An Idyl of Nantucket and the Cape.

MILLARD CHACE awoke on the morning of his wedding day, and glancing first at the clock on his mantel-piece and then at the weather outside, began to dress with great care. The clock showed that he had ample time before the train left for as elaborate a toilet as he could desire, and the weather indicated that the storm which had been raging for the past three days had abated but little. Millard was a man advanced in life, and he dressed, as he did everything else, with due deliberation and forethought. He had not decided to enter into matrimony until he had spent many hours in studying the pros and cons of the subject, and on this eventful morning he tied his cravat with a slowness and precision that showed his thoughts were busied with strictly material considerations, rather than given to the wandering which younger minds are supposed to indulge in on such important mornings as the one in question.

Millard by trade was a retail dealer in boots, shoes, rubbers, etc., and had held a monopoly of the custom of his native village for fifteen years. But as the village was small, and the children all went barefoot in the summer, his fortune had not risen to anything prodigious. He was of some importance in the village itself, which was a Cape Cod town, and his opinions on matters of general interest were listened to with considerable respect, and his arguments on matters of national importance considered quite eloquent. A stir was occasioned in the little village during the preceding summer, by the appearance of a visitor from the neighboring island of Nantucket, by the name of Miss Ida Acorn; and a greater one some time later, when it was announced in the county paper that a matrimonial alliance was projected by this same Miss Acorn and "our distinguished fellow-townsmen, Mr. Millard Chace." The gossips were unable to decide on the exact circumstances of the match. The older ladies presumed that Miss Acorn had come to South Jarmouth with Millard in her mind's eye, and that subsequent events were but the natural conclusion of a long attachment. Such a careful man as Millard, they argued, could not possibly fall in love and become engaged all in two months, when he had successfully withstood the combined feminine attractions of the village for five and forty years. The younger ladies, however, looked at the matter differently. To their minds the growth of true love was not measured by days and hours. The whole affair might have begun and ended in the short space of time necessary to try on a pair of shoes. In a book dear to the select few who held this opinion, Lord Layerdirk was distinctly described as "feeling a vein of quivering fire stirring his heart-throbs through" on a certain occasion when he had been engaged in tying Gwendoline Mayerdine's ball slipper; why should not Millard have been likewise affected while carrying on his trade? It was quite clear to everybody in several different ways. Cape Cod people, after they reach a certain age, are not in the least sentimental, and therefore only the young girls held the shoe-store theory. The rest either did not trouble themselves about the matter, or accepted the ready made opinion regarding a long attachment. The entire town agreed that she was wholly unsuited to him. In the first place, she was impulsive, nervous, and thoroughly wide awake. Millard, being a Cape Cod man, was entirely free from these qualities. She was not handsome, and she was surely over fifteen years his junior. Nevertheless the newspaper item was not contradicted, and while the particulars of the match were still unknown, Miss Acorn returned to Nantucket; and Millard informed his friends that he was to follow her there in two months, when they were to be married in her mother's house.

His usual discrimination was shown in his replies to all leading questions during this time, and at the end of the two months the village forgot its curiosity on the subject, and