

the greatest masters have always held as "Nature's first step" is the highest of art. grand simplicity is above the picturesque.

RALPH B. GODDARD.

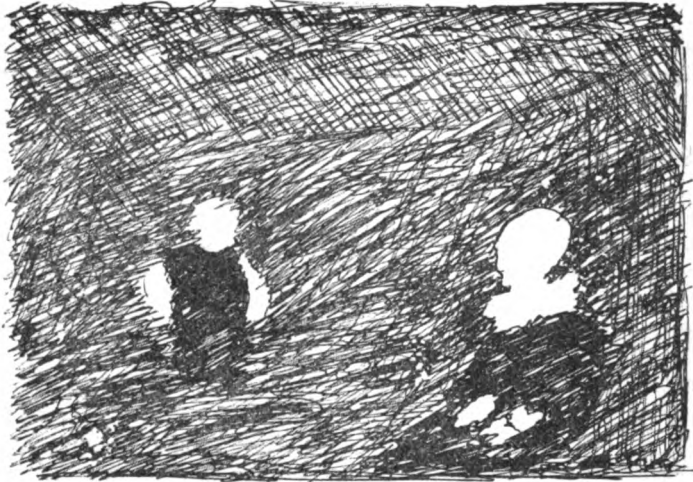


FIG. 5.

HOW AN OLD MAID CAME TO A RESOLUTION.

"YOU will not live with me, and you to myself, as nothing else is left me. divest yourself of all but Somehow, I feel like one of the old yourself!" Greek goddesses who has drifted out of place. I leave you all my little person-

"Well," said Ruth, "I rise in value



FIG. 6.

alties, reserving only what can not be transferred—the eye, the step, the sylvan bow—the soul in the soul of nature.”

“What can you do? How will you live?”

“Let me descend from the heights of the Olympian. I give away all Yankee vestments—bib, tucker, and wrap; bonnet and slippers, petticoat and shawl, parchment and deed.”

“You must be out of your head! What does it all mean?”

“It means that I am all disencumbered, and can wander where I will at my own sweet way. I shall have no thought for the morrow—where I shall live, where I shall die, or where I shall be buried. Something, it may be that from the first has simmered in my veins, is going to break out. I shall be under the special eye of the great Father, like the antelope of the desert, the birds of the air.”

“How; what?” uttered Ruth, breathlessly.

“*I am going to turn tramp!*”

I was not surprised at the expression, amounting to horror, that spread over the pretty face of Ruth; but a woman who would retrieve her entire emancipation, must adopt what physicians call heroic measures, for somehow, in some way she is always in bondage.

We are so hemmed in and narrowed by our social fabric, that anything outside of the four walls of a house, anything irrespective of the droppings of the sanctuary the orsize of visiting card, must, to the thoroughly conventional mind, seem little less than madness. How can man or woman exist if devoid of carpets, gas, and sewing machines? The very idea of regarding the tramp as a man, to be cared for, or imitated, is monstrous. He has given up the struggle for existence; let him die. He has made himself a Pariah or outcast; turn upon him all the force of law and the bullets of the military. He refuses to work; let him starve.

All this sounds proper enough within conventional views. Once, at a debat-

ing society, in which the great Benjamin Franklin took a part, a member proposed the question:

“How is it that a barrel may be filled to the brim with beans, and you may then pour in a full barrel of water, and it will not run over?”

Various reasons were suggested: “the spaces between the beans owing to their form,” etc., till the debate was brought to a sudden close by Franklin’s pithy question, “How is the fact?” So this question of masses of men taking to a peripatetic life will have to be eventually settled as to the fact of the relation of capital to labor, and the relation of both to moral humanitarian principles. The beans have filled up the social barrel, and the scanty accession of water, so far from being equal to another full barrel, in the shape of wages, has only the effect to swell the beans and split the barrel.

But I am anticipating. I must tell something about myself, that the reader may be able to know something about the woman who thus claims to be heard.

In spite of what Ruth had said, at twenty-five I am not uncomely. I have little of that startling animal beauty that sets animal passion aflame, at once dangerous to the possessor and the observer. I do not go in for what passes for beauty, which would be in my way, an obstruction, and a snare. I am wholesome to look upon, clear eyes and skin, and perfect health. I am naturally peaceful in character, never could, and never did quarrel. I do not fidget, either. Am not easily daunted, nor readily flattered. I am very steadfast, reliable, and from the depth and strength of my convictions am rarely at a loss for a significant answer when required. I am not what is called brilliant, nor am I particularly magnetic, that is apt to go with a fibre coarser than mine. My eyes are deep set under an unwrinkled forehead, and gray in color.

