

The Sumter Banner.

DEVOTED TO SOUTHERN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY, NEWS, LITERATURE, AGRICULTURE, SCIENCE AND THE ARTS.

WILLIAM LEWIS,
JOHN S. RICHARDSON, JR., } PROPRIETORS.

"God—and our Father Land."

TERMS—\$2 IN ADVANCE

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TERMS.

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Original Poetry.

The Early Grave.

They've planted wild flowers o'er her tomb,
The living o'er the dead!
The violet's witching soft perfume
Around her grave is shed—
As emblems of bright memory's sway.

I seek the spot, when the last blish
Of day is on the rose,
And o'er the wave a deeper flush
Of burning crimson glows—
And then I think how more than bright,
Was her young day when near its night!

I saw her come like morning dew
Reflecting sunnier skies,
Her cheek flushed with aurora's hue,
And heaven was in her eyes,
And her bright tresses could have won,
No brighter beauty from the sun.

She was with me, as a dream,
Of fairer worlds on high—
Flashing, like a sunlight o'er a stream,
A moment but to die,
As dew drops, that on earth are given,
-But to return again to heaven.

I saw her on the couch of death
More lovely in decay;
I listened as her last drawn breath,
Passed on the breeze away—
Her spirit left its earthly hover
Calmy as an eagle leaves the flow'r.

I could not weep—I could not weep;
So tranquil pass'd her breath—
Her eyes seem'd cloud'd in gentle sleep—
Not the dull sleep of death—
Her brow was still as marble fair,
And on her cheek—the rose was there!

Yes! that which through life's favor'd hour
Blossom'd but to be a stray,
Did not with life lose all its power,
Nor pass'd in death away—
Not still it gave its lovely bloom,
As though in mockery of the tomb.

But all is pass'd—that bloom no more
Again shall thrill to my eye's sigh;
That brow no more the seat of care,
No tear again bedew that eye—
I will not weep that she's at rest,
Would I were with such slumber blest.

Sumterville, 12th August, 1854.

The Longest Night in a Life.

A LADY'S ADVENTURE.

It was one of those old-fashioned English winters in the days of the Georges, when the snow lay on the ground for weeks, when railways were unknown, and the electric telegraph had not been dreamed of save by the speculative Commiss of London. The mails had been irregular for a month past, and the letter bag which did reach the post office had been brought thither with difficulty. The newspapers were devoid of all foreign intelligence, the metropolis knew nothing of the doings of the provinces and the provinces knew little more of the affairs of the metropolis; but the columns of both were crowded with accounts of starvation and destitution, with wonderful escapes of adventurous travellers, and of still more adventurous young gallants and guards.—Business was almost at a standstill, or was only carried on by fits and starts; families were made uneasy by the frequent long silence of their absent members, and the poor were suffering great misery from cold and famine.

The south road had been blocked up for nearly a month, when a partial thaw almost caused a public rejoicing. Coaches began to run, letters to be dispatched and delivered, and weather-bound travellers to have some hope of reaching their destination.

Among the first ladies who undertook the journey from the west of Scotland to London at this time, was a certain Miss Stirling, who had for weeks past, desired to reach the metropolis. Her friends assured her that it was a foolhardy attempt, and told her of travellers who had been twice—nay, three times—snowed up on their way to town; but their advice

and warnings were of no avail; Miss Stirling's business was urgent, it concerned others more than herself, and she was not one to be deterred by personal discomfort or by physical difficulties from doing what she thought was right.

So, she kept to her purpose, and early in February, took her seat in the mail for London, being the only passenger who was booked for the whole journey.

The thaw had continued for some days; the roads, though heavy, were open; and with the aid of extra horses here and there, the first part of the journey was performed pretty easily though tediously.

The second day was more trying than the first. The wind blew keenly, and penetrated every crevice of the coach; the partial thaw had but slightly affected the wild moorland they had to cross; thick heavy clouds were gathering round the red rayless sun, and when on reaching a little road-side inn the snow began to fall fast, both the guard and coachman urged their solitary passenger to remain there or the night, instead of tempting the discomforts and perhaps the perils of the next stage. Miss Stirling hesitated for a moment, but the little inn looked by no means a pleasant place to be snowed up in, so she resisted their entreaties, and, gathering her furs more closely round her, she nestled herself into a corner of the coach. Thus, for a time, she lost all consciousness of outward things in sleep.

