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Ephraim Maxham

Daniel Ripley Wing

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AUNT MERCY'S STORY,
OR, THE PLAIN ONE OF THE FAMILY.

BY HARRIET N. HATHAWAY.

It was a soft, sunny afternoon, late in the spring, that I had thrown on my sun-bonnet and taken a stroll across the fields to Aunt Mercy's pretty little cottage-home. As I stood before the glass, in its quaintly carved oaken frame, smoothing my hair, Aunt Mercy looked up at me from her knitting, and said, with a smile peculiarly her own:

"Hattie, child, do you think that you are pretty?"

"O no, Aunt Mercy," I replied, in all honesty, "I'm sure I do not. Why did you ask?"

"Was it because I was smoothing my hair?" "Love is a wonderful beautifier," she said, apparently not heeding my question, or the embarrassment beokened by my blushes—"a wonderful beautifier indeed! It smooths out the wrinkles of old age, lends lustre to the dimmed eye, paints roses on the yellow cheek; in short, the plainest face becomes beautiful, when seen through the medium of love."

I softly drew an ottoman from its place, and seated myself at the old lady's feet. I knew her mind was wandering far away amid the shadows of the past. Very quietly I sat, for fear of disturbing her reverie.

"Hattie, at length she said, 'would you like a story?'"

"O yes, Aunt Mercy," I replied, for this was what I had been waiting for.

The old lady helped herself to a pinch of snuff, took back in her arm-chair, removed her glasses from her eyes, and rested them upon the border of her dainty mob cap, then folded her wrinkled hands together, and partly closing her eyes, said:

"Dear little Lucy Lambert! I see her as plainly at this moment, as though years had not gone by since she stood before me a timid, shrinking child."

"Alice Morgan was my early school friend, and we were like sisters in attachment; but Alice married young, and went from her New England home to find one in Cincinnati, Ohio. I was married. In fifteen years from that time, I was left a widow and childless, with not a near relative in the wide world."

"My old friend, on hearing of my bereavement, sent an earnest invitation to come and make a home with them for a time. I accepted this kind offer. It was afternoon when I arrived, and I met with a startled reception from my friend, Alice Lambert."

"Soon the children came trooping in from school—the two boys and two girls. First came Frank, a fine, noble looking boy of twelve summers; then Walter, a fair-haired boy of ten; next Bella, a brilliant, bewitching beauty of fourteen, followed by her twin-sister Lucy, who seemed to shrink from observation."

"There was evidently a feeling akin to pride in Mrs. Lambert presented Walter, Frank, and Bella to me; but, when she came to Lucy, she said:

"And here is our Lucy, the plain one of the family; but she is a very good, gentle girl."

"I drew the timid, blushing child to my bosom, and said:

"I know she is, for she is very pleasant looking. She reminds me of my own little Alice, your namesake, who died two years ago."

"As I said this, a tear, called forth by the remembrance of that sad hour, fell upon Lucy's hand." She raised her little pale face to mine with a look full of sorrowful compassion. The moment our eyes met, there seemed to be an electric sympathy—as they call it now—established between us."

"During my stay in the family, I cannot remember a day but that something occurred to remind Lucy of her lack of personal beauty. I was really painful to me to see what a line of distinction was drawn between her and the other children by every member of the household. If her father addressed her, it was 'plain little Lucy'; and the mother's pet term was, 'My homely little Lucy'; while Frank, Walter, and Bella, when designated by their names, were called 'the beauty' and 'Alice' as 'the little beauty'."

"One afternoon, as Lucy sat by my side, Frank came bounding in, calling:

"See, see, Harry May wants to see you."

"The color mounted to Lucy's temples, as she exclaimed:

"What, me, Frank?"

"No, no, not you!" exclaimed the impetuous boy. "Why should he care to see you? No one ever cares to see homely folks. It's Beauty he's after. He thinks you are as homely as his ugly sister, Lulu. Did you know it?"

"I had often been at loss to know how Lucy felt when meeting with such rebuffs; but had never been able to come to a definite conclusion. I had at times thought that, having been so accustomed to them, she did not heed them; but as Frank closed the door, she raised her large gray eyes to my face with such an expression of sorrow, that my heart throbbed with anguish, and it was with difficulty I could restrain my tears."

"She did not speak a word, nor was there need for this; for that look told me more than language could utter. Soon after, she made an excuse, and went to her room. Somehow, I felt uneasy about the child, as she had not been well for several days, and in a few moments I laid aside 'my work' and followed her."

"Very quietly I entered my room, which was adjoining her, the door of which stood partially open. Before the glass I saw Lucy, apparently studying each feature of her plain, little face separately."

"Frank is right!—I am homely," at last she said. "What a little great-face mine is, freckled, belid, and great staring gray eyes with coarse brown hair, my mother says; nothing pretty about me, but my mouth and teeth; but even they do not keep everybody from calling me 'homely.' Father and mother—Oh dear! I wish I could die, and then they would not be ashamed of me all the time!"

"The sorrowful voice ceased, and not after she had opened my sitting apron. I could restrain myself no longer, but entering the chamber I drew the weeping child to my bosom, lavishing kisses and caresses upon her."

"O Aunt Mercy, at length she said; 'you think me a very silly little girl, but you do not know what a dreadful thing it is to be homely. I thought—I thought if everybody called me homely, Harry May wouldn't become as always takes my part at school, when the children laugh at me, and only last week, when one of the boys called me 'ugly-bug,' he found me crying under the old elm at the back of the school-house, and he told me not to mind it. But now he thinks so, and who will take my part? What shall I do?"

"I will, Lucy, darling," I said as I gently smoothed her hair from her burning brow. "You are very, very sweet and dear to me, and I love you better than any little girl I know of."