The world is exceedingly beautiful and satisfying to me; by no means a vale of

tears, nor a thoroughfare to be scurried over in the hope of something better. I am well content in it, believing that what seems evil is under-grooved by such a substratum of good that there is no evil in fact, only needful discipline for such a creation as man. My optimism is unailing, in the small as in the great.

I find nothing mean or contemptible in the order of earthly relations, nothing common or unclean. On the contrary, infinite possibilities are daily developed around us; hopes from what has been creating prophesies of the future. Dante has lived and found a Beatrice; Milton could sing of the white soul of his "espoused wife;" and Shakespeare takes the great beating common heart into his own, despite of Ann Hathaway endowed with his "second best bed."

Ah, me! It is well to live, even shaped as woman, because Cleopatra turned her coarse clod into Orient pearl, and Margaret Roper sanctified a daughter's life, and Rachel Russel's wifely heart beat on for years, wisely, truly, greatly, after having manfully helped a weaker than herself.

None of these great opportunities are in my destiny, though I have greatly longed for a career, which comes now in the humblest guise. I will be a tramp!

Let me consider. Do I wrong any one when I turn my back upon organized society? My half-sister, Jane, older by several years than myself, will be right glad to have my silk quilt and fine blankets, to say nothing of my room at her own disposal. When we come down to the facts of our relation to each other in this life, how inadequate to our conceptions, what a mean character every thing assumes. "My second best bed" of Shakespeare has such a world-wide significance.

Jane is no better nor worse than the majority of women. She is by nature envious and jealous. Not jealous of me in the ordinary meaning of the word.

She does not fear that I may sneak behind doors and wood-piles to steal a kiss from her poor hen-pecked Sam. Oh, no! She only fears he may, through me, be refreshed with some clear, vigorous thought to send him on his way rejoicing. She owns Sam, body and soul, and her whole life is that of a detective, lest some poacher may trespass on her domain.

I own I may have tried to interest Sam in evolution, when she would rivet his attention to a neighbor's mishap, or the grave suspicion that Laura Brown laced in her naturally slender waist, or painted her blooming cheeks.

Well, Jane will be well rid of me. Sam will have some weak fears that I may perish in some way, and nobody to take my last breath; but, as an act of any kind requiring helpful forecast is quite beyond him, nothing within the range of an Eden would ever come of it.

Farmer Brace will miss me, and I shall miss his cheery, "Good morning, Miss Hannah. I always stick to it you are not an atheist, but what your creed is I can't make out. No matter, you're the most religious person I ever knew, and that's enough. Up there you won't be asked about creeds, I'm thinking, but about that cup of cold water and that bread to the hungry, and visit to the prisoners"—he points upward at this.

Then there is the Rev. Mr. Screamer. He will not have a soul on whom to fix his bulging-out eyes when he emphasizes his best paragraphs and aims his pithiest hits at infidels, if one could know the meaning of the word.

Vixenish Dolly Carter will miss an ever-abiding cause of spiteful malevolence; and Mary Clay will open in vain her baby blue eyes expecting to hear some supposed sceptical utterance. These will all miss a daily whetstone for their dull wits, and be none the worse for the privation.

No, I wrong no one. The world will jog on just the same, though I slip my neck out of the social yoke. It has sur-

vived Harriet Martineau, who honestly believed herself essential thereto, and it will survive sweet, beautiful Florence Nightingale, condemned to bear a name illustrative of high art, but low idea, in Westminster Abbey, a libel upon the smiling angel Death who lifts for us the veil of the Unseen.

No, no! I have no misgivings. I own myself, unshackled, and I impinge upon the personality of no other being. The inventory of my possessions is easily made out. *Imprimis*, a pair of serviceable legs, terminated by sound, shapely feet; two hands, not over small nor white, from having hoed and grubbed in Sam's neglected garden; a head well set upon neck and shoulders; gray, deep-set eyes, and a mouth somewhat wide, all kept in healthful trim by excellent digestion and a perfectly sound organization, thanks to my "forbears."

