

[From the Dollar Weekly Sun.]
MY SPRING CAMPAIGN.

BY MARY BROWN.

Twenty years ago, my aunt asked for the privilege of giving her name to the little, ugly mass of flesh, blood and contortions, and I was duly rubbed Betsy Jane Herrick. I have been told I was quite a pretty child when my face was straight (and that was like angel's visits, for it was constantly in a squalling attitude.) Indeed, my mother told me she never would have had the patience to raise me, if she had not thought I would make something when grown. I have made something—nothing more or less than a—Bloomer! I have the misfortune, at present, to be the only surviving child. The others—there were three of them—being a degree crosser than myself, cried themselves to death—said to have died of fits.

When I arrived at my fifteenth year, my parents concluded that Betsy Jane needed some polishing, and as Farmer Sonos was about to send his Julia to a boarding-school, it was decided that I should also have a smattering of fashionable school-training. I was already beginning to see that my cognomen was far from being poetical, so I gave my name in to the secretary of the seminary as "B. Jennie Merrick." That was enough to give an appreciative mind a deep impression of my importance.

Three years were spent in conjugating the verb to *love*, through French, German and Latin, with the other accompaniments of music, drawing and painting. I never studied much, but my chum said I always recited at my turn; so that at the close of my school life, I acquitted myself as a very good scholar—though not at all polished; for if I wanted to laugh, it was loud enough to awaken from his snoring a moderate sleeper a quarter of a mile away.

A year was spent in traveling—a season in looking at the different dresses in Saratoga and Newport—a winter divided between the "Hub of the Universe," the "Pure City," and the "City of Brotherly Love." The last year had been spent at home mostly surrounded by a flock of lovers of Squire Herrick's hospitality and lovers of nonsense compounded and glided with fashion.

A little thing turns the tide in one's life sometimes. A little thing caused me to look inside at my poor miserable life, as barren of beauty as a desert—as useless and aimless as an idiot, as contemptible and deplorable as an office-seeker's. It made me sick of myself. My advantages had been liberal, and my talents of no mean order. And there had been, notwithstanding, an uneasy round of beaux, parties, a terrible expenditure of myself and all to no purpose. I was disgusted with it. It was cold, hollow, and meaningless. I was growing nervous, hysterical, had a poor appetite, and was troubled with that everlasting complaint of woman's the headache. How I hated it all!

But what should I do? I thought of a variety of employments, but it would need time for the carrying out of such plans. I wanted something immediate for fear my new resolutions might weaken. If I had been a man, I should have done as our best and noblest have done, gone to war. I did the next patriotic thing, and went to war with myself. My adorable lovers! could they endure the trial to which their nerves were to be subjected? They were but human, and the breeze of sense might blow them away. My first battle was with my parents the next morning.

"I've a request to make, father and mother, and I very much desire that you may grant it." My face flushed all over at this. I could feel the blood tinge at my very finger ends.

"What is it, Betsy Jane?" says father. "Has Will Hastings been making—"

"No—Will Hastings has nothing to do with it, nor anybody's will but my own. 'Tis just this. I want you to dismiss our hired girl; there are only three of us in the family, and I really think we need no girl."

"But," interrupted my mother, "do you think your poor old mother wants to kill herself?"

"No; I mean that I don't want to kill myself any more doing nothing. I have lived uselessly about long enough."

There was numberless objections to this, but by diligent entreaty and argument, I carried the day. Three days later I assumed the position of Bridget. But before half the morning had elapsed I was tired to death!—yes, "my lady was tired to death." If I went upstairs one hand must hold up a quantity of crinoline and skirts. If I came down stairs, there was the rat, tat, tat of steel upon the stairs. If I passed into a narrow place, both hands must be enlisted in squeezing the balloon into a collapsed

state. I was in constant fear of tipping boxes; jugs, catching my dress on nails, or wiping off some convenient kettle. My dress must be pinned up or be beautifully drabbed round the bottom. My shoes were too thin for out-door wear.

I had another battle to fight. There were no lives sacrificed—only a few false notions of gracefulness, dignity, etc., quietly beheaded and buried. My first attack was at the shoe store, and resulted in the capture of a pair of bal-moral calf-skins—No. 5—legally captured, of course. The dress question occupied my attention next. I had heard of bloomers, but most ungraciously stuck up my proboscis at them, like hundreds of other foolish women who know nothing of their excellencies. I did not have any of Dr. Harriet Austin's patterns or guides—neither wanted any. I took from my wardrobes a cast-off dress, very good, except it was most shamefully switched out around the bottom. Cutting off the rags and hemming it up, I had a dress two or three inches above the top of my shoes. The next morning I appeared in the kitchen sans crinoline, sans trail, sans flum-mydiddle! Cousin John, who happens in to see father, cries out, "Och! and Bridget, how long since ye came over from Ould Ireland?"

