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RECITATIONS

For the Social Circle.

SELECTED AND ORIGINAL.

BY

JAMES CLARENCE HARVEY.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

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In reading and recitation, the general tendency is to overdo. The quiet reserve force, which can be made apparent in the voice, will reach the heart and stir the soul when gesture and ranting

fail. "Be bold! Be not too bold" should be the watchwords of the reciter. Self-possession, with a nervousness arising from an earnest desire to please, is the keynote to success. Never gesticulate if you can help it. When a gesture asserts itself to such an extent that you have made it before you realize it, be sure it was effective and graceful.

It is a noble ambition to wish to sway the hearts and minds of others by the subtle modulations of the voice, and only he who feels the force of what he utters can hope to accomplish his end. The thought of the author must be pursued and overtaken. The sentiments between the lines must be enlisted before the voice will lend itself, in all its glorious power, to the tones that thrill and the music that charms.

It is not always necessary to search for something your audience has never heard. It is far better to reveal hidden thought and new life in selections which are familiar. The hackneyed recitation, if rendered better than ever before, will win more applause than a fresh bit carelessly studied. [Pg 4]

Above all, use judgment in selection. The stout lady of fifty-two should avoid "Marco Bozarris" and "The Elf Child," and the young lady just home from boarding-school should not attempt the ponderous utterances of a Roman gladiator.

Care in selection; fidelity in study; wisdom in the choice of occasion; modesty in delivery; earnestness of manner and sincerity of feeling throughout, must win at last. If you make failures, trace them to a lack in some one or more of these requisites and, by experience, learn to avoid a recurrence. Orators, like poets, are "born not made," but even the born speaker will fail at times unless these laws are considered and observed. Always render an author's lines as he wrote them. The chances are ten to one that every word carries its burden of thought, even though you may not have discerned it. Err on the conservative side if in doubt. Over-enthusiasm is less easily pardoned.

Never select dialect verses or stories unless you have the unusual gift necessary to give them the piquancy and zest which attends a good imitation. Ask a dozen friends for an honest opinion on the subject and draw an average from their criticisms to guide you in your choice of selections. Don't lose your temper over a severe criticism. Search carefully through your list of abilities and see if there is not, perhaps, some foundation for kindly suggestion. It is often a great assistance, in memorizing the work of another, to make a written copy, but attention should be given to the making of a perfect copy, properly punctuated. [Pg 5]

Use the eye in memorizing.

Oftentimes a mental picture of a page will recall a line which for an instant seems about to escape you. Use the ear as well and study the effect of various modulations of voice as you rehearse in private.

Above all, use the best of your intelligence, earnestly, in studying and applying the thousand little nothings that in the aggregate make the perfect reader.

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THE STUDY OF ELOQUENCE.

BY CICERO.

I cannot conceive anything more excellent, than to be able, by language, to captivate the affections, to charm the understanding, and to impel or restrain the will of whole assemblies, at pleasure. Among every free people, especially in peaceful, settled governments, this single art has always eminently flourished, and always exercised the greatest sway. For what can be more surprising than that, amidst an infinite multitude, one man should appear, who shall be the only, or almost the only man capable of doing what Nature has put in every man's power? Or, can anything impart such exquisite pleasure to the ear and to the intellect, as a speech in which the wisdom and dignity of the sentiments are heightened by the utmost force and beauty of expression?

Is there anything so commanding, so grand, as that the eloquence of one man should direct the inclinations of the people, the consciences of judges, and the majesty of senates? Nay, farther, [Pg 12] can aught be esteemed so great, so generous, so public-spirited, as to assist the suppliant, to rear the prostrate, to communicate happiness, to avert danger, and to save a fellow-citizen from exile? Can anything be so necessary, as to keep those arms always in readiness, with which you may defend yourself, attack the profligate, and redress your own, or your country's wrongs?

But let us consider this accomplishment as detached from public business, and from its wonderful efficacy in popular assemblies, at the bar, and in the senate; can anything be more agreeable, or more endearing in private life, than elegant language? For the great characteristic of our nature, and what eminently distinguishes us from brutes, is the faculty of social conversation, the power of expressing our thoughts and sentiments by words. To excel mankind, therefore, in the exercise of that very talent which gives them the preference to the brute creation, is what everybody must not only admire, but look upon as the just object of the most indefatigable pursuit.

And now, to mention the chief point of all, what other power could have been of sufficient efficacy to bring together the vagrant individuals of the human race; to tame their savage manners, to reconcile them to social life; and, after cities were founded, to mark out laws, forms, [Pg 13] and constitutions, for their government?—Let me, in a few words, sum up this almost boundless subject. I lay it down as a maxim, that upon the wisdom and abilities of an accomplished orator, not only his own dignity, but the welfare of vast numbers of individuals, and even of the whole state, must greatly depend.

THE WIND AND THE SEA.

BY BAYARD TAYLOR.

The Sea is a jovial comrade;
  He laughs, wherever he goes,
And the merriment shines
In the dimpling lines
  That wrinkle his hale repose.

He lays himself down at the feet of the sun
  And shakes all over with glee,
And the broad-backed billows fall faint on the shore
  In the mirth of the mighty sea.

But the wind is sad and restless,
  And cursed with an inward pain;
You may hark as you will,
By valley or hill,
  But you hear him still complain.
He wails on the barren mountain;
  Shrieks on the wintry sea;
Sobs in the cedar and moans in the pine,
  And shivers all over the aspen tree.

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Welcome are both their voices,
  And I know not which is best,
The laughter that slips
From the ocean's lips,
  Or the comfortless wind's unrest.
There's a pang in all rejoicing,
  A joy in the heart of pain,
And the wind that saddens, the sea that gladdens,
  Are singing the self-same strain.

CUT BEHIND.

BY T. DE WITT TALMAGE.

The scene opens on a clear, crisp morning. Two boys are running to get on the back of a carriage, whose wheels are spinning along the road. One of the boys, with a quick spring, succeeds. The other leaps, but fails, and falls on the part of the body where it is most appropriate to fall. No sooner has he struck the ground than he shouts to the driver of the carriage, "Cut behind!"

Human nature is the same in boy as in man—all running to gain the vehicle of success. Some are spry, and gain that for which they strive. Others are slow, and tumble down; they who fall crying out against those who mount, "Cut behind!"

A political office rolls past. A multitude spring to their feet, and the race is on. Only one of all the number reaches that for which he runs. No sooner does he gain the prize, and begin to wipe the [Pg 15] sweat from his brow, and think how grand a thing it is to ride in popular preferment, than the disappointed candidates cry out, "Incompetency! Stupidity! Fraud! Now let the newspapers of the other political party 'cut behind.'"

There is a golden chariot of wealth rolling down the street. A thousand people are trying to catch it. They run, they jostle; they tread on each other. Push, and pull, and tug. Those talk most against riches who cannot get there. Clear the track for the racers! One of the thousand reaches the golden prize and mounts. Forthwith the air is full of cries, "Got it by fraud! Shoddy! Petroleum aristocracy! His father was a rag-picker! His mother was a washer-woman! I knew him when he blacked his own shoes! Pitch him off the back part of the golden chariot! Cut behind! cut behind!"

