

WHY HE MARRIED.

"And don't you know when you will pass through this part of the country again, Mr. Verley?" "No I don't," said the old bachelor, decidedly. He was something of a bear to answer so crustily when Barbara Smith stood in the doorway, with the shadowy lashes drooping over the soft brown eyes, and the roses melting into deep carmine on her rosy cheeks, until her muslin dress was plain in comparison. Such a pretty, big-eyed, loving little Barbara as she was, in all the blonde freshness of her eighteen summers, and the soft sigh that fluttered from her lips as the one-horse carriage drove away, was checked instantly. Barbara had no idea of becoming a victim to unrequited love, though she had rather fancied Mr. Verley during his brief sojourn at her father's house. Mr. Verley drove away through the rustling green draperies of the summer lanes, whistling sadly as the drive.

man, who was busily polishing the window with a piece of crumpled newspaper. "Ahem! I was to meet my niece here to-day, and I don't see her." "Your niece, sir? what is her name?" "Verley." "O, yes, sir; she has been here these two hours, bless her dear heart; she's asleep now." "Asleep!" gasped Mr. Verley; but the stewardess only answered him by bustling into the inner apartment and bringing out what appeared to be a compact bundle, with a pink face at one end of it, and a mass of long trailing embroideries at the other. Joseph Verley recoiled as far as the angle of the wall would permit him. "Why—it's a baby!" "To be sure it is, sir," said the woman, "and as fine a little girl as ever I saw; bless her sweet blue eyes." "But isn't there a nurse or some such person here, who would take charge of her?" "There was a nurse brought her on, sir, a queer foreign-looking thing, with a yellow skin and hair as black as night, and big gold hoops in her ears; but she talked something about the next steamer—I couldn't understand her lingo, sir—and went right back to New York on the two o'clock train." Joseph Verley stood aghast, staring at the rosy baby as it lay crowing in the woman's arms, and wondering which of his lucky stars he should call on to aid him in this unlooked-for emergency. A full-grown young lady niece would have been bad enough—but a baby!

"So this is my niece," he muttered. "And what am I going to do with her?" He turned suddenly to the colored woman. "What time does the next train for Winfield leave?" "In an hour, sir." "Would you be kind enough to take care of the child till then? I suppose I must take it home with me; for I can't very well drown it, or throw it under the car wheels." "Sir!" ejaculated the astonished stewardess. But Mr. Verley turned on his heel and strode out of the depot, scarcely able at first to comprehend the disaster that had befallen him. "Asleep, eh?" commented Mr. Verley. "Well that's lucky." "Where's the nurse, sir?" inquired the woman. "The nurse? What nurse?" "Why, I suppose you want to get a nurse?" "Never once thought of it!" ejaculated Joseph madly smiting his forehead. "Here—give the thing to me quick, the train is moving." He had hardly time to spring on board, as the locomotive gave an unearthly shriek while the baby followed suit in both respects. He staggered to his seat, holding the umbrella and child in one hand, while in the other his valise swung backward and forward. "There! there! bless its little heart!" he exclaimed, intreating the colored woman, "We won't cry—so we won't." But the baby evidently had an opinion of its own on the subject, and would cry in spite of the various blandishments practiced by the bewildered uncle—such as shaking the umbrella handle, swinging his watch, and trotting both knees. People began to look around, reproachfully; young men shrugged their shoulders, and young ladies "giggled."

"Hush! hush! there's a darling!" whispered Mr. Verley. But still the baby wept and wailed, and gnashed its gums, for of teeth it had but two. Mr. Verley began to look round in the car in search of some matronly dame of whom he could seek counsel, but in vain. There were only three ladies in the car, and they were young, with round hats and dimpled cheeks. "They don't know any thing about it," groaned Mr. Verley, in anguish of spirit. "Oh, why didn't I have common sense enough to go and get a nurse? I suppose there is no danger of a baby bursting its lungs; but I should think if there was such a contingency, this baby was in a fair way of meeting it. Well, roar away, my young friend; I can stand it as long as you can." Vain boast, as futile as vain, as Mr. Verley very soon discovered. The baby not only cried, but it screamed, it kicked, it doubled itself over in more ways than a contortionist's wildest dreams could imagine, and became apparently frantic with passion. The perspiration broke out in huge beads on Joseph's brow; his face

