

## THE DAUGHTER.

The old man sits beside the lock,  
Where the day drips the water;  
The old wife in her faded frock  
Still knits and nods by the cottage-clock,  
But, ah, the little daughter!  
I see no more her loving eyes,  
I hear no more her low replies—  
Alas, alas, the daughter!

At dawn the birds begin to sing,  
And o'er and o'er the water  
The swallow flits with winking wing,  
The old folks wake with the waking spring;  
But, ah, the little daughter!  
No more to list the cuckoo's call  
She roams the woods of the Manor ham—  
Alas, alas, the daughter!

Midsummer brought the young earl back,  
The lord of wood and water;  
He met her in the greenwood track—  
His eyes were wondrous bold and black—  
Ah, me, the little daughter!  
He whispered, "Trust me, O mine own!"  
She wept, "I live for thee alone!"  
Alas, alas, the daughter!

Slow moved the weary months to years;  
All day dripped down the water;  
The father's heart was dull with fears,  
The mother's eyes were dim with tears—  
Ah, me, the little daughter!  
Who is it, 'neath the city's glare,  
Looks up with wild, bewildered stare?  
Alas, alas, the daughter!

A night there came—a night of wroth—  
The rain beat on the water,  
The wind blew from the rushing north,  
The cottage lights shone freely forth—  
But, ah, the little daughter!  
Low in the dripping look she lies,  
With tangled hair and altered eyes—  
Alas, alas, the daughter!

—*Timothy's Magazine.*

## THE JUDGE'S BOND.

BY AUGUSTA LARNED.

"If you don't work lively, Hester, you won't make your ten knots to-day."

Hester stopped short in her walk, and the buzzing of the big wheel ceased. There was a mass of soft rolls, and the brown reel by her side, with the results of her morning labors in blue stocking-yarn. She held the wheel firm in one hand, and in the other a long, slender thread attached to the spindle.

"Well, mother," said she, quietly turning her face toward the window, "I suppose the sun will rise and set just the same if I don't spin my ten knots a day."

"I s'pose it will," said Mrs. Preston. She was a spare old lady, and sitting with her back bent to the shape of the rocking-chair hooped over. Her sharp elbows stuck out, and her rather large and coarse shoes projected beyond the skirt of her gown. "You know your father likes to see things moving indoors and out," she went on, holding her knitting needles suspended. "He hates lazy folks like Canada thistles."

"And I hate to be driven as if I was a pack-horse," retorted Hester, almost bitterly. "I tell you, mother, I won't wear my life out digging and drudging as you have yours."

"La, Hester, how you do talk. I never thought I was brought into the world for nothing but to cook three meals of victuals a day, and to tend to the dairy work. Now, you make a fuss because you have a little chore of stocking-yarn to spin; but it ain't so many years since I made all the cloth for the family wear, and did every stitch of my own sewing at night. Why, that year your father was sent up to the Legislature I made him a set of twelve fine shirts. He was perty pertickler in them days; and I did all the stitching, after the rest of the folks had gone to bed, with my foot on the cradle. Sylvester was a baby then, and a dreadful hectoring child. Every day I wove a full stent on linsey woolsey, for it was almost impossible to hire help; and I got up regular at five in the morning and milked four cows before I went about breakfast."

"What is the use of having a soul if you've got to slave in that way?" said Hester, as she gave a little sharp jerk, and broke her thread. "You might as well be a machine and done with it."

"I don't expect you'll do as I have done," responded the old lady with a sigh. "Folks shirk now-a-days to beat all. Your father, when he was younger, was a dreadful driving man. Folks must keep doing as long as they could stand; and none of his boys now can begin to do a day's work equal to his'n. I don't s'pose you mean to follow your sister Nancy, either, for she has had a

pretty hard row; but I tell you what, Hester, you'll have to run off more than ten knots of stocking-yarn a day if you marry Joel Selfridge, for he haint got a mite of ambition. He makes me think of my old speckled hen setting out there on chany eggs. I shouldn't be a mite surprised to hear Joel begin to cackle; and I don't see where he gets his shiftlessness from, for there's the Jedge, his brother, a reg'lar money catcher, smooth, and plausible, and ily, but with his eye always out for business. I s'pose, Hester, you've 'bout made up your mind to take Joel, for you don't seem to favor any other young man, and he's been coming here stiddy for the last year. Your father says it costs him four quarts of oats, and two or three good square meals every week, and he talks about sending a bill for board and horse feed in to the Jedge. You know he will never give his consent, and I tell you again, Hester, if you mean to marry Joel Selfridge, you and work had better not fall out."

"Mother," said Hester, with a troubled face, leaving her wheel, and going over by the hearth, "you do Joel injustice. It is father's opposition that makes him neglect his business, and takes the spirit out of him. If he could marry me he would become another man."

"Hester," said the old lady, emphasizing her words with her knitting needles, "what's bred in the bone will come out in the flesh. You can't make a whistle out of a pig's tail."