In many eyes success is a crime. "I do not like you," said the snow-flake to the snow-bird. "Why?" said the snow-bird. "Because," said the snow-flake, "you are going *up* and I am going *down*."

We have to state that the man in the carriage, on the crisp morning, though he had a long lash-whip, with which he could have made the climbing boy yell most lustily, did not *cut behind*. He heard the shout in the rear, and said, "Good morning, my son. That is right; climb over and sit by [Pg 16] me. Here are the reins; take hold and drive; was a boy myself once, and know what tickles youngsters."

Thank God, there are so many in the world that never "cut behind," but are ready to give a fellow a ride whenever he wants it. There are hundreds of people whose chief joy it is to help others on. Now it is a smile, now a good word, now ten dollars. When such a kind man has ridden to the end of the earthly road, it will be pleasant to hang up the whip with which he drove the enterprises of a lifetime, and feel that with it he never "cut behind" at those who were struggling.

AT THE STAGE DOOR.

BY JAMES CLARENCE HARVEY.

The curtain had fallen, the lights were dim,
  The rain came down with a steady pour;
A white-haired man with a kindly face,
  Peered through the panes of the old stage door.
"I'm getting too old to be drenched like that"
  He muttered and turning met face to face,
The woman whose genius, an hour before,
  Like a mighty power had filled the place.

"Yes, much too old," with a smile, she said,
  And she laid her hand on his silver hair;
"You shall ride with me to your home to-night,
  For that is my carriage standing there."
The old door-tender stood, doffing his hat [Pg 17]
  And holding the door, but she would not stir,
Though he said it was not for the "likes of him
  To ride in a kerridge with such as her."

"Come, put out your lights," she said to him,
  "I've something important I wish to say,
And I can't stand here in the draught you know—
  I can tell you much better while on the way."
So into the carriage the old man crept,
  Thanking her gratefully, o'er and o'er,
Till she bade him listen while she would tell
  A story, concerning that old stage door.

"It was raining in torrents, ten years ago
  This very night, and a friendless child
Stood, shivering there, by that old stage door,
  Dreading her walk in a night so wild.
She was only one of the 'extra' girls,
  But you gave her a nickle to take the car,
And said 'Heaven bless ye, my little one,
  Ye can pay me back ef ye ever star.'

"So you cast your bread on the waters then,
  And I pay you back, as my heart demands,
And we're even now—no! not quite," she said,
  As she emptied her purse in his trembling hands.
"And if ever you're needy and want a friend,
  You know where to come, for your little mite
Put hope in my heart and made me strive
  To gain the success you have seen to-night."

Then the carriage stopped, at the old man's door,
  And the gas-light shone on him, standing there:
And he stepped to the curb, as she rolled away,
  While his thin lips murmured a fervent prayer.
He looked at the silver and bills and gold,
  And he said: "She gives all this to me?
My bread has come back a thousandfold,
  God bless her! God bless all such as she!"

THE FRENCHMAN AND THE LANDLORD. [Pg 18]

ANONYMOUS.

A shrewd and wealthy old landlord, away down in Maine, is noted for driving his "sharp bargains," by which he has amassed a large amount of property. He is the owner of a large number of dwelling-houses, and it is said of him that he is not over-scrupulous of his rental charges, whenever he can find a customer whom he knows to be responsible. His object is to lease his house for a term of years to the best tenants, and get the uttermost farthing in the shape of rent.

A diminutive Frenchman called on him last winter, to hire a dwelling he owned in Portland, and which had long remained empty. References were given, and the landlord, ascertaining that the tenant was a man "after his own heart," immediately commenced to "Jew" him. He found that the tenement appeared to suit the Frenchman, and he placed an exorbitant price upon it; the leases were drawn and duly executed, and the tenant removed into his new quarters.

Upon kindling fires in the house, it was found that the chimneys wouldn't "draw," and the building was filled with smoke. The window-sashes rattled in the wind at night, and the cold air [Pg 19]

rushed through a hundred crevices about the house until now unnoticed. The snow melted upon the roof, and the attics were drenched from the leakage. The rain pelted, and our Frenchman found a "natural" bathroom upon the second floor—but the lease was signed and the landlord chuckled.

"I have been vat you sall call 'tuck in,' vis zis *maison*," muttered our victim to himself a week afterwards, "but *n'importe*, ve sal se vat ve *sal* see."

Next morning he arose bright and early, and passing down he encountered the landlord.

"Ah ha!—*Bon jour, monsieur*," said he in his happiest manner.

"Good day, sir. How do you like your house?"

"Ah monsieur—elegant, beautiful, magnificent. *Eh bien*, monsieur, I have ze one regret!"

"Ah! What is that?"

"I sal live in zat house but tree little year."

"How so?"

"I have find by vot you call ze lease, zat you have give me ze house but for tree year, and I ver mooch sorrow for zat."

"But you can have it longer if you wish—"

"Ah, monsieur, sal be ver mooch glad if I can have zat house *so long as I please*—eh—monsieur?" [Pg 20]

"Oh, certainly, certainly, sir."

"*Tres bien*, monsieur! I sal valk rite to your offees, and you sal give me vot you call ze lease for that *maison jes so long as I sal vant the house*. Eh, monsieur?"

"Certainly, sir. You can stay there your lifetime, if you like."

"Ah, monsieur—I have ver mooch tanks for zis accommodation."

The old lease was destroyed and a new one was delivered in form to the French gentleman, giving him possession of the premises for "such a period as the lessee may desire the same, he paying the rent promptly, etc."

The next morning our crafty landlord was passing the house just as the French-man's last load of furniture was being started from the door; an hour afterward, a messenger called on him with a legal tender, for the rent for eight days, accompanied with a note as follows:

"Monsieur—I have been smoke—I have been drouned—I have been frees to death, in ze house vat I av hire of you for ze period as I may desire. I have stay in ze house *jes so long as I please*, and ze bearer of zis vill give you ze key! *Bon jour*, monsieur."

It is needless to add that our landlord has never since been known to give up "a bird in the hand for one in the bush."

GUILD'S SIGNAL. [Pg 21]

BY FRANCIS BRET HARTE, 1839.

Two low whistles, quaint and clear,
That was the signal the engineer—
That was the signal that Guild, 'tis said—
Gave to his wife at Providence,
As through the sleeping town, and thence
    Out in the night,
    On to the light,
Down past the farms, lying white, he sped!

As a husband's greeting, scant, no doubt,
Yet to the woman looking out,
Watching and waiting, no serenade,
Love-song, or midnight roundelay
Said what that whistle seemed to say;
    "To my trust true,
    So love to you!
Working or waiting. Good night!" it said.

Brisk young bagmen, tourists fine,
Old commuters, along the line,
Brakesmen and porters, glanced ahead,
Smiled as the signal, sharp, intense,

Pierced through the shadows of Providence,—
"Nothing amiss—
Nothing!—it is
Only Guild calling his wife," they said.

Summer and winter, the old refrain
Rang o'er the billows of ripening grain,
Pierced through the budding boughs o'er head,
Flew down the track when the red leaves burned
Like living coals from the engine spurned!
Sang as it flew
"To our trust true.
First of all, duty! Good night!" it said.

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And then, one night, it was heard no more
From Stonington over Rhode Island Shore,
And the folk in Providence smiled and said,
As they turned in their beds: "The engineer
Has once forgotten his midnight cheer."
One only knew
To his trust true,
Guild lay under his engine, dead.