flushed, and still the ears thundered. "What's to become of me?" he pondered, holding desperately on to the struggling infant by the sash that encircled its little waist, and watching its purple face with a species of detestation. "I don't wonder Harold died. I shall die in a week if this thing goes on. And it seems so easy for Barbara Smith to take care of her little brothers and sisters. If Barbara was here—"

And Verley pulled the baby up into a sitting posture with a sudden jerk. "I'll do it," quoth Mr. Verley. "I'll take the back express at four in the morning and go straight there. Ah you may stop crying, you little hypocrite; but it won't do any good; I'm not to be caught twice in the same trap." Barbara Smith was watering her tube roses in the bright morning sunshine, with the valise and baby in the carriage. "Dear me, Mr. Verley," she ejaculated, blushing celestial red. "Why, what a sweet baby!" "Yes, very sweet," he responded dryly. "It is my niece that I was to meet at Speedville." "Why, I thought that she was a young lady?" "So did I; but it seems she's not. Barbara, what do you suppose brought me back?" he added, speaking very fast for fear the baby would cry. "I don't know," faltered Barbara, crimsoning still more. "Perhaps you forgot something." "Yes, I did." "What was it?" said Barbara, a little disappointed. "I forgot to ask you if you would marry me!" "Dear me! was that all?" said the young lady demurely. "Isn't that enough? Say, Barbara, will you?" "I'll think of it," answered Barbara, evasively. "No, but tell me now. Quick—the baby's waking up." "Well, then—yes." Barbara had taken the little thing in her arms, and disappeared before it had time to utter its waking yell. A week afterward Mr. Joseph Verley took the 12.30 return train with his wife and niece, the happiest of reclaimed old bachelors, and it was all the unconscious baby's work.

The Dignity of Labor. In a nation of workers labor ought certainly to command respect. And among right thinking people everywhere in this country it does so. Supercilious dandies of cities and towns North and South may form an exception to the rule which accords respect to the laborer, but their number, greater in the North than in the South, is not sufficient to give either weight or respectability to their opinions. Certain leaders of Northern opinion have in times past arrogated the championship of labor, and have tolerated the prejudices of their section and directed them against the people of the South as contemners of labor and laborers. This was done upon pure grounds of demagogism for political purposes, and was without foundation, as we know by observation and experience. In the moral code of a certain class of men, "a lie well stuck to is as good as the truth," and this prejudice against labor has been propagated with an industry which can only be accounted for by reference to the axiom quoted. Labor has never been deemed disgraceful at the South. It is true that the people have, as everywhere else in the world, the Northern States of the Union not excepted, always tried to get along with the smallest amount of labor, and thus to live as easily as practicable. Before the late revolution, the circumstances of a large class of our people were easy, and the necessity for labor was not urgent on them as upon the people of less favored sections, such, for instance, as the dwellers among the granite hills of New England. Moreover, field work under the warm sun during a long summer is to the white man somewhat harder to endure, than the same kind of labor during our short summers in Vermont or New York. And this fact may have developed an apparently greater repugnance to labor on the part of the Southern people. All these concessions we are ready to make. But when it is said that we are despisers of labor and laborers *per se*, we deny the charge. All over the South in times of slavery was scattered a large class of small farmers, each of whom owned a few slaves with whom he worked, personally superintending their labor. This was a highly respected class among us, and constituted what our political orators were accustomed to call, in the language of eulogy, "the bone and sinew of the country." Among our wealthiest people there were besides a great many who had amassed property by personal industry. These men, as a class, took a real pleasure in recounting to the rising generation, the story of their early toils and successes. We have known many young men in good circumstances sent to college after having served a few years at the plow-handles for the purpose of acquiring physical vigor, and a practical knowledge of the pursuits they were expected to follow. The idea that labor was degrading never occurred to these men. Not only are we accused of dishonoring labor but are represented as being in a state bordering on anarchy. Yet the people of this lawless region produced 3,500,000 bales of cotton last year, and an increased crop over the production of the year previous—all this in spite of the decrease and deterioration of our black labor. How are such results reconcilable with the hypothesis that we are despisers of labor? Away with such pernicious falsehood. The surest passport to the respect of Southern society is a course of honest industry. A despiser of labor here would be regarded as nearly akin to an idiot.