"Dear Aunt Mercy," she replied, as she leaned into my face with her whole soul in her eyes, "how good you are!" and then she slid down my lap into the lounge, and soon fell asleep. Her breathing was slow and irregular, and her face was painfully flushed."

"I was so feverish, and my tears were welling up, that I could not sleep. I watched her over her night and day."

"I think I shall never marry, Aunt Mercy!"

"Poor child! Now I had obtained the key that unlocked her long boarded secret; viz., her fidelity to her girlish love, was Harry May yet mindful of the plain little Lucy Lambert—he whom report said to be wealthy, talented, and endowed with many charms? His early love—if love it was—had faded from him as a dream long before this, was the answer my heart gave. So, with a sigh, I returned the miniature to its hiding place, and Lucy was none the wiser for the secret which I had involuntarily become mistress of—a secret never known to one save herself, and that being who reads the hidden thoughts of his children as though they were open books."

"We arrived at Cincinnati. Five years had wrought great changes in my friend's family. Frank and Walter were no longer boys, but fashionably appearing young men; yet both held their identity. For Frank was gay, dashing, with a spice of his old fun-loving propensity about him; while Walter was soft and tender in his ways as a woman, yet he did not lack manliness of character. But Bella—how shall I find words to describe her? Her charms had far out-rivalled the promise of her girlhood! My poor little Lucy seemed to sink into her former insignificance by the side of her, and I was forced to own that, dear as she was to me, she was still 'plain little Lucy Lambert!'"

"It was evident that the family thought the same, though they said she was much improved."

"Lucy sat in her own room, in her favorite seat at the window, her head reclining on her hand and her eyes resting dreamily on the landscape before her. I knew where her thoughts were, for a few hours before we had received the intelligence that Harry May had returned from Canton. Soon there was a ring at the door, and in a few moments Bella came bounding along the passage-way and into the room exclaiming:

"Lucy—Lucy! Harry May is down stairs, and has inquired for you. He is one of the most splendid-looking men I ever saw, and so polished in his manners. Come—come down quickly, for he seems quite impatient to see you; the gay girl continued, not heeding the deadly pallor that had overspread Lucy's face, as she danced away."

"O Aunt Mercy, what shall I do?" escaped Lucy's white lips, as she rose and, sinking on her knees on a sofa at my side, threw her arms around my neck and laid her cheek against mine. I endeavored to soothe her, and after a time she became more composed. Then I smoothed her brown hair from her brow, arranged the folds of her white muslin dress, which was fastened at the throat by a moss-rose bud (as she never wore ornaments), and leading her to the stairs, I gently insisted upon her going below."

"As you please, Aunt Mercy, said, in a hopeless tone, and with an expression in her large, gray eyes which told how much she was suffering. 'But Bella is so very beautiful, I shall look plainer than ever.'"

for she had become very dear to me. Many things passed her lips that were not quite understood by the family; but I knew their import well."

"O Harry, do not let the boys tease me, she would sometimes murmur, in broken, incoherent tones. Then again she would sob, 'I shall die if you leave me, Harry!' or 'Have you forgotten the time when we made sand-houses—long, long ago?' 'Will you leave me too?' O Harry! Harry! and many other touching sentences, which, though broken and weak, revealed to me the heart history of the unconscious little sufferer."

"Two weeks after Lucy was taken sick, Harry May left his home to enter the mercantile establishment of his uncle, who resided in Canton—his father thinking it time for him to prepare himself for business, as he was nearly seventeen years of age."

"It was six weeks before Lucy was so that she could leave her bed. I well remember the first time she did so. It was a mild, balmy evening in June, and as she sat up in her arm chair before the window, watching the fading tints of the golden sunset, she looked almost beautiful to me. Her face was very pale, and her eyes had a dreamy, soft expression, quite new to them."

"Aunt Mercy, at length she said, 'is it true that Harry May has gone away? I dreamed it so many, many times while I was sick, and I feel as if it were true.'"

"I dreamed the result, but replied in the affirmative."

"I am very glad, auntie," she said calmly. "It is much better so for now I am going to be your own little girl—I am going to live with you. You know you said you would care for me."

"Dear, dear little Lucy, so you shall," I said, with forced composure, fearful of exciting her in any way; but my heart cried out in very joy, for this was a thought which had never left me since the first moment I met the child. And so it was decided that she should accompany me to my New England home."

"To say that Lucy was not tenderly loved by her parents, would be true; for, in reality, she was as dear to them as either of the more favored ones; but somehow they had formed an idea that an apology was due for her plainness, and thus had formed a habit of offering one on all occasions, little thinking how their words pained her sensitive heart. Now that she was about to leave them, every member of the family showered kindness upon her, and I sometimes thought she might regret her hastily-formed decision; so one day, when we were alone, I said:

"Lucy, dear, do you not regret leaving all your home friends, to find a home with Aunt Mercy?"

"I sometimes think they love you too well to spare you."

"They love me very much; but still I am but 'plain little Lucy' to them, and it is better I should go. Bell, Frank, and Walter are beautiful, but I am one by myself," was her quiet answer."

"I felt pained at her reply, but yet could not say a word, for, in my heart, I said, 'It is even so.'"

"That Lucy was right, her mother's parting words testified. As she pressed her to her bosom, she said: 'It is better to be Lucy than Bella; for you, my love, with your little plain face, will not meet with the trials and temptations that Bella would with her beauty.'"

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"You, no doubt may have wondered why I did not speak plainly to my friends in regard to what I considered a great error in their dealings with Lucy, and here I will explain it. I often thought this to be my duty, but shrank from the task, feeling it to be a delicate matter for a comparative stranger to interfere between parent and child. At one time I quite decided to lay aside these scruples and open my heart to them; but, when I mentioned this to Lucy, she pleaded so earnestly against it, that I yielded the point, and promised never to break my silence on the subject."

