

## HOW THE BAMBERSES BORROWED JOSIAH.

BY JOSIAH ALLEN'S WIFE.

WHEN we bought our farm, there was a house on it, jist acrost the road from our'n; it was middlin' small, and dretful kinder run down and shakey, and I had entirely gin up the idee of enybody's livin' there.

But all of a sudden, Josiah started up, and said he was goin' to fix up that house, and rent it, "he believed he could make piles of money out of it, a-rentin' it, and he wanted some neighbors."

Says I, "Josiah Allen, you'd better let well enough alone. You'd better let the old house stay as it is," says I, "There is werse neighbors than them that is stayin' in the old house now."

"What do you mean, Samantha?" And his eyes showed the whites all 'round 'em, he was that surprised.

But I says, "There are werse neighbors, and more troublesome creeters in this world, Josiah Allen, than peace, and quiet, and repose."

"Oh, shaw!" says he. "Why can't you talk common sense, if you have got any." And he went on in a firm, obstinate way. "I am determined to fix up the house, and rent it. Wimmens never can see into business. They haven't got the brains for it. You hain't to blame for it, Samantha; but you haven't got the head to see how profitable I am goin' to make it. And then, our nearest neighbors now live well on to a quarter of a mile away. How neat it will be to have neighbors, right here, by us all the time, day and night." And he added, dreamily, "I love to neighbor, Samantha, I love to neighbor, dearly."

But I held firm, and told him "He'd better let well enough alone." But he was sot as sot could be, and went on a-fixin' the house, and it cost him nearer a hundred dollars than it did anything else, besides lamin' himself, and blisterin' his hands to work on it himself, and fillin' his eyes with plaster, and gettin' creaks in his back a-lifitin' 'round and repairin'.

But he felt neat through it all. It seemed as if the more money he laid out, and the werse he got hurt, the more his mind soared up, a-thinkin' how much money he was goin' to make a-rentin' it, and what a beautiful time he was a-goin' to have a-neighborin'.

Wall, jist as soon as the house was done, he sot out to find some one to occupy it, for that man

couldn't seem to wait a minute. I told him to keep cool. Says I, "You'l make money by it, if you do." But no: he couldn't wait till somebody came to him, he kept inquirin' 'round; and one day he came home from Janesville tickled most to death, seemingly. He'd rented the house to a Mr. Bamber; the bargain was all made.

Says I, coldly, "Is it the Bamberses that used to live in Loon Town?"

"Yes," says he. "And they are splendid folks, Samantha; and I have made a splendid bargain; they are goin' to give me fifty dollars a year for the house and garden. What do you think now? I never should have known they was a-lookin' for a house, if I hadn't been a-enquirin' 'round. What do you think, now, about my keepin' cool?"

Says I, mildly, but firmly, "My mind hain't changed from what is was more formally."

"Wall, what do you think, now, about my lettin' the old house run down, when I can make fifty dollars a year, clean gain, besides more'n three times that in solid comfort, a-neighborin'."

Says I, firm as a rock, "My mind hain't changed, Josiah Allen, so much as the width of a horse-hair."

Says he, "I always said, and knew, that wimmen hadn't got no heads. But it is agrevatin', it is awful agrevatin', when enybody has made such a bargain as I have, to not have enybody's wife appreciate it. And I should think it was about time to have supper, if you are goin' have any to-night."

I calmly rose, and put on the tea-kettle, and never disputed a word with him about whether I had a head, or not. Good Lord: I knew I had one, and what was the use of arguin' about it? I never said a word, but I kept a-thinkin'. I had heard of the Bamberses before. It had come right straight to me: Miss Ebenezer Sewelz, she that was Nably Spink's nephew's wife's step-mother, Miss Bumper, lived neighbor to 'em, and she had told me, Nably had, that them Bamberses was shiftless creeters.

Bnt the bargain was all made, and there wuzn't no use in saying anything, and I knew if I should tell Josiah what I had heard, he'd only go to arguin' agin that I hadn't no head. So I didn't say nothin', and the very next day they moved in. They had been stayin' a spell

to her folks'es, a little ways beyond Janesville. They said the house they had been livin' in, at Loon Town, was so uncomfortable, they couldn't stay in it a day longer. But we heard afterwards, Miss Scwelz heard right from Miss Bumpers'es own lips, that they was smoked out, the man that owned the house had to smoke 'em out, to get rid of 'em.

