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by Marietta Holley**

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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK SAMANTHA AMONG THE BRETHREN —
VOLUME 1 ***

SAMANTHA
AMONG THE BRETHREN.

BY
"JOSIAH ALLEN'S WIFE"
(MARIETTA HOLLEY).

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.



SAMANTHA
AMONG THE BRETHREN.

BY
"JOSIAH ALLEN'S WIFE"

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1890

Part 1.

TO

All Women

WHO WORK, TRYING TO BRING INTO DARK LIVES
THE BRIGHTNESS AND HOPE OF A
BETTER COUNTRY,
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

Again it come to pass, in the fulness of time, that my companion, Josiah Allen, see me walk up and take my ink stand off of the manteltry piece, and carry it with a calm and majestick gait to the corner of the settin' room table devoted by me to literary pursuits. And he sez to me:

"What are you goin' to tackle now, Samantha?"

And sez I, with quite a good deal of dignity, "The Cause of Eternal Justice, Josiah Allen."

"Anythin' else?" sez he, lookin' sort o' oneasy at me. (That man realizes his shortcomin's, I believe, a good deal of the time, he duz.)

"Yes," sez I, "I lay out in petickuler to tackle the Meetin' House. She is in the wrong on't, and I want to set her right."

Josiah looked sort o' relieved like, but he sez out, in a kind of a pert way, es he set there a-shellin corn for the hens:

"A Meetin' House hadn't ort to be called she—it is a he."

And sez I, "How do you know?"

And he sez, "Because it stands to reason it is. And I'd like to know what you have got to say about him any way?"

Sez I, "That 'him' don't sound right, Josiah Allen. It sounds more right and nateral to call it 'she.' Why," sez I, "hain't we always hearn about the Mother Church, and don't the Bible tell about the Church bein' arrayed like a bride for her husband? I never in my life hearn it called a 'he' before."

"Oh, wall, there has always got to be a first time. And I say it sounds better. But what have you got to say about the Meetin' House, anyway?"

"I have got this to say, Josiah Allen. The Meetin' House hain't a-actin' right about wimmen. The Founder of the Church wuz born of woman. It wuz on a woman's heart that His head wuz pillowed first and last. While others slept she watched over His baby slumbers and His last sleep. A woman wuz His last thought and care. Before dawn she wuz at the door of the tomb, lookin' for

His comin'. So she has stood ever sense—waitin', watchin', hopin', workin' for the comin' of Christ. Workin', waitin' for His comin' into the hearts of tempted wimmen and tempted men—fallen men and fallen wimmen—workin', waitin', toilin', nursin' the baby good in the hearts of a sinful world—weepin' pale-faced over its crucefixion—lookin' for its reserection. Oh how she has worked all through the ages!"

"Oh shaw!" sez Josiah, "some wimmen don't care about anythin' but crazy work and back combs."

I felt took down, for I had been riz up, quite considerble, but I sez, reasonable:

"Yes, there are such wimmen, Josiah, but think of the sweet and saintly souls that have given all their lives, and hopes, and thoughts to the Meetin' House—think of the throngs to-day that crowd the aisles of the Sanctuary—there are five wimmen to one man, I believe, in all the meetin' houses to-day a-workin' in His name. True Daughters of the King, no matter what their creed may be—Catholic or Protestant.

"And while wimmen have done all this work for the Meetin' House, the Meetin' House ort to be honorable and do well by her."

"Wall, hain't *he*?" sez Josiah.

"No, *she* hain't," sez I.

"Wall, what petickuler fault do you find? What has *he* done lately to rile you up?"

Sez I, "*She* wuz in the wrong on't in not lettin' wimmen set on the Conference."

"Wall, I say *he* wuz right," sez Josiah. "*He* knew, and I knew, that wimmen wuzn't strong enough to set."

"Why," sez I, "it don't take so much strength to set as it duz to stand up. And after workin' as hard as wimmen have for the Meetin' House, she ort to have the priveledge of settin'. And I am goin' to write out jest what I think about it."

"Wall," sez Josiah, as he started for the barn with the hen feed, "don't be too severe with the Meetin' House."

And then, after he went out, he opened the door agin and stuck his head in and sez:

"Don't be too hard on *him*"

And then he shet the door quick, before I could say a word. But good land! I didn't care. I knew I could say what I wanted to with my faithful pen—and I am bound to say it.

JOSIAH ALLEN'S WIFE, Bonny View,
near Adams, New York,
Oct. 14th, 1890.

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SAMANTHA AMONG THE BRETHREN.

BY JOSIAH ALLEN'S WIFE.

CHAPTER I.



WHEN I first heard that wimmen wuz goin' to make a effort to set on a Conference, it wuz on a Wednesday, as I remember well. For my companion, Josiah Allen, had drove over to Loontown in a Democrat and in a great hurry, to meet two men who wanted him to go into a speculation with 'em.

And it wuz kinder curious to meditate on it, that they wuz all deacons, every one on 'em. Three on 'em wuz Baptis'es, and two on 'em had

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When I first heard that wimmen wuz goin' to make a effort to set on a Conference, it wuz on a Wednesday, as I remember well. For my companion, Josiah Allen, had drove over to Loontown in a Democrat and in a great hurry, to meet two men who wanted him to go into a speculation with 'em.

And it wuz kinder curious to meditate on it, that they wuz all deacons, every one on 'em. Three on 'em wuz Baptis'es, and two on 'em had jined our meetin' house, deacons, and the old name clung to 'em—we spoze because they wuz such good, stiddy men, and looked up to.

Take 'em all together there wuz five deacons. The two foreign deacons from 'way beyond Jonesville, Deacon Keeler and Deacon Huffer, and our own three Jonesvillians—Deacon Henzy, Deacon Sypher, and my own particular Deacon, Josiah Allen.

It wuz a wild and hazardous skeme that them two foreign deacons wuz a-proposin', and I wuz strongly in favor of givin' 'em a negative answer; but Josiah wuz fairly crazy with the idee, and so wuz Deacon Henzy and Deacon Sypher (their wives told me how they felt).

The idee was to build a buzz saw mill on the creek that runs through Jonesville, and have branches of it extend into Zoar, Loontown, and other more adjacent townships (the same creek runs through 'em all).

As near as I could get it into my head, there wuz to be a buzz saw mill apiece for the five deacons—each one of 'em to overlook their own particular buzz saw—but the money comin' from all on 'em to be divided up equal among the five deacons.