"Arrived at home, I at once commenced housekeeping, and very happy was I to find my little charge all that I had pictured her, and even more. Removed from the depressing influences that had previously surrounded her, her bodily health improved, while her spirit became elastic. To me she was very beautiful. I loved to watch the varying expressions of her large gray eyes, to trace the smiles that flitted about her prettily formed mouth, displaying her faultlessly beautiful teeth; and to see the warm color come and go on her once hueless cheeks. Do not misunderstand me, Hattie, I would not have you think her beautiful, for, with her features, this could not be. To a stranger, she could be nothing still but plain Lucy Lambert; but to me, who loved her, there was something indescribably fascinating in her every expression. I could watch her hours and never be weary."

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"While I was overlooking some articles of clothing in Lucy's trunk, I discovered a miniature, and on taking it up found it was Harry May's. I now remembered having found Lucy several times deeply absorbed in looking at a picture, which she had concealed on my approach. Dear little Lucy (I still called her so), she had refused the several offers of marriage she had received; and, when I urged her, she would smile a sweetly and smile, and say:

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"Lucy—Lucy! Harry May is down stairs, and has inquired for you. He is one of the most splendid-looking men I ever saw, and so polished in his manners. Come—come down quickly, for he seems quite impatient to see you; the gay girl continued, not heeding the deadly pallor that had overspread Lucy's face, as she danced away."

"O Aunt Mercy, what shall I do?" escaped Lucy's white lips, as she rose and, sinking on her knees on a sofa at my side, threw her arms around my neck and laid her cheek against mine. I endeavored to soothe her, and after a time she became more composed. Then I smoothed her brown hair from her brow, arranged the folds of her white muslin dress, which was fastened at the throat by a moss-rose bud (as she never wore ornaments), and leading her to the stairs, I gently insisted upon her going below."

"As you please, Aunt Mercy, said, in a hopeless tone, and with an expression in her large, gray eyes which told how much she was suffering. 'But Bella is so very beautiful, I shall look plainer than ever.'"

FRESHINGS UPON POPULAR PROVERBS.

"You shall be vicar of Bowden, and who shall carry the dirt out—into the vicarage?"

"Every man cannot be vicar of Bowden."

"Every man cannot be vicar of Bowden."

"Every man cannot be vicar of Bowden."

"Every man cannot be vicar of Bowden."

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"Every man cannot be vicar of Bowden."

"Every man cannot be vicar of

you richer or poorer, or whether no other person than yourself knows of your action, still, always and in all cases, do the right thing. Your first lesson in this will grow easier, until finally doing the right thing will become a habit, and to do a wrong will seem an absolute impossibility.

The Eastern Mail.

WATERVILLE, MAY 12, 1859.

AGENTS FOR THE MAIL.

B. M. PETERSON & Co., Newspaper Agents, No. 10 State street, Boston, and 139 Nassau street, New York, are Agents for the Eastern Mail, and are authorized to receive Advertisements and Subscriptions as the same may be required at this office.

ALL LETTERS AND COMMUNICATIONS, relating either to the business or editorial departments of this paper, should be directed to "The Eastern Mail," or "The Editor," at Waterville, Me.

THE EASTERN MAIL AND A MAGAZINE! GOOD READING TO BE HAD CHEAP!

We offer the following liberal terms to subscribers, old and new, for the ensuing year, cash invariably in advance.

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY, a \$3 magazine, and the EASTERN MAIL, one year, for \$5.00.

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LADIES' HOME MAGAZINE, (Arthur's) a \$3 periodical, and the EASTERN MAIL, one year, for \$5.00.

YOUTH'S GAZETTE AND PLAYMATE, a \$1.50 juvenile monthly, and the EASTERN MAIL, one year, for \$3.00.

THE PLAIN TRUTH.—Necessity is positively driving us to make a strong appeal to our delinquent subscribers to pay up. Many of them are sadly in arrears, and the consequence is we are sadly in debt. Our credit system is a bad one, but we have adopted it, and can't now get out of it; and our patrons should be careful not to make us extend it beyond our terms. No man should ask more than a year's credit on the little sum of nine shillings, and those who compel us to give more should willingly pay the additional price agreed upon. Our volume is drawing to its close, and those who pay within the time will do us a great favor. Such as are already owing for the past year should feel honorably bound to help us forthwith, without putting us to the expense of sending a collector with bills. Those at a distance can remit by mail at our risk, and receipts shall be promptly forwarded.

P. S.—The above is not intended for those who are not in arrears.

THE SEASON.—We like to make a record of the early weather marks, because "we told you so." Of course we know all about it. We are now closing the third week of the very choicest weather for the purposes of seed time; during which all the labor preliminary to a bountiful harvest has been going on most busily. Last Sunday was the warmest day the thermometer marking as high as 91. This is not only warm, but remarkably so. On that day good bunches of asparagus were eaten from the gardens of W. Chipman and C. F. Hathaway, and we measured rhubarb stalks two feet high in the garden of R. W. Pray—all grown in the open garden. We venture to say this record is without precedent in Waterville; and when we assert that there was a snow bank five feet deep in the rear of Boutelle Block, we give our story all it will bear. The willow, elm and maple are showing good development of leaf, and the plum and apple are verging closely upon the blossom. But on the other hand the dry weather, so favorable for everything else, seems to be throwing the hay crop in the back ground. So very difficult it is to suit everything and everybody—and so wise the provision that nobody can help themselves! "God over all and in all."