Wall, as I said, they come—Mr. Bamber and his wife, and his wife's sister (she was Irish,) and the children. And, oh! how neat Josiah Allen did feel. He was over there before they had hardly got sot down, and offered to do anything under the sun for 'em, and offered 'em everything we had in the house. I, myself, kep' cool and collected together. Though I treated 'em in a liberal way, and in the course of two or three days, I made 'em a friendly call, and acted well towards 'em.

But instead of runnin' over there the next day, and two or three times a day, I made a practice of stayin' to home considerable; and Josiah took me to do for it. But I told him that "I treated them jist exactly as I wanted them to treat me." Says I, "a megum course is the best course to pursue in nearly every course of life, neighborin' especially," says I. "I begin as I can hold out. I lay out to be kind and friendly to 'em, but I don't intend to make it my home with them, nor do I want them to make it their home with me." Says I, "once in two or three days is enough, and enough, Josiah Allen, is as good as a feast."

"Wall," says he, "if I ever enjoyed anything in this world, I enjoy neighborin' with them folks," says he. "They think the world of me. It beats all how they wershup me. The children take to me so, they don't want me out of their sight, hardly a minute. Bamber and his wife says they think it is in my looks. You know I am pretty-lookin', Samantha. They say the baby will cry after me so quick. It beats all, what friends we have got to be, I and the Bamberses, and it is agrevatin', Samantha, to think you don't seem to feel towards 'em that strong friendship that I feel."

Says I, "Friendship, Josiah Allen, is a great word." Says I, "True friendship is the most beautiful thing on earth; it is love without passion, tenderness without alloy. And," says I, "soarin' up into the realm of allegory, where, on the feathery wings of pure eloquence, I fly frequent, "Intimacy hain't friendship." Says I, "Two men may sleep together, year after year, on the same feather bed, and wake up in the mornin', and shake hands with each other, perfect strangers, made so unbeknown to them. And feather beds, nor pillers, nor nothin' can't

bring 'em no higher to each other. And they can keep it up, from year to year, and lock arms and promenade together through the day, and not be no higher to each other. They can keep their bodies side by side, but their souls, who can tackle 'em together, unless nature tackled 'em, unbeknown to them? Nobody.

"And then agin two persons may meet, comin' from each side of the world; and they will look right through each other's eyes, down into their souls, and see each other's image there; born so, born friends, entirely unbeknown to them. Thousands of milds apart, and all the insperations of heaven and earth; all the influence of life, education, joy and sorrow, has been fitting them for each other (unbeknown to them); twin souls, and they not knowin' of it."

"Speakin' of twin—" says Josiah.

But I was soarin' too high to light down, that minute; so I kep' on, though his interruption was a-lowerin' me down gradual.

Says I, "Be good and kind to everybody, and Mr. Bambers'es folks, as you have opportunity; but before you make bosom friends of 'em, wait and see if your soul speaks." Says I, firmly, "Mine don't, in the case of the Bamberses."

"Speakin' of twin," says Josiah, agin, "Did you ever see so beautiful a twin as Mr. Bambers'es twin is? What a pity they lost the mate to it! Their ma says it is perfectly wonderful the way that babe takes to me. I held it all the while she was ironin', this forenoon. And the two boys foller me 'round all day, tight to my heels, instead of their father. Bamber says they think I am the prettiest man they ever see."

Before I had time to say a word back, Bamber's wife's sister opened the door, and come in unexpected, and said, "that Mrs. Bamber wanted to borrow the loan of ten pounds of side pork, some flour, the dish-kettle, and my tooth-brush."

I let 'em all go, for I was determined to use 'em well, but I told Josiah, after she went off with 'em, "that I did hate to lend my tooth-brush, the worst kind."

And Josiah 'most snapped my head off, and muttered about my not bein' neighborly, and that I didn't feel a mite about neighborin', as he did.

