Uncle Cyrus Weatherworm

OF

Crowville, Vermont.

BY

E. L. BROWNSON.

B'gosh, Martha, I tell yew what 'tis; this 'ere high toned city liter'ture is too durned full of high-flowor language fer us common country punkins. All 'bout them pesky s'iety swells and their parties, where the men wear them 'ere patent shoes, what don't never need to be greased to make 'em shine. And them coats with not front side to 'em, and two long tails behind, and they call 'em dress coats. Hum—looks more like they was undress coats. And them 'ere low cut vests, what shows the whole bosom of yer shirt. Reckon if they wore paper collars and calaker shirts, as us country dudes do, they wouldn't wear them low cut vests, 'cause 'twouldn't look pooty with a calaker shirt.

And then there's them wimen, or s'iety bells, or what they call 'em; with their low necked and short sleeved dresses, with the cloth that orter kiver up their bosoms and bare arms, put into the tail end of 'em, and left dragin' behind to catch all the dirt, and fer some one to step onto and make themselves embarrassed. I tell yew Martha, them wimen is orfully bold. Jest think of one of 'em, in that half dressed fashion, shyin' right up to a feller in one of their dances, and never blushin'. I tell yew there's enough vice in them city s'ieties to cuss the whole town of Crow Ville.

I ain't got much larnin'—never went to collig in my life—but I have been a school master, and I reckon I understand Grammar 'n 'Rithmetic jest as well as any of 'em. I never had anythiig to do with liter'ture—but I'll be gosh durned if I don't write some real old country liter'ture and send it to some of 'em magazine editers to aublish, and I won't charge a gosh durned cent fer it either, by gum! I'll jest show them city arastocracy what good common sense liter'ture is. And I'll bet all the buttons on my meetin' frock, (there ain't no buttons on it, they're all gone) it'll increase the circulation of the magizine, that's lucky enough to git it, much's two or three copies right here in Crow Ville. I do believe it, by cricky!

I'll tell you Martha—I've hit it, or its hit me,—I'm goin' to write all 'bout that huskin' bee and dance neighbor Peoford had last fall.

"Cyrus, 'pears to me you've clean gone out of yer head—old Uncle Cyrus Weatherworm writin' liter'ture. Do yew want to go and 'spose yer igranence to them editers? They'll only jes laff at it and chuck it into the waste basket!"

"Martha, yew jest hang onto yer tongue and let me 'lone. Yew don't know Uncle Cyrus Weatherworm as well as yew orter. Yew've lived with me nigh onto thirty years, and ain't found out that I can write liter'ture: I tell yew it's time yew knowd it. Yew can scold and sputter all yew mind to Marha, I'm goin' to write some liter'ture jes the same. Yew'll be proud of me when I git to be another Woodyard Kipli'"

"Yew can do jest's yew mind ter Cyrus; but when yew git laffed at, yew needn't say I didn't tell yew better'n' to 'spose yer igeranence. I jest won't talk with yew any more 'bout it. I'm goin' right out into the kitchen and leave yew all alone to meditate and write yer nonsensical liter'ture if yer bound to do it."

"Well, b'gosh, if Martha ain't got reg'lar huffy. But I don't care 'bout that. I'm goin' to write some liter'ture bout that 'ere huskin' bee and dance of neighbor Peaford's, 'cause I've said I would and I will, b'gosh!"

"Here's plenty of paper to write on, but I'll be durned if I can find a pen. Here's an old wing—reckon I can make a quill pen that will do the bizness. Folks used to use 'em and I guess the editer'll know 'twasn't good."

"Now how'll I start the durned thing? Uncle Cyrus, I guess yew've got a sticker now. Let me see, I can always think when I scratch my head Hum—yes, that's the way—I'll jest star it as if 'twas a letter. Wha'd I call him—Mr. Editer— how'd that sound?—reckon 'twill please him to be called Mr. Editer."

"Well, I've got to begin it any way, so here goes

"MR. EDITER:—

My name's Cyrus Weatherworm. They call me Uncle Cy fer short. I live up here in Crow Ville Vermont. I don't know what your'n is, so I'll call yew jest plain Mr. Editer."

