THE EVENING NEWS.

Friday, - - - December 29, 1871.

THAT LIKE FENCE.

Old Farmer Smith came home in a miff
From his field the other day,
While his sweet little wife, the pride of his life
At her wheel was spinning away.

And ever anon, a gay little song,
With the buzz of her wheel kept time:
And his wrathful brow is clearing now,
Under her cheerful rhyme.

"Come, come; little Turk, put away your work,
And listen to what I say;
What can I do but a quarrel brew
With the man across the way?

"I have built my fence, but he won't commence
To lay a single rail;
His cattle get in and the feed gets thin—
I am tempted to make a sale!"

"Why John, dear John, how you do go on!
I'm afraid it will be as they say."
"No, no, little wife, I have heard that strife
In a lawyer's hand don't pay.

"He is picking a flaw to drive me to law,
I am told that he said he would;
And you know, long ago, law wronged me so,
I vowed that I never should.

"So what can I do, that I will not rue,
To the man across the way?"
"If that's what you want, I can help you haunt
That man with the spectre gray!

"Thirty dollars will do to carry you through,
And then you have gained a neighbor;
It would cost you more to peep in the door
Of's court, and much more labor.

"Just use your good sense—let's build him a fence,
And shame had act out of the fellow."
They built up his part and sent to his heart
Love's dart where the good thoughts mellow.

That very same night, by the candle light,
They opened with interest, a letter,
Not a word was there, but three greenbacks fair
Said the man was growing better.

HOW HE COLLECTED HIS BILL.

[CONCLUDED.]

It was Mallet's turn to smile, and he did it like the heathen Chinee, "child-like and bland." What did Mr. Quoin take him for? He never paid for goods till he had them. The idea of paying for cuts he had not seen as yet, and of settling up Quoin's bill was absurd! Under no circumstances whatever would he take the cuts, until he saw the receipted bills of both engraver and printer. Was he to buy a lawsuit? to be served with attachments and provers and replevins and injunctions and games of that sort? Not much. Mr. Mallett tilted himself back in his chair, and looked upward, as if in quest of relief from the absurdities of Quoin.

Quoin became pensive. It was quite clear that Mallet would not advance the money to pay the printer's bill. Where could he get it? But if he did not get it he would lose the $285. That was not to be thought of. The interview was adjourned. Quoin went out to hunt up the money, much to the annoyance of Mallet, who could not conceal his apprehensions that Quoin was about to refuse to sell. When Mallet had made up his mind to buy, he wanted to buy and end the matter. If Quoin would go on to New York with him, he would pay all expenses: but he would not pay for the cuts till he had them and with a good title. And here he flourished his wallet.

This was talking business to purpose, and accelerated Quoin's movements. He raised the money. That night Quoin and Mallet took passage together on the steamer, and next morning found them at the Astor House. Mallet had proved excellent company. He eat and drank and smoked and told good stories, and was as chatty and confidential with Quoin, as if they had been school-boys together. But, with all this, Mallet showed a most unaccountable fear that Quoin would somehow or other disappoint him; he was evidently afraid that Quoin would give him the slip. Quoin had to be very decided to prevent Mallet from accompanying him when he went to see Bodkin.

"He only wanted to make sure it was all right." For obvious reasons, Quoin was bound that Mallet should not see the interview, and shook him off resolutely.

"I shall count the minutes while I wait in this room till you come back," said the aggrieved and wistful Mallet, as he cast himself upon the sofa.

"I will surely be back in half an hour," said the triumphant Quoin.

It was with exceeding hauteur that Quoin strode into the office of Bodkin. His face was hard, his eyes severe. It was the grimness of an officer of justice on duty, and the elevation of a lofty mind conscious of right. "Mr. Bodkin, I have called to pay your bill. Of course you did not expect it, nor do you deserve it. Your conduct in dunning me is shameful—perfectly shameful. I should feel justified in refusing it altogether. But—produce your bill, sir." And he tugged at his moustache and looked defiantly. Ithuriel himself was not more grand in consciousness of virtue.

The surprised and somewhat crest-fallen Bodkin fumbled in his drawers for the bill, and at length produced it. A spasm of disgust flittered over Quoin's face as he saw the hideous total, with two years interest and legal expenses. But he made up his mind to make an impression, and he did it. How it wrenched him nobody but Quoin can imagine. He told down the money in full, and secured his receipt with great deliberation.

"Now, Mr. Bodkin, oblige me by packing up those woodcuts, and delivering them to the porter."

"Surely, Mr. Quoin, you will not remove those cuts so precipitately," said the penitent Bodkin.

Up went Quoin's cane most unmeaningly.

"Not an hour, sir; not an hour, sir! I want those cuts now, sir!"

There was no resisting this impetuosity. The cuts were produced, examined, and checked. Quoin sailed out of Bodkin's office gloriously, with his porter tugging at the bundle, like a man-of-war protecting a merchantman.

It was but a few minutes to get back to the Astor House. Here was vexation. The door of the room in which he had left Mallet was locked. Down to the clerk's office strode the irate and impatient Quoin.

"Where's my friend and room-mate, Mallet, of room 302?"

"Mallet? Yes, sir! Mallet, sir? Why, Mallet paid for his room, and left half an hour ago."

"What!"

"Just so. Paid for his room half an hour ago, took a coach, and went to the Erie railway."

Not even then was Quoin convinced that his polite friend, Mallet, was a delusion and a snare. But he had the presentiment. All day long he traversed from hotel to depot in an agonized frame of mind. Nor did he fail to call on the chief of police, to make sure that his friend had not had a fit, and been sent to the hospital. Nor is it worth while to recount his visits to booksellers and his inquiries touching the publisher, Mallet, of Buffalo, who was unknown to them all. As night settled on the city he felt able to express a decided opinion concerning Mallet. He was "an unreality and an inequitude, a phantasm and a wind-bag." As for Bodkin—words could not do him justice. But he never saw either of them again.

That day Bodkin closed the ledger account of Quoin. That day Bodkin and Mallet went out riding on the Coney Island road. And the riders of that frequented thoroughfare were astonished at the vivacity and vociferousness of the spectacled elderly gentleman and his young friend. They were evidently at ease and at peace with the whole world. So Mrs. Bodkin thought. For Bodkin's temper was sweet for a month—a state of mind unknown before or since.

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THE BAZAAR UNIVERSELLE!

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