And I made a vow, then and there, (inside of my mind,) that I wouldn't say a word to Josiah Allen on the subject, not if they borrowed us out of house and home. Thinkses I, I can stand it as long as he can; if they spile our things, he has got to pay for new ones; if they waste our property, he has got to lose it; if they spile our comfort, he's got to stand it as well as I have; and knowin' the doggy obstinacy of his sect, I

considered this great truth, that the stiller I kep', and the less I said about 'em, the quicker he'd get sick of 'em; so I held firm. And never let on to Josiah but what it was solid comfort to me to have 'em there, all the time, a'most; and not havin' a minute I could call my own, and havin' 'em borrow everything under the sun that ever was borrowed: garden-sass of all kinds, and the lookin'-glass, groceries, vittles, cookin' utensils, stove pipe, a feather bed, bolsters, bed-clothes and the New Testament.

They even borrowed Josiah's clothes. Why, Bamber wore Josiah's best pantaloons more than Josiah did. He got so, he didn't act as if he could ster out without Josiah's best pantaloons. He'd keep a-tellin' that he was goin' to get a new pair, but didn't get 'em, and would hang onto Josiah's. And Josiah had to stay to home a number of times, jist on that account. And then he'd borrow Josiah's galluses. Josiah had got kinder run out of galluses, and hadn't got but one pair of sound ones. And Josiah would have to pin his pantaloons onto his vest, and the pins would loose out, and it was all Josiah could do to keep his clothes on. It made it awful bad for him. I know, one day, when I had a lot of company, I had to wink him out of the room a number of times, to fix himself, so he would look decent. But all through it, I kep' still and never said a word. I see we wus loosin' property fast, and had lost every mite of comfort we had enjoyed, for there wus some on 'em there every minute of the time, a'most, and some of the time

two or three of 'em. Why, Mrs. Bamber used to come over and eat breakfast with us lots of times. She'd say she felt so manger that she couldn't eat nothin' to home, and she thought mebbe my vittles would go to the place. And besides losin' our property and comfort, I'll be hanged if I didn't think, sometimes, that I should lose my pardner by 'em, they worked him so. But I held firm. Thinkses I, to myself, it must be that Josiah will get sick of neighborin', after awhile, and start 'em off. For the sufferin's that man endured couldn't never be told or sung.

Why before they had been there a month, as I told Miss Sewelz, she was to our house a-visitin', and Josiah was in the buttery a-churnin', and I knew he wouldn't hear, says I, "They have borrowed everything I have got, unless it is Josiah." And if you'll believe it, before I had got the words out of my mouth, Mrs. Bamber'ses sister opened the door, and walked in, and asked me "If I could spare Mr. Allen, to help stretch a carpet." And I whispered to Miss Sewelz, and says I, "if they hain't borrowed the last thing now, if they hain't borrowed Josiah." But I told the girl "to take him in welcome." (I wus very polite to 'em, and meant to be, but cool).

So I tuk holt and done the churnin', myself, and let him go.

But I must stop now, for I see Josiah a-comin' across the field to supper, and curius to tell, he's always hungry for supper. Boys and husbands allus is hungry. Another time I'll tell what came of borrowin' Josiah.

## AN ARTIST'S DREAM.

BY HENRY J. VERNON.

We met at the sea-side, one summer.

She had such a "love of a dress."

(She wore it for every new-comer.)

And smiled—it was like a caress!

I said that I sketched for a living,

She answered she "doted on art."

And looked so, I thought she was giving

Her fortune, as well as her heart.

I dreamed then a dream that might madden

The soul, say of even Millais.

I fancied I'd found, like Aladdin,

The wealth to give kingdoms away.

I'd woo her, and win her, and marry,

And then to dear Paris we'd hie.

Thrice fortunate ship that should carry

Twin souls, such as Lily and I!

We strolled in the moonlight, that even;

The sea was as calm as the skies.

I vowed that her face was my heaven,

No stars were as bright as her eyes.

She languishing sang (oh! that shoulder,

I still see its ravishing gleam,

And shall, till I'm centuries older),

"How dear, how divine is Love's Dream."

All night the sweet strains of that solo

Surged wildly and mad thro' my brain—

I met her, next day, at the Polo,

With young Pete Gorilla Fitz Payn!

He'd four-in-hands; led the cotillions;

Shot pigeons, too, out of a trap;

Was heir to a couple of millions;

While I wasn't heir to a "rap."

She watched, from his mail-coach, the playing,

And smiled her witch-smile at his leer.