"To come to the p'int—neighbor Peaford had a huskin' last fall, and I'm goin' to write all 'bout it to put into yer Magazine. I'll tell yew, Mr. Editer, why I'm writin' this:—I've been readin' some of this 'ere new fangled city liter'ture, ('scuse my slang frazes, I can't talk nateral if I don't use 'em now and then), and 'twas all 'bout them s'iety parties, and I got jest pretty durned disgusted with it. It's so full of 'em big words that when I was readin' to Martha, (she's my wife and a orful durned good worker too,) I couldn't pernounce half of 'em; and when it come to meanin'—I'd had to consult Webster's Underbridge Dictionary most every word. Blee'by I got pooty sick of that kind of pernunciation exercise and gived it up, and told Martha I's goin' to write some good old country liter'ture, so here I am at it."

"Well, 'twas past harvestin' time, and neighbor Peaford had got his corn and pum'kins fetched into the barn as well as the rest of us Crow Ville farmers. And as he had had an enormous big yield of corn he decided to have a huskin' and 'vite his neighbors. So he sent his big [illegible] over to 'vite Martha 'n I. She's kinder of a bashful critter any way—and she comes in with one of them big pun'kin-pie grins on her face, and one finger stuck in the corner of her month, jest's you've seen bashful children, kinder gigglin' all the time. Pooty soon she busted out and says:

"Pa'n' ma sent me over to 'vite yew' 'n' Martha over to our house to-morrow night to a husain'. All the neighbors is comin', and pa and ma says fer yew to be sure n come."

"I told her to tell her pa and ma that's sure's my name's Cyrus Weatherworm I'd come. She didn't wait fer no more but skedadled fe hum."

"Martha 'n' I discussed the subject a few minutes, then we retired to bed so'st' git all the sleep we could, 'er we knew we'd be up all the next night. Pooty soon I heard Martha snorin' in her usual way, so I knew she was sleepin'. I meditated a spell on the anticipations of the comin' event, and then I guess I must have fell asleep too, 'cause I didn't wake up till mornin'."

"I got up and bilt the fire, and went out to feed the calves. That gol durned big yeller one tipped the swill-pail over and spilt mor 'n' to quarts of sour milk all over my bran new cowhide boots, and made 'em look kinder sickly like. It didn't make me feel very goon natered I can tell yew. Then I went into the barn to milk, and when I had got that long horned brindle cow of ourn milked, she up and kicked it over and me with it. It hurt my feelin's mor'n I could stand, so I busted a three legged milkin' stool all to splinters over her, and head to set on a soap-box to finish milkin'. I reckon Uncle Cyrus got his dander up by this time"

"I went in to the house and found Martha scoldin' in her nateral way, 'bout the fire She said I'd make a good fire company, 'cause I'd put a fire out if I jest looked at it. Pooty soon, Martha had breakfast ready, and we dropped the fire question, and west to discussin' the huskin'."

Martha didn't know what she'd better wear—didn't know whether she'd better wear her new calaker dress or that black alpacker of her'n I told her that I reckoned the alpacked'd be the most 'propriate fer sech an occasion—so she decided to wear her black alpacker. And then them slippers of her'n, with them big rizetts on the toes was jest too sweet fer anythin'. Martha said she 'sposed she could dance beter in 'em than in her everyday calf-skin shoes, and I reckoned she could too Then she put on that new sunbonnet of her'n, and 'twas starched right up jest as it orter be B'gosh, I reckon if some of 'em city swells had seen her, they'd jest clean busted with admirashun. I tell yew, it made me think of old days when I used to go a-courtin' her, way back in '61."

"Well, I'd got to decide on what I'd wear. Martha thought I'd better wear tha new $5.00 suit I'd jest bot. But I told her 'twould be too flashy fer sech an occashun. 'Twas all right fer meetin' and weddin's, but 'twasn't 'propriate fer huskin's. Hum-spun's more 'propriate, and a feller feels mor kinder nateral in 'em- don't feel so kinder stiff and akward like So I fetched out that old hum-spun suit of mine, and cleaned the sour milk off'm them new cowhide boots of mine, and greased 'em all up new, and I tell yew what, they did shine jest as good's any of them new patent things And when I got that new straw hat onto my head I reckon I didn't take no back seat fer style."