A sudden lurch awoke her, and she soon learned that they had struck fast in a snow drift, and that no effort of the tired horses could extricate the coach from its unpleasant predicament. The guard mounting one of the leaders, set off in search of assistance, while the coachman comforted Miss Stirling by telling her that as nearly as they could estimate they were only a mile or two from the inn; and that if the guard could not find the inn, the coachmen were certain to come to their rescue with his sledge. It was not the first time that the squire had got the mail bags out of a snow wreath by that means.

The coachman's expectations were fulfilled. Within an hour, the distant tinkling of the sledge bells was heard and lights were seen gleaming afar; they rapidly advanced nearer and nearer; and soon a hearty voice was heard hailing them. A party of men with lanterns and shovels came to their assistance; a strong arm lifted Miss Stirling from the coach, and supported her trembling steps to a sledge close at hand; and almost before she knew where she was, she found her self in a large hall brilliantly lighted by a blazing wood fire. Numbers of rosy glowing childish faces were gathered round her, in hopes of bright eager eyes were gazing curiously upon her, kindly hands were busied in removing her wraps, and pleasant voices welcomed her and congratulated her on her escape.

"Ay, ay, Mary," said her host, addressing his wife. "I told you that the sleigh would have plenty of work this winter, and you see I was right. As you always are, under a merry voice exclaimed. "We all say at Hawtree that Uncle Atherton never can be wrong!"

"Atherton! Hawtree!" repeated Miss Stirling in some amazement, and uttered in that familiar voice, "Ellen, Ellen, Middleton, is it possible that you are here?"

A joyful exclamation and a rush into her arms were the young girl's ready reply to this question, as she cried—"Uncle Atherton, Aunt Mary, don't you know your old friend, Miss Stirling?"

Mrs. Atherton fixed her soft blue eyes on the stranger, in whom she could at first scarcely recognize the bright-haired girl whom she had not seen for eighteen or twenty years; but by and by, she satisfied herself that though changed, she was Ellen Stirling still, with the same sunny smile and the same laughing eyes that had made every one love her in their school days. Heart felt indeed were the greetings which followed, and cordial the welcome Mrs. Atherton gave her old friend as she congratulated herself on having dear Ellen under her own roof, more especially as she owed this good fortune to Mr. Atherton's exertions in rescuing her.

"It is the merest chance, too, that he is at home at present," she said; he ought to have been in Scotland, but the state of the roads in this bleak country has kept him prisoner here for weeks."

"And others as well," Ellen Middleton added; "but both children and grown people are only too thankful to have so good an excuse for staying longer at Bedford." And then, laughing, she asked Aunt Mary how she meant to dispose of Miss Stirling for the night, for the house was as full as

ready as it could hold.

"Oh," said her aunt, "we shall manage very well. Bedford is very elastic."

She smiled as she spoke; but it struck Miss Stirling that the question was, nevertheless, a puzzling one, so she took the opportunity of entreating her to take no trouble on her account, a chair by the fire was ready all the accommodation she cared for, as she wished to be in readiness to pursue her journey as soon as the coach could proceed.

"We shall be able to do better for you than that Ellen," Mrs. Atherton answered cheerfully. "I cannot, it is true, promise you a state room, for every bed in the house is full, and I know you will not allow any one to be moved for your convenience; but I have one chamber still at your service, which, except in one respect, is comfortable enough."

"Haunted of course!" said Miss Stirling, gaily.

"Oh, no, it is not that! I had it fitted up for brother William when he used to be here more frequently than of late, and is often occupied by gentlemen when the house is full; but, as it is detached from the house, I have, of course never asked any lady to sleep there till now."

"Oh! if that be all, I am quite willing to become its first lady tenant," said Miss Stirling, heartily. So the matter was settled, and orders were given to prepare the pavilion for the unexpected guest.