I bowed; but she stared, as if saying,

"What impudent tramp have we here?"

That Fall, at Grace Church, they were married,

And went off to Europe to stay.

While I—well, by duns I'm still harried,

And "pot-boilers" paint night and day.

## WHAT CAME OF BORROWIN' JOSIAH.

BY JOSIAH ALLEN'S WIFE.

I was tellin' you how the Bamberses borrowed Josiah. But I seen him comin' across the house lot, and had to stop to get him his supper, and "lay down my pen," as the Complete Letter Writer says. He has gone to bed, dear man, and is snorin' loud, so I resume. I always write better, I think, when he is snorin'; the music of it sort of stimulates my intellex.

Josiah came home, after the Bamberses had borrowed him, perfectly tuckered out. Wasn't good for nuthin' hardly for several days. He got strained, somehow, a-pullin' on that carpet. Yet after that, they would send for him real often, to help do some job. They took as much agin liberty with Josiah as they did with me; they worked him down almost to skin and bones.

And it wasn't that he suffered, we all suffered. Why his cow—sufferin' alone, was perfectly awful. They had a cow, a high-headed creeter, as haughty a-actin' cow as I ever see in my life. She would hold her head right up, and walk over our fence, and trample through the garden. I didn't know how Josiah felt about it, but I used to think myself, that I could have stood it as well agin, if it hadn't been so high-headed. It would look so sort o' independent and overbearin' at me, when it was a-walkin' through the fence, and trampin' through the garden. They tied her up, at nights, but she would get loose, and start right for our premises; seemed to take right to us, jest as the rest of 'em did. But I held firm, fer I see that, gettin' up night after night, and goin' out in the night air, chasin' after that cow, was coolin' off my companion's affection for the Bamberses.

And then they kept the awfulest sight of hens. I know Josiah was dretful tickled with the idee, at first. Said, "mebby we could swap with 'em—get into their herd of hens." And I told him, in a cautious way, "that I shouldn't wonder a mite if we did."

Wall, them hens seemed to feel jest as the rest of the family did, didn't seem to want to stay to home a minute, but flocked right over onto us; stayed right by us day and night; would hang round the doors and doorsteps, and come into the house every chance they could get, day times; and nights, would roost right along on the door yard fence, and the front porch, and the lilock bushes, and the pump. Why, the story got out that we

was keepin' a hen dairy, and strangers who thought of goin' into the business would stop, and holler to Josiah, and ask him, if he found it profitable to keep so many hens. And I'd see that man shakin' his fist at 'em, after they would go on, he would be that mad at 'em. Somehow, the idee of keepin' a hen dairy was always dretful obnoxious to Josiah, though it is perfectly honorable, as far as I can see.

Finally, he had made so much of 'em, the two boys got to thinkin' so much of Josiah, that they wanted to sleep with him, and he, thinkin' it wouldn't be neighborly to refuse, let 'em come every little while, and they kicked awfully. They kicked Josiah Allen till he was black and blue. It came tough on Josiah, but I held firm, and didn't say a word, only I merely told him, "that, of course, he couldn't expect me to sleep with the hull neighborhood," so I went off, and slept in the settin'-room bedroom. It made me a sight of work, but I held firm.

Finally, Bamber and his wife, and wive's sister, got into the habit of goin' off nights to parties, and leavin' the twin with Josiah. And though it almost broke my heart to see his sufferin's, still, held up by principle, and the aim I had in view, I would go off, and sleep in the settin'-room bedroom, and let Josiah tussle with it. Sometimes it would have the colic most all night, and the infantum, and the snuffles. But though I could have wept, when I heerd my pardner a-groanin', and a-singin' in the dead of night, and a-callin' on heaven to witness that no other man ever had the sufferin's he was a-sufferin', still, held up by my aim, I would lay still, and let it go on.

It wore on Josiah Allen. His health seemed to be a-runnin' down; his morals seemed to be loose and totterin'; he would snap me up every little while, as if he would take my head off; and, unbeknown to him, I would hear him a-jawin' to himself, and a-shakin' his fist at nothin' when he was alone, and actin'. But I kep cool; for though he didn't come out, and say a word to me about the Bamberses, still I felt a feelin' that there would be a change. But I little thought the change was so near.