I must honestly admit, that I am not what is termed a lovely woman. I am, perhaps, inclined to be critical, but not to be sneering. That devilish quality is entirely foreign to me. I believe in the line of beauty, but live in the honest, uncompromising square.

I have a weak hankering for sympathy, underlying this my grim, square old maidenhood. I might have had a tendency to flirt, as most of women have, had not my lines of character been too sharply drawn, and it is besides this, a waste of capacity. I think I can understand how grand old Queen Bess struggled against this womanly propensity, and that largeness, fulness, and soundness of mental fiber that induced her to devote herself to her *children*, as she called her people.

"Why do you not adopt children, and do some good, instead of turning tramp?" the reader asks.

Well, the supposition is that this chapter would not have been written had I done otherwise. As to adopting children, those that beget are in duty bound to take care of children. I am not clever as nursery maid. I do

not take to blowing noses, and picking ears, and paring nails, and scrubbing down white heights.

I am not, as before intimated, lovely, but inclined to be exacting to others as well as myself. Still children love me, and even cats, which I detest, will rub their treacherous sides against me and purr and spring into my lap. I think children have an instinct for just, reliable characters, rather than for the caressing kind, and so have cats.

Most of women have a vocation for the family, which is but partially developed in me. They are useful and praiseworthy, just in proportion as they bring wholesome children into the world, but ought to be by the law proscribed from mothering sickly, scrofulous numbers to the body politic. I observe the least intelligent women aid best the common census.

Look at the sturdy Irish dame, with her frowsy brood! She has no theories about breeding or training, or anything else, but goes in a straightforward way to fill her seven by nine shanty with olive branches, who take their cuffs and spankings, and kisses and cajolings all with equal zest. They grow up endowed with a natural *pushing* faculty, and grow to outvote and push to the wall the flaccid children of the original stock.

No, I will not adopt the sickly children of ailing mothers, the accursed children of diseased fathers. I will not convert the blessed air around me into hospital malaria. Consumption is disgusting; fever madness; ulcers plague-breeding. I am selfish, if you will, but I can not abide disease and imbecility, household meanness and bickerings; women's eternal dawdling and complaining; and the wailing of poor, dear, distressed children.

Every day I take heart-joy that a Bergh has been evolved out of the ameliorating elements of our civilization. I study out his onwardness, and already land him where Swedenborg says the

oldest angel, but the youngest looking of all the angels, stands, even Love, nearest to the throne of the Infinite. He is not now waiting the call, "Friend, come up higher."

I will turn tramp, and see what comes of it. I will no more of these old ways that help in no growth, and scarcely leave us human. Besides all this there is no man and no woman made exactly alike. Men will carry out their own ideas in spite of all obstacles. They will be Alexanders, and Cæsars, and Napoleons; preachers, scientists, inventors, discoverers, artists, or what not, as best inclined, or best endowed, and they never ask, by your leave; while we women are all the time tucked up behind them, and made to pull their chestnuts out of the fire. It is a grand, beautiful thing to own one's self; to stand up in the light of heaven, and feel a divine chrism sanctifying the head.

After all, one house can not well hold several women unless some of them are natural subordinates. I am not one of these; or, if I must be subordinate, let a man, not a woman, be the boss. There's where the rub will come in when women get the ballot.

I talked on in this way, and Ruth heard with round, open eyes. At length she exclaimed:

"I don't see what you want, Hannah Jane, and why you are not contented. If you were only pious-minded, you would see that it takes all kinds of people to make up a world, and that the bad people in it are needed in God's way to try the hearts and purify the good."

"I dare say; bad people are needed to be whippers-in of the good. You may believe in a God who keeps that kind of police force. I do not; and I want a "lodge in some vast wilderness," just as men have longed for it, where I can escape cant, fraud, and wrong of all kinds. I am reverting to some anterior state—the blood of some old reprobate, perhaps, is breaking out in me."

"Why not get married, Hannah Jane, and settle down like other women?"

"That's it, exactly—settle down! Why are there so many wrecks of wretched women in the world? Because women hate work, and are afraid of enterprise. Why do not women join estates together, join property and business, instead of running after men?"

"I'm sure you could make a man stand round," this from Ruth.