MARK TWAIN AND THE INTERVIEWER.

The nervous, dapper, "peart" young man took the chair I offered him, and said he was connected with "The Daily Thunderstorm," and added,—

"Hoping it's no harm, I've come to interview you."

"Come to what?"

"*Interview* you."

"Ah! I see. Yes—yes. Um! Yes—yes."

I was not feeling bright that morning. Indeed, my powers seemed a bit under a cloud. However, I went to the bookcase, and when I had been looking six or seven minutes, I found I was obliged to refer to the young man. I said,—

"How do you spell it?"

"Spell what?"

"Interview."

"Oh, my goodness? What do you want to spell it for?"

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"I don't want to spell it: I want to see what it means."

"Well, this is astonishing, I must say. *I* can tell you what it means, if you—if you"—

"Oh, all right! That will answer, and much obliged to you, too."

"In, *in*, ter, *ter*, *inter*"—

"Then you spell it with an *I*?"

"Why, certainly!"

"Oh, that is what took me so long!"

"Why, my *dear* sir, what did *you* propose to spell it with?"

"Well, I—I—I hardly know. I had the Unabridged; and I was ciphering around in the back end, hoping I might tree her among the pictures. But it's a very old edition."

"Why, my friend, they wouldn't have a *picture* of it in even the latest e—— My dear sir, I beg your pardon, I mean no harm in the world; but you do not look as—as—intelligent as I had expected you would. No harm,—I mean no harm at all."

"Oh, don't mention it! It has often been said, and by people who would not flatter, and who could have no inducement to flatter, that I am quite remarkable in that way. Yes—yes: they always speak of it with rapture."

"I can easily imagine it. But about this interview. You know it is the custom, now, to interview any man who has become notorious."

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"Indeed! I had not heard of it before. It must be very interesting. What do you do it with?"

"Ah, well—well—well—this is disheartening. It *ought* to be done with a club, in some cases; but customarily it consists in the interviewer asking questions, and the interviewed answering them. It is all the rage now. Will you let me ask you certain questions calculated to bring out the salient points of your public and private history?"

"Oh, with pleasure,—with pleasure. I have a very bad memory; but I hope you will not mind. That is to say, it is an irregular memory, singularly irregular. Sometimes it goes in a gallop, and then again it will be as much as a fortnight passing a given point. This is a great grief to me."

"Oh! it is no matter, so you will try to do the best you can."

"I will! I will put my whole mind on it."

"Thanks! Are you ready to begin?"

"Ready."

Question. How old are you?

Answer. Nineteen in June.

Q. Indeed! I would have taken you to be thirty-five or six. Where were you born?

A. In Missouri.

Q. When did you begin to write?

A. In 1836.

Q. Why, how could that be, if you are only nineteen now? [Pg 25]

A. I don't know. It does seem curious, somehow.

Q. It does indeed. Whom do you consider the most remarkable man you ever met?

A. Aaron Burr.

Q. But you never could have met Aaron Burr, if you are only nineteen years——

A. Now, if you know more about me than I do, what do you ask me for?

Q. Well, it was only a suggestion; nothing more. How did you happen to meet Burr?

A. Well, I happened to be at his funeral one day; and he asked me to make less noise, and——

Q. But, good heavens! If you were at his funeral, he must have been dead; and, if he was dead, how could he care whether you made a noise or not?

A. I don't know. He was always a particular kind of a man that way.

Q. Still, I don't understand it at all. You say he spoke to you, and that he was dead?

A. I didn't say he was dead.

Q. But wasn't he dead?

A. Well, some said he was, some said he wasn't.

Q. What do *you* think?

A. Oh, it was none of my business! It wasn't any of my funeral.

Q. Did you—However we can never get this matter straight. Let me ask about something else. [Pg 26] What was the date of your birth?

A. Monday, October 31, 1693.

Q. What! Impossible! That would make you a hundred and eighty years old. How do you account for that?

A. I don't account for it at all.

Q. But you said at first you were only nineteen, and now you make yourself out to be one hundred and eighty. It is an awful discrepancy.

A. Why, have you noticed that? (*Shaking hands.*) Many a time it has seemed to me like a discrepancy; but somehow I couldn't make up my mind. How quick you notice a thing!

Q. Thank you for the compliment, as far as it goes. Had you, or have you, any brothers or sisters?

A. Eh! I—I—I think so,—yes—but I don't remember.

Q. Well, that is the most extraordinary statement I ever heard.

A. Why, what makes you think that?

Q. How could I think otherwise? Why, look here! Who is this a picture of on the wall? Isn't that a brother of yours?

A. Oh, yes, yes, yes! Now you remind me of it, that *was* a brother of mine. That's William, *Bill* we called him. Poor old Bill!

Q. Why, is he dead, then? [Pg 27]

A. Ah, well, I suppose so. We never could tell. There was a great mystery about it.

Q. That is sad, very sad. He disappeared, then?

A. Well, yes, in a sort of general way. We buried him.

Q. Buried him! Buried him without knowing whether he was dead or not?

A. Oh, no! Not that. He was dead enough.

Q. Well, I confess that I can't understand this. If you buried him, and you knew he was dead——

A. No, no! We only thought he was.

Q. Oh, I see! He came to life again?

A. I bet he didn't.

Q. Well. I never heard anything like this. *Somebody* was dead. Somebody was buried. Now, where was the mystery?

A. Ah, that's just it! That's it exactly! You see we were twins,—defunct and I; and we got mixed in the bathtub when we were only two weeks old, and one of us was drowned. But we didn't know which. Some think it was Bill; and some think it was me.

Q. Well, that *is* remarkable. What do *you* think?

A. Goodness knows! I would give whole worlds to know. This solemn, this awful mystery has cast a gloom over my whole life. But I will tell you a secret now, which I never have revealed to any [Pg 28] creature before. One of us had a peculiar mark, a large mole on the back of his left hand; that was *me*. *That child was the one that was drowned.*

Q. Very well, then, I don't see that there is any mystery about it, after all.

A. You don't; well, *I* do. Anyway, I don't see how they could ever have been such a blundering lot as to go and bury the wrong child. But, 'sh! don't mention it where the family can hear of it. Heaven knows they have heart-breaking troubles enough without adding this.

Q. Well, I believe I have got material enough for the present; and I am very much obliged to you for the pains you have taken. But I was a good deal interested in that account of Aaron Burr's funeral. Would you mind telling me what peculiar circumstance it was that made you think Burr was such a remarkable man?

A. Oh, it was a mere trifle! Not one man in fifty would have noticed it at all. When the sermon was over, and the procession all ready to start for the cemetery, and the body all arranged nice in the hearse, he said he wanted to take a last look at the scenery; and so he *got up, and rode with the driver*.

[Pg 29]

Then the young man reverently withdrew. He was very pleasant company; and I was sorry to see him go.

THE PRIME OF LIFE.

BY ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

I read the sentence or heard it spoken—
  A stalwart phrase and with meaning rife—
And I said: "Now I know, by youth's sweet token,
  That this is the time called the 'prime of life.'