This put us all in a roar of laughter, which of itself was enough to pay for one bloomer scene. Father, who, like sensible men, never admired the "institution," (as he calls crinoline,) said "Betsy Jane never looked better." He always calls me Betsy Jane, and thinks it is a very substantial name. He says these Jennies, Carries and Lotties do very well for high-down folks; who are always running after some new-fangled notions.

My new harness fitted me so well that I found my work completed in half the time, and with more than twice the ease. I could now hunt for hen's nests without frightening the hens with a transient ghost of a hay-stack. So I started for the barn. On my way, uncle passed with, "Well, there, you look like the last run of shad! My Kate had on something like that the other day, and I threatened to turn her away."

"Whenever you tire of her," I replied, "send her here. This shall be an asylum for the oppressed hereafter."

I had a fine time hunting for eggs. My movements were so free and untrammelled that it seemed like living over again my childhood.

Just before sitting down to dinner, Cousin John came in, saying, "I thought I'd come over to dine with you, Jennie, and see how you hold out in your new-fangled costume."

"Well, Sir John, despite all your sarcasm, I hold out faithful, and with the aid of common sense, intend to, while my laboring life lasts."

"Will you receive visitors this afternoon, in your charming habit?"

"No—I shall dress up this afternoon; but if my friends make morning calls, they will find me in my working dress."

"But what if Doctor Wilson or Hayward—or—"

"I wouldn't run for all the gentlemen in town. I presume the said dandies would stare, and wonder if I was sane, fee-faw-fum awhile, suddenly call to mind an engagement, and vamoose. You needn't laugh, Cousin John, and think I would not dare do as I say. I know I am surrounded by fashion, and caste is at a premium; and women are sacrificing health comfort and happiness for the 'looks of the thing.' It is really a relief to see how a woman really does look. She has been confounded with stays and hoops so long that we cannot help fancying her a moving pyramid. An African woman seeing a French madame with a *grand panier* under her long robe, exclaimed, '*Madame tout cela est-il vous meme?*' No wonder the Japanese thought American women very queer specimens of the *genus homo*. I'm sure you wouldn't hand down dry goods, rummage among boxes and trumpery, with a hog'shead attached to your suspenders."

The dress question subsided by John asking for another cup of coffee, to "quiet his nerves," adding it was quite palatable for a "green hand."

Next morning jingle went the door-bell at half past nine. I answered the summons, and had the merriment of seeing Dr. Wilson look at me as though I was a sight to behold. I invited him into the drawing-room and did my best to entertain, which was poorly enough. He is what goes to the making up of a fashionable gallant, knows how to bring in pretty sayings about your face, eyes, hair and figure, pick up handkerchiefs, and almost an Aaron Burr in helping a woman into a carriage. His patent-leather boots were as bright and polished as a steel mirror, and encased

a foot, small, of course, to compare with his brains. After a somewhat embarrassing silence, the Doctor stammered out with, "Really, Miss Herrick, am I to presume that you have adopted your present style of costume?"

"I am very happy to inform you that I have adopted it."

"You certainly don't intend to continue the wearing of it?"

"I do. Have you any serious objections to my dressing according to my business?"

"Pray what business have you that requires it?"

"Merely that I have volunteered to go to work and do something. I'm going to take care of the garden this summer. Our former gardener has gone to the army, and there seems to be a demand for the spirit of our good old revolutionary mothers. I am proud that there is enough of it in me to assert its sway."

I could feel my cheeks flushing as I spoke. A sickening leer hung around the lips of the Doctor's mouth. He evidently "failed to see the point." He had studied medicine, obtained his title, but never had the ambition or tact to distinguish himself in his profession. He gloried in his idleness and thirty-thousand dollars. He left with much fewer flourishes of his compliments than usual, and was succeeded by Mr. Hayward. When he left, Mr. Bower came, and I was not slow to surmise that Cousin John had been using "strategy," and giving my courage a trial.

They all left with the impression that I was fast becoming a "strong minded" woman, and altogether too solid for their soft appliances of compliments. My new costume acted as an emetic upon the stomach of "dear friends," for they quietly withdrew, leaving all I cared for, however. Among the latter was George Wayne. He was neither rich, like Wilson, nor gallant like Hayward. You could feel his goodness better than tell it. It was something indefinable, that pleased and satisfied. He had good, hard sense, and that is worth more than complime—without it. He did not turn up his nose at my new determination, but with his fine, gray eyes kindled with a glow of honest admiration and enthusiasm, as he said, "I am glad, Jennie, there is one woman in the village who has independence and spirit to act in accordance with the dictates of her better judgment. I was fearful you belonged to the heartless, frivolous, useless class of women, so common among the rich. I tried to believe otherwise. I thank you that by your 'change of base,' you have proven to me that you are, what I wish all women were, less enslaved by fashion and given to false notions of propriety."