LUXURIES.—Under the influence of the warm, genial weather, Mother Earth commenced the distribution of her favors unusually early this spring, and from her banks—which never fail—she has already paid rich dividends to lucky stockholders. Of the truth of this, owners of asparagus beds have had good evidence with abundant promise for the future. We were enabled to make cuttings by the first of May, which we think has seldom been done in this latitude without forcing. Talking of asparagus reminds us of a story, "and we'll tell you the reason why"—they very early go together on the dinner table, and properly cooked, will arouse even a jaded appetite to action. And speaking of food, we are prompted to inform our readers that nice fresh ones are to be had for the asking and a York shilling or so, at "Poor Chip's," opposite of the Williams House, though why he is called "Poor" is past our comprehension since there is no man in town who is growing rich faster—but that's no business of ours.

Don't like shad? Too many bones, eh? Well a hungry man might go farther and fare worse, scaly fare though you pronounce it. You are too much engaged in the pursuit of the almighty dollar, perhaps, and don't allow yourself leisure to enjoy the good things with which a bountiful Providence has surrounded you. We will allow that it takes time to eat shad properly—but if nicely stuffed and properly cooked, and you don't allow yourself to get flustered, there is good eating to be had from this fish, especially when flanked by a dish of asparagus toast, daintily browned. By the way, *non disputandum*—which freely interpreted means that if you won't eat shad, Chip has plenty of halibut and cod to sell to foolish fellows who can't appreciate better eating, or who are compelled to bolt their food whole and have no time to eat leisurely and digest it like sensible Christians.

CALIFORNIA TO BE DIVIDED.—By the last overland arrival we get news of the passage of a bill in the State Senate, forming California into a new territory, subject to the governor's approval.

OUR TABLE.

A DISCUSSION ON SHAKESPEARE. LITERATURE.—By Rev. E. M. Caspary, D. D. New York: Thatcher & Hutchinson. This is one of Chapin's recent characteristic discourses, issued in cheap form, being sold at ten cents a copy. Knowing the author, one hardly need be told that it is an eloquent plea in behalf of wronged and suffering woman, and a strong protest against certain conventional rules, by which, having once sinned, she is condemned to a life of shame, while man, more guilty, perhaps, is allowed to go scot free.

WESTMINSTER REVIEW.—The following is the table of contents of the April number of this quarterly, which by many people is thought to be the ablest of the four great British Reviews:—1. Yorkshire. 2. The Morals of Trade. 3. Weimar and its Celebrities. 4. The Drama in Paris. 5. The Italian Question. 6. Adam Bede. 7. DeLamennais: his Life and Writings. 8. England's Political Position in Europe. 9. Contemporary Literature.

The four great British Quarterly Reviews and Blackwood's Monthly, are promptly issued by L. Scott & Co. 64 Goldstreet, New York. Terms of subscription.—For any one of the four Reviews \$7 per annum; any two Reviews \$12; any three Reviews \$17; all four Reviews \$22; Blackwood's Magazine \$3; Blackwood and three Reviews \$9; Blackwood and the four Reviews \$10—with large discount to clubs. In all the principal cities and towns, these works will be delivered free of postage. When sent by mail, the postage to any part of the U. States will be but 24 cents a year for "Blackwood," and but 14 cents a year for each of the Reviews.

CAUTION.—The Acrook Railroad may or may not be built, and the proposed plan may or may not be the best that could be devised for securing the desired object and protecting the interests of the State—but one fact we think is clear; some of the opponents of the proposed measure are doing us serious injury and "fouling their own nest," by reckless statements and mischievous arguments. It is utterly futile, they say, to attempt to stay the tide of emigration from Maine by the building of railroads, or the development of our resources in any way; men will go where money can be most easily made. California and the West will continue to attract our young men to the rich mine and broad prairie, and they cannot be retained at home though you cover the State with a network of railroads.

When father Drew told the young men of Maine that they were best off at home, but that if they became discontented and were determined to go abroad, they had better stop in New Jersey instead of going further West, what a howl of indignation went up from the entire press of the State. Well, if in making the talk he did, Brother Drew was guilty of treason to the State, and narrowly escaped the gibbet, how ought these other gentlemen to be treated for their open and oft repeated calumnies? Let the press and the people answer.

TOWN HALL.—If any one wishes to know what a wonderful change in the appearance of things can be wrought by the application of a little paint and paper, let them look into our old Town Hall. Without enlarging its dimensions, those having it in charge, have, by covering its time stained walls and battered ceiling, converted it from a grim looking den to a really pleasant looking room. It is the same old place, to be sure—only about half large enough to accommodate this community, and possesses none of the modern contrivances for the health and comfort of the audience—and yet it is a great deal better than it was, and somebody deserves credit for the improvement. Our selectmen will doubtless come in for their share, but we should not wonder if the movement originated with the present keeper of the Hall, Mr. S. Keith.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.—The vote on the amendment to the Constitution of Massachusetts, which requires two years residence after naturalization, before the right of suffrage is conferred, was very light, but the amendment is no doubt accepted.

Conductor Mitchell has so far recovered from the injuries he received at the time of the accident on the "lower railroad," at Vassalboro', that he will resume his place on the road on Monday next.