" A WILD AND HAZARDOUS SKEME. "

They thought there wuz lots of money in the idee. But I wuz very set against it from the first. It seemed to me that to have buzz saws a-permeatin' the atmosphere, as you may say, for so wide a space, would make too much of a confusion and noise, to say nothin' of the jarin' that would take place and ensue. I felt more and more, as I meditated on the subject, that a buzz saw, although estimable in itself, yet it wuz not a spear in which a religious deacon could withdraw from the world, and ponder on the great questions pertainin' to his own and the world's salvation.

I felt it wuz not a spear that he could revolve round in and keep that apartness from this world and nearness to the other, that I felt that deacons ought to cultivate.

But my ideas wuz frowned at by every man in Jonesville, when I ventured to promulgate 'em. They all said, "The better the man, the better the deed."

They said, "The better the man wuz, the better the buzz saw he would be likely to run." The fact wuz, they needed some buzz saw mills bad, and wuz very glad to have these deacons lay holt of 'em.



TALKING OVER THE BUZZ-SAW.

But I threw out this question at 'em, and stood by it—"If bein' set apart as a deacon didn't mean anything? If there wuzn't any deacon-work that they ought to be expected to do—and if it wuz right for 'em to go into any world's work so wild and hazardous and engrossin', as this enterprise?"

And again they sez to me in stern, decided axents, "The better the man, the better the deed. We need buzz saws."

And then they would turn their backs to me and stalk away very high-headed.

And I felt that I wuz a gettin' fearfully onpopular all through Jonesville, by my questions. I see that the hull community wuz so sot on havin' them five deacons embark onto these buzz saws that they would not brook any interference, least of all from a female woman.

But I had a feelin' that Josiah Allen wuz, as you may say, my lawful prey. I felt that I had a right to question my own pardner for the good of his own soul, and my piece of mind.

And I sez to him in solemn axents:

"Josiah Allen, what time will you get when you are fairly started on your buzz saw, for domestic life, or social, or for religious duties?"

And Josiah sez, "Dumb 'em! I guess a man is a goin' to make money when he has got a chance." And I asked him plain if he had got so low, and if I had lived with him twenty years for this, to hear him in the end dumb religious duties.

And Josiah acted skairt and conscience smut for most half a minute, and said, "he didn't dumb 'em."

"What wuz you dumbin'?" sez I, coldly.

"I wuz dumbin' the idee," sez he, "that a man can't make money when he has a chance to."

But I sez, a haulin' up this strong argument agin—

"Every one of you men, who are a layin' holt of this enterprise and a-embarkin' onto this buzz saw are married men, and are deacons in a meetin' house. Now this work you are a-talkin' of takin' up will devour all of your time, every minute of it, that you can spare from your farms.

"And to say nothin' of your wives and children not havin' any chance of havin' any comfort out of your society. What will become of the interests of Zion at home and abroad, of foreign and domestic missions, prayer meetin's, missionary societies, temperance meetin's and good works generally?"

And then again I thought, and it don't seem as if I can be mistaken, I most know that I heerd Josiah Allen mutter in a low voice,

"Dumb good works!"



“ I HEERD JOSIAH MUTTER, ‘ DUMB GOOD WORKS ! ’ ”

But I wouldn't want this told of, for I may be mistook. I didn't fairly ketch the words, and I spoke out agin, in dretful meanin' and harrowin' axents, and sez, "What will become of all this gospel work?"

And Josiah had by this time got over his skare and conscience smite (men can't keep smut for more'n several minutes anyway, their consciences are so elastic; good land! rubber cord can't compare with 'em), and he had collected his mind all together, and he spoke out low and clear, and in a tone as if he wuz fairly surprised I should make the remark:

"Why, the gospel work will get along jest as it always has, the wimmen will 'tend to it."

And I own I was kinder lost and by the side of myself when I asked the question—and very anxious to break up the enterprise or I shouldn't have put the question to him.

For I well knew jest as he did that wimmen wuz most always the ones to go ahead in church and charitable enterprises. And especially now, for there wuz a hardness arozen amongst the male men of the meetin' house, and they wouldn't do a thing they could help (but of this more anon and bimeby).

There wuz two or three old males in the meetin' house, too old to get mad and excited easy, that held firm, and two very pious old male brothers, but poor, very poor, had to be supported by the meetin' house, and lame. They stood firm, or as firm as they could on such legs as theirs wuz, inflammatory rheumatiz and white swellin's and such.

But all the rest had got their feelin's hurt, and got mad, etc., and wouldn't do a thing to help the meetin' house along.

Well, I tried every lawful, and mebbly a little on-lawful way to break this enterprise of theirs up—and, as I heern afterwards, so did Sister Henzy.

Sister Sypher is so wrapped up in Deacon Sypher that she would embrace a buzz saw mill or any other enterprise he could bring to bear onto her.

"She would be perfectly willin' to be trompled on," so she often sez, "if Deacon Sypher wuz to do the tromplin'."

Some sez he duz.

Wall, in spite of all my efforts, and in spite of all Sister Henzy's efforts, our deacons seemed to jest flourish on this skeme of theirn. And when we see it wuz goin' to be a sure thing, even Sister Sypher begin to feel bad.

She told Albina Widrig, and Albina told Miss Henn, and Miss Henn told me, that "what to do she didn't know, it would deprive her of so much of the deacon's society." It wuz goin' to devour so much of his time that she wuz afraid she couldn't stand it. She told Albina in confidence (and Albina wouldn't want it told of, nor Miss Henn, nor I wouldn't) that she had often been obleeged to go out into the lot between breakfast and dinner to see the deacon, not bein' able to stand it without lookin' on his face till dinner time.

And when she was laid up with a lame foot it wuz known that the deacon left his plowin' and went up to the house, or as fur as the door step, four or five times in the course of a mornin's work, it wuz spozed because she wuz fearful of forgettin' how he looked before noon.

She is a dretful admirin' woman.

She acts dretful reverential and admirin' towards men—always calls her husband "the Deacon," as if he was the one lonely deacon who was perambulatin' the globe at this present time. And it is spozed that when she dreams about him she dreams of him as "the Deacon," and not as Samuel (his given name is Samuel).



"THE INITIALS STOOD FOR 'MISS DEACON SYPHER.'"

But we don't know that for certain. We only spoze it. For the land of dreams is a place where you can't slip on your sun-bonnet and foller neighbor wimmen to see what they are a-doin' or what they are a-sayin' from hour to hour.