My lady friends were apparently taken by storm. They wondered how I could endure to have my hands browned by labor, and how I could wear calf-skin boots. They would sooner think of going to war than to raking the garden, or pinching the runners off strawberry plants, or killing bugs on cucumbers, or feeding chickens. And so they dawdled away their time upon such delectables as Wilson, Hayward and troupe, rejoicing in pale faces with spots of *rouge*, and in delightful headaches and delicate health. On the contrary, for present enjoyment, I am as healthy, rosy-cheeked, red-lipped and as happy as an English girl. My hands brown and hard, but stronger for the piano, while my voice is fuller and clearer than I ever dared to hope it might be. I can make capital bread and pastry, and expect the finest strawberries in town. Moreover I shall have forty dollars to pay into the Sanitary commission, the amount saved by substituting myself in Bridget's position.

Varieties.

—It is twenty-seven years since the telegraph was first put to practical test. Then it was considered a mere toy. By 1851, however, 7,000 miles were in operation. Since then fully 200,000 miles of telegraph have been called into existence throughout the world. The wire has penetrated to almost every region in the world, braving all climates.

—O hope deferred! O endless waiting! Blamed if this ain't aggravating? Richmond, scarce ten miles away, As well as might be in Baffin's Bay;— Beyond the Chattahoochee river, Atlanta's father off than ever! O strangest thing e'er known in war—"Thou art so near, and yet so far!" —[Times.]

—Oshawa wants a rifle match and is raising money for the purpose.

—It is hinted that Mrs. Tom Thumb's "token of love" is a rag baby.

—"J. C. Sesh" is the name upon a sign of a "loyal" trader in Pittsburg.

—A preacher not long since, asking to stay all night at a country house, was forbidden by a lady. Knowing her to be a member of the church and generally pleased to entertain ministers, he began to quote Paul to her, hoping that she would understand by this that he was a preacher. He hardly got out, "For thereby some have entertained angels unawares," when she said, "I know sir, but angels would not come with tobacco stuck in their mouths." The preacher left without further ceremony.

—Charles Kean, the actor, is an Irishman, having been born in Waterford. Burke, the most prophetic and philosophical statesman, and finest orator that England ever saw, Wellington, the greatest and most successful warrior the old world ever produced; and Kean her principal living actor, were all Irishmen.

—The humors of the war come in. An officer in Georgia writes:

One night Gen. — was out on the line, and observed a light on the mountain opposite. Thinking it was a signal light of the enemy, he remarked to his artillery officer that a hole could easily be put through it. Whereupon the officer, turning to the corporal in charge of the gun, said:

"Corporal, do you see that light?"

"Yes, sir."

"Put a hole through it," ordered the captain.

The corporal sighted the gun, and when all was ready he looked up and said:

"Captain, that's the moon."

"Don't care for that," was the captain's ready response: "put a hole through it any how."

—Thompson's Bank Note Reporter thus defines some of the phrases used in stock circles and by newspapers:

A Bull is one who buys stocks on speculation, thinking they will rise, so that he can sell at a profit. It is to his interest to have stocks rise, and he will resort to every means to bring about the desired result.

A Bear is one who sells stocks on speculation, thinking they will fall, so that he can buy in for less money to fill his contracts. It is to his interest to break down the market, and he will resort to the most desperate means to accomplish his object.

A Corner is when the bears cannot buy or borrow the stock to deliver in fulfillment of their contracts.

A Deposit is earnest money, lodged in the hands of a third party as a guarantee; "5 up," "10 up," etc., is the language expressive of a deposit.

—A baker in Halifax has been sentenced to ten cents for every ounce short in his bread loaves.

—An Abolition orator in New York announces the following platform:

Emancipation with Deporation.
Sequestration without Litigation.
Condemnation without Mitigation.
Extermination without Procrastination.
Confiscation without Botheration.
Damnation without Reservation.
To which he might add
Miscegenation without Hesitation.

—Water isn't a fashionable beverage for drinking your friend's health, but it is a capital one for drinking your own.

—A contemporary noticing a Postmaster says: "If he attends to the mails as he does to the females he will make a very attentive and efficient officer."

—Some one suggests that England should buy Lapland—now on sale—for a penal settlement, whither it might transplant those to whom it wishes to give the cold shoulder. It would frighten off a good deal of crime, doubtless, more especially if this were made the station for freezing down malefactors, on the Swedish system, which suspends animation entirely for any number of years, and until wanted.

—The Queen of England receives pay as an authoress, from Murray, the London publisher.

—A new seven-story building in Philadelphia, completed, fell to pieces on Monday. Good masonry! that builder had better enlist.

—Greeley says "never since Arnold's treason have blacker clouds hung over us." It is the shadow of abolitionism.

—The clergy of the English church are agitating the propriety and convenience of letting the beard grow after the manner of the apostles. Probably clergymen would be less troubled with bronchitis, if they scraped their faces less.