MAINE CONFERENCE.—We publish the following additional appointments made at the recent Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Portland: Chestnut Street, H. Cox, Sup.; Pine Street, S. H. Wetherbee, Congreg. Street, Geo. Webber and A. Moore, Sup.; Gardiner, D. B. Randall; Richmond, A. Hatch; Bowdoinham, J. Cobb; Bath, Wesley Church, J. McMillan; Beason Street, H. Nickerson; West Bath, Z. H. Blair; Monmouth, E. Martin; Leeds, D. B. Holt; Augusta, A. Sanderson; Hallowell, C. Fuller; Sidney, T. Whitler; East Readfield, to be supplied; Kendall's Mills, U. Bidout; Fairfield, W. B. Bartlett; Skowhegan, J. Colby; Solon, S. Rankin; Madison and Anson, J. Lord; New Portland, to be supplied; Strong, J. Mitchell; Phillips, S. W. Pierce; Industry, P. Elby; New Sharon, J. Allen; Mercer to be supplied; Mount Vernon, do do; Farmington, do do; Farmington Brick Meeting House, J. W. Hathaway; Wilton and Temple, J. Fairbank; Fayette, W. H. Foster; Winthrop, C. C. Mason; Wayne, C. A. King; Kent's Hill, A. J. Church; North Wayne, to be supplied.

Two steamers were burned at Pittsburgh, Pa., on the 7th inst., by which property to the amount of \$135,000 was destroyed.

Louis Guidi, an Italian pedlar, in prison at Ellsworth, for burglary in Bucksport, recently set fire to the jail and made his escape. A few days afterwards, however, he was arrested, after a desperate resistance, by officer Stevens in Bluehill. Hunger had driven him out of the woods in which he had been lurking.

SKOWHEGAN.—The Clarion reports that village as showing many and strong marks of improvement this Spring; indicating, as that paper concludes, a return of more prosperous times. We are glad to hear it, Moses for Skowhegan is a nice place, and ought to prosper.

APPOINTMENTS BY THE GOVERNOR, with the Advice and Consent of Council.—Judges of Supreme Judicial Court, John Appleton, Bangor, re-appointed; Richard Kent, Bangor, vice, J. Hathaway. Reporter of Judicial Decisions, Wales Hubbard, Wiscasset. State Prison Commissioners, Richard Tinker, Ellsworth; Horace Porter, Kennebunk. Penitentiary Indian Agent, Samuel W. Hoag, Bangor.

European News.

Stirring news comes to us from over the water, by the late arrivals. Hostilities, to be sure, have not actually commenced, but the great powers of earth are evidently making ready for a terrific contest. What combinations and alliances are to be formed, remains to be seen, but it is pretty certain that England cannot avoid being a party in the quarrel, however small her disposition is for fight.

The more important items of news we copy below:

Prussia, England and Russia, have all protested against the conduct of Austria.

The British Channel fleet had sailed with sealed orders. It was reported that they were destined for the Adriatic. It is rumored the whole military force of Great Britain is to be embodied.

The Sardinian Chambers have invested the King with the powers of Dictator.

The commanders of the French army are announced. Pelissier is to be Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Observation.

The London Exchange and Paris Bourse are greatly excited, and violent fluctuations have taken place. The French Three Per Cent, closed at 62 3/4.

The German Diet have decided to keep the principal Federal Contingent ready to march, and to arm the Federal forces.

ALLIANCE BETWEEN FRANCE AND RUSSIA. It is announced that a treaty, offensive and defensive, was concluded by Russia and France on the 22d of April, and that according to it, Russia is to make her first mobilization of four Corps d'Armee, two of which are to be advanced towards the Prussian frontiers.

The London Times of the 27th remarks that this alliance is most startling. Although so often hinted at, this event, on this avowal, has changed in a moment the whole aspect of affairs. We now understand the proposition of a Congress, which opportunely interrupted Lord Dowie's mediation. The London Post asserts that the policy of the English Cabinet forced France into the arms of Russia, and compelled an alliance which cannot be regarded without sincere apprehension.

A dispatch from Vienna asserts on credible authority that the French troops had already violated neutral territory in Savoy, and it is also announced that the French forces had arrived at Genoa and entered the Sardinian territory.

It was reported that Austria had accepted the proffered mediation of England, and had postponed the declaration of war for a few days. France had not accepted the mediation, but was said to be considering the subject.

The Paris Constitutional and London Daily News, deny the reported alliance between France and Russia. Later accounts say the documents signed by the two Powers is a mere Convention. The Times professes to give the provisions of the treaty, and draws the most threatening consequences from them; regarding the alliance as a menace to England, inasmuch as Russia guarantees the services of her fleet in the Mediterranean and Baltic Seas, in addition to an army of Observation on the Austrian frontiers.

The King of Sardinia has issued an inspiring proclamation to the army, saying "he regarded Austria's ultimatum as an insult, and rejected it with disdain."

French troops were landing at Genoa in large numbers, and were enthusiastically received. The King of Sardinia has gone to join his army in Alexandria. The Tuscan army have called on the Grand Duke to join France and Piedmont, and declare war against Austria. He declined and fled, and Tuscany declared a military dictatorship.

Warlike preparations are going forward in England, and great activity prevailed at Woolwich. The British government have chartered the Cunard screw steamship, Enna, and other vessels, to convey troops and ammunition to the Mediterranean. There were rumors of a proclamation being issued calling out 10,000 men for the navy.

War premiums were being generally demanded at Lloyd's.

Active military movements were going on throughout France. Eighty thousand French troops were expected to have arrived in Italy by the day the Adelaide sailed.

Denmark is reported to have concluded a treaty, offensive and defensive with France.

LIVERPOOL, April.—The report that the Austrians crossed the Ticino on the 26th, is incorrect. They received orders to do so, but it was countermanded, and the army remained on the east bank. It is asserted that the advanced posts crossed, and that the main army would do so on the 29th.

The Austria Official Journal contains an imperial manifesto explaining the necessity of a war with Sardinia, and authoritatively denies the existence of a secret treaty between Russia and France. This manifesto is tantamount to a declaration of war.

Paris, Saturday.—The Austrians have crossed the Ticino and commenced hostilities. This is official.

