Miscellaneous.

[From the *Providence Journal,*]

THE MINISTER'S GUESTS.

Elinor Blake was deeply in love with the Rev. Ashton Granger, and her affection was reciprocated. So they were married.

Mr. Granger lived in the country; and if you want to know what kind of a life his was, just you go and change yourself into a minister, and settle some where just out of the city, with all the inhabitants of which you are more or less acquainted—each and every one of whom will consider it an especial duty to come out and take dinner or tea with you a half dozen times a year, and all of whom will consider it an insult if your wife don't have three kinds of cake—and fresh milk, eggs and honey on the table. Of course, people who live in the country are expected to have all these in great abundance.

Mrs. Granger was a very pleasant, agreeable woman, and tried to have everything smooth, and she was overrun with company.

A minister among other things, is expected to keep a hotel, and keep it in a way our modern landlords don't very well understand—without money and without price.

It must be open night and day, and hot meals served at all hours. Nobody must be refused admittance. People who are too low to stay at the tavern, are sent to the minister's. Tract peddlers, book peddlers, agents, woman's rights lecturers—everybody, in fact, must go to the minister's.

And then, if the poor clergyman, thinking of his overworked wife, and of the consumptive state of his larder, ventures to hint that his salary is a small one, he is piously reminded that St. Paul and St. Peter and those other fine fellows of that epoch, dld not dream of receiving any salary at all.

But whether they kept tavern and entertained all creation at free cost does not appear.

Mrs. Granger was not a strong woman; and having been brought up delicately, her burden fell heavily. They were too poor to employ help, and she did all the work except her washing.

The people who came visiting her never volunteered their assistence about anything. Of course not. It would have been to vulgar. And most of the ladies were invalids—(did you ever notice that those people who go visiting most are usually out of health.)

But we on the present occasion have only to do with the Rev. Asa Drowne, and wife, and their four children: Abel, Priscilla, Rachel Ann, and Ahasuerus Nicodemus. Our story is about them, and the host of other people who visited Mr. and Mrs. Granger shall rest in obscurity.

The Drownes arrived late one Saturday evening, when Mrs. Granger was almost dead with the headache, having just got rid of three ministers and a colporteur. Mr. Granger had just finished his sermon for the morrow—the doors were locked and the family were about retiring for the night.

A ring at the front door. Mrs. Granger's heart sank—Mr. Granger drew a long sigh and went to the door.

On the steps were two trunks, as many bandboxes, several bundles—a poodle dog, a fat, red faced man, a woman of about the same style, and four children.

My dear Brother Granger! cried the man, seizing Mr. Granger's hand, and giving it a heart-rending ring. I am the Rev. Asa Drowne—traveling itinerant—and this is my wife, and these are my children. We came at once to your house, because we knew you would be mortally offended if we did not. My wife is a great invalid! a dreadful sufferer! Been sick for seven years! And I will speak of it now in the beginning, we must sleep where there is a fire! I wouldn't have Eliza Jand sleep away from the fire for a thousand dollars: And I want your wife to see that the sheets are well aired before an open fire, very fine! My wife is nervous—exceedingly nervous— she could not sleep a wink in course sheets. Linen is best, if you have them.

I should die before morning if I had to sleep in coarse sheets! called Mrs. Drowne—a stout fat faced woman of forty-five or fifty—I come very near going to my last home about a week ago from sleeping on an unbleached pillow case. They thought I was dead for over two hours!

Have you a stuffed chair? exclaimed Mrs. Drowne, I cannot sit a moment in an uncushioned chair! And I will take a little tea, and a bowl of oysters, or a piece of mince pie, I feel so faint.

And I will trouble you for a cup of coffee, said Mr. Drowne—It will be a sort of stay to my stomach till supper is ready. What time will you have supper?

Mrs. Granger retired to the heat of the stove—her temples throbbing to bursting—and her heart the least bit rebelling at the influx of these exacting visitors.

I want some gingerbread and some milk, yelled Abel, the eldest boy—I'm half starved! Where's the cupboard? I'll help myself.

I want a doughnut, yelled Priscilla—and if I can't have that rocking-chair that Mr. Granger's sitting in, I don't stay! so there!

What a little mean room! said Nicodemus—by crackee? what's that are on the table? and he flew at a statuette of Psyche—presented to Mr. Granger by a dear friend, who was then dead, and which was very highly valued on that account.

Hello! cried Nicodemus, it's slippery haint it? and down went the Psyche on the floor—caving in the forehead, and splitting off the largest part of the nose.

Mr. Granger sprang up with an exclamation of dismay.

Oh! it's no matter! said Mrs Drowne, you can mend it again with some of Spaulding's Glue. I mended a mug with it the other day. I hate them things a standing round on tables. They look like dead folks; Mrs Granger, seems to me you dress a little too stylish for the wife of a minister of the gospel! You've got a red ribbon on your hair I observe. Now I never allow myself to wear red ribbons. I try to make myfelf look as plain as possible.