The evening passed pleasantly; music, dancing, and ghost stories made the hours fly fast. It was long past ten—the usual hour for retiring at Bedford—when Miss Stirling, under her hostess's guidance, took possession of her own chamber. It really was a pleasant, cheerful little apartment. The crimson hangings of the bed and window looked warm and comfortable in the twilight, and when the candles on the wall were lighted, and the two chairs drawn close to the hearth, the long parted friends found it impossible to resist the temptation of sitting down to have, what in old days they used to call a two-handed chat. There was much to tell of what had befallen both of them since they parted; of joy and sorrow, deeply interesting to those two whose youth had been passed together; there were mutual recollections of school days to be talked over; mutual friends and future plans to be discussed; and midnight rung out from the stable clock before Mrs. Atherton said good night. She had already crossed the threshold to go, when she turned back to say—"I forgot to tell you, Ellen, that the inside of this door is not very secure, and that the key only turns outside. Are you inclined to trust to the bar alone, or will you, as William used to do, have the door locked outside, and let the servant bring the key in the morning? William used to say that he found it rather an advantage to do so, as the unlocking of the door was sure to awake him."

Miss Stirling laughingly allowed that though, generally, she could not quite think it an advantage to be locked into her room, still she had no objection to it on this particular occasion as she wished to rise in a reasonable time.

"Very well; then you had better not fasten the bar at all, and I will send my maid with the key, at eight precisely.—Good night."

"Good night!"

They parted; the door was locked outside; and the key taken out; and Miss Stirling, standing by the window, watched her friend cross the narrow back path, which had been swept clear of snow to make a dry passage from the house to the pavilion. A ruddy light streamed from the hall door as it opened to admit its mistress, and gave a cheerful, friendly aspect to the scene; but, when the door closed and shut out that warm, comfortable light, the darkened porch, the pale moonlight shimmering on the shrouded trees, and the stars twinkling in the frosty sky, had such an aspect of solitude as to cast over her a kind of chill that made her half repent having consented to quit the house at all, and let herself be locked up in this lonely place.

Yet what had she to fear? No harm could happen to her from within the chamber; the door was safely locked outside, and strong iron studs checked guarded the window; there could be no possible danger. So, drawing her chair once more to the fire, and stirring it up a brighter blaze, she took up a little bible which lay on the dressing table, and read some portions of the New Testament.

When she had laid down the book, she took out the comb that fastened up her long dark silken tresses—in which despite her five and thirty years, not a silver thread was visible—and as she arranged them for the night her

thoughts strayed back to the old world memories which her meeting with Mary Atherton had revived.—The sound of the clock striking two was the first thing that recalled her to her present life. By the time the candles were burned down almost to the socket, and the fire was dying fast. As she turned to flip a fresh log into the grate, her eyes fell upon the dressing glass, and in its reflection she saw, or at least fancied she saw, the bed-curtains in view.

She stood for a moment gazing at the mirror, expecting a repetition of the same movement; but all was still, and she blamed herself for allowing nervous fears to overcome her. Still it was an exertion, even of her brave spirit, to approach the bed and draw the curtains. She was rewarded by finding nothing save the bedclothes neatly folded down, as if inviting her to press the snow-white sheets, and a luxurious pile of pillows that looked most tempting. She could not resist the mute invitation to rest her wearied limbs. Allowing herself no time for further doubts or fears, she placed her candle on the mantelpiece and stepped into bed.

She was very tired—her eyes ached with weariness—but sleep seemed to fly from her. Old recollections thronged from her memory; thoughts connected with the business she had still to get through haunted her; and difficulties that had not occurred till now rose up before her. She was restless and feverish, and the vexation of feeling so made her more wakeful.—Perhaps if she were to close the curtains between her and the fire she might be better able to sleep—the flickering light disturbed her, and the moonbeams stealing between the window curtains cast ghostly shadows on the wall. So, she carefully shut out the light on that side, and turned again to sleep. Whether she had or had not quite lost consciousness she would not have known, but she was soon thoroughly aroused by feeling the bed shake under her. She started up, and awaited with a beating heart a repetition of the movement, but it did not come. It must have been a return of the nervous fancies which had twice assailed her already that night. Laying her head once more on the pillow, she determined to control her groundless terrors.

Again she started up! This time there could be no doubt; the bed had heaved more than once, accompanied by a strange gurgling sound as if of a creature in pain. Leaning on her elbow, she listened with that intensity of ear which desires almost as much as it dreads a recurrence of the sound that caused it. It came again—followed by a loud rustling noise, as if some heavy body were dragged from under the bed in the direction of the fire. What could it be? She longed to call out for help, but her tongue clave to the roof of her mouth, and the pulses in her temples throbbled until she felt as if their painful beating sounded in the silence of the night like the loud tick of a clock.