MASONIC.—At the annual meeting of the Grand Lodge of Maine, Tuesday, May 3d, the following were chosen officers for the ensuing year:

Hiram Chase, Defunct, Grand Master. Josiah H. Drummond, Waterville, Deputy Grand Master. Gustavus F. Sargent, Bangor, Senior Warden. Oliver Gerrish, Portland, Junior G. Warden. Moses Dodge, " Grand Treasurer. Ira Berry, " Grand Secretary.

A SURE ROAD TO A COMPETENCY.

Not one man in five hundred will make a fortune. But a competency and an independent position is within the reach of most men. This is obtained most surely by patient industry and economy. If a man has ordinary talents and ability, in any profession, or trade, he can by pursuing an economical persevering course, be pretty sure of finally obtaining an independent position in life. Let his expense fall below his income. Let him live cheap, very cheap, if necessary; but let him be sure and make his income more than cover his expense. It can be done in almost all cases, notwithstanding the positive denial of ever so many householders. A man may not have more than two or three hundred dollars a year, and may have a family as large as that of John Rogers, and he can find a way to live comfortably, and lay up something into the bargain. There is much, may all in knowing how the thing is done. And that is the thing people who are going to make money have got to learn. It is wonderful how few real wants we have, and how little it takes to give genuine happiness. If we could get rid of our artificial, senseless, and expensive way of living, we should find ourselves better off in purse, in prospect, and in heart. Let any one who has any ambition to go ahead in life, try the experiment this year, and see how much there is in economy. Make your expenses less than your income, and see how much you will have gained not only in money, but in the feeling that you are in the condition which the Yankees denominate "forehanded." Try it.

THE WORK OF LIFE.—"Most truly did Theodore Sedgwick say that it is the man of robust and enduring constitution, of elastic nerves, of comprehensive digestion, who does the great work of life. It is Scott with his manly form. It is Brougham with his superhuman powers of physical endurance. It is Franklin at the age of seventy, camping out on his way to across the Canadas, as our hardiest boys of twenty now camp out on the Andirocock or on the Miramichi. It is Napoleon, sleeping four hours, and on horseback twenty. It is Washington, with his splendid frame and physical strength."

Why not say it is Paul, in bodily presence weak? It is Timothy, with his "often infirmities." It is Baxter, never robust, never a well man. It is the blind Milton. It is Johnson, bravely carrying through life the weight of a diseased and ailing body. It is Channing, with his frail clayey tenement. It is the pale Amos Lawrence, scrupulously weighing from day to day the light morsels of coarse bread which alone his debilitated system allowed him to eat. It is Adolphe Monod, uttering on his death-bed and under the pressure of torturing disease, words that shall be a power among men in distant lands and in other generations.

A sound body is a good thing—a blessing to be thankful for and to be preserved; but history is full of the triumphs of the soul over all physical obstacles, including those of weak and shattered frames. If robust health has its advantages, so has the want of it; if there is disability to a certain extent and in a certain form with the latter, the former is beset with its peculiar temptations, and strong men rush to destruction with no good sense of their responsibility. Of what use is a good body except as the dwelling place of a better soul?

What soul, purified, cultivated, filled with the love of Christ ever failed to shine like a star, and to be a blessing among men, whatever might be the condition of the clod of earth enveloping it? And who does not see that this excellence belongs to a higher and better sphere than Scott's, or Brougham's, or Napoleon's, or Franklin's?—[Vermont Chronicle.]

THE GREAT EASTERN.—The Liverpool Post of the 18th ult. says that efforts are making to have this monster steamship ready for sea by the last of July or beginning of August. Several hundred workmen are engaged upon her, and the progress is rapid. The great shaft was put on board some time since, and one of the masts would be set up shortly. There will be six masts, three of iron and three of wood. The necessity of having iron masts will be readily understood, when it is remembered that the furnaces, burning some 250 tons of coal per day, will send enormous heat through the monster funnels. As the iron masts could not be cut away in the ordinary manner, should the necessity arise, the difficulty will be overcome by a screw of enormous power, which, attached to the masts and set in motion, will crush in the sides, and let the towering iron columns fall overboard. Ingenious devices have been adopted by which to readily manage the rigging, the whole of which is to be of iron wire. The main and top-mast yards, of the square-rigged masts will be of iron, and the length of the main yard 120 feet. It has been finally decided that Portland shall be the port to which the Great Eastern will make its first voyage.

THE BUTCHERY IN MEXICO.—The butchery of unoffending persons which recently followed the defeat of the Juarez Army near the city of Mexico, was cruel and brutal in the extreme. The slaughter was stimulated by the Priests who went about the streets urging the soldiers to kill the "accursed ones." The murderous onslaught was indiscriminate, even the physicians in attendance upon the sick and wounded being dragged off and butchered. Two of them, John Duval and Albert Lamou, were Americans. They were taken out and shot like dogs, amidst the jeers of the drunken soldiers and the curses of the more depraved priests. Two American boys named Smith, 15 and 18 years old, were also among the victims. Mr. Black the American Consul, made a solemn protest against these enormities and endeavored to induce the British minister, Mr. Olway, to interfere for the protection of foreign residents, but Mr. Olway declined to move. The massacre of unoffending citizens was continued by the soldiers for days after the battle, and the number killed is estimated at several hundreds. The American residents were in a state of great alarm, and many had asked passports, while others were expecting expulsion if they escaped death. The people were exceedingly exasperated against the Americans on account of Mr. Buchanan's recognition of the Juarez government. The darkest and bloodiest deeds of Spanish Buccaneers were not more distinguished for rapacity and cruelty, than were these high-handed outrages. The villains should be held to a strict account for their bloody and revolting crimes.

