartless it was. She merely demanded the return of her picture and all the little souvenirs which she had given me so lovingly, with the explanation that she had concluded to retract her engagement, and marry a rival whose wealth was about ten times greater than my own. Of course the demand was instantly obeyed, and I have never looked upon her face from that hour to this. I thought never to love or trust a woman again; but you, Rose, you are pure and good——'

'But you really don't love me, Paul,' she interrupted, half-sorrowfully but gently. 'Do you think you ever will—really, I mean?'

'Yes, dear,' he answered, bending to touch his lips to her pure, smooth brow.

'I will love you with all my heart—some day. When you are my own, I mean,' he added quickly. 'I told you this only because I wanted to have no secrets from you.'

Rose was silent for a minute; then she asked in a soft, low whisper:

'What was her name, Paul?'

He started, and she saw his face grow pale even in the shadows.

'Her name was—Clarice,' he said huskily after a breath of hesitation, turning his face away. And Rose asked him nothing more.

'Thank you, Paul,' she said simply. 'Yes, I will be your wife.'

Among the large audience waiting in rapt expectation in the church that bright, delicious Sabbath morning was Paul Danforth.

Yet he had come more to please Rose than because he cared to hear the sweet-voiced stranger sing. Music had lost its charms for him. A sweet, bird-like soprano, he thought, would sound hateful to his ears.

He did not see her face until the time came for her solo. Then, as the low, clear, exquisite tones suddenly broke the hushed silence, he looked up with a violent, irrepressible start which drew Rose's dark eyes upon him with surprise.

There stood the singer before them all—fair, sweet and beautiful, with her sapphire-blue eyes and her golden hair dazzling the gaze of the enraptured throng, and her glorious voice rising higher and clearer and filling the house with its wondrous melody.

'Clarice!' was the one low uttered word that fell from Paul's lips before he realized it.

And Rose must have caught it, for her bright, dimpled brunette cheek changed color all at once, and she gazed at the lovely singer with a world of passionate envy and sadness in her pretty eyes.

Paul drew himself up instantly, and sat through the next hour with a stony calm that seemed impenetrable.

After the service he walked slowly down the aisle by Rose's side, glancing neither to the right nor left. Suddenly a low exclamation attracted him, and, looking up, he saw that, in the pressure of the crowd, he had been stopped, and was still clumsily standing upon the edge of a lady's dress. When he saw who that lady was he moved aside with a flush that swept like a hot torrent over his neck and brow.

'Your pardon, Mrs. Moulton,' he muttered coldly, speaking the name because he could not resist the desire to make her feel all the stinging scorn and contempt which his utterance of the word implied.

She drew back icily, yet with a strangely exquisite, dazzling face.

'You are mistaken,' she haughtily returned. 'That is not, and never was, my name.'

'Then,' said Paul, almost forgetting himself in his surprise, 'you are——'

'Miss Randall,' she finished, with a cold, slight inclination of her golden head.

'Just one question, then, if you will pardon it,' he went on breathlessly, 'did you never intend to bear the name?'

'Never, sir,' she returned still coldly, trying to move as if she scorned to listen to his voice.

'Wait,' he almost commanded in that low, tense voice. 'What, then, did you mean by your words to that purpose in the letter demanding your release——'

She turned and looked at him without a word. But in that look he read her astonishment, her utter ignorance of what he was trying to remind her.

'My God, Clarice! what could it all have meant?' he murmured huskily, as they moved down the aisle in close proximity, with Rose some distance in advance.

'The work of some enemy,' she answered lowly, her voice soft and forgiving now. 'For I, too, received a similar letter, purporting to be from you. I thought you were married. I——'

'No, but——'

He got no further, for the crowd jostled between them, and the low-voiced conversation was ended. Remembering Rose at last, he hastened to join her, and walked on by her side. But he was strangely abstracted and silent until the walk was ended.

So was pretty Rose herself. At the gate where, the evening before, they had plighted vows of betrothal, she stopped and held out her hand with a sorrowful little smile.