The unseen thing dragged itself along until it reached the hearth, where it flung itself down with violence. As it did so, she heard the clank of a chain.—Her breath came less painfully as she heard it, for it occurred to her that the creature might be nothing worse than the house dog, who, having broken his chain, had sought shelter beneath the bed in the warm room. Even this notion was disagreeable enough, but it was as nothing to the vague terror which had in her to oppress her. She persecuted herself that if she lay quite quiet, no harm would happen to her, and the night would soon pass over. Thus reasoning, she laid herself down again.

By and by the creature began to move, and it struck her feverish fancy that the snoring was not like that of a dog. After a little time, she raised herself gently and with trembling hands drew back an inch or two of the curtain and peered out, thinking that any certainty was better than such terrible suspense. She looked towards the fireplace, and there, sure enough, the huge creature lay—a brown, hairy mass, but of what shape it was impossible to divine, so litil was the light, and so strangely was it oiled up on the hearth. By and by it began to stretch itself out, to open its eyes, which shone in the flickering rays of the fire, and to raise its paws above its hairy head.

Good God! those are not paws! They are human hands—and dangling from the wrists hang fragments of broken chains!

A chill of horror froze Ellen Stirling's veins as a flash of the expiring fire showed her this clearly—far too clearly—and the conviction seized upon her mind that she was shut up with an escaped convict. An inward invocation to heaven for aid rose from her heart, as, with the whole force of

her intellect, she endeavored to sur-vey the danger of her position, and to think of the most persuasive words she could use to the man into whose power she had so strangely fallen. For the present, however, she must be still, very still; she must make no movement to betray herself, and perhaps he might overlook her presence until daylight came, and with it possible help. The night must be far spent; she must wait and hope.

She had not to wait long. The creature moved again—stood upright—staggered towards the bed. For one moment—one dreadful moment—she saw his face, his pale pinched features, his flashing eyes, his black bristling hair; but thank God! he did not see her. She shrunk behind the curtains. He advanced to the bed, slowly, hesitatingly, and the clanking sounds of the broken chains fell menacingly on her ear. He laid his hand upon the curtains, and, for a few moments, fumbled to find the opening.—These moments were all in all to Ellen Stirling. Despair sharpened her senses; she found that the other side of the bed was not so close against the wall but that she could pass between. Into the narrow space between she contrived to slip noiselessly.

She had hardly accomplished the difficult feat, and sheltered herself behind the curtains, when the creature flung itself on the bed, and, drawing the bedclothes round him, uttered a sound more like the whinnying of a horse than the laugh of a human being.

For some little time Miss Stirling stood in her narrow hiding-place, trembling with cold and terror, fearful lest some unguarded movement should betray her, and bring down on her a fate she dared not contemplate. She lifted up her heart in prayer for courage; and when her composure had in some degree returned, it occurred to her that if she could but reach the window, she might from that position possibly attract the attention of some passer-by, and be released from her terrible durance.

Very cautiously she attempted the perilous experiment; her bare feet moved noiselessly across the floor, and a friendly ray of moonlight guided her safely towards the window. As she put her hand towards the curtains, her heart gave a fresh bound of terror, for it came in contact with something soft and warm. At length, however, she remembered that she had flung down her fur cloak in that spot, and it was a merey to come upon it now, when she was chilled to the bone. She wrapped it round her and reached the window without further adventure, or alarm from the occupant of the bed, whose heavy, regular breathing gave assurance that he was now sound asleep.—This was some comfort, and she greatly needed it. The look-out from the window was anything but inspiring. The stars still shone peacefully on the sleeping earth; the moon still showed her placid visage; not a sight or sound presaged dawn; and after long listening in vain for any sign of life in the outer world, she heard the stable clock strike four.

Only four!

She felt as if it were impossible to survive even another hour of terror such as she had just passed through. Was there no hope? None.

She tried to support herself against the window frame, but her first touch caused it to shake and creak in a manner that seemed to her startlingly loud; she fancied that the creature moved uneasily on its bed at the sound. Drops of agony fell from her brow, as minutes after minute wore heavily on. Ever and anon a rustle of the bedclothes, or a slight clank of the manacled hands, sent a renewed chill to her heart.