WATKINS FILLIBUSTERS.—The last miserable filibuster expedition occurred but a few days ago. On the 19th of March last thirty-five filibusters sailed from New York to invade Cuba. The brig African, Capt. Button, had the honor of carrying them and their munitions, which were two hundred and forty muskets. They attempted to land at Navitas Grandis on the 7th ult., but their boats swamped and were lost, and the Captain was away for Port au Prince. Thence the unlucky filibusters

were put ashore, where, at the last dates, they remained, moneyless and friendless. Thirty-five men with a few muskets will not probably take Cuba this year.

BOILER EXPLOSIONS CAUSED BY ELECTRICITY.—The New York Tribune gives the details of a discovery made several years ago by Mr. Richard L. Lloyd, of Philadelphia, and which has, since the death of Mr. Lloyd, which occurred shortly after, been neglected until quite recently.

Mr. Lloyd convinced himself, by a number of experiments with small iron vessels, that the explosive agent, the presence of which scientific men had already detected, but could not explain, generated by the decomposition of water or steam within a boiler, was electricity. He at length determined his theory by a more dangerous experiment. Introducing an insulated metallic rod through the top of a boiler, he evaporated the water in it under a heavy pressure, continuing the fire until that part of the boiler exposed to it became red hot. He then pumped with his own hands a sufficient quantity of water to cover the red-hot surface of the boiler—a proceeding which is supposed to cause an inevitable explosion—but no explosion followed. He repeated the experiment, with the same result in every instance. His discovery met with a cold reception, he being ridiculed and called an enthusiast. This neglect, it is supposed, hastened his death.

About three years ago, Mr. George T. Parry, also of Philadelphia, bearing of Mr. Lloyd's discovery, which no one had attempted to repeat, determined to verify it by actual experiment. At first he confined himself to small iron vessels, and finding the results the same as stated by Mr. Lloyd, he also resorted to the dangerous trial of a boiler. Inserting the insulated conductor through the top of an old boiler, which had been in use for several years, and deemed unsafe at a higher pressure than sixty pounds, he evaporated the water in it, at a pressure of sixty-eight pounds, allowing the under part of the boiler to become red hot.

At this point he called five men to witness this fact, and then alone, no one being willing to assist at the trial, boldly pumped thirty gallons of cold water into the red-hot boiler. In the previous trials, the result was the same, no explosion taking place. Notwithstanding all the ingenious contrivances to prevent it, boilers still explode under circumstances inexplicable even to those who are supposed to be the most capable of explaining the cause. If the discovery of Mr. Lloyd should prove to be the true one, his name will be revered by a grateful posterity. Mr. Parry also deserves the highest encomiums for bringing the discovery before the public, and in endangering his life in a laudable experiment, which apparently would end in certain death.

It is stated that he has introduced metallic conductors into several boilers in Philadelphia, and that in other places, since the discovery has been made public, a number of owners have, as a matter of precaution, introduced them into their boilers.

FROM WASHINGTON.—May 6.—The President expresses his belief that England means to carry out her understanding of the operations of Sir George Osely.

Senator Meta had to-day an interview with the Secretary of State, with reference to Mexican affairs. His letters from Mexico are encouraging, and he entertains no doubt of the triumphant success of the Liberal party.

It is estimated that Mr. Richard Cobden, during his late sojourn at the White House, availed himself of the opportunity to sound the President on the subject of a moral interposition of the United States in the present entangled and menacing affairs of Europe. It is certain that English statesmen are greatly alarmed, and the wisest are unable to foresee to what terrible issues the present complications are to lead.

The Mormon imbroglio bids fair to be speedily and permanently settled. It appears that Brigham Young has submitted a proposition to a company of capitalists to sell all their right, title and interest in Utah Territory for a reasonable sum of money, and to leave the territory within a specified time. Some of the company are said to be here consulting with the Administration. The matter has been kept thus far a profound secret. They desire the aid of the Government in carrying out this praiseworthy undertaking, and it is highly probable that the Government will lend them all the aid in their power. If it cannot be effected in any other way, the subject will be laid before Congress at its next meeting.

Special dispatches, received at the French Legation, confirm the report of strong words having passed between Lord Cowley and Count Walewski relative to the course pursued by the English Cabinet. Napoleon thinks the English Cabinet has proved false to the professed *entente cordiale*, and expresses confidence that the English people will never sanction the subjugation of Italy by Austria. The approaching elections for Parliament he thinks will prove the correctness of his judgment.

HOW TO READ WITH PROFIT.—For the sake of those who are not accustomed to systematic reading, we make some suggestions as to the best mode of reading so as to gain the highest advantage from the books they peruse:

1. Ascertain the aim of the author. You will thus know what to expect from his book, and may save much time, which might otherwise be spent in looking for what you could not find. An attentive reading of the title-page, preface, and table of contents, will enable you to judge pretty accurately what the author is about. Some facts, too, which float only among intelligent men, will aid you greatly in these matters.

2. Read *watchfully and attentively*, and with a determination to comprehend thoroughly the book you are perusing. Read neither credulously nor skeptically, but candidly; endeavoring to go to the root of the matter if possible. One hour of such reading is worth a week of the superficial reading which is so common.

3. Read with a *good dictionary at your elbow*, and consult it freely whenever you meet a word you are not sure you understand. Webster and Worcester are the best in general use. We use Webster. Never pass an important word without mastering its meaning in the work you are reading. In this way you will soon gain a good stock of words for your own use, while you are learning the meaning of the book you are reading.

4. After reading a chapter, close the book and try to recall, and state briefly in your own language, the substance of the chapter, in the order the author pursues. This is one of the most profitable exercises. It will show you just how much you have gained by reading.