"For my hopes soar over the loftiest mountain,
  And the future glows red, like a fair sunrise;
And my spirits gush forth, like a spring-fed fountain,
  And never a grief in the heart of me lies."

Yet later on, when with blood and muscle
  Equipped I plunged in the world's hard strife,
When I loved its danger, and laughed at the tussle,
  "Why *this*," I said, "is the prime of life."

And then, when the tide in my veins ran slower,

And youth's first follies had passed away,
When the fervent fires in my heart burned lower,
And over my body my brain had sway,

I said: "It is when, through the veiled ideal
The vigorous reason thrusts a knife
And rends the illusion, and shows us the real,
Oh! this is the time called 'prime of life.'"

Hut now when brain and body are troubled
(For one is tired and one is ill,
Yet my soul soars up with a strength redoubled
And sits on the throne of my broken will),
Now when on the ear of my listening spirit, [Pg 30]
That is turned away from the earth's harsh strife,
The river of death sounds murmuring near it—
I know that *this* "is the prime of life."

SUPPORTING THE GUNS.

Did you ever see a battery take position?

It hasn't the thrill of a cavalry charge, nor the grimness of a line of bayonets moving slowly and determinedly on, but there is peculiar excitement about it that makes old veterans rise in the saddle and cheer.

We have been fighting at the edge of the woods. Every cartridge-box has been emptied once and more, and a fourth of the brigade has melted away in dead and wounded and missing. Not a cheer is heard in the whole brigade. We know that we are being driven foot by foot, and that when we break back once more, the line will go to pieces and the enemy will pour through the gap.

Here comes help!

Down the crowded highway gallops a battery, withdrawn from some other position to save ours. The field fence is scattered while you could count thirty, and the guns rush for the hill behind us. Six horses to a piece, three riders to each gun. Over dry ditches where a farmer could not drive a [Pg 31] wagon; through clumps of bushes, over logs a foot thick, every horse on the gallop, every rider lashing his team and yelling,—the sight behind us makes us forget the foe in front. The guns jump two feet high as the heavy wheels strike rock or log, but not a horse slackens his pace, not a cannoneer loses his seat. Six guns, six caissons, sixty horses, eighty men, race for the brow of the hill as if he who reached it first was to be knighted.

A moment ago the battery was a confused mob. We look again and the six guns are in position, the detached horses hurrying away, the ammunition-chests open, and along our line runs the command: "Give them one more volley and fall back to support the guns!" We have scarcely obeyed when boom! boom! boom! opens the battery, and jets of fire jump down and scorch the green trees under which we fought and despaired.

The shattered old brigade has a chance to breathe for the first time in three hours as we form a line of battle behind the guns and lie down. What grim, cool fellows these cannoneers are. Every man is a perfect machine. Bullets plash dust in their faces, but they do not wince. Bullets sing over and around them, but they do not dodge. There goes one to the earth, shot through the head as he sponged his gun. The machinery loses just one beat,—misses just one cog in the wheel, and [Pg 32] then works away again as before.

Every gun is using short-fuse shell. The ground shakes and trembles—the roar shuts out all sounds from a battle-line three miles long, and the shells go shrieking into the swamp to cut trees short off—to mow great gaps in the bushes—to hunt out and shatter and mangle men until their corpses cannot be recognized as human. You would think a tornado was howling through the forest, followed by billows of fire, and yet men live through it—aye! press forward to capture the battery! We can hear their shouts as they form for the rush.

Now the shells are changed for grape and canister, and the guns are served so fast that all reports blend into one mighty roar. The shriek of a shell is the wickedest sound in war, but nothing makes the flesh crawl like the demoniac singing, purring, whistling grape-shot and the serpent-like hiss of canister. Men's legs and arms are not shot through, but torn off. Heads are torn from bodies and bodies cut in two. A round shot or shell takes two men out of the ranks as it crashes through. Grape and canister mow a swath and pile the dead on top of each other.

Through the smoke we see a swarm of men. It is not a battle-line, but a mob of men desperate [Pg 33] enough to bathe their bayonets in the flame of the guns. The guns leap from the ground, almost, as they are depressed on the foe—and shrieks and screams and shouts blend into one awful and steady cry. Twenty men out of the battery are down, and the firing is interrupted. The foe accept it as a sign of wavering, and come rushing on. They are not ten feet away when the guns give

them a last shot. That discharge picks living men off their feet and throws them into the swamp, a blackened, bloody mass.

Up now, as the enemy are among the guns! There is a silence of ten seconds, and then the flash and roar of more than three thousand muskets, and a rush forward with bayonets. For what? Neither on the right, nor left, nor in front of us is a living foe! There are corpses around us which have been struck by three, four and even six bullets, and nowhere on this acre of ground is a wounded man! The wheels of the guns cannot move until the blockade of dead is removed. Men cannot pass from caisson to gun without climbing over winrows of dead. Every gun and wheel is smeared with blood, every foot of grass has its horrible stain.

Historians write of the glory of war. Burial parties saw murder where historians saw glory.

A LEGEND OF THE IVY.

[Pg 34]

BY JAMES CLARENCE HARVEY.

In a quiet village of Germany, once dwelt a fair-haired maiden,
Whose eyes were as blue as the summer sky and whose hair with gold was laden;
Her lips were as red as a rose-bud sweet, with teeth, like pearls, behind them,
Her smiles were like dreams of bliss, complete, and her waving curls enshrined them.
Fond lovers thronged to the maiden's side, but of all the youth around her,
One only had asked her to be his bride, and a willing listener found her,
"Some time, we'll marry," she often said, then burst into song or laughter,
And tripped away, while the lover's head hung low as he followed after.
Impatient growing, at last he said, "The springtime birds are mating,
Pray whisper, sweet, our day to wed; warm hearts grow cold from waiting."
"Not yet," she smiled, with a fond caress; but he answered, "Now or never,
I start for the Holy War unless I may call thee mine forever."
"For the Holy War? Farewell!" she cried, with never a thought of grieving.
His wish so often had been denied, she could not help believing
His heart would wait till her budding life had blown to its full completeness.
She did not know that a wedded wife holds a spell in her youthful sweetness.
But alas! for the "Yes" too long delayed, he fought and he bravely perished; [Pg 35]
And alas! for the heart of the tender maid, and the love it fondly cherished;
Her smile grew sad for all hope was gone; life's sands were swiftly fleeting,
And just at the break of a wintry dawn, her broken heart ceased beating;
And when, on her grave, at the early spring, bright flowers her friends were throwing,
They knelt and there, just blossoming, they saw a strange plant growing,
Its tender fingers, at first, just seen, crept on through the grass and clover,
Till, at last, with a mound of perfect green, it covered the whole grave over;
And often the village youth would stand by the vine-clad mound, in the gloaming,
And holding a maiden's willing hand, would tell that the strange plant roaming
Was the maiden's soul, which could not rest and with fruitless, fond endeavor,
Went seeking the heart it loved the best, but sought in vain, forever.

THE UNITED STATES.

BY DANIEL WEBSTER.

And now, Mr. President, instead of speaking of the possibility or utility of secession, instead of dwelling in these caverns of darkness, instead of groping with those ideas so full of all that is horrid and horrible, let us come out into the light of day; let us enjoy the fresh air of Liberty and [Pg 36]
Union; let us cherish those hopes which belong to us; let us devote ourselves to those great objects that are fit for our consideration and our action; let us raise our conceptions to the magnitude and the importance of the duties that devolve upon us; let our comprehension be as broad as the country for which we act, our aspirations as high as its certain destiny; let us not be pigmies in a case that calls for men.