"Martha 'n' I, seein' we's sech near neighbors, decided it would be 'propriate fer her 'n' me to go over early'n the afternoon to kinder help 'em 'bout gittin' ready and to help receive the cumpany and entertain 'em. So 'bout three 'clock, Martha 'n' I went over. We's sech intimate friends we didn't never think of rappin'—so we opened the door and walked right in, and—don't yew blush, 'cause 'twas all an axident. But what'd yew s'pose—Mr. Peaford was jest changin' his shirt, and he wa'n't havin' good luck either. He had got it up round his shoulders and over his head and 'twouldn't go no further. Betsy, his wife, had their old red washtub most full of water, and she stood in it washin' her feet. She was holdin' up her red petticoat so'st not gi it wet, and all the time she was hallerin' to Peaford to pull, and he kept a-pullin', and finely off it come, and uncovered his eyes so'st he see us. I tell yew, it was all so kinder komical I had to bust right out a-laffin'.

Betsy screamed right out and run into the pantry, and peaked through the crack in the door and Peaford had bizness out in the wood shed bout hat time. When Betsy seed who 'twas, she said she's orfully glad to see us, and told us to go right into the parlor, and she 'n' Peaford would be right in. We went in and sot down. We didn't say much at first, 'cause we felt a little dejected over our runnin' onto Peaford and his wife in sech a perdicament."

"Pooty soon they come in and we had a lively chat—Martha 'n' Betsy, they talked 'bout their new calaker dresses and 'bout their neighbors. Peaford 'n' I, we talked 'bout our taters, and Jersy cows, and politicks; and time flew by pooty fast till the company began to come."

"Neighbor Skinner drove up and we all went out to receive him. He said his wife couldn't come 'cause she'd got to churn, and the baby was sick too, and he reckoned she could churn and take care of a sick baby better'n he could, so he'd come."

"I told Peaford I'd drive round to the barn and help him take care of his hoss. Another team drove up just then, so he said I could go. But I was orfully sorry I went. That 'ere hoss of neighbor Skinner's is a deception. He's poorer 'n' Jobes turkey and don't look as he had life enough to eat hay, but he's a holy terrer."

"Jest as we got 'round front of the barn, Peaford's yeller dog, Agynaldo, come runnin' out and scart the hoss, and he commenced to kick. Great gran'father of Nicademus, how the feet did fly. When the dash-board broke connections with the rest of the wagon and took a bee-line fer Jupiter, I jest turned a somersot out of the hind end and struck my settin-down-apperatus onto a big flat stun: I could see mor'n forty constelations floatin' round my head, and I felt kinder dazed like. When I got over my observations of heavenly bodies, I looked 'round fer Skinner—but he'd gone, hoss and all."

"I felt pooty sore—so I went in and took a few glasses of Peaford's apple-juice, and pooty soon I felt better,—I felt jest like a fightin' cock, and when Jim Smith said I was an old fool, I declared war, and commenced bambardin' his fort. But Martha got hold of me by the coat tail, and the enemy retreated out of range."

"Pooty soon, Peaford 'vited us all out to the barn to husk corn. But we didn't husk much—the boys spent all their time buzzin' the gals, and the old duffers helped to empty Peaford's gimy jon. Then we cleared up the floor fer dancin'."

"When the music commenced to play, I jest couldn' hold onto myself, so I caught onto Martha and jined into dancin' 'Old Dan Tucker,' I reckon I would have surprised them city dudes if they could have seed me cuttin' the pigon-wing. But jest as we was windin' up the figer, I made a mistep and come down with a double-shuffle onto Martha's big toe. I've been struck by lightnin' fourteen times—run over by a locomotion, and survived an atack from an insurance agent—but when Martha gave one of her war whoops and come down onto me with the force of a western cyclone, I jest collapsed and subsided into the hay-mow beneath a volly of grape and canister that poured from the wounded enemy. I was completely riddled, and the blood was pourin' from every vein—perigoricaly speakin' and I was left to die on the field of battle."