"There's good stuff in Joel," cried Hester, her color rising, and eyes flashing. "If the whole world was against him I'd stand true. Folks may say what they have a mind to, but give Joel a chance, and he will show that he can support a family, and be a man among men."

"Hity, tity!" retorted the old lady, incredulously. "Hain't the Jedge boosted him, and kep' a boosting of him, and now he's sot him up in the drug business, and every few days he locks the shop and comes over here a courting, and Bassett gets all his custom. I tell you, Hester, when I was your age I wouldn't have looked at a young man that fooled around when he ought to have been to work. Love is a good thing in its place, when it's got a house and garden spot free of incumbrance, and plenty of firewood, and a full meal chest and flour barrel attached to it but it never was meant to go alone."

Hester hung her head. Her mother had the good hard sense on her side, and she had only the faith of love to offset it. She did not say what she thought, that the chance Joel needed was herself; but she leaned against the chair, and touched her mother's gray head, and her voice was pleading and eager.

"O, mother," said she, "don't you go against me. I shall never come back begging to the old door, but when I leave home I want to have all things pleasant, and not give the neighbors a chance to talk. Mother"—and suddenly the girl threw her arms around the wrinkled, old neck—"you can think how it was when you were young; how your heart beat, and your cheek flushed for just one man. You wanted to go to the world's end with him, and not with another. If you saw his faults, you could forgive them, for your heart-strings were someway twisted and tied with his, and could not be undone. In those days, mother, you didn't think so much about the potato-bin and flour-barrel."

"La, child, you go on to beat all," returned the old lady, drawing the back of her hand across her eyes. "The Bible says a man must leave father and mother and cleave unto his wife, and I s'pose it's the same with a woman; but I tell you, Hester, it's mighty handy to have worldly goods to cleave on to besides. I always agree with your father on all p'int. He expects it of me; and if he should say black was white, aw, I should say so too, but I think jest as I've a mind to inside. I always said no man should tyrannize over me. A woman can squint around a corner handier than a man can, and she can find ways of getting her will, and I guess I've ruled the roost as much as the Old Square has after all's said and done; but he don't know, and I wouldn't have him find it out for the world. I don't say I shall enkeridge Joel, but if you have made up your mind there's no use argufying, for you're a reg'lar born Preston, and they all hold on like a dog to a root. I shall try to ease off things; that's all I can promise, but I must confess, Joel is a pleasant creature, and you can't help liking him if you try."

Hester kissed the old lady's wrinkled cheek rather more impulsively than was necessary, and then, in a half-

coaxing, shamefaced sort of way, she said:

"Mother, I expect Joel over this afternoon, and I thought if you didn't mind I'd put a little handful of fire in the sitting-room stove."

"No, you'd better not," said Mrs. Preston, decidedly. "Your father won't like to have any underhand courting going on. It will only rile him the more. He and I did all our courting business up by the kitchen fire. Mother thought it was economical. Every Sunday night he came like clockwork (we used to keep Saturday night in them days), and there he sot and cored apples, and I strung um, and we killed two birds with one stone as neat as any thing you ever saw. Joel had better be treated in an every day sort of fashion. In your father's present state of mind it won't do to waste candlelight and firewood on him. And, Hester, you had better stir up some fritters for supper. The Square is fond of fritters. I hain't lived with him all these years without finding out that a good meal of victuals makes considerable difference with his feelings."

Hester knew her mother was wise in her day and generation—an experienced woman, so she set her wheel away, and went up to her chamber—a little, cold, neat room, with sloping wall. The high-post bed was covered with a blue and white worsted counterpane, and looked soft and fluffy with feathers. There was a tall bureau with brass knobs, and dimity-covered dressing-table, with old-fashioned fringes. The place was chilly, for it was still March, and from her window Hester could look down the valley road and see patches of snow in the angles of fences, and along the borders of the bleak woods. Not a furrow had yet been drawn across the hill-sides, but blue-birds were beginning to twitter about the brown fields. Hester could trace the winding road Joel was to come. It ran past her sister Nancy's place, and the peaked gable of the farmhouse, with three Lombardy poplars in front, was plain in sight. She knew how Nancy slaved there from morning till night—with scarce a touch of grace about her life—in the service of a somewhat coarse and loutish husband. She thought how Nancy had lost her beauty and sprightliness, and had faded and withered, and grown gray and bent before her time, and the determination not to follow in Nancy's footsteps rose strong in Hester's bosom. She was hungry for a different sort of existence. Joel read books, and played the flute. He took an interest in something besides raising stock, and fattening pigs. Hester was willing to work, but to the end of making her days beautiful and rich. Joel could satisfy her tastes and feed her affections. She meant that marriage should make her more, instead of less, as it did the majority of women about her. She did not intend to sink to the level of a husband's drudge, but to rise to the height of the helper and companion of the man she loved.

These thoughts went around in Hester's head, not very coherently, as she slipped off her calico gown, and put on one of dark green stuff, to the neck of which was basted a little ruffle. This she fastened with a knot of pink ribbon, and smoothed her curly hair. Though her heart was in no small flutter, her cheeks were rosy, and her dark eyes bright and glad with anticipation.