Never did there devolve on any generation of men higher trusts than now devolve upon us, for the preservation of this constitution, and the harmony and peace of all who are destined to live under it. Let us make our generation one of the strongest and brightest links in that golden chain, which is destined, I fondly believe, to grapple the people of all the states to this constitution, for ages to come.

We have a great, popular, constitutional government, guarded by law and by judicature, and defended by the whole affections of the people. No monarchical throne presses these states together; no iron chain of military power encircles them; they live and stand upon a government popular in its form, representative in its character, founded upon principles of equality, and so constructed, we hope, as to last forever.

In all its history it has been beneficent: it has trodden down no man's liberty; it has crushed no state. Its daily respiration is liberty and patriotism; its yet youthful veins are full of enterprise, courage, and honorable love of glory and renown. Large before, the country has now, by recent events, becomes vastly larger. [Pg 37]

This republic now extends, with a vast breadth, across the whole continent. The two great seas of the world wash the one and the other shore. We realize, on a mighty scale, the beautiful description of the ornamental edging of the buckler of Achilles—

> "Now the broad shield complete, the artist crowned
> With his last hand, and poured the ocean round;
> In living silver seemed the waves to roll,
> And beat the buckler's verge, and bound the whole."

IN ARABIA.

BY JAMES BERRY BENSEL, 1856.

"Choose thou between!" and to his enemy
  The Arab chief a brawny hand displayed,
Wherein, like moonlight on a sullen sea,
  Gleamed the gray scimitar's enamelled blade.

"Choose thou between death at my hand and thine!
  Close in my power, my vengeance I may wreak,
Yet hesitate to strike. A hate like mine
  Is noble still. Thou hast thy choosing—speak!"

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And Ackbar stood. About him all the band
  That hailed his captor chieftain, with grave eyes
His answer waited, while that heavy hand
  Stretched like a bar between him and the skies.

Straight in the face before him Ackbar sent
  A sneer of scorn, and raised his noble head;
"Strike!" and the desert monarch, as content,
  Rehung the weapon at his girdle red.

Then Ackbar nearer crept and lifted high
  His arms toward the heaven so far and blue
Wherein the sunset rays began to die,
  While o'er the band, a deeper silence grew.

"Strike! I am ready! Did'st thou think to see
  A son of Gheva spill upon the dust
His noble blood? Did'st hope to have my knee
  Bend at thy feet, and with one mighty thrust,

"The life thou hatest flee before thee here?
  Shame on thee! on thy race! Art thou the one
Who hast so long his vengeance counted dear?
  My hate is greater; I did strike thy son,

"Thy one son, Noumid, dead before my face;
  And by the swiftest courser of my stud
Sent to thy door his corpse. And one might trace
  Their flight across the desert by his blood.

"Strike! for my hate is greater than thy own!"
  But with a frown the Arab moved away,
Walked to a distant palm and stood alone
  With eyes that looked where purple mountains lay.

This for an instant; then he turned again
  Toward the place where Ackbar waited still,
Walking as one benumbed with bitter pain,
  Or with a hateful mission to fulfil.

[Pg 39]

"Strike! for I hate thee!" Ackbar cried once more,
"Nay, but my hate I cannot find!" said now
His enemy. "Thy freedom I restore,
Live, life were worse than death to such as thou."

So with his gift of life, the Bedouin slept
That night untroubled; but when dawn broke through
The purple East, and o'er his eyelids crept
The long, thin finger of the light, he drew

A heavy breath and woke. Above him shone
A lifted dagger—"Yea, he gave thee life,
But I give death!" came in fierce undertone,
And Ackbar died. It was dead Noumid's wife.

The New Year Ledger.

BY AMELIA E. BARR.

I said one year ago,
"I wonder, if I truly kept
A list of days when life burnt low,
Of days I smiled and days I wept,
If good or bad would highest mount
When I made up the year's account?"

I took a ledger fair and fine,
"And now," I said, "when days are glad,
I'll write with bright red ink the line,
And write with black when they are bad,
So that they'll stand before my sight
As clear apart as day and night.

[Pg 40]

"I will not heed the changing skies,
Nor if it shine nor if it rain;
But if there comes some sweet surprise,
Or friendship, love or honest gain,
Why, then it shall be understood
That day is written down as good.

"Or if to anyone I love
A blessing meets them on the way,
That will to me a pleasure prove:
So it shall be a happy day;
And if some day, I've cause to dread
Pass harmless by, I'll write it red.

"When hands and brain stand labor's test,
And I can do the thing I would,
Those days when I am at my best
Shall all be traced as very good.
And in 'red letter,' too, I'll write
Those rare, strong hours when right is might.

"When first I meet in some grand book
A noble soul that touches mine,
And with this vision I can look
Through some gate beautiful of time,
That day such happiness will shed
That golden-lined will seem the red.

"And when pure, holy thoughts have power
To touch my heart and dim my eyes,
And I in some diviner hour
Can hold sweet converse with the skies,
Ah! then my soul may safely write:
'This day has been most good and bright.'"

What do I see on looking back?
A red-lined book before me lies,
With here and there a thread of black,
That like a gloomy shadow flies,—
A shadow it must be confessed,

That often rose in my own breast.

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And I have found it good to note
The blessing that is mine each day;
For happiness is vainly sought
In some dim future far away.
Just try my ledger for a year,
Then look with grateful wonder back,
And you will find, there is no fear,
The red days far exceed the black.

GOOD READING THE GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT.

BY JOHN S. HART, LL.D.

There is one accomplishment, in particular, which I would earnestly recommend to you. Cultivate assiduously the ability to read well. I stop to particularize this, because it is a thing so very much neglected, and because it is such an elegant and charming accomplishment. Where one person is really interested by music, twenty are pleased by good reading. Where one person is capable of becoming a skillful musician, twenty may become good readers. Where there is one occasion suitable for the exercise of musical talent, there are twenty for that of good reading.

The culture of the voice necessary for reading well, gives a delightful charm to the same voice in conversation. Good reading is the natural exponent and vehicle of all good things. It is the most effective of all commentaries upon the works of genius. It seems to bring dead authors to life again, and makes us sit down familiarly with the great and good of all ages.

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Did you ever notice what life and power the Holy Scriptures have when well read? Have you ever heard of the wonderful effects produced by Elizabeth Fry on the criminals of Newgate, by simply reading to them the parable of the Prodigal Son? Princes and peers of the realm, it is said, counted it a privilege to stand in the dismal corridors, among felons and murderers, merely to share with them the privilege of witnessing the marvelous pathos which genius, taste, and culture could infuse into that simple story.

What a fascination there is in really good reading! What a power it gives one! In the hospital, in the chamber of the invalid, in the nursery, in the domestic and in the social circle, among chosen friends and companions, how it enables you to minister to the amusement, to the comfort, the pleasure of dear ones, as no other art or accomplishment can. No instrument of man's devising can reach the heart as does that most wonderful instrument, the human voice. It is God's special gift and endowment to his chosen creatures. Fold it not away in a napkin.