"Pooty soon Martha got better, and when that 'ere new school-master—what all the gals is after—asked her to 'tip the light hand basket' with him she jest fergot all 'bout her big toe bein' in the invalid corpse, and 'cepted his invitashun I reckon I kinder roused up when I seed this. And think I, says I, Uncle Cyrus you hadn't better die But live to take a tooth fer a tooth and an eye fer an eye (By gum, that sounds like poetry perhops I'll be a poet some day like Woodyard Kiplin')"

"When I seed him put his long arm right round Martha, I reckon 'twas time fer me to inerfer I could stand the dancin' all right—but I couldn't stand to see no other feller's arm round Martha—so I jest walked in, and that's all I remember."

"When I came too, 'twas day-time, and I was in bed sorter invalid like. Martha was settin' beside the bed playin' she was a perfessional nuss."

"I'm out again now, and I reckon if I ketch that 'ere schoolmaster there'll be 'nother invalid in Crowville, and it won't be,—"

Yours truly,

Uncle Cyrus Weatherworm.

Martha's Vineyard Heroine.

Polly Daggett was a Martha's Vineyard heroine, and her name will ever be associated with the famous Liberty Pole at Vineyard Haven, says the Patriotic Review. It was back in 1775 that the good people of that village erected the pole on the highest point of land One day a British vessel came sailing into the snug little harbor. Its captain needed a new mast and sent a boat full of men ashore to obtain one. The Liberty Pole was just what they wanted, and they proceeded to negotiate with the selectmen, saying, they would take it away by force, and therefore a price might as well be fixed, so the selectmen sold the pole.

Now, when Polly Daggett heard of this proceeding she became very indignant, she felt that the flag which surmounted that pole had been insulted, and she determined to frustrate the Britishers' plan. Learning that they were to come in the morning to saw off the pole, Polly took two girl friends into her confidence. When night came they went quietly to the hilltop, bored a hole in the staff, poured in quantity of powder, applied a firebrand on the end of a beanpole, and then watched with glee the fall of the pole—ruined beyond repair.

The next day the men from the ship came for the pole and were furious to find the coveted "stick" in splinters. The selectmen could not explain matters, but inwardly charged the affair to the prank of village boys. The ship sailed away minus the Liberty Pole, and for many years the three girls kept their secret concerning this incident which became history.

On July 4, 1898, the Sea Coast Defence Chapter, D. A. R., erected a new Liberty pole, a fac simile of the historical one, and three girl descendants of Polly Daggett, Parnel Manter and Maria Allen performed the act of unveiling it. A bronze tablet tells the story of why the Britishers did not secure a new mast, and it bears the names of the plucky heroines of that night.

Finding a Way.

In the note book of the late Bishop Fraser of Manchester there is a story for a former young curate of the English village of Stoke which shows the value of a little common sense in deciding a knotty point. The curate, being exceedingly anxious at all times to do things in the order of the liturgy, once insisted, when marrying a couple, on the ring being put on the fourth finger. The bride rebelled, and finally said:

"I would rather die than be married on my little finger."

For an instant the curate wavered; then he said: "But the fubric says so."

Matters were at a standstill—the bride tearful, the groom uneasy, the curate determined—when the parish clerk stepped in and said:

"In these cases, sir the thoomb counts as a digit."

HOME FOR THE AGED.

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Mrs K I. Wheelwright solicitor $12 35—Kate Crowley Mrs Wheelwright each $5 Charles Wheelwright Mrs W Wynn each $1 cash 75 cents

Mesdames Gullen and McMannis solicitors, $11 Margaret Tolan $5, Mrs. T. Gullen Mrs M McMannis Mrs Beatrice Leary Mrs Monks Mrs T G Murphy, John Gullen Mrs O Ward each $1 Mrs J Dintruff Mrs McHale Mr Dintruff, Mrs P Corrigan each fifty cents

Mrs Thomas A O'Hare solicitor $10—Dr T A O'Hare, $5 P Fahy $5

Mrs H Jakway solicitor $10—A Rice Congdon, Anna Cooper L Murphy M L Kinsella, B Strukes, Mary Colanes Miss Brewster, each $1 cash $5

Miss B Keon solicitor $10 55—Miss Lindsay Mrs Whitbeck Mrs George Doyle P T Keon M Bethune W H Briggs Mary Mallory, B Keon each $1 N N Lyons, H Henner, Minnie Joynt each fifty cents, cash in smaller amounts $1 05