No, the best calculator on gettin' neighborhood news can't even look into that land, much less foller a neighborin' female into it.

No, their barks have got to be moored outside of them mysterious shores.

But, as I said, this had been spozen.

But it is known from actual eyesight that she marks all her sheets, and napkins, and piller-cases, and such, "M. D. S." And I asked her one day what the M. stood for, for I 'spozed, of course, the D. S. stood for Drusillia Sypher.

And she told me with a real lot of dignity that the initials stood for "Miss Deacon Sypher."

Wall, the Jonesville men have been in the habit of holdin' her up as a pattern to their wives for some time, and the Jonesville wimmen hain't hated her so bad as you would spoze they all would under the circumstances, on account, we all think, of her bein' such a good-hearted little creeter. We all like Drusilly and can't help it.

Wall, even she felt bad and deprested on account of her Deacon's goin' into the buzz saw-mill business.

But she didn't say nothin', only wept out at one side, and wiped up every time he came in sight.

They say that she hain't never failed once of a-smilin' on the Deacon every time he came home. And once or twice he has got as mad as a hen at her for smilin'. Once, when he came home with a sore thumb—he had jest smashed it in the barn door—and she stood a-smilin' at him on the door step, there are them that say the Deacon called her a "infernol fool."

But I never have believed it. I don't believe he would demean himself so low.

But he yelled out awful at her, I do 'spoze, for his pain wuz intense, and she stood stun still, a-smilin' at him, jest accordin' to the story books. And he sez:

"Stand there like a—fool, will you! Get me a *rag*!"

I guess he did say as much as that.

But they say she kept on a-smilin' for some time—couldn't seem to stop, she had got so hardened into that way.



“ONCE, WHEN HER FACE WUZ ALL SWELLED UP, SHE SMILED AT HIM.”

And once, when her face wuz all swelled up with the toothache, she smiled at him accordin' to rule when he got home, and they say the effect wuz fearful, both on her looks and the Deacon's acts. They say he was mad again, and called her some names. But as a general thing they get along first rate, I guess, or as well as married folks in general, and he makes a good deal of her.

I guess they get along without any more than the usual amount of difficulties between husbands and wives, and mebbly with less. I know this, anyway, that she just about worships the Deacon.

Wall, as I say, it was the very day that these three deacons went to Loontown to meet Deacon Keeler and Deacon Huffer, to have a conference together as to the interests of the buzz saw mill that I first heard the news that wimmen wuz goin' to make a effort to set on the Methodist Conference, and the way I heerd on't wuz as follows:

Josiah Allen brought home to me that night a paper that one of the foreign deacons, Deacon Keeler, had lent him. It contained a article that wuz wrote by Deacon Keeler's son, Casper Keeler—a witherin' article about wimmen's settin' on the Conference. It made all sorts of fun of the projeck.

We found out afterwards that Casper Keeler furnished nearly all the capital for the buzz saw mill enterprise at his father's urgent request. His father, Deacon Keeler, didn't have a cent of money of his own; it fell onto Casper from his mother and aunt. They had kept a big millinery store in the town of Lyme, and a branch store in Loontown, and wuz great workers, and had laid up a big property. And when they died, the aunt, bein' a maiden woman at the time, the money naturally fell onto Casper. He wuz a only child, and they had brung him up tender, and fairly worshipped him.

They left him all the money, but left a anuety to be paid yearly to his father, Deacon Keeler, enough to support him.

The Deacon and his wife had always lived happy together—she loved to work, and he loved to have her work, so they had similar tastes, and wuz very congenial—and when she died he had the widest crape on his hat that wuz ever seen in the town of Lyme. (The crape was some she had left in the shop.)

He mourned deep, both in his crape and his feelin's, there hain't a doubt of that.

Wall, Miss Keelerses will provided money special for Casper to be educated high. So he went to school and to college, from the time he was born, almost. So he knew plenty of big words, and used 'em fairly lavish in this piece. There wuz words in it of from six to seven syllables. Why, I hadn't no idee till I see 'em with my own eye, that there wuz any such words in the English language, and words of from four to six syllables wuz common in it.

His father, Deacon Keeler, wouldn't give the paper to my companion, he thought so much of it, but he offered to lend it to him, because he said he felt that the idees it promulgated wuz so sound and deep they ought to be disseminated abroad.

The idees wuz, "that wimmen hadn't no business to set on the Conference. She wuz too weak to set on it. It wuz too high a place for her too ventur' on, or to set on with any ease. There wuzn't no more than room up there for what men would love to set on it. Wimmen's place wuz in the sacred precinks of home. She wuz a tender, fragile plant, that needed guardin' and guidin' and kep by man's great strength and tender care from havin' any cares and labors whatsoever and wheresoever and howsumever."

Josiah said it wuz a masterly dockument. And it wuz writ well. It painted in wild, glarin' colors the fear that men had that wimmen would strain themselves to do anything at all in the line of work—or would weaken her hull constitution, and lame her moral faculties, and ruin herself by tryin' to set up on a Conference, or any other high and tottlin' eminence.

The piece wuz divided into three different parts, with a headin' in big letters over each one.

The *first* wuz, wimmen to have no labors and cares WHATSOEVER;

Secondly, NONE WHERESOEVER;

Thirdly, NONE HOWSUMEVER.

The writer then proceeded to say that he would show first, *what* cares and labors men wuz willin' and anxious to ward offen women. And he proved right out in the end that there wuzn't a thing that they wanted wimmen to do—not a single thing.

Then he proceeded to tell *where* men wuz willin' to keep their labors and cares offen wimmen. And he proved it right out that it wuz every *where*. In the home, the little sheltered, love-guarded home of the farmer, the mechanic and the artizen (makin' special mention of the buzz sawyers). And also in the palace walls and the throne. There and every *where* men would fain shelter wimmen from every care, and every labor, even the lightest and slightest.

Then lastly came the *howsumever*. He proceeded to show *how* this could be done. And he proved it right out (or thought he did) that the first great requisit' to accomplish all this, wuz to keep wimmen in her place. Keep her from settin' on the Conference, and all other tottlin' eminences, fitted only for man's stalwart strength.

And the end of the article wuz so sort of tragick and skairful that Josiah wept when he read it. He pictured it out in such strong colors, the danger there wuz of puttin' wimmen, or allowin' her to put herself in such a high and percipitous place, such a skairful and dangerous posture as settin' up on a Conference.



“ JOSIAH WEPT WHEN HE READ IT.”