One mornin', to the breakfast table, as I handed Josiah his fourth cup of coffee, he says to me, says he, "Samantha, s'posen' we go to

Brother Minkley'ses, to-day, and spend the day. I feel," says he, with a deep sigh, "I feel as if I needed a change."

Says I, looking pityingly on his pale and haggard face, "You do, Josiah." And says I, "if I was in your place, I would speak to Brother Minkley about the state of your morals." Says I, in a tender, yet firm tone, "I don't want to scare you, Josiah, nor twit you, but your morals seem to be a-totterin'; I am afraid you are a-backslidin', Josiah Allen."

He jumped right up out of his chair, and shook his fist over towards Bamber'ses house, and hollered out, in a loud, awful tone:

"My morals would be all right, if it wuzn't for them Bamberses, hang 'em!"

You could have knocked me down with a pin-feather (as it were), I was that shocked and agitated, it had all come onto me so sudden, and his tone was so loud and skareful. But before I could say a word he went on, a-shakin' his fist, vehementer, and wilder than I ever see a fist shook.

"I guess you be neighbered with as I have been, and slept with by two wild cats, and be kicked till you are black and blue, and mebbly you'd backslide!"

Says I, "Josiah Allen, if you don't go to see Brother Minkley, to-day, Brother Minkley shall come and see you. Did I ever expect to live," says I, with a gloomy face, "to see my pardner rampagin' 'round worse than any pirate that ever swum the seas, and shakin' his fist, and actin'. I told you, on the first on't, Josiah Allen, to begin as you could hold out."

"What if you did?" he yelled out. "Who thought we'd be borrowed out of house and home, and visited to death, and trampled over by cows, and roasted on; who s'posed they'd run me over with twin, and work me down to skin and bone, and foller me 'round tight to my heels all day, and sleep with me nights, and make dumb lunatics of themselves. Hang 'em, I say."

Says I, in firm axents, "Josiah Allen, if you swear another swear to-day, I'll part with you before 'Squire Baker." Says I, "it betters it, don't it, for you to start up and go to swearin'."

Before Josiah could answer me a word, the door opened, and in come Mrs. Bamber'ses sister. They never none of 'em knocked, but dropped right down on us unexpected, like sun-strokes.

Says she, with a sort of haughty, independent meen onto her (some like their cow's meen), and directin' her conversation to Josiah:

"Mr. Bamber is goin' to have his likeness took, to-day, and he would be glad to borrow the loan

of your pantaloons. And he said if you didn't want your pantaloons to go without your boots went with 'em, he guessed he'd wear your boots, as his had been heel-tapped and might show. And the boys bein' so took up with you, Mr. Allen, their Ma thought she'd let 'em come over here and sleep with you, while they wus gone; they didn't know but they might stay several days to her folks'es, as they had heard of a number of parties that wus goin' to be held in that neighborhood. And knowin' you hadn't no little children of your own, she thought it might be agreeable to you to keep the twin, while they wus gone—and—"

She hadn't got through with her speech, and I don't know what she would have tackled us for next. But the door opened without no warnin', and in come Mrs. Bamber herself; and she said that Bamber had been urg'in' her to be took, too, and they kinder wanted to be took holt of hands, and they thought if Josiah and me had some kid gloves by, as they would try to borrow the loan of 'em; they thought it would give 'em a more genteel, aristocratic look. "And as for the children," says she, "we shall go off feelin' jist as safe and happy about 'em as if they wus with us, they love dear Mr. Allen so." And says she, with a sweet smile, "I have lived on more places than I can think on hardly—we never have lived but a little while in a place, somehow the climates didn't agree with us long at a time. But never, in all the places we have lived in, have we ever had such neighbors, never, never, did we take such solid comfort a-neighborin' as we do here!"

Josiah jumped right up on his feet, and shook his fist at her, and says he, in a more skareful tone than he had used as yet:

"You have got to stop it. If you don't stop neighborin' with me, I'll know the reason why!"

Mrs. Bamber looked skairt and agitated, awful, but I laid hands on him, and says I, "Be calm, Josiah Allen, and compose yourself down."

"I won't be calm!" says he. "I won't be composed down."