The clock struck five.

Still all without was silent. Suddenly, a man's whistle was heard in the court, and the driver of the mail-coach, lantern in hand, crossed the yard towards the pavilion. Would to God she could call to him, or in any way attract his attention! but she dared not make the slightest sound. He looked up at the window, against which he almost brushed in passing, and the light he held flashed on Miss Stirling's crouching figure. He paused, looking again, and seemed about to speak, when she hastily made signs that he should be silent, but such assistance at the house. He gave her a glance of intelligence, and hastened away.

How long his absence seemed! Could he have under-tood her? The occupant of the bed was growing every instant more restless: he was rising from the bed—he was groping round the room. They would come too, late, too late!

But no! steps in the court yard—the key turns in the lock—the door opens—then, with a yell that rang in Ellen Stirling's ear until her dying day, the creature rushed to her hiding-place, dashed the slight window-frame to

pieces, and finding himself balked of his purposed escape by the strength of the iron bars outside, turned, like a wild beast on his prisoners. She was the first on whom his glances fell. He clasped her throat—his face was close to hers—his glittering eyes were glaring at her in frenzy—when a blow from behind felled him.

She awoke from a long swoon to find herself safe in Mrs. Atherton's dressing room, and to hear that no one was hurt but the poor maniac, and that he was again in the charge of his keepers, from whom he had escaped a few hours before.

"A few hours! A lifetime, Mary! but Heaven be thanked, it is past like a wild dream!"

It was not all passed. One enduring effect remained, ever after to imprint on Ellen Stirling's memory, and on the memories of all who knew her, the events of that long night. Such had been her suffering, anxiety, and terror, that in those few hours her hair had turned as white as snow.

Sue—Dumas—Lamartine.

We have been looking at the portraits of these celebrated authors, as painted by Mr. Powell, and exhibited with his large picture De Soto, at the rooms of the Academy.

Lamartine is—yes, young ladies, positively—a *prim* young man, with a long face, short grey hair, a slender figure, and a suit of black! Put a pen behind his ear, and he would look like a "confidential clerk." Give his face more character, and he would remind you of Henry Clay. He has a fine head, phrenologically speaking—large and round at the top, with a spacious forehead, and a scant allotment of cheek. *Prim* is the word, though. There is nothing in his appearance which is ever so remotely suggestive of the romantic. He is not even pale, and as for a rolling shirt collar or a Byronic tie,—he is evidently not the man to think of such things. Romance, in fact, is the article he lives by, and like other men he chooses to "sink the shop," at least when he sits for his portrait.

Dumas, on the contrary, is a burly fellow. His large, red, round cheeks stand out, till they seem to stretch the very skin that covers them, and it looks as smooth as a polished apple. His black, crisped hair is piled high above his forehead, and stands divided into two unequal masses, one inclining to the right and the other to the left. His eyes are dark and his mouth sensuous, but not to the degree of vulgarity. His person is large, and his flowing mantle red. He is the gentleman to lay bare the throat, and look romantic; not Byronically so, but practically. Yet he looks good humored and like a man whose capacity for physical enjoyment of all kinds is boundless. His negro blood is evident enough to one who knows he has it; but it would not be detected by one who knew it not. It appears in the peculiar rotundity of the man and all his parts. It crisped and heaped his hair; it gave the fulness to his mouth; it made him dress up in flowing red to have his picture taken. But his complexion is only a shade darker than the average, the portrait reminded us for a moment of the late Thomas Hamblin, the actor.

Eugene Sue is neither prim nor burly.—He is a man of large frame, over which a loose black coat is carelessly buttoned.—Complexion light—yes, blue—hair, once black, now pepper and salt—whiskers, voluminous—eye-brows, black and thick—good forehead, and the lower face ample. This conveys no better idea of the man's appearance than the description in a French passport. But the truth is, Sue's countenance and figure have none of those peculiarities which make description possible. He looks, in his portrait, like a comfortable careless, elderly gentleman taking his ease in an easy chair and an easy coat. He does not look like an author. Authors seldom do. His air is rather that of a prosperous citizen.—Sue is only forty-five years old, but he has lived fast, and looks fifty-five. Lamartine is sixty-three, and would pass easily for fifty-three. Dumas is fifty, and could get credit for thirty eight.—N. Y. Times.