"To have her set up on it," sez the writer, in conclusion, "would endanger her life, her spiritual, her mental and her moral growth. It would shake the permanency of the sacred home relations to its downfall. It would hasten anarchy, and he thought sizm." Why, Josiah Allen handled that paper as if it wuz pure gold. I know he asked me anxiously as he handed it to me to read, "if my hands wuz perfectly clean," and we had some words about it.

And till he could pass it on to Deacon Sypher to read he kep it in the Bible. He put it right over in Galatians, for I looked to see—Second Galatians.

And he wrapped it up in a soft handkerchief when he carried it over to Deacon Sypherses. And Deacon Sypher treasured it like a pearl of great price (so I spoze) till he could pass it on to Deacon Henzy.

And Deacon Henzy was to carry it with care to a old male Deacon in Zoar, bed rid.

Wall, as I say, that is the very first I had read about their bein' any idee promulgated of wimmens settin' up on the Conference.

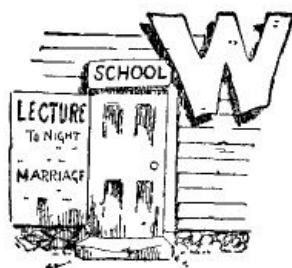
And I, in spite of Josiah Allen's excitement, wuz in favor on't from the very first.

Yes, I wuz awfully in favor of it, and all I went through durin' the next and ensuin' weeks didn't put the idee out of my head. No, far from it. It seemed as if the severer my sufferin's wuz, the much more this idee flourished in my soul. Just as a heavy plow will meller up the soil so white lilies can take root, or any other kind of sweet posies.

And oh! my heart! wuz not my sufferin's with Lodema Trumble, a hard plow and a harrowin' one, and one that turned up deep furrows?

But of this, more anon and bimeby.

CHAPTER II.



ALL, it wuz on the very next day—on a Thursday as I remember well, for I wuz a-thinkin' why didn't Lodema's letter come the next day—Fridays bein' considered onlucky—and it being a day for punishments, hangin's, and so forth.

But it didn't, it came on a Thursday. And my companion had been to Jonesville and brung me back two letters; he brung 'em in, leavin' the old mair standin' at the gate, and handed me the letters, ten pounds of granulated sugar, a pound of tea, and the request I should have supper on the table by the time that he got back from Deacon Henzy's.

(On that old buzz-saw business agin, so I spozed, but wouldn't ask.)

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Wall, I told him supper wuz begun any way, and he had better hurry back. But he wuz belated by reason of Deacon Henzy's bein' away, so I set there for some time alone.

Wall, I wuz goin' to have some scoloped oysters for supper, so the first thing I did wuz to put 'em into the oven—they wuz all ready, I had scoloped 'em before Josiah come, and got 'em all ready for the oven—and then I set down and read my letters.

Wall, the first one I opened wuz from Lodema Trumble, Josiah's cousin on his own side. And her letter brought the sad and harrowin' intelligence that she was a-comin' to make us a good long visit. The letter had been delayed. She was a-comin' that very night, or the next day. Wall, I sithed deep. I love company dearly, but—oh my soul, is there not a difference, a difference in visitors?

Wall, suffice it to say, I sithed deep, and opened the other letter, thinkin' it would kind o' take my mind off.

And for all the world! I couldn't hardly believe my eyes. But it wuz! It wuz from Serena Fogg. It wuz from the Authoress of "Wedlock's Peaceful Repose."

I hadn't heard a word from her for upwards of four years. And the letter brung me startlin' intelligence.

It opened with the unexpected information that she wuz married. She had been married three years and a half to a butcher out to the Ohio.

And I declare my first thought wuz as I read it, "Wall, she has wrote dretful flowery on wedlock, and its perfect, onbroken calm, and peaceful repose, and now she has had a realizin' sense of what it really is."

But when I read a little further, I see what the letter wuz writ for. I see why, at this late day, she had started up and writ me a letter. I see it wuz writ on duty.

She said she had found out that I wuz in the right on't and she wuzn't. She said that when in the past she had disputed me right up and down, and insisted that wedlock wuz a state of perfect serenity, never broken in upon by any cares or vexations whatsomever, she wuz in the wrong on't.

She said she had insisted that when anybody had moored their barks into that haven of wedded life, that they wuz forever safe from any rude buffetin's from the world's waves; that they wuz exempt from any toil, any danger, any sorrow, any trials whatsomever. And she had found she was mistook.

She said I told her it wuz a first-rate state, and a satisfactory one for wimmen; but still it had its trials, and she had found it so. She said that I insisted its serenity wuz sometimes broken in upon, and she had found it so. The last day at my house had tottled her faith, and her own married experience had finished the work. Her husband wuz a worthy man, and she almost worshipped him. But he had a temper, and he raved round considerable when meals wuzn't ready on time, and she havin' had two pairs of twins durin' her union (she comes from a family on her mother's side, so I had hearn before, where twins wuz contagious), she couldn't always be on the exact minute. She had to work awful hard; this broke in on her serenity.

Her husband devotedly loved her, so she said; but still, she said, his bootjack had been thrown voyalent where corns wuz hit onexpected.

Their souls wuz mated firm as they could be in deathless ties of affection and confidence, yet doors *had* been slammed and oaths emitted, when clothin' rent and buttons tarried not with him. Strange actions and demeanors had been displayed in hours of high-headedness and impatience, which had skaired her almost to death before gettin' accustomed to 'em.



"FOUR TWINS BROKE IN ALSO ON HER WAVELESS CALM."

The four twins broke in also on her waveless calm. They wuz lovely cherubs, and the four apples of her eyes. But they did yell at times, they kicked, they tore round and acted; they made

work—lots of work. And one out of each pair snored. It broke up each span, as you may say. The snorin' filled each room devoted to 'em.

He snored, loud. A good man and a noble man he wuz, so she repeated it, but she found out too late—too late, that he snored. The house wuz small; she could *not* escape from snores, turn she where she would. She got tired out with her work days, and couldn't rest nights. Her husband, as he wuz doin' such a flourishin' business, had opened a cattle-yard near the house. She wuz proud of his growin' trade, but the bellerin' of the cattle disturbed her fearfully. Also the calves bleating and the lambs callin' on their dams.

It wuz a long letter, filled with words like these, and it ended up by saying that for years now she had wanted to write and tell me that I had been in the right on't and she in the wrong. I had been megum and she hadn't. And she ended by sayin', "God bless me and adoo."