Says I, firmly, still a-keepin' between him and her, and still a-layin' holt of him. "You must, Josiah!"

"I tell you I *won't*, Samantha! I'll let you know," says he, a-shakin' his fist at her awful, "I'll let you know that you have run me over with twin for the last time; I'll let you know that I have been trampled over, and eat up by cows, and roasted on, and slept with for the last time," says he, shakin' both fists at her. "You have neighbered your last neighbor with me, and I'll let you know you have."

Says I, "Josiah Allen, I tell you to compose yourself down."

"And I tell you agin, Samantha, that I *won't!*" says he.

But I could see that his voice was a sort of lowerin' down gradual, and I knew the worst was over. I spoke sort o' soothin'ly to him, and told him, in tender axents, that he shouldn't be neighbered with another mite; and finally I got him quieted down. But he looked bad in the face, and his sithes was fearful.

My feelin's for that man give me strength to give Mrs. Bamber a piece of my mind. My talk was calm, but to the purpose, and very smart. It was a very little on the allegory way.

I told her jest how I felt about mejum courses; how sweet and happyfyin' it was to pursue 'em. Says I, "fire is first-rate, dretful comfortin' for warmin' and cookin' purposes; too much fire is bad, and leads to conflagrations, martyrs, and etcetery. Water is good; too much leads to drownin', dropsy, and so forth. Neighberin' is good, first-rate, if foftered mejumly. Too much neighberin' leads to weariness, anarky, kicks, black and blue pardners, and almost delerious Josiahs."

As quick as I mentioned the word kick, I see a change in Josiah's face; he begun to shake his fist, and act; I see he was growin' wild agin; Miss Bamber see it, too, and she and her sister fled.

That very afternoon, Josiah went to Janesville, and served some papers onto 'em. They hadn't made no bargain for any certain time, so by loosin' all his rent, he got rid of 'em, before the next afternoon. And says he to me, that night, as he sot by the fire, rubbin' some linement onto his legs, where he had been kicked, says he to me:

"Samantha, if any human bein' ever comes to rent that house of me, I'll shoot 'em down, jest as I would a mushrat."

I knew he had lost over two hundred dollars by 'em, and been worked down thin as a rat, and been kicked so lame that he couldn't stand on his feet hardly. I knew that man had been neighbered almost onto his grave, but I couldn't set by calmly and heer him talk no such wickedness, and so says I:

"Josiah Allen, can't you ever learn to take a mejum course?" Says I, "you needn't go round, huntin' up renters, or murder one, if they come nigh you." Says I, "you must learn to be more moderate and mejum."

But he kep right on, a-pourin' out the linement in his hand, and rubbin' it into his legs, and stuck to it to the last.

Says he:

"I'd shoot 'em down, jest as I would a mushrat; and there hain't a law in the land but what would bear me out in it."

## A SUNSET MEMORY.

BY FAITH LINCOLN.

It seems not more than one short day,  
Since slow along this shady way,  
We two walked side by side.  
The leaves were whispering overhead,  
The long grass rustled 'neath our tread,  
The sun's last rays flushed rosy red,  
Then paled away and died.

Your words were few; but in your face,  
I read what made that pleasant place  
Seem holy ground to me.  
I knew, dear heart, you loved me well,  
Though from your lips no whisper fell.  
And I? I had no need to tell  
What you could plainly see.

But well I knew that happy day,  
Has floated many miles away,  
Adown life's rapid stream  
And many summer suns have set,  
But, darling, I cannot forget,  
That sunset memory lingers yet,  
Like some remembered dream.

And when, to-night, I walked, once more,  
The self-same path we wandered o'er,  
In that fair long ago.  
Upon my ear there seemed to fall,  
Your well-known voice in tender call;  
And when I reached the old stone wall,  
I answered soft and low.

And then I stopped and listened, dear,  
Your presence seemed so strangely near,  
I thought you must have heard.  
But while among the leafless trees,  
An unseen hand, on unseen keys,  
Played softly, dirge-like symphonies,  
You answered not a word.

But all my heart was hushed to rest,  
While, as the sun died in the west,  
I wandered slowly on.  
I know—oh! knowledge, wondrous sweet,  
Some day my slowly loitering feet  
Shall find a path, when we shall meet,  
On God's eternal dawn.