Mrs D Slattery solicitor $27 75—Mrs C C Connell $2, Mary Ryan Kate Coffey, Mary Stevenson Margaret Walsh Ellen McCarthy Emma Dolan each $1 Mrs Cohn Mrs G M Legler Catherine McDonald Mrs C H Ferris Mrs T McAvinney Cecilia Moore M Battell Mrs P Buggy M Cushing, G Lavis Ella Nighon K Lucas K Corcoran K M Phinny, Catherine Perrin M Doyle M Sherry, Anna Dillon S M Thayer Mrs McMahon Anna Kenny friend Mary McCaffery Mrs C Wilson, Mary Bates Anna McCarthy Ella Maher C R H Mary McGinty each fifty cents, cash in less amounts $5

Mrs M W Naughton solicitor $12—Miles T O'Reilly $5 Mrs M W Naughton $3 J H Welch D M Sullivan W W Corris each $1 cash in less amounts $1

Mrs J J Cleary solicitor $8 65 Mrs J J Cleary Miss R Carmody each $1 Mrs Miller Mrs A Roth Mrs Dempsey Mrs A Netzel friend Mrs J O'Connell Miss J Mahoney Mrs Brady Mrs F Roeser, friend, each fifty cents cash $1 65

Mrs C H Crowley, solicitor, $7 Mrs W Ernst, $2, Charles H Crowley Mrs M H Shea, Luke O'Brien, J J McGreal, J J Hetterich each $1

Mrs Mayer, solicitor, $2 50—Mrs Anna Mayer, Mrs A Schreck Miss Stupp, Mrs Hafner each fifty cents

Frank J Carberry solicitor $10—John W. Clements, D J McClellan, Miss Nana McGorrey F J Carberry, each $2 Miss Hebert, Miss Katie, O'Hanlon, each $1

Miss F Shelvey, solicitor $1 75 F Shelvey Mary Gannon, each fifty cents, cash, 75 cents

Miss Catherine Hurley, $1

Mrs H S Wright, $1

St Joseph's Parish $938 57

Rev Philip Rossbach rector, church collection $89 10

Mrs M Kolb, solicitor, $687 50—Mrs Caroline Kolb, $500 Kolb & Son $25, George H Weisner, Louis W Maier, B D George J Oaks, Louis Ernst & Sons, Traders Bank, each $10, Yates Coal Co, A. G Yates, J S. Flannery H Michaels, E A Ashley, A J. Wegman, estate of Louis Flen, Vincent Gruener, a friend, V G Fochner Henry Hart A T Hagen Mrs Charles Hahn L N Stein each $5, Mrs George Klem Louis Ernst each $3 J N Oberlies, Charles Schleyer Mrs M Zogewitz friend Mrs W Ernst each $2 Mrs J Neubert $1 50 Mrs William Rampe, friend C J Shaib, W V Gresser Mrs George Winder Teresa Hart, Mrs Joseph Fleckenstein Miss M Ruffinger W Bayer A L Wegman, Mrs John Cuhe Mrs John Flen, Miss C Vogt, Mrs F Weber, Mrs Hutler each $1

Mrs P H Yawman, solicitor $146 97—P H Yawman Mrs P H Yawman, each $5, Miss Cecilia M Yawman F J Yawman, each $5 E Yawman A Yawman, Mrs F Hahn each $2, J Yawman, Victor J Yawman each $1, Mrs H Heidelin, Helen Heidelin each 50 cents, F J Hafner receipted bill for $27 97; Louis Edelman, $10; Mrs. John Klem $5.

Immaculate Conception Parish..... $367 05

Rev A. M. O'Neill, by church collection, $74 50—A friend, J. M. Murphy, M. Howe, Mrs. Charles Atkinson, James Flynn, B V. Logan, Marie Keenan, H. P. Mulligan, each $1, in less amounts, $66.50.