The fire crackled softly on the clean hearth. The teakettle sung a song of welcome and cheer. The oysters sent out an agreeable atmosphere. The snowy table, set out in pretty china and glassware, looked invitin', and I set there comfortable and happy and so peaceful in my frame, that the events of the past, in which Serena Fogg had flourished, seemed but as yesterday.

I thought it all over, that pleasant evenin' in the past, when Josiah Allen had come in unexpected, and brung the intelligence to me that there wuz goin' to be a lectur' give that evenin' by a young female at the Jonesville school-house, and beset me to go.

And I give my consent. Then my mind travelled down that pleasant road, moongilded, to the school-house. It stopped on the door-step while Josiah hitched the mair.

We found the school-house crowded full, fur a female lecturer wuz a rarity, and she wuz a pretty girl, as pretty a girl as I ever see in my life.

And it wuz a pretty lecture, too, dretful pretty. The name of the lecture wuz, "Wedlock's Peaceful and Perfect Repose."



THE LECTURE.

A pretty name, I think, and it wuz a beautiful lecture, very, and extremely flowery. It affected some of the hearers awfully; they wuz all carried away with it. Josiah Allen wept like a child durin' the rehearsin' of it. I myself didn't weep, but I enjoyed it, some of it, first rate.

I can't begin to tell it all as she did, 'specially after this length of time, in such a lovely, flowery way, but I can probably give a few of the heads of it.

It hain't no ways likely that I can give the heads half the stylish, eloquent look that she did as she held 'em up, but I can jest give the bare heads.

She said that there had been a effort made in some directions to try to speak against the holy

state of matrimony. The papers had been full of the subject, "Is Marriage a Failure, or is it not?"

She had even read these dreadful words—"Marriage is a Failure." She hated these words, she despised 'em. And while some wicked people spoke against this holy institution, she felt it to be her duty, as well as privilege, to speak in its praise.

I liked it first rate, I can tell you, when she went on like that. For no living soul can uphold marriage with a better grace than she whose name wuz once Smith.

I *love* Josiah Allen, I am *glad* that I married him. But at the same time, my almost devoted love doesn't make me blind. I can see on every side of a subject, and although, as I said heretofore, and prior, I love Josiah Allen, I also love megumness, and I could not fully agree with every word she said.

But she went on perfectly beautiful—I didn't wonder it brought the school-house down—about the holy calm and perfect rest of marriage, and how that calm wuz never invaded by any rude cares.

How man watched over the woman he loved; how he shielded her from every rude care; kept labor and sorrow far, far from her; how woman's life wuz like a oneasy, roarin', rushin' river, that swept along discontented and onsatisfied, moanin' and lonesome, until it swept into the calm sea of Repose—melted into union with the grand ocian of Rest, marriage.

And then, oh! how calm and holy and sheltered wuz that state! How peaceful, how onruffled by any rude changes! Happiness, Peace, Calm! Oh, how sweet, how deep wuz the ocian of True Love in which happy, united souls bathed in blissful repose!



“HE HAD ON A NEW VEST.”

It was dretful pretty talk, and middlin' affectin'. There wasn't a dry eye in Josiah Allen's head, and I didn't make no objection to his givin' vent to his feelin's, only when I see him bust out a-weepin' I jest slipped my pocket-handkerchief 'round his neck and pinned it behind. (His handkerchief wuz in constant use, a cryin' and weepin' as he wuz.) And I knew that salt water spots black satin awfully. He had on a new vest.

Submit Tewksbury cried and wept, and wept and cried, caused by remembrances, it wuz spozed. Of which, more anon, and bimeby.

And Drusilly Sypher, Deacon Sypherses wife, almost had a spazzum, caused by admiration and bein' so highly tickled.

I myself didn't shed any tears, as I have said heretofore. And what kep' me calmer wuz, I *knew*, I knew from the bottom of my heart, that she went too fur, she wuzn't megum enough.

And then she went on to draw up metaphors, and haul in illustrations, comparin' married life and single—jest as likely metaphors as I ever see, and as good illustrations as wuz ever brung up, only they every one of 'em had this fault—when she got to drawin' 'em, she drew 'em too fur. And though she brought the school-house down, she didn't convince me.



“ I MYSELF DIDN'T SHED ANY TEARS.”

Once she compared single life to a lonely goose travellin' alone acrost the country, 'cross lots, lonesome and despairin', travellin' along over a thorny way, and desolate, weighed down by melancholy and gloomy forebodin's, and takin' a occasional rest by standin' up on one cold foot and puttin' its weery head under its wing, with one round eye lookin' out for dangers that menaced it, and lookin', also, perhaps, for a possible mate, for the comin' gander—restless, wobblin', oneasy, miserable.

Why, she brought the school-house down, and got the audience all wrought up with pity, and sympathy. Oh, how Submit Tewksbury did weep; she wept aloud (she had been disappointed, but of this more bimeby).

And then she went on and compared that lonesome voyager to two blissful wedded ones. A pair of white swans floatin' down the waveless calm, bathed in silvery light, floatin' down a shinin' stream that wuz never broken by rough waves, bathed in a sunshine that wuz never darkened by a cloud.

And then she went on to bring up lots of other things to compare the two states to—flowery things and sweet, and eloquent.

She compared single life to quantities of things, strange, weird, melancholy things, and curius. Why, they wuz so powerful that every one of 'em brought the school-house down.

And then she compared married life to two apple blossoms hangin' together on one leafy bough on the perfumed June air, floatin' back and forth under the peaceful benediction of summer skies.

And she compared it to two white lambs gambolin' on the velvety hill-side. To two strains of music meltin' into one dulcet harmony, perfect, divine harmony, with no discordant notes.

Josiah hunched me, he wanted me to cry there, at that place, but I wouldn't. He did, he cried like an infant babe, and I looked close and searchin' to see if my handkerchief covered up all his vest.

He didn't seem to take no notice of his clothes at all, he wuz a-weepin' so—why, the whole schoolhouse wept, wept like a babe.

But I didn't. I see it wuz a eloquent and powerful effort. I see it was beautiful as anything could be, but it lacked that one thing I have mentioned prior and before this time. It lacked megumness.

I knew they wuz all impressive and beautiful illustrations, I couldn't deny it, and I didn't want to deny it. But I knew in my heart that the lonely goose that she had talked so eloquent about, I knew that though its path might be tegus the most of the time, yet occasionally it stepped upon velvet grass and blossomin' daisies. And though the happy wedded swans floated considerable easy a good deal of the time, yet occasionally they had their wings rumped by storms, thunder storms, sudden squalls, and et cetera, et cetera.