"That's a kind of meanness I do not covet. I want to go outside of the woman's view of life as accepted in our day. I am tired of bullyings, whether on the platform or by the hearth-stone. Men, somehow, seem to be in demand socially, and in the body politic, and I should be glad of peaceful relations between the sexes. I do not wonder at war and battle-fields, for every little dirty community is fighting ground; even children emerge from the nursery well practiced in arms. I go in for peace—a truce, at least—and if I can not have that, give me a desolate island or a broad thoroughfare. I go in for work, and old maid independence."

"But you might get married, Hannah Jane, and have a man to comfort you."

"Comfort me! Men have outgrown all that. They care no more for a woman's tears than the cat cares for the squeak of the mouse under his paw;" and I am afraid that I laughed in an unpleasant way, for I had no need of doing so, being so situated that no man, and no woman, had any right to say, "Why do you so?" And thus I am bent on going out and seeing how it will seem to have neither house nor home, and nobody to find fault with me.

Find fault! that's the great perpetual under-current that, like the *undertow* of the sea, drags people under, and wrecks and drowns them. Everybody that ever I knew has tried their hand in making me over, and yet, here I am, the same square, unflinching old maid, and I will go to the end of the world,

but I will see it in my own way. Everybody tries to hitch his team to the team of somebody else, and hence perpetual collisions. I never saw but one fully equipped old maid, and that was Sallie Holly, of Virginia, and she has built up her Eden, minus an Adam, and surrounded it with a palisade sixteen feet high, made of the strongest oak. I envy her regality.

Ruth had been furtively reading my face as this monologue went on, and she suddenly asked me :

"Do tell me, Hannah Jane, what became of your father? I've heard tell he was a mighty handsome man."

"Oh, bother fathers and mothers. I'm from the stock of old Melchisedek, King of Salem, so blessedly disencumbered; and so, this is the last of me, kept in a straight-jacket by society, where every one is strictured on the bedstead of Procrustes, all made of the same length by pulling out or lopping off. Let me rather go out into eclipse total.

ELIZABETH OAKES SMITH.

THE STORM ON THE PRAIRIE.

FROM out the West the wrathful clouds,
Wind-driven, onward sweep,
Till all the plain is wrapt in shrouds,
As though for endless sleep.
Through all the blackness flashing bright
The swift electric force
Smites the quivering earth with might,
And runs its mystic course.

Our speed gains nought, so crouch we here
And watch the torrents pour, *ff*!
Our hearts o'erfilled with wilding fear
Until the storm is o'er.

Then, in the East the gray mist falls,
The blue again unveils;

While His trained hosts the Thunder calls,
The cowed wind hiding wails.

On gathered ranks of cloudlets white
Far to the North we look,
And near, the Sun, in glory bright,
Smiles on the swelling brook.

Now, in the South the broad fields smile,
The trembling, bearded grain
Lifts up the heads that bowed erewhile
And craved, "Oh, give us rain!"

And where the streamlet careless strays,
The rushes, beaten down,
Have lost their dainty rustling way,
They're bruised from root to crown.

A. ELMORE.

A BUDGET OF PAPERS ON PHRENOLOGY.—No. 6.

A FEW CHARACTER SKETCHES.

*"O wad some power the giftie gie us,
To see oursel's as ithers see us!
It wad frae mornie a blunder free us,
An' foolish notion."*

THE joyous freedom of the novelist is not mine. I must be true to nature, and photograph even the shadows. The trained eye of a good phrenologist—where the qualifying adjective has a moral as well as an intellectual reference—is an accurate lens; revealing all that is mortal, and much that is spiritual, but the heart which is spiritual and immaterial, is accurately known only by the superhuman and the Divine. Then, too, these sketches must be instantaneous, taken in the quickness of a thought, before an acquaintance or companionship gives one

the ordinary and common knowledge of their fellowmen.

Should these pages in their wide and almost universal circulation fall under the eye of the ones thus instantaneously sketched, I can not plead the advice followed by ministers of the Gospel, "Preach to others your own experiences, and they will say to you at the close of the discourse: 'I know who you were trying to hit this morning, Dominie,' and take it to themselves." No, this is your own portrait; if you think it another's, so much the better. If you recognize the correctness of the likeness, I trust you will feel honored by its honorable position and rejoice that your life can thus be made helpful to others. By