'You told me last night that your—the woman who was false to you was called Clarice,' she said, trying to speak heavily. 'And I know it was she who sang in church this morning. I caught enough, too, of your words and looks to assure me that there has been some mistake between you, and that you love each other yet. Go, Paul, and make it all right with her. You never could have loved me, and we never should have been happy. I will get over it—in time,' she added with a soft little laugh through which the tear drops sparkled.

So, with a few tender words, the pledges of last night were quickly sundered, and Paul was free to throw himself once more at the feet of his beautiful, true-hearted love of other days.

Rose's words came true—in time. For, within a year, she became the really happy bride of one who had always loved her—handsome, blonde Jack Linwood.

The Festival of Finding the True Cross.

Early in the autumn all over Syria and the East, is celebrating the finding of the True Cross by the Empress Helena.

You know the legend—how leaving her palace in Constantinople the Empress set sail for the Holy Land. All along the coast huge watch-fires were built and relays of watchers appointed. As soon as her search was rewarded the light on the nearest hilltop blazed forth the glad tidings, and as it lighted by the magic touch of a swift-flying angel one hill after another caught up and carried forward the news from one end of Syria to the other, across Asia Minor, and the Bosphorus until the answering shout of joy rang within the palace walls at Constantinople: 'Joy, joy! The Cross is found!'

Now, hundreds of years later, when the telegraph wires spread news of joy faster than the old system of watchfires, we here in the East yearly gather round a ruddy blaze to celebrate this search and hold a festival with songs.

Right below our Mt. Lebanon home in an open field was a long flat rock especially dedicated to use at this festival. All the children of the village for days beforehand would climb the high mountain slopes back of the village in every direction for bellan or the sun-dried crackling thorns. On our rock we would first build a high tower of sticks, mostly abstracted by stealth from the woodpiles at home. Around this, and overtopping it, the bundles of thorns were piled—a cord at last being wound spirally around to keep all in place. Just as soon as it was dark—and how eagerly we watched for the time to come—we would all gather around, forming a circle, and dance until our leader—chosen as having contributed most toward the bonfire—would set fire to the pile. Fanned by the evening breeze it would almost immediately shoot up into a huge pyramid of flame scattering sparks in all directions and giving active employment to the older ones in preventing the venturesome little ones from making martyrs of themselves in their excitement. As the thorns burnt up we replenished them from a pile hidden in the pile.

When all but the largest logs at the centre and base had been consumed we would again form a circle and the maddest, merriest time would then ensue. Breaking out into a wild song we would incite one another to brave the flames and jump through, or over, the wide bed of live coals. The older ones leading, one and another would break away from our circle, leap across, rejoining it at the other side. With our bare feet and simple blue dyed cotton garments this meant severe burns and much danger, for the circle of fire was a wide one, and the hot brands and ashes were spread about in all directions, but he was indeed a coward who before the evening's close had not attempted and accomplished the feat—not one, but several times.

At the close of the evening we would end our feast by partaking of little cakes baked with oil and sweetened with honey. Then joining hands for the last time around the dying embers we would repeat an invocation to the clouds to send us rain once more, and to the earth to re open her springs, to refresh the thirsty soil. From April to October we rarely have a drop of rain about Mt. Lebanon, and mothers always say their mothers told them that the early autumn rains waited for the Empress Helena to accomplish her errand lest they should endanger the success of her watchfire signals, and that year by year since the rains wait for this festival, lest they should extinguish memorial flames.

In later years we have often climbed to the very top of the high mountain near us to watch the neighboring villages. As many as thirty or forty bonfires could be seen from this point, all along the sea coast, on neighboring slopes, and up a long valley which opens towards the east. Every little hamlet—even the sheepfolds sometimes sent forth a light into the surrounding darkness. The whole dark expanse below as well as the sky above would be ablaze with sparkling points of light and the effect was not one to be easily forgotten.

So little of pleasure comes into the life of a child in our downtrodden and unhappy land that anything that connects happiness and joy with the life and cross of Him who was once a child in Nazareth is a great blessing.—Fedduk Zahar, in February Wide Awake.

Characteristics of Large Cities.