And I knew the divine harmony of wedded love, though it is the sweetest that earth affords, I knew that, and my Josiah knew it—the very sweetest and happiest strains that earthly lips can sing.

Yet I knew that it wuz both heavenly sweet, and divinely sad, blended discord and harmony. I knew there wuz minor chords in it, as well as major, I knew that we must await love's full harmony in heaven. There shall we sing it with the pure melody of the immortals, my Josiah and me. But I am a eppisodin', and to continue and resoom.

Wall, we wuz invited to meet the young female after the lecture wuz over, to be introduced to her and talk it over.

She wuz the Methodist minister's wife's cousin, and the minister's wife told me she wuz dretful anxious to get my opinion on the lecture. I spoze she wanted to get the opinion of one of the first wimmen of the day. For though I am fur from bein' the one that ort to mention it, I have heard of such things bein' said about me all round Jonesville, and as far as Loontown and Shackville. And so, I spoze, she wanted to get hold of my opinion.

Wall, I wuz introduced to her, and I shook hands with her, and kissed her on both cheeks, for she is a sweet girl and I liked her looks.

I could see that she was very, VERY sentimental, but she had a sweet, confidin', innocent look to her, and I give her a good kissin' and I meant it. When I like a person, I *do* like 'em, and visy-versey.

But at the same time my likin' for a person mustn't be strong enough to overthrow my principles. And when she asked me in her sweet axents, "How I liked her lecture, and if I could see any faults in it?" I leaned up against Duty, and told her, "I liked it first-rate, but I couldn't agree with every word of it."

Here Josiah Allen give me a look sharp enough to take my head clear off, if looks could behead anybody. But they can't.

And I kept right on, calm and serene, and sez I, "It wuz very full of beautiful idees, as full of 'em as a rose-bush is full of sweetness in June, but," says I, "if I speak at all I must tell the truth, and I must say that while your lecture is as sweet and beautiful a effort as I ever see tackled, full of beautiful thoughts, and eloquence, still I must say that in my opinion it lacked one thing, it wuzn't mean enough."

"Mean enough?" sez she. "What do you mean?"

"Why," sez I, "I mean, mean temperature, you know, middleinness, megumness, and whatever you may call it; you go too fur."



"YOU GO TOO FUR."

She said with a modest look "that she guessed she didn't, she guessed she didn't go too far."

And Josiah Allen spoke up, cross as a bear, and, sez he, "I know she didn't. She didn't say a word that wuzn't gospel truth."

Sez I, "Married life is the happiest life in my opinion; that is, when it is happy. Some hain't happy, but at the same time the happiest of 'em hain't *all* happiness."

"It is," sez Josiah (cross and surly), "it is, too."

And Serena Fogg said, gently, that she thought I wuz mistaken, "she thought it wuz." And Josiah jined right in with her and said:

"He *knew* it wuz, and he would take his oath to it."

But I went right on, and, sez I, "Mebby it is in one sense the most peaceful; that is, when the affections are firm set and stabled it makes 'em more peaceful than when they are a-traipsin' round and a-wanderin'. But," sez I, "marriage hain't *all* peace."

Sez Josiah: "It is, and I'll swear to it."

Sez I, goin' right on, cool and serene, "The sunshine of true love gilds the pathway with the brightest radiance we know anything about, but it hain't all radiance."

"Yes, it is," sez Josiah, firmly, "it is, every mite of it."

And Serena Fogg sez, tenderly and amiably, "Yes, I think Mr. Allen is right; I think it is."

"Wall," sez I, in meanin' accents, awful meanin', "when you are married you will change your opinion, you mark my word."

And she said, gently, but persistently, "That she guessed she shouldn't; she guessed she was in the right of it."

Sez I, "You think when anybody is married they have got beyend all earthly trials, and nothin' but perfect peace and rest remains?"

And she sez, gently, "Yes, mem!"

"Why," sez I, "I am married, and have been for upwards of twenty years, and I think I ought to know somethin' about it; and how can it be called a state of perfect rest, when some days I have

to pass through as many changes as a comet, and each change a tegus one. I have to wobble round and be a little of everything, and change sudden, too.

"I have to be a cook, a step-mother, a housemaid, a church woman, a wet nurse (lots of times I have to wade out in the damp grass to take care of wet chickens and goslings). I have to be a tailoress, a dairy-maid, a literary soarer, a visitor, a fruit-canner, a adviser, a soother, a dressmaker, a hostess, a milliner, a gardener, a painter, a surgeon, a doctor, a carpenter, a woman, and more'n forty other things.

"Marriage is a first-rate state, and agreeable a good deal of the time; but it haint a state of perfect peace and rest, and you'll find out it haint if you are ever married."

But Miss Fogg said, mildly, "that she thought I wuz mistaken—she thought it wuz."

"You do?" sez I.

"Yes, mem," sez she.

I got up, and sez I, "Come, Josiah, I guess we had better be a-goin'." I thought it wouldn't do no good to argue any more with her, and Josiah started off after the mair. He had hitched it on the barn floor.

She didn't seem willin' to have me go; she seemed to cling to me. She seemed to be a good, affectionate little creetur. And she said she would give anything almost if she could rehearse the hull lecture over to me, and have me criticise it. Sez she:

"I have heard so much about you, and what a happy home you have."

"Yes," sez I, "it is as happy as the average of happy homes, any way."

And sez she, "I have heard that you and your husband wuz just devoted to each other." And I told her "that our love for each other wuz like two rocks that couldn't be moved."

And she said, "On these very accounts she fairly hankered after my advice and criticism. She said she hadn't never lived in any house where there wuz a livin' man, her father havin' died several months before she was born; and she hadn't had the experience that I had, and she presumed that I could give her several little idees that she hadn't thought on."

And I told her calmly "that I presumed I could."

It seemed that her father died two months after marriage, right in the midst of the mellow light of the honeymoon, before he had had time to drop the exstatic sweetness of courtship and newly-married bliss and come down into the ordinary, everyday, good and bad demeanors of men.