Joel came driving to the gate. The air was nipping, and spiteful gusts of wind whirled along the valley. He fastened his horse to the fence, and blanketed him carefully. The boys, Hester's brothers, had gone with lumber to the village mill, and would not be back until late, if at all, that night. The Squire was in the barn, tinkering away at his sap buckets. The cold weather had kept back the sugar season, but a thaw might be looked for now at any moment. The old man was short and stocky, with an eagle face, and iron-gray hair. All his motions were brisk, and his words exploded something after the fashion of fire-crackers. Now a grim sort of smile puckered the old face, as he thought that long-tailed gray of Herrick's, the livery-stable keeper, might stand there in the cold till doomsday for all him. Then rub-a-dub-dub on the sap buckets. Hester met Joel at the door demurely enough. He was good-looking, tall, and slender, and unconsciously elegant and refined in appearance. The young man drew up to the fire with his overcoat on, and Mrs. Preston engaged him in talk about the weather and the neighbors. The kitchen was large and light, with a floor unstained, and braided mats, and comfortable chairs, and a great clock ticking in the corner. There were pots of petunias and "hen and chickens" in the window. The bit of greenery made a

pretty back ground for Hester, who, seated in a low chair, took out her company work, some old-fashioned lace she was knitting, which uncoiled and foamed over her black silk apron. She was anxious as she glanced out at Joel's horse, shivering under his blanket, when the cold did not sting him unto positive uneasiness. The young man still sat with his overcoat on, fingering his hat and muffler, while Mrs. Preston talked away about Sally Mifflin's cough, and how the Selkirk children had all come down with the measles. Hester saw how uncomfortable Joel was, not knowing whether to stay or go, so she ran out with a shawl over her head, set the long tailed gray free from the fills as quietly as possible, and led him into the barn. She knew all the ins and outs of horse tackle, and could harness and unharness as handily as a man. It was not long, therefore, before the gray was munching oats in state. The old squire saw Hester do this high-handed thing under his very nose, so to speak, and the strokes on the sap buckets grew more savage than ever. When the girl went into the house she was much relieved by hearing her mother say:

"I guess the Square has put up your horse, Joel, and you had better stay to supper, and spend the night with us."

Hester had spread the tea table, not with the best naper and dishes from the keeping-room cupboard, for her mother had hinted that it would be impolitic to make any change on Joel's account; but everything was clean, wholesome, and appetizing. There was the platter of sliced meat, the snowy bread, and golden butter, and the dish of clear honey for the fritters. The old man came in, and gave a sort of snort when he detected Joel sitting snugly ensconced in a warm corner by the fire. He drew his chair directly to the suppertable, without reference to anybody present, and his shaggy gray eyebrows met in a twisted frown—always a most decided storm signal. With something which emanated from his throat between a grunt and a growl, he pushed the various dishes toward the unwelcome lover. It is a mild statement to say that Joel was literally on pins and needles. Hester's face was very red, but she maintained herself bravely by the frying kettle, and in a few minutes slipped a fritter, brown, puffy, hot, with little sprangles and crisp bits clinging to its edges, on to the old gentleman's plate. His face relaxed slightly, and a sort of juiciness crept into the dry wrinkles about his mouth. Presently two more delectable brown puffs took the place of the one that had already vanished, and the mollified look stole up to the knobby old nose, and higher still to the keen gray eyes, and softy united the twisted knot of the eyebrows. "Wal, Joel, how's the Jedge?" in a pacific growl.

Joel almost sprang off his seat, the question was so sudden and startling.

"O, the Jedge; he is well," stammered the young man, turning several shades of red in quick succession.

"Making money hand over fist, I'll warrant."

"Yes, he is doing pretty well," replied Joel, so painfully confused that he dropped a lump of salt into his tea in place of sugar.

"Them lawyers have got long heads, and sharp claws," said the Squire. "The best way is to give 'em a wide berth. There's an old saying I used to hear when I was a boy: 'Tell the truth and shame the devil,' but I guess the devil don't often get shamed that way by lawyers. There's one thing I will say for the Jedge, though; he's the likeliest of the lot, and he freezes right snug to his business; but that ain't a family trait, is it?"

"What, honesty?" returned Joel; "O, yes, I never knew a dishonest Selfridge."

"Humph," grunted the old Squire, "did you ever know a shiftless Selfridge? But there ain't no use asking that question. Everything has got a new-fangled name. What are lazy folks called now-a-days, Hester? You have taught school and ought to be acquainted with fashionable names."

"I'm sure I don't know," said Hester, bending her head down over the fire.

"Now I recollect. They're called gentlemen of leisure. If the Jedge can afford to keep his relations without work, why it's a mighty fine thing for them, and I don't know as it's any business of mine," and with a metallic sound in the chest, which might have been either a laugh or a chronic cough, the old man arose from the table, set his hat determinedly upon his head, and went away out of the house to do his evening chores.

The lamp was lit, the fire well