London contains more Scotchmen than Edinburgh, more Irishmen than Dublin, more Welshmen than Swansea and more Italians than Rome. There are a death and a birth in the city every few minutes. It is more dangerous to walk down the streets of this city than to take a long journey.

Paris possesses the finest literary, scientific and educational facilities in the world. She is also the centre of gayety and fashion, and in a great measure of immorality.

New York is the great commercial centre of the Union. One-third of the imports and exports of this country pass through this port.

Chicago is the greatest grain and lumber market in the world, and in its beef and pork packing business it has no equal on this continent.

Give your neighbor a helping hand by recommending him to keep Dr. Bull's Baby Syrup in his family for all the ills babies are subject to.

Laxador, the 'golden' remedy for bowel and stomach complaints, has achieved a most brilliant success. It eliminates the poison from the blood, searching, cleansing and purifying the whole system. It costs only 25 cents. At all druggists.

Written of a blind world-seer: 'While those who saw him see, thousands did see him sin.'

Fear nothing but wrong.

OUR CALENDAR OF TIME.

Why 1900 Will not be Called a Leap Year in the Almanac.

The following may be interesting to those who wish to know why there are leap years, and find out the difference between the old and new styles in reckoning time:

There is considerable of interesting history extant of the efforts made to fix the year at a certain number of whole days, when it really, as it appears, has in the fraction of a day (nearly one fourth)—but it would be too tedious to quote much of it here.

It is easy to perceive that if the years had been all counted in the calendar to be 365 days long when they are really about 365¼, the seasons would have fallen behind in the almanac at the rate of one day in about every four years, or about a whole month in every 120 years.

To prevent this and make sure that the seasons should always continue to come in their appropriate months, 'leap year' was invented by the celebrated mathematician, Sosigenes of Alexandria, Egypt, whom Julius Cæsar had called to his aid in adjusting the calendar. They decided to add one day to the month of February in every year that was evenly divisible by four years; thus to make up the yearly deficit of nearly one-fourth of a day.

This method of keeping time being established by Cæsar, was hence named the Julian Calendar and continued unaltered for about 16 centuries, and if 365 days had been the exact length of the solar year, there never would have occurred any need for further adjustment.

But 365¼ days was too much by 11 minutes and 14 seconds, say 11¼ minutes per year, and therefore a leap-year every four years produced an over correction of four times 11¼ or 45 minutes in four years, making a whole day in about 128 years. Consequently, in the 16th century, the accumulation of this over-correction had become so considerable that the equinox appeared about the 11th of March instead of on the 21st, occasioning much derangement in the notable feast days, &c., observed by the Romish Church.

Friar Bacon, about A. D. 1255, called attention to the danse of this inevitable derangement of times and seasons, which had also been noted by other scientific men before him; but Pope Sextus IV, in 1474 was first to move toward making a correction of the calendar.

He called to Rome Reziomontanus, a noted scholar of that period, presenting him, in consideration of the assistance expected of him, with the bishopric of Ratisbon. But death intervened, and 100 years more transpired before Gregory XIII took up and accomplished what several former pontiffs and councils had attempted in vain. He obtained the assistance of a number of mathematicians and astronomers, taking 10 years to examine their plans, and in A. D. 1582 accomplished what would seem in these days rather a simple matter, as set forth herein.

First. They shortened the year 1582 by taking 10 days from the month of October, causing the difference between what was then called 'old style' and 'new style' and forcing the calendar again to indicate the 21st of March at the vernal equinox as it did at the Council of Nice (A. D. 325) and as it now continues to do.

Next. To prevent getting wrong again, by the accumulation of that one day in 128 years as above explained, it was decided that the centurial years, 1600 1700, 1800, 1900 &c., that would all have been leap years according to the Julian calendar, should all remain common years except the one out of every four that would divide evenly by 400.

This change holds back the old Julian note of time three days after 400 years; that is, one day out of every 133⅓ years; which very nearly corrects the previous troublesome gain of one day in 128 yerrs, just mentioned.

The adoption of this centurial method of counteracting the accumulation of the odd minutes by which the solar year is short of 365¼ days, constitutes the essential feature wherein the Gregorian calendar, now in use, varies from the Julian.

So nearly does it correct the tendency towards all irregularities that it will require about 3 200 years to again derange the calendar one whole day. Even this very small remaining cause of derangement may be counteracted to more perfect nicety, when the time comes, on similar principles applied to the millenial years, by making still one leap-year less every third thousand years.

The French have the reputation of making the best coffee. Their method is very different from the American method. They take a great deal of care in making this favorite beverage, and the result is that when French coffee is taken one drinks the pure flavor of the berry. They always grind the berries just before they are to be used, and do not let a quantity of ground coffee stand and get stale. The French cook then pours boiling water in the ground coffee, then she filters this, and, after boiling the water again, pours it on the coffee once more. This is repeated a third time. She never boils the coffee and water together, nor puts the coffee in cold water and then let it boil.

Young man (to editor)—'Here is a little poem of a pathetic nature, sir. I showed it to my mother and she actually cried over it!' Editor (after reading the poem)—'You say your mother cried?' Young man—'Yes, sir.' Editor—'Well, you go home and promise your mother never to write any more poetry, and I think the old lady will dry her eyes.'

The nutmeg tree, a shrub that grows ten feet high, which is not now cultivated in Mexico and is becoming very rare, is found in great abundance in the vicinity of Papantla. The Mexicans use large quantities of nutmegs, both as a remedy and a condiment with characteristic improvidence. They neglect nature's benefits and buy what they might easily raise.

'Othello's occupation's gone.' He used to spend days and nights cursing the fates and rheumatism. Now he only lies down and laughs to think how easily he was cured by Salvation Oil, at 25 cents.

Wm. H. Vanderford, Esq., Editor of the Democratic Advocate, Westminster, Md., writes, that he has used Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup and knows it to be a good medicine. Buy it. Try it. 25 cents.

Every attempt to make others happy, every sin left behind, every temptation trampled under foot, every step forward in the cause of what is good, is a step nearer to Heaven.—Dean Stanley.

Keep good company or none.

Friday is Not Unlucky.

Mr. Marvin R. Clark, the archivist of the New York City Thirteenth Club, collected these historical facts concerning the day of the week called Friday, which is regarded by many persons as being particularly unlucky:

Friday, August 21, 1492, Christopher Columbus sailed on his great voyage of discovery.

Friday, October 12, 1492, he first discovered land.

Friday, June 18, 1494, he discovered the continent of America.

Friday, November 10, 1620, the Mayflower, with the Pilgrims, made the harbor of Provincetown, and on the little day they signed that august compact the forerunner of our present Constitution.

Friday, December 22, 1620, the Pilgrims made the final landing at Plymouth Rock.

Friday, February 22, George Washington was born.

Friday, June 16, 1776, Bunker Hill was seized and fortified.

Friday, September 22, 1780, Arnold's treason was laid bare, which saved us from destruction.

Friday, October 19, 1781, the surrender of Yorktown, the crowning glory of the American army, occurred.

Friday, July 7, 1776, the motion was made in Congress by John Adams, and seconded by Richard Henry Lee, that the United States colonies were, and of right ought to be, free and independent.

Friday, November 20, 1721, the first Masonic lodge was organized in North America.

Bismarck, Gladstone and D'Israeli were born on Friday.

Friday, March 20, 1788, Pope Clement XII, promulgated his bill of excommunication against the Free Masons. Ever since the allocution excommunicating indiscriminately all Free Masons, the order has received an immense forward impetus in Italy, France and Spain.

Friday, March 25, 1609, the Hudson River was discovered.

Friday, December 25, 1642, Sir Isaac Newton, the illustrious philosopher, was born.

Friday, November 10, 1543, Martin Luther was born at Eisleben, in the County of Mansfield, in Upper Saxony.

Friday, June 8, the first steam vessel that crossed the Atlantic, the Savannah, sailed from Savannah to Liverpool.

If any boat can shoot the rapids successfully we should think it would be the gunboat.

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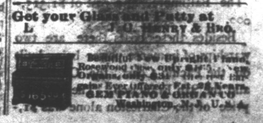
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