If you would double the value of all your other acquisitions, if you would add immeasurably to your own enjoyment and to your power of promoting the enjoyment of others, cultivate, with incessant care, this divine gift. No music below the skies is equal to that of pure, silvery speech from the lips of a man or woman of high culture.

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PAUL REVERE'S RIDE.

BY HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

Listen, my children, and you shall hear,
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in seventy-five—
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year—

He said to his friend: "If the British march
By land or sea from the town to-night,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch
Of the North Church tower as a signal light;
One, if by land, and two if by sea,
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm,
For the country folk to be up and to arm."

Then he said "Good-night," and, with muffled oar,
Silently row'd to the Charlestown shore,
Just as the moon rose over the bay,
Where, swinging wide at her moorings, lay

The "Somerset," British man-of-war;
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar
Across the moon like a prison bar,
And a huge black hulk, that was magnified
By its own reflection in the tide.

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Meanwhile his friend, through alley and street,
Wanders and watches with eager ears,
Till in the silence around him he hears
The muster of men at the barrack door,
The sound of arms and the tramp of feet,
And the measured tread of the grenadiers,
Marching down to their boats on the shore.

Then he climbed the tower of the Old North Church
By the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,
To the belfry chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their perch
On the sombre rafters, that round him made
Masses and moving shapes of shade,
By the trembling ladder, steep and tall,
To the highest window in the wall,
Where he paused to listen and look down
A moment on the roofs of the town,
And the moonlight flowing over all.

Beneath, in the churchyard, lay the dead,
In their night encampment on the hill.
Wrapped in silence so deep and still
That he could hear, like a sentinel's tread,
The watchful night wind, as it went
Creeping along from tent to tent,
And seeming to whisper, "All is well!"
A moment only he feels the spell
Of the place and the hour, and the secret dread
Of the lonely belfry and the dead,
For, suddenly, all his thoughts are bent
On a shadowy something far away,
Where the river widens to meet the bay,—
A line of black that bends and floats
On the rising tide like a bridge of boats.

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Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.
Now he patted his horse's side,
Now gazed at the landscape far and near,
Then, impetuous, stamped the earth
And turned and lighted his saddle-girth;
But mostly he watched, with eager search,
The belfry tower of the Old North Church,
As it rose above the graves on the hill,
Lonely and spectral and sombre and still.
And lo! as he looks, on the belfry's height
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!
He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight,
A second lamp in the belfry burns.

A hurry of hoofs in the village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark,
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet;
That was all; and yet, through the gloom and the light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night;
And the spark struck out by that steed in his flight
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.

He had left the village and mounted the steep,
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,
Is the Mystic, meeting the ocean tides,
And under the alders that skirt its edge,
Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.
It was twelve by the village clock
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town;

He heard the crowing of the cock
And the barking of the farmer's dog,
And felt the damp of the river's fog,
That rises after the sun goes down.

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It was one by the village clock
When he galloped into Lexington.
He saw the gilded weathercock
Swim in the moonlight as he passed,
And the meeting-house windows, blank and bare,
Gaze at him with spectral glare,
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

It was two by the village clock
When he came to the bridge in Concord town;
He heard the bleating of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadows brown.
And one was safe and asleep in his bed
Who at the bridge would be first to fall,
Who that day would be lying dead,
Pierced by a British musket ball.
You know the rest; in the books you have read,
How the British regulars fired and fled;
How the farmers gave them ball for ball,
From behind each fence and farmyard wall,
Chasing the redcoats down the lane,
Then crossing the fields, to emerge again
Under the trees, at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.

So through the night rode Paul Revere,
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm,—
A cry of defiance and not of fear,
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo for evermore!
For, borne on the night-wind of the past,
Through all our history to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

BY SPECIAL REQUEST.

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BY FRANK CASTLES.

A Lady Standing with one Hand on a Chair in a Somewhat Amateurish Attitude.

Our kind hostess has asked me to recite something, "by special request," but I really don't know what to do. I have only a very small *repertoire*, and I'm afraid you know all my stock recitations. What shall I do? (*Pause.*) I have it; I'll give you something entirely original. I'll tell you about my last experience of reciting, which really is the cause of my being so nervous to-night. I began reciting about a year ago; I took elocution lessons with Mr. ——; no, I won't tell you his name, I want to keep him all to myself. I studied the usual things with him—the "Mercy" speech from the "Merchant of Venice," and Juliet's "Balcony scene," but I somehow never could imagine my fat, red-faced, snub-nosed old master (there! I've told you who he was), I never could fancy him as an ideal Romeo; he looked much more like Polonius, or the Ghost before he was a ghost—I mean as he probably was in the flesh.

My elocution master told me that Shakespeare was not my forte, so I studied some more modern pieces. He told me I was getting on very well—"one of my most promising pupils," but I found that he said that to every one.

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Well, it soon became known that I recited (one must have *some* little vices, you know, just to show up one's virtues). I received an invitation from Lady Midas for a musical evening last Friday, and in a postscript, "We hope you will favor us with a recitation." Very flattering, wasn't it?

I went there fully primed with three pieces—"The Lifeboat," by Sims, "The Lost Soul," and Calverley's "Waiting." I thought that I had hit on a perfectly original selection; but I was soon undeceived. There were a great many people at Lady Midas', quite fifty, I should think, or perhaps two hundred; but I'm very bad at guessing numbers. We had a lot of music. A young man, with red hair and little twinkling light eyes, sang a song by De Lara, but it did not sound as well as when I heard the composer sing it. Then two girls played a banjo duet; then—no, we had another song first, then a girl with big eyes and an ugly dress—brown nun's veiling with yellow lace, and beads, and ribbons, and sham flowers and all sorts of horrid things, so ugly, I'm sure it was made at home. Well—where was I? Oh, yes!—she stood up and recited, what do you think? Why, "Calverley's Waiting!" Oh! I was so cross when it came to the last verses; you remember [Pg 49] how they go (*imitating*)—

"'Hush! hark! I see a hovering form!
From the dim distance slowly rolled;
It rocks like lilies in a storm,
And oh! its hues are green and gold.

'It comes, it comes! Ah! rest is sweet,
And there is rest, my babe, for us!'
She ceased, as at her very feet
Stopped the St. John's Wood omnibus."

Well, when I heard that I felt inclined to cry. Just imagine how provoking; one of the pieces I had been practicing for weeks past. Oh, it *was* annoying! After that there was a violin solo, then another—no, then I had an ice, such a nice young man, just up from Aldershot, *very* young, but *so* amusing, and so full of somebody of "ours" who had won something, or lost something, I could not quite make out which.

Then we came back to the drawing-room, and an elderly spinster, with curls, sang, "Oh that we two were Maying," and the young man from Aldershot said, "Thank goodness we aren't."

Afterward I had another ice, not because I wanted it, not a bit, but the young man from Aldershot said he was *so* thirsty.

Then I saw a youth with long hair and badly-fitting clothes. I thought he was going to sing, but he wasn't; oh no! much worse! he recited. When I heard the first words I thought I should faint [Pg 50] (*imitating*):

"Been out in the lifeboat often? Aye, aye, sir, oft enough.
When it's rougher than this? Lor' bless you, this ain't what *we* calls
rough."