Honor Your Business. It is a good sign when a man is proud of his work or his calling, yet nothing is more common than to hear men finding fault constantly with their particular business, and deeming themselves unfortunate because fastened to it by the necessity of gaining a livelihood. In this way men fret and laboriously destroy all their comforts in the work; or change their business, and go on miserably, shifting from one thing to another, till the grave, or poor house, gives them a fast grip. But while, occasionally, a man fails in life because he is not in the place fit for his peculiar talents, it happens, ten times oftener, that failure results from neglect, and even contempt, of an honest business. A man should put his heart into everything that he does. There is no profession that has not its peculiar cares and vexations. No man escapes annoyance by changing his business. No mechanical business is altogether agreeable. Commerce, in its endless varieties, is affected, like all other pursuits, with trials, unwelcome duties, and dispiriting necessities. It is the very height of folly for a man to search out the frets and burdens of his calling, and give his mind every day to a consideration of them. They belong to human life—they are inevitable. Brooding over them only gives them strength. On the other hand, a man has power given him to shed beauty and pleasure on the homeliest toil, if he be wise. Let a man adopt his business, and identify it with pleasant associations; for heaven has given us imaginations, not alone to flake its poets, but to enable all men to beautify homely things. Heart varnish will cover up innumerable defects. Look at the good things. Accept your lot as a man does a piece of rugged ground, and begin to get out rocks and roots, to deepen and mellow the soil, to enrich and plant it.

The Meanest Man Yet.

Some years ago the culminating-mean descendant of notorious skin flints, in a New England State, was sick so nearly unto death that the attendant doctor and the doctors called in consultation, virtually gave him up. At this crisis an old and excellent physician, living near the sick man, but whose friendship and professional services had been alienated for a number of years past by some despicable mean act of the rich miser, heeded the despairing cry that called him to the bed-side of his former patient, and, by some happy resource, rescued his enemy from death. For this he utterly refused compensation, though, in an exceptional humanization of soul, the man whose life he had saved offered it liberally. In a few months thereafter the physician had occasion to call at the same house on other business. His only cow had strayed into a field belonging to his rich neighbor and late patient, and he went to offer—compensation! "How much shall I pay for the damage done?" he asked, shamefaced at his own question. The answer, after a pause, a suppressed sigh, and a nervous twitching of the lips, was—"Nothing." But in the manner and tone of this answer there was something to make the doctor draw from his pocket a half dollar and extend it toward his neighbor saying: "You must at least take this." The man of score thousands, with all his inherited meanness, thrust both his hands fiercely into his pockets; turned red and pale alternately; looked at the coin, then tried to look away from it; choked; stammered something incoherently; drew one hand slowly from a pocket, and snatched the coin like a wild beast! "I cannot help it!" he sobbed, and cried aloud like a child in utter shame and conscious irresistible degradation.

CORSETS.—In 1870, it is stated, there were 10,000,000 pair imported into the United States—a quantity it is calculated, sufficient to supply three pair to every adult female in the country. In addition, the annual domestic product of sewed corsets amounted to 1,500,000 pairs, manufactured by about twelve establishments. Near Strasburg, a city in Germany, there are 1,500 hand looms employed in weaving corsets for the consumption in the United States. One man as a weaver and two women as finishers are required for each loom, which produces three corsets daily. The sale of corsets, it is estimated, increases five per cent. every year. Corsets for males are also made, and about 200 dzn of this article of masculine apparel are imported into the United States every year.

Great Britain spends as much in two days on liquors as she does in a year on foreign missions.