Miss Winifred Eagan, solicitor, $117 25—Rev. A. M. O'Neill, $15; J. C. King, $10; Rev. Joseph Bustin, Thos B. Mooney, Patrick J. Madden, Charles Cogan, Winifred Eagan, each $5; T. W. Ford, Sarah E. Kelly, Elizabeth Hernon, Dr. J. Stapleton, Patrick Eagan, C. R. Barnes, D. Harris, D H. Sullivan, each $2; R. J. Bendon, L. Wegman, M Howe, Mrs Mutchler, Mrs. Hartigan, Mrs Carling, T A. Ryan, George B. Hawken, A. Hernon, Mrs. A. Cogar, Margaret Cogar, Elinore Cogar, William Cogar, George Wright, Mrs. Merry, Mrs. Ham, Margaret O'Malley, Mrs. Leahy, Mrs. William Yawman, Nellie White, Mrs. David Clancy, James O'Neill, Mrs. P. Doran, Mrs. M. H Hogan, Kate Shea, Mrs. P. E. James, Mrs. Sheahan, E. Shean, M. Sullivan, Nellie Davis, Mrs. James McGaffrey, Richard Ford, Miss Sweeney, May Madigan of Dansville, A McCormick, Mrs. P. Grady, John Reddington, Emma Sullivan, John G. Carroll, Mrs. M. Giles, Mrs. Bernard Smith, Mrs. Shaw, each $1; J. Leddy, Ann Keogh, S. E. Kane, a friend, Samuel McAuliff, Mrs. Collins, Mrs. Cunningham, Mary Shea, Mrs Frank Madden, Ann Rossney, each 50 cents.

Miss Kate Kane, solicitor, $97.80—Rev. William Gleason, $10; Kate L. Kane, $10; Mrs. P. Barry, Hannah O'Brien, Mrs. Thomas Grady, Mrs. Teresa Fisher, each $5; Mrs. Winifred Kane $2; William H. McDonald, Mrs. W. H. Reilly, a friend, J. Morrissey, Mrs. R. Morrissey, a friend, B. Ginnity, Mrs. James Riley, J. Connors, Miss K. Connors, J. M. Reddington, Joseph McDermott, M. C. H. Maloy, Charles Maloy, E. Hickey, Miss Teresa Leary, B. V. Logan, Mrs. Frank Lyons, A. S. McDonald, Mrs. G. G. Gray, John Connors, Frank Connors, Minnie Corcoran, Mrs F. Epping, Mrs. G. Higgins, S. Graney, Minnie Gragan, Mary Houston, Mrs F Hughes, Mrs A. E. Wolcott, Mrs G F Roth, Mrs R Weiss, Mrs. Comerford Catherine Davy, Thomas Brannigan, Caroline Ward, Mrs D M Maher, Mamie Kelly, J W Roech Mrs. F. E. Rogers, each $1, K Hanley, Ellen Morgan, friend, Mrs H Curran, friend, Mrs. F. Beachel, Joseph Murphy F. J. Gambol, S. E Bruman, Mrs Mary Seel, S Brown, F. Slattery, M. Callahan, E. H Wichams, Mrs J H. Curtis, Mrs Wichams, Mary Wichams, Mrs C Hobson, Rose Courneen, F Courneen, Marie Ragen, Maggie Mason, Sarah Mahoney, Margaret McDonald, L. Peters, John Shane Mrs John Tiefel, each 50 cents; cash in less amounts, $1.80.

Mrs Mary Miller, solicitor, $20—A. J. Miller, $2; Mrs E. Rossnev, Mrs. S Birmingham, Mrs R J Howard, Nellie J Kane, Mrs H B McGill Mrs P Darcy, Mrs. E. West H McPadden, Mary Smyth, P. Magill, Dr J Hanna, Julia Lyndon, each $1 M E Mills, 75 cents, Johanna Shean, M. A Barrett, friend, J O'Neill, M Leary, Susie Kirk, Mrs A O Brien, N O Brien, each 50 cents

Mrs L. Ennecker, solicitor, $17—Louis Ennecker, $5, Edward Rossney, $2, John F. McGraw Mrs James F O'Neill, Atlanta, Ga each $5

Mrs M J Quinn, solicitor $9 25—William Gleason $2, Anna C Mack, a friend, Mrs M J Quinn, each $1, J S Wright, 75 cents, Nellie Mack T Tawaka, a friend, Lucinda Jucabhan, H P Jhube, W S Coon, M. McHugh, each 50 cents

Mrs