How well I knew the lines! Wasn't it cruel? However, I had one hope left—my "Lost Soul," a beautiful poem, serious and sentimental. The æsthetic youth was so tedious that the young man from Aldershot asked me to come into the conservatory, and really I was so vexed and disappointed that I think I would have gone into the coal-cellar if he had asked me.

We went into the conservatory and had a nice long talk, all about——well, it would take too long to tell you now, and besides it would not interest *you*.

All at once mamma came in, and I felt rather frightened at first (I don't know why), but she was laughing and smiling. "O, Mary," she said, "that æsthetic young man has been so funny; they encored 'The Lifeboat,' so he recited a very comic piece of poetry, that sent us all into fits of laughter, it was called 'The Fried Sole,' a parody on 'The Lost Soul' that you used to recite."

Alas! my last hope was wrecked; I could not read after that! I believe I burst into tears. Anyhow, mamma hurried me off in a cab, and I cried all the way home and—and—I forgot to say good- [Pg 51] night to the young man from Aldershot. Wasn't it a pity?

And you see that's why I don't like to recite anything to-night. (*Some one from the audience comes up and whispers to her*). No! really, have I? How stupid! I'm told that I've been reciting all this time. I am so sorry; will you ever forgive me? I do beg pardon; I'll never do it again! (*Runs out.*)

NOW I LAY ME DOWN TO SLEEP.

[Found in the Knapsack of a Soldier of the Civil War After He Had Been Slain in Battle.]

Near the camp-fire's flickering light,
In my blanket bed I lie,
Gazing through the shades of night
And the twinkling stars on high;
O'er me spirits in the air
Silent vigils seem to keep,

As I breathe my childhood's prayer,
"Now I lay me down to sleep."

Sadly sings the whip-poor-will
In the boughs of yonder tree;
Laughingly the dancing rill
Swells the midnight melody.
Foemen may be lurking near,
In the cañon dark and deep;
Low I breathe in Jesus' ear:
"I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to keep."

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'Mid those stars one face I see—
One the Saviour turned away—
Mother, who in infancy
Taught my baby lips to pray;
Her sweet spirit hovers near
In this lonely mountain-brake.
Take me to her Saviour dear
"If I should die before I wake."

Fainter grows the flickering light,
As each ember slowly dies;
Plaintively the birds of night
Fill the air with sad'ning cries;
Over me they seem to cry:
"You may never more awake."
Low I lisp: "If I should die,
I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to take."

Now I lay me down to sleep;
I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to keep.
If I should die before I wake,
I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to take.

THE AMERICAN UNION.

BY DANIEL WEBSTER.

I profess, sir, in my career hitherto, to have kept steadily in view the prosperity and honor of the whole country, and the preservation of our Federal Union. It is to that union we owe our safety at home, and our consideration and dignity abroad. It is to that union that we are chiefly indebted for whatever makes us most proud of our country.

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That union we reached only by the discipline of our virtues, in the severe school of adversity. It had its origin in the necessities of disordered finance, prostrate commerce, and ruined credit. Under its benign influences, these great interests immediately awoke, as from the dead, and sprang forth with newness of life.

Every year of its duration has teemed with fresh proofs of its utility and its blessings; and although our territory has stretched out wider and wider, and our population spread further and further, they have not outrun its protection, or its benefits. It has been to us all a copious fountain of national, social, and personal happiness.

I have not allowed myself, sir, to look beyond the union, to see what might lie hidden in the dark recess behind. I have not coolly weighed the chances of preserving liberty, when the bonds that unite us together shall be broken asunder.

I have not accustomed myself to hang over the precipice of disunion, to see whether, with my short sight, I can fathom the depth of the abyss below; nor could I regard him as a safe counsellor in the affairs of this government, whose thoughts should be mainly bent on considering, not how the union should be best preserved, but how tolerable might be the condition of the people when it shall be broken up and destroyed.

[Pg 54]

While the union lasts, we have high, exciting, gratifying prospects spread out before us, for us and our children. Beyond that I seek not to penetrate the veil. God grant that, in my day at least, that curtain may not rise! God grant that on my vision never may be opened what lies behind!

When my eyes shall be turned to behold, for the last time, the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious union; on states dissevered, discordant, belligerent; on a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched, it may be, in fraternal blood!

Let their last feeble and lingering glance rather behold the gorgeous ensign of the republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in their original lustre, not a stripe erased or polluted, nor a single star obscured,

bearing for its motto no such miserable interrogatory as, What is all this worth? nor those other words of delusion and folly, Liberty first, and union afterward; but everywhere, spread all over in characters of living light, blazing on all its ample folds, as they float over the sea and over the land, and in every wind under the whole heavens, that other sentiment, dear to every true American heart, liberty and union now and forever, one and inseparable!

THE POPPY LAND LIMITED EXPRESS.

[Pg 55]

BY EDGAR WADE ABBOT.

The first train leaves at six p. m.
  For the land where the poppy blows;
The mother dear is the engineer,
  And the passenger laughs and crows.

The palace car is the mother's arms;
  The whistle, a low, sweet strain:
The passenger winks, and nods, and blinks,
  And goes to sleep in the train!

At eight p. m. the next train starts
  For the poppy land afar,
The summons clear falls on the ear:
  "All aboard for the sleeping-car!"

But what is the fare to poppy land?
  I hope it is not too dear.
The fare is this, a hug and a kiss,
  And it's paid to the engineer!

So I ask of Him who children took
  On His knee in kindness great,
"Take charge, I pray, of the trains each day,
  That leave at six and eight.

"Keep watch of the passengers," thus I pray,
  "For to me they are very dear,
And special ward, O gracious Lord,
  O'er the gentle engineer."

MOTHER, HOME, AND HEAVEN.

[Pg 56]

Mother, Home, and Heaven, says a writer, are three of the most beautiful words in the English language. And truly I think that they may be well called so—what word strikes so forcibly upon the heart as mother? Coming from childhood's sunny lips, it has a peculiar charm; for it speaks of one to whom they look and trust for protection.

A mother is the truest friend we have; when trials heavy and sudden fall upon us; when adversity takes the place of prosperity; when friends, who rejoiced with us in our sunshine, desert us when troubles thicken around us, still will she cling to us, and endeavor by her kind precepts and counsels to dissipate the clouds of darkness, and cause peace to return to our hearts.

The kind voice of a mother has often been the means of reclaiming an erring one from the path of wickedness to a life of happiness and prosperity.

The lonely convict, immured in his dreary cell, thinks of the innocent days of his childhood, and feels that though other friends forsake him, he has still a guardian angel watching over him; and that, however dark his sins may have been, they have all been forgiven and forgotten by her.

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Mother is indeed a sweet name, and her station is indeed a holy one; for in her hands are placed minds, to be moulded almost at her will; aye, fitted to shine—not much, it is true, on earth, compared, if taught aright, with the dazzling splendor which awaits them in heaven.

Home! how often we hear persons speak of the home of their childhood. Their minds seem to delight in dwelling upon the recollections of joyous days spent beneath the parental roof, when their young and happy hearts were as light and free as the birds who made the woods resound with the melody of their cheerful voices. What a blessing it is, when weary with care, and burdened with sorrow, to have a home to which we can go, and there, in the midst of friends we love, forget our troubles and dwell in peace and quietness.