You needn't try very hard! said Mrs. Granger to herself.

My wife is a model for a minister's wife, said Mr. Drowne—would there more like her. Eliza Jane, my love, you ought to have a bath. Mrs. Granger will see to it at once.

After a while the Drownes were got off to bed. Such a supper as they had eaten! Mrs. Granger drew a long breath in thinking of it. She had never dreamed of such achievements in the eating line.

The next morning everything went wrong.—Mr. Downe's dispepsia was worse—he must have fresh eggs, and soda crackers and dry toast, and some cream and honey, and coffee. His appetite was dreadfully poor.

Mrs. Drowne was wretched. She had not slept a wink because there were hen's feathers in the bed. She was sure of it—and she never could sleep on hens feathers! They stuffed her up so!

The children amused themselves with cutting paper, and too late Mr. Granger made the discovery that his sermon, on which he spent the prevous day, had been converted into paper dolls, and horses with any number of legs from two to twenty.

Law sake! don't take on about it! said Mrs. Drowne. The little dears didn't mean to do it! Bless 'em.

Just after dinner, Aunt Peggy Trim, Mrs. Granger's aunt, arrived on a visit. Aunt Peggy was a very determined person, and she took charge of the kitchen at once, and sent Mrs. Granger off to church with her husband. The Drownes were not well enough to go, they said.

Mrs. Drowne read a story, and Mr. Drowne lay on the sofa and slept. Suddenly Mrs. Drowne missed Fan, the the poodle.

Good gracious! cried she—where is Fan?

The children looked up from their employment of smearing the pictures of a handsome Polyglot Bible with red ink, and giggled.

What have you done with Fanny? queried their mother.

We've had a funeral! said Abel with a grin.

A funeral! shrieked Mrs. Drowne, what do you mean?

She's in Mrs. Granger's work box, all burried as nice as anybody in the garden, said Nicodemus; Abel preached the sermon, and Lilly and I followed as mourners! Abel was sexton! Crackee, wasn't it jolly!

Mrs Drowne rushed to the garden, followed by the whole company, and there, sure enough, in Mrs. Granger's dahlia bed, the dog was found buried! The dahlias were all pulled up by the roots, and lay wilting and dying in the sun, and the dog, very much stifled in the work-box, looked sorry enough as he leaped out with a howl.

The sight was too much for the sensitive Mrs. Downe. She threw up her hands crying out—

Oh, gracious me! I'm dying! Farewell, Asa! and fell back on the ground.

Oh, dear! called Mr. Drowne, she's dead! she's had such spells for the last seven years! The doctor said she'd die sometime! Help me carry her into the house.

Aunt Peggy lent a hand, and the senseless woman was deposited on the sofa.

She's dead! Alas! she's dead! moaned Mr. Drowne. Get the camphor, and some hat lemonade, and some flannels wrung out of boiling water—

If she's dead, I guess the sooner she's laid out the better! said Aunt Peggy. You have got rid of an awful great burden. Brother Downe, you'd ought to thank the Lord for it! A wife that's been seven years a dying must be dreadful to get along with! I should have kept a coffin in the house all the time. Hand me the shears! I'll take her hair off the first thing, you can sell it to the barber. It'll make a splendid waterfall for somebody!

The dead woman sprung to her feet, and dived at Aunt Peggy.

You'll have my hair off will ye? You old Jezebel! I'll have your'n off first, see if I don't, and with that she grabbed Aunt Peggy's false front, and pealed her head quicker than a Cherokee Indian could have done it.

Aunt Peggy's dander rose. She seized the broom, and in less time than it takes me to write it, she had driven every Drowne about the premises, out of doors. And then she piled their baggage out after them. There they sat on their trunks until Dea. Buckly of the other church came along when they told him their tale of wrong—and he took them home with him.

The next day he was so anxious to forward them on their journey, that he carried them ten miles, and left them at the house of another minister.

Of course the affair made a good deal of scandal in Brookville—but some people were sensible enough to commend Aunt Peggy.

But Mr. Granger is still keeping a hotel, and is well patronized by the traveling public. If you should happen to pass through Brookville, you will save a dollar or two by stopping all night with Mr. Granger. He won't mind it—he's used to it.

THE SEWERS OF PARIS.

About once in a fortnight persons, armed with cards of admission, are permitted to visit the sewers. You obtain the cards by writing to the director-general of sewers. In due time you receive an answer, if your name and signature have struck that functionary as safe and respectable, directing you to be present at 1 o'clock in the afternoon at the place of descent. It is usually beside the church dedicated to "Our Lady of Loretto," in the Rue Flechier. This is on the border of the enchanted ground of the Quartier Breda. Behind the modest church is the Rue Notre-Dame-de-Loretto, which has enriched the French language with a new word. I hope it may be long before we feel the want of such a word in our daily speech.