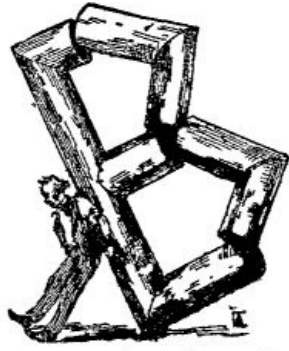
And she had always lived with her mother (who naturally worshipped and mentally knelt before the memory of her lost husband) and three sentimental maiden aunts. And they had drawed all their knowledge of manhood from Moore's poems and Solomon's Songs. So Serena Fogg's idees of men and married life wuz about as thin and as well suited to stand the wear and tear of actual experience as a gauze dress would be to face a Greenland winter in.

And so, after considerable urg'in' on her part (for I kinder hung back and hated to tackle the job, but not knowin' but that it wuz duty's call), I finally consented, and it wuz arranged this way:

She wuz to come down to our house some day, early in the mornin', and stay all day, and she wuz to stand up in front of me and rehearse the lecture over to me, and I wuz to set and hear it, and when she came to a place where I didn't agree with her I wuz to lift up my right hand and she wuz to stop rehearsin', and we wuz to argue with each other back and forth and try to convince each other.

And when we got it all arranged Josiah and I set out for home, I calm in my frame, though dreadin' the job some.

CHAPTER III.



UT Josiah Allen wuz jest crazy over that lecture—crazy as a loon. He raved about it all the way home, and he would repeat over lots of it to me. About “how a man’s love was the firm anchor that held a woman’s happiness stiddy; how his calm and peaceful influence held her mind in a serene calm—a waveless repose; how tender men wuz of the fair sect, how they watched over ’em and held ’em in their hearts.”

“Oh,” sez he, “it went beyond anything I ever heard of. I always knew that men wuz good and pious, but I never realized how dumb pious they wuz till to-night.”

“She said,” sez I, in considerable dry axents—not so dry as I keep by me, but pretty dry—“No true man would let a woman perform any manuel labor.”

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“Wall, he won’t. There ain’t no need of your liftin’ your little finger in emanuel labor.”

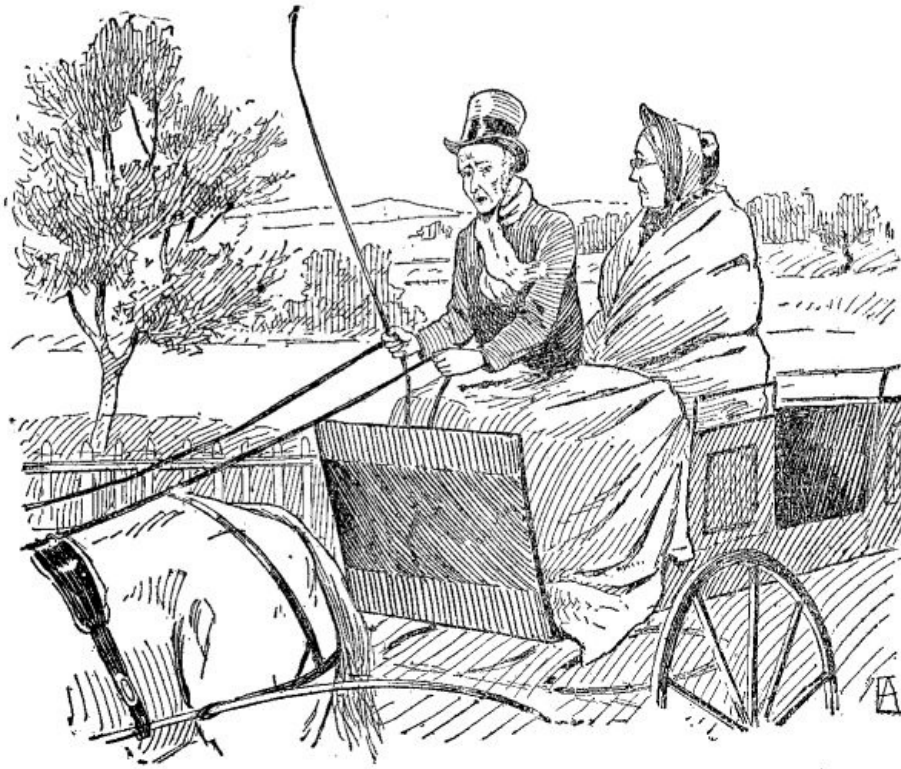
“Manuel, Josiah.”

“Wall, I said so, didn’t I? Hain’t I always holdin’ you back from work?”

“Yes,” sez I. “You often speak of it, Josiah. You are as good,” sez I, firmly, “full as good as the common run of men, and I think a little better. But there are things that have to be done. A married woman that has a house and family to see to and don’t keep a hired girl, can’t get along without some work and care.”

“Wall I say,” sez he, “that there hain’t no need of you havin’ a care, not a single care. Not as long as I live—if it wuzn’t for me, you might have some cares, and most probable would, but not while I live.”

I didn’t say nothin’ back, for I don’t want to hurt his feelin’s, and won’t, not if I can help it. And he broke out again anon, or nearly anon—



"OH, WHAT A LECTURE THAT WUZ."

"Oh, what a lecture that wuz. Did you notice when she wuz goin' on perfectly beautiful, about the waveless sea of married life—did you notice how it took the school house down? And I wuz perfectly mortified to see you didn't weep or even clap your hands."

"Wall," sez I, firmly, "when I weep or when I clap, I weep and clap on the side of truth. And I can't see things as she duz. I have been a-sailin' on that sea she depicted for over twenty years, and have never wanted to leave it for any other waters. But, as I told her, and tell you now, it hain't always a smooth sea, it has its ups and downs, jest like any other human states."

Sez I, soarin' up a very little ways, not fur, for it wuz too cold, and I was too tired, "There hain't but one sea, Josiah Allen, that is calm forever, and one day we will float upon it, you and me. It is the sea by which angels walk and look down into its crystal depths, and behold their blessed faces. It is the sea on whose banks the fadeless lilies blow—and that mirrors the soft, cloudless sky of the Happy Morning. It is the sea of Eternal Repose, that rude blasts can never blow up into billows. But our sea—the sea of married life—is not like that, it is oftentimes billowy and rough."

"I say it hain't," sez he, for he was jest carried away with the lecture, and enthused.

"We have had a happy time together, Josiah Allen, for over twenty years, but has our sea of life always been perfectly smooth?"

"Yes, it has; smooth as glass."

"Hain't there never been a cloud in our sky?"

"No, there hain't; not a dumb cloud."

Sez I, sternly, "There has in mine. Your wicked and profane swearin' has cast many and many a cloud over my sky, and I'd try to curb in my tongue if I was in your place."