5. If the book is your own—but not if it is a borrowed one—you may mark with a pencil the most important thoughts. You will thus remember them more easily, and can refer to them more readily.

ADOPTING these suggestions, you will read slowly, but what you read will become yours. It will stir up your own thoughts, and probably develop your mental powers as healthfully as any other discipline you can have.

MR. JERU, THE FAST MAN.—An American is but a mau; no law of life has been suspended for his sake, and any outrage of the virtue that make up true earnestness will bring him into the same trouble that besets all transgressors. Rashness, imprudence, caprice, foreshadowing and heated action, thinking like chain lightning and doing like the thunderbolt, may be fine fun for awhile, but such play utters out the dearest kind of work, that must be done over again. "A fast man" is one thing, an earnest man quite another. John the son of Jonathan drives furiously in the year 1858, as old Jehu drove in Bible days. He yokes the unwhipped horses of speculation and over-trading to his chariot of business, and vanishes in a cloud of dust, and to-morrow is hauled out of the ditch from beneath the ruins of his equipage, by some poor patient doctor, that had been plodding on far behind. Jehu drives fast in domestic affairs; up goes the brown steed (front and out of doors) flash Mr. Jeru, and the little Jehu, resplendent in diamonds and taffeta; what a crowd-mob he saloon on reception night!

Alas! one silent gentleman rings the bell, calls Jeru aside, and lo! the sheriff has dissolved the illusion, and old Slow Jaws, up to the auction and buys out the concern at a ruinous discount. How Jeru cracks his whip in his Senate. Onward and upward, new worlds to conquer; a fig for justice, hurrah for success; man and God stand aside. Alas! the poor creature is only running himself blind and mad, and will soon lie breathless; his horse cheek pressed against the adamant of the higher law. Poor Jeru does no better at his books—he may study himself into any of the fifty new American diseases, shriek though high pressure-oratory, write new theories of the universe in extempore trance, rave in the newspapers, and swear upon the stump; old Germany can take the noisy boy on his knees and teach him his A B C's. Jeru is a creature, but his steeds always run away with him. It is a sorry ambition, this rage for being fast, better be an earnest man, and earnest woman, and grow as the years grow, and you will see all along your way the bleaching bones of these insane runners for the prize of life.

LIFE IN NEBRASKA.—A citizen of Nebraska thus puts up an earnest correspondent who poses a variety of questions at him as to the territory and life there:

What kind of a country do you live in? Mixed and extensive. It is made up principally of land and water?

What kind of weather? Long spells of weather are frequent; our sunshine comes off principally in the day time! "Have you plenty of water, and how hot?" A good deal of water scattered about, and generally got in pits and whiskey.

Is it hard? Rather so when you have to go half a mile.

What kind of buildings? Allegoric, Ionic, anti-Baltic, Log and Shabaz! They are chiefly out of shacks and so low between joints that the chimney sticks out at the roof.

Good kind of society? Good, bad, hateful, indifferent, and mixed. Any aristocracy? None. Any nobility? None. Any one? None. What do your people do for a living mostly? Some work, some hang around, one's a shrewd business manager, and several drink whiskey.

Is it cheap living there? Only five cents a glass, and the water thrown in.

Any taste for music? Strong. Buzzard back-saws in the days time, and wolf-howling and cat fighting in the night.

Any pianos there? No, but we have several cow-bells and a tin pan in each family.

Any manufacturers? Every household. All our children are home productions.

What could a genteel family in moderate circumstances do there for a living? Work, shave, notes, fish, hunt, steal, or if hand pushed, buy and sell town property.

POTATOES.—It is stated by the Bangor Times that 80,000 bushels of potatoes were shipped from Bangor last year, for which the average price paid the producer was sixty cents. This looks well, but hasn't the Times got the price a little too high.

MR. BIGELOW OF THE NEW YORK EVENING POST, writes from Rome about the library of the Vatican.

When I passed through the famous library of the Vatican the other day, and walked nearly half a mile without seeing a single book or meeting a single reader, I must confess that I felt for a moment, and for the first time, a desire that the present controversy of the European powers over Italy might not end until the secrets of this great storehouse of knowledge were unlocked, and made accessible at least to the historian and the student. At present the Vatican library and manuscripts are of scarcely any more value to the world than the collection at Alexandria, which the famous dilemma of Aschmet consigned to the flames.

A EAST HONORABLE Ralph Waldo Emerson in a lecture on "clubs" related his experience in a club of fasters and feasters, who styled themselves the "Fet-House Society," who, in the midst of their instructive and witty discussion, would suddenly and unwittingly affect many a bright gem. The subject once turning upon the anecdotes of horses, one of the company, an Orientalist, wishing not to be outdone by his fellow-members in wonderful stories, affirmed that he had heard of a horse running so rapidly in a ring as to present one confounding horse in every part of the circle.

FIRES.—On Wednesday afternoon of last week the Stable, Shell and Parah belonging to Mr. Charles Wyman, at Kendall's Mills, Fairfield, was destroyed by fire, and his dwelling house seriously damaged. We learn the loss is estimated at about \$1000. Insured by the Somerset Co., for \$500.00.

On Thursday morning a new house belonging to Mr. Joseph Mious, at Kendall's Mills, was destroyed by fire. No insurance.

On Saturday afternoon, a two-story dwelling house in Bloomfield, belonging to Capt. Z. Pearson, and occupied by Mr. Tarr, took fire on the roof from the chimney, but was extinguished without doing much damage.

FIRES IN NEWPORT.—A week ago last Sunday the house of Alfred W. Mason, in North Newport, took fire whilst himself and wife were absent at church, and was entirely consumed. Loss \$600.