Arriving at the place appointed, you see a mystery explained, which may have often puzzled you before. You see the meaning of that heavy iron door lying flat in the sidewalk. It is open now, and discloses a flight of stone steps leading down into darkness. You present you card to the official-looking person who guards the entrance, whose embroidered cuff and cap denotes that he serves the State, and whose air of settled and hopeless dreariness would indicate that earthly honors are not all as they seem. He puts you back, with a sort of broken-hearted forbearance, and says, "1 o'clock, sir," as if it were really too much to insist on his saying it again. You look at your Waltham chronometer, and find it is only 12:59½ past the 30 seconds that remain to you in looking across the street, and wondering if that young woman has clean cap and white stockings every morning, and whether she washes them herself, and, if not, whether her *blanchisseuse* is solvent.

At the first stroke of the clock, the low-spirited *employé* stands aside and lets you into the cellar-way, with an air that says, "There! I have restrained you as long as I shall! Go your ways! I wash my hands of you."

The party pours down the stairs; another *employé* evidently the twin-brother of the one aloft, saying at the landing, "Look out for the steps,"—as if we were all blind or idiotic, for the stairs are brightly lighted, and no one could break his neck but with malice aforethought. After going down a flight and turning sharply to the right, you find yourself in a heavily vaulted chamber, with three long dim gallaries fading before you, and on either hand, into shadow pierced at intervals by the light of flickering lamps. It is about 13 feet high at the point where you enter, and very wide. The gallaries, as far as you can see them, are lower and narrower. In the centre is a channel about four feet wide, in which flows sluggishly by the black, thick stream, for whose convenience and entertainment the magnificent system of works was built. A man thrusts in his cane; it touches bottom at about two feet. The surface of the stream is about four inches below the level of the stone floor.

You are carefully counted by a fierce-looking little man, with gold lace on his collar and cuff. He gives a sign of command to a man with a trumpet, who blows thereon not cheerily. A rumbling and rolling of wheels is heard, and a queer, compact little car comes out of the darkness. It runs directly over the stream, the wheels fitting the the edge of the floor on either side. It contains a bench for three persons, a stool for one, and room for a brakeman to stand. Four persons get in, a workman takes hold of either side, and we push off into the darkness. Another comes, and another, until all the party are seated. They go off at a brisk pace through the low door of the passage that lay to your left as you entered. A plate bearing blue letters on a white ground informs you that you are in the Rue St. Lazare.

These galleries takes the names of the streets under which they respectively run. At short intervals you see smaller vaults, debauching into the main gallery, each bearing a number. These are the sewers of the several houses in the street, and they bear the numbers of the houses they serve. As you roll on, you pass by several streets which come to pour their tribute into the main stream. You see the white letters gleaming on the blue ground, Rue St. Georges, Rue de la Rochefoucauld, and further on a more pretentious plate in the wall bears the name of the Church of the Trinity—the remarkable soft-stone structure that has been set up recently to form a picturesque ending for the Chausée d'Antin. Just beyond, you hear the splash of rushing water, and you see, dashing over its rapid slope the sewerage of the Havre Railway Station. There is a sort of artistic sentiment in the topography of this region that makes this tributary plunge, where all others creep.

We reach the Place Laborde and dismount. If the conductor on your car has been polite and communicative, you feel inclined to offer him a *pour boire*. You are, perhaps, restrained by the respect which "springs eternal in the human breastf" for a man with gold lace on his cuff, who speaks French grammatically. Do not hesitate. He has a lean wife and six little Gauls at home, and he will pocket thankfully all you choose to give him.

The Place Laborde is the terminus of the great branch we have just traversed. We struck it midway of its course. It begins by the Church of St. Margaret, near the dim old street of Charoune, in the Faubourg St. Antoine, runs under the streets of Bas-Froid and Pompincourt, follows the Quai Jemnapes, the Recollects sluices, there dives under the canal and follows the streets whose very names are poems, Fidélité, Paridis, Papillion, and Lamartine, to the point where we joined it under the shadow of the church of the Madona of Loretto.

Quitting the carriages at the Place Laborde, you walk a little distance until you enter the vast sewer that runs under the Boulevard Malesherbes. Here the central moat is more than twice as large as that of the branch St. Lazare, as also are the sidewalks on either hand. The visitors accompanied by a *chef de service*, take one side, and four workmen, carrying large lamps, station themselves opposite, to accompany the party.

You see above you enormous water-pipes, which conduct to the different houses of this quarter the water from the Seine and from the Canal de l'Oureq; great conduit pipes for the distribution