"Dumb' hain't swearin'," sez he. And then he didn't say nothin' more till anon, or nearly at that time, he broke out agin, and sez he:

"Never, never did I hear or see such eloquence till to-night I'll have that girl down to our house to stay a week, if I'm a living Josiah Allen."

"All right," sez I, cheerfully. "I'd love to have her stay a week or ten days, and I'll invite her, too, when she comes down to rehearse her lecture."

Wall we got home middlin' tired, and the subject kinder dropped down, and Josiah had lots of work come on the next day, and so did I, and company. And it run along for over a week before she come. And when she did come, it wuz in a dreadful bad time. It seems as if she couldn't have come in a much worse time.

It wuz early one mornin', not more than nine o'clock, if it wuz that. There had come on a cold snap of weather unexpected, and Josiah wuz a-bringin' in the cook stove from the summer kitchen, when she come.

Josiah Allen is a good man. He is my choice out of a world full of men, but I can't conceal it from myself that his words at such a time are always voyalent, and his demeanor is not the demeanor that I would wish to have showed off to the public.

He wuz at the worst place, too. He had got the stove wedged into the entry-way door, and couldn't get it either way. He had acted awkward with it, and I told him so, and he see it when it wuz too late.

He had got it fixed in such a way that he couldn't get into the kitchen himself without gettin' over the stove, and I, in the course of duty, thought it wuz right to tell him that if he had heerd to me he wouldn't have been in such a fix. Oh! the voyalence and frenzy of his demeanor as he stood there a-hollerin'. I wuz out in the wood-house shed a-bilin' my cider apple sass in the big cauldron kettle, but I heard the racket, and as I come a-runnin' in I thought I heard a little rappin' at the settin'-room door, but I didn't notice it much, I wuz that agitated to see the way the stove and Josiah wuz set and wedged in.

There the stove wuz, wedged firm into the doorway, perfectly sot there. There wuz sut all over the floor, and there stood Josiah Allen, on the wood-house side, with his coat off, his shirt all covered with black, and streaks of black all over his face. And oh! how wild and almost frenzied his attitude wuz as he stood there as if he couldn't move nor be moved no more than the stove could. And oh! the voyalence of the language he hurled at me acrost that stove.

"Why," sez I, "you must come in here, Josiah Allen, and pull it from this side."

And then he hollered at me, and asked me:

"How in thunder he was a goin' to *get* in." And then he wanted to know "if I wanted him squshed into jelly by comin' in by the side of it—or if I thought he wuz a crane, that he could step over it or a stream of water that he could run under it, or what else do you think?" He hollered wildly.

"Wall," sez I, "you hadn't ort to got it fixed in that shape. I told you what end to move first," sez I. "You have moved it in side-ways. It would go in all right if you had started it the other way."

"Oh, yes! It would have been all right. You love to see me, Samantha, with a stove in my arms. You love it dearly. I believe you would be perfectly happy if you could see me a luggin' round stoves every day. But I'll tell you one thing, if this dumb stove is ever moved either way out of this door—if I ever get it into a room agin, it never shall be stirred agin so much as a hair's breadth—not while I have got the breath of life in me."

Sez I, "Hush! I hear somebody a-knockin' at the door."

"I won't hush. It is nothin' but dumb foolishness a movin' round stoves, and if anybody don't believe it let 'em look at me—and let 'em look at that stove set right here in the door as firm as a rock."



“WON'T YOU BE STILL?”

Sez I agin in a whisper, "Do be still, and I'll let 'em in, I don't want them to ketch you a talkin' so and a-actin'." "Wall, I want 'em to ketch me, that is jest what I want 'em to do. If it is a man he'll say every word I say is Gospel truth, and if it is a woman it will make her perfectly happy to see me a-swelterin' in the job—seven times a year do I have to move this stove back and forth—and I say it is high time I said a word. So you can let 'em in just as quick as you are a mind to."

Sez I, a whisperin' and puttin' my finger on my lip:

"Won't you be still?"

"No, I won't be still!" he yelled out louder than ever. "And you may go through all the motions you want to and you can't stop me. All you have got to do is to walk round and let folks in, happy as a king. Nothin' under the heavens ever made a woman so happy as to have some man a-breakin' his back a-luggin' round a stove."

I see he wouldn't stop, so I had to go and open the door, and there stood Serena Fogg, there stood the author of "Wedlock's Peaceful Repose." I felt like a fool. For I knew she had heard every word, I see she had by her looks. She looked skairt, and as surprised and sort o' awe-stricken as if she had seen a ghost. I took her into the parlor, and took her things, and I excused myself by tellin' her that I should have to be out in the kitchen a-tendin' to things for a spell, and went back to Josiah.

And I whispered to him, sez I: "Miss Fogg has come, and she has heard every word you have said, Josiah Allen. And what will she think now about Wedlock's Peaceful Repose?"

But he had got that wild and reckless in his demeanor and acts, that he went right on with his hollerin', and, sez he, "She won't find much repose here to-day, and I'll tell her that. This house has got to be all tore to pieces to get that stove started."

Sez I, "There won't be nothin' to do only to take off one side of the door casin'. And I believe it can be done without that."

"Oh, you believe! you believe! You'd better take holt and lug and lift for two hours as I have, and then see."

Sez I, "You hain't been here more'n ten minutes, if you have that. And there," sez I, liftin' up one end a little, "see what anybody can do who is calm. There I have stirred it, and now you can move it right along."

"Oh, *you* did it! I moved it myself."

I didn't contend, knowin' it wuz men's natural nater to say that.



“AND HE SAID I HAD RUBBED 'EM OUT.”

Wall, at last Josiah got the stove in, but then the stove-pipe wouldn't go together, it wouldn't seem to fit. He had marked the joints with chalk, and the marks had rubbed off, and he said I had "rubbed 'em out." I wuz just as innocent as a babe, but I didn't dispute him much, for I see a little crack open in the parlor door, and I knew the author of "Wedlock's Peaceful Repose" was a-listenin'.

But when he told me for the third time that I rubbed 'em out on purpose to make him trouble, and that I had made a practice of rubbin' 'em out for years and years—why, then I *had* to correct him on the subject, and we had a little dialogue.

I spoze Serena Fogg heard it. But human nater can't bear only just so much, especially when it has stoves a dirtien up the floor, and apple sass on its mind, and unexpected company, and no cookin' and a threshin' machine a-comin'.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK SAMANTHA AMONG THE BRETHERN —
VOLUME 1 ***

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