Discovery of Coffee.—About the year 1258, a dervis named Hadji Omer, was driven out of the community of Mecha. Hunger induced him to roast the Kahiva berries which grew near his hiding place. He roasted and ate them as his only means of sustaining life. Steeping them in the water which quenched his thirst, he discovered very agreeable qualities, and also that this effusion was nearly equal to solid food. His persecutors, who had intended him to die of starvation, regarded his preservation as a miracle. He was transmuted into a saint. Such are the facts relating to coffee. There are now supposed to be 3000 coffee rooms in Constantinople.

VEGETABLE INSTINCT.—If a pan of water be placed within six inches of either side of the stem of a young pumpkin or vegetable, in the evening, and will be found in the morning, with one of its leaves floating on the water. This experiment may be continued nightly until the plant begins to fruit. If a prop be placed within six inches of a young convolvulus, or scarlet runner, it will find it, although the prop may be shifted daily. If, after it has twined some distance up the top, it be unwound, and twined in the opposite direction, it will return to its original position, or die in the attempt, yet notwithstanding if two of these plants grow near each other, have no stick around which they can twine, one of them will later the direction of its spiral and they will twine around each other. Duhamel placed some kidney beans in a cylinder of earth; after a while they commenced to germinate, of course, sending the plume upwards to the light, and the root down into the soil. After a few days the cylinder was turned one fourth round, and again this was repeated, until the revolution was complete. The beans were then taken out of the earth, and it was found that both the plume and radical had bent to accommodate themselves to every revolution, and the one in its efforts to ascend perpendicularly, and the other to descend; they had formed a perfect spiral. But although the natural tendency of the roots is downward, if the soil beneath be dry, and any damp substance be above, the roots will as end to reach it.

A SCHOOLMASTER, hearing one of his scholars read, the boy, when he came to the word "honor," pronounced it full, the master told him it should be pronounced without the H, as thus: "onor."

"Very well, sir," replied the lad, "I will do so."

"And the master, "always drop the H."

The next morning the master's tea, with a hot muffin, had been brought to his desk; but the duties of his vocation made him wait till it was cold; when addressing the same boy, he told him to take it to the fire and heat it.

"Yes, sir," replied the boy, and taking it to the fire, eat it. Presently the master called for the muffin.

"I have eat it, as you bade me," replied the boy.

"Eat it, you scoundrel! I bade you take it to the fire and heat it."

"But sir," answered the lad, "yesterday you told me always to drop the H."

BEN JONSON'S WIT.—Lord Craven was very desirous to see Ben Jonson, which being told to Ben, he went to my lord's house; but being in a very tattered condition, the porter refused him admittance, with some saucy language, which the other did not fail to return. My lord, happening to come out while they were wrangling, asked the occasion of it. Ben, who stood in need of nobody to speak for him, said "the underwood his lordship desired to see him."

"You, friend!" said my lord; "who are you?"

"Ben Johnson," replied the other.

"No, no," quoth his lordship, "you cannot be Ben Johnson, who wrote the Silent Woman; you look as if you could not say *bon* to a goose."

"*Bon!*" cried Ben.

"Very well," said my lord, who was better pleased at the joke than of fended at the affront; "I am now convinced you are Ben Johnson."

GROWTH IN SIZE.—There is a tree on the Island of the river Ganges, a single shoot of which, if set out, soon becomes a tree, with branches drooping down to the ground. Each branch on touching the earth, takes root, and becomes a new tree; this also sends forth branches, which enter the ground and give birth to other trees, until at length that little Banyan shoot, first plant of all, has become a thick shaded forest. So it is with every sinful practice, and every sinful habit. Sin reproduces itself with rapidity. The first sin is the little shoot planted and springing up with life. Each successive sin is a new branch, taking root. Would it not have been an easy task to have pulled up that first Banyan tree, and thrown it in the Ganges?—But it is not an easy task, when in the course of years, that tree is a forest!

THE MARRIAGE RELATION.—The celebrated English writer, Addison, has left on record the following important sentence: "Two persons who have chosen each other out of all the species, with design to be each other's mutual comfort and entertainment, have in that action bound themselves to be good-humored, affable, discreet, forgiving, patient, and joyful with respect to each other's frailties and imperfections to the end of their lives."