Heaven! that land of quiet rest—toward which those, who, worn down and tired with the toils of

earth, direct their frail barks over the troubled waters of life, and after a long and dangerous passage, find it—safe in the haven of eternal bliss. Heaven is the home that awaits us beyond the grave. There the friendships formed on earth, and which cruel death has severed, are never more to be broken: and parted friends shall meet again, never more to be separated.

It is an inspiring hope that, when we separate here on earth at the summons of death's angel, and when a few more years have rolled over the heads of those remaining, if "faithful unto death," we shall meet again in Heaven, our eternal *home*, there to dwell in the presence of our Heavenly Father, and go no more out forever. [Pg 58]

PRAYING FOR SHOES.

BY PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE.

A True Incident.

On a dark November morning,
A lady walked slowly down
The thronged, tumultuous thoroughfare
Of an ancient seaport town.

Of a winning and gracious beauty,
The peace of her pure young face
Was soft as the gleam of an angel's dream
In the calms of a heavenly place.

Her eyes were fountains of pity,
And the sensitive mouth expressed
A longing to set the kind thoughts free
In music that filled her breast.

She met, by a bright shop window,
An urchin timid and thin,
Who, with limbs that shook and a yearning look,
Was mistily glancing in
At the rows and varied clusters [Pg 59]
Of slippers and shoes outspread,
Some shimmering keen, but of sombre sheen,
Some purple and green and red.

His pale lips moved and murmured;
But of what, she could not hear.
And oft on his folded hands would fall
The round of a bitter tear.

"What troubles you, child?" she asked him,
In a voice like the May-wind sweet.
He turned, and while pointing dolefully
To his naked and bleeding feet,

"I was praying for shoes," he answered;
"Just look at the splendid show!
I was praying to God for a single pair,
The sharp stones hurt me so!"

She led him, in museful silence,
At once through the open door,
And his hope grew bright, like a fairy light,
That flickered and danced before!

And there he was washed and tended
And his small, brown feet were shod;
And he pondered there on his childish prayer,
And the marvelous answer of God.

Above them his keen gaze wandered,
How strangely from shop to shelf,
Till it almost seemed that he fondly dreamed
Of looking on God Himself.

The lady bent over, and whispered,
"Are you happier now, my lad?"
He started, and all his soul flashed forth

In a gratitude swift and glad.

[Pg 60]

"Happy?—Oh, yes!—I am happy!"
Then (wonder with reverence rife,
His eyes aglow, and his voice sunk low),
"Please tell me! Are you God's wife?"

RUM'S DEVASTATION AND DESTINY.

BY HON. WILLIAM SULLIVAN.

[In a discourse delivered before the Massachusetts Society for the Suppression of Intemperance, on the twenty-third of May, 1832, Hon. William Sullivan, one of the vice-presidents of the society, gave an account of the discovery of the art of distilling wine from brandy, showing that it was made some five or six hundred years ago, by an alchemist who was in search of the means of acquiring "inexhaustible riches and perpetual youth." After having spoken of the origin of alcohol, the speaker imagines it to be "the office of history to announce the future, instead of recording the past," and assuming to stand beside the man who made the discovery, delivered the following eloquent address detailing the melancholy consequences of this discovery, and forecasting the blessings which shall result from the final overthrow of the rum fiend.]

In your researches after that which you should, at once, have known to be impossible, by the laws of nature, you have opened a fountain of misery which shall flow for ages. You have not contented yourself with pressing out the juices of the fruits bestowed upon you, and converting these into strong drink which you needed not,—but you have taken this strong drink, and the harvest, which was given to you for food, and have drawn from these a liquid which is not food and which will [Pg 61] not nourish nor sustain your earthly frame. This liquid shall be a curse upon you and your descendants. It shall be known wherever the arts of civilization are known. You shall call it the *elixir of life*. You shall believe it to be nutritious to the body and gladdening to the soul. The love of it shall grow with the use of it. It shall soothe the solitary hour and cheer the festive board. It shall charm away your griefs, and be the cause of your rejoicings. It shall be the inducement to communion and the bond of friendship. It shall be prized alike by the high and the low. It shall be the joy of princes as well as of the meanest of mortals. It shall be the stimulant to laborious toil, and the reward for labor done. It shall be bought and sold, and make the dealer therein rich. It shall yield abundant revenues to sovereignty. Hospitality shall be dishonored in not offering it to the guest, and the guest shall be disgraced in not receiving it at the hand of his host.

But——it shall visit your limbs with palsy; it shall extinguish the pride of man; it shall make the husband hateful to the wife, and the wife loathsome to the husband; it shall annihilate the love of offspring; it shall make members of society a shame and a reproach to each other, and to all among whom they dwell. It shall steal from the virtuous and the honorable their good name, and [Pg 62] shall make the strong and the vigorous to totter along the streets of cities. It shall pervert the law of habit, designed to strengthen you in the path of duty, and bind you in its iron chain. It shall disgrace the judge upon the bench, the minister in the sacred desk, and the senator in his exalted seat. It shall make your food tasteless, your mouth to burn as with a fever, and your stomach to tremble as with disease. It shall cause the besotted mother to overlay her newborn, unconscious that it dies beneath the pressure of her weight; the natural cravings of the infant shall make it strive to awaken her who has passed, unheeded, to her last long sleep. The son shall hide his face that he may not behold his father's depravity; and the father shall see the object of his fondest hopes turn to a foul and bloated carcass, that hurries to the grave. It shall turn the children of men into raving maniacs; and the broken ties of blood and affection shall find no relief but in the friendly coming of Death. As the seed which man commits to the earth comes forth into that which he converts into spirit, so shall this product of his own invention be as seed in his own heart, to bring forth violence, rapine and murder. It shall cause man to shut up his fellow-man in the solitude of the grated cell. The prisoner shall turn pale and tremble, in his loneliness, at the [Pg 63] presence of his own thoughts; he shall come forth to die, in cold blood, by the hand of his fellow, with the spectacle of *religious homage on a scaffold*, and amid the gaze of curious thousands. Poverty shall be made squalid and odious, even so that Charity shall turn away her face in disgust. It shall attract the pestilence that walks, even at noon-day, in darkness, to the very vitals of the drunkard, as carrion invites the far-sighted birds of prey. The consumer of spirit shall be found dead in the highway, with the exhausted vessel by his side. Yea, the drunkard shall kindle a fire in his own bosom which shall not depart from him till he is turned to ashes. The dropsical drunkard shall die in his delirium, and the fluid which has gathered in his brain shall smell like spirit, and like spirit shall burn. A feeble frame, an imbecile mind, torturing pain and incurable madness shall be of the inheritance which drunkards bequeath, to run with their blood to innocent descendants.

The wise men, who assemble in the halls; of legislation, shall be blind to this ruin, desolation, and misery. Nay, they shall license the sale of this poison, and shall require of dignified magistrates to certify how much thereof shall be sold for the "PUBLIC GOOD."

This minister of woe and wretchedness shall roam over the earth at pleasure. It shall be found in every country of the Christian; it shall go into every city, into every village, and into every house. But it shall not visit the country of the heathen, nor spread woe and wretchedness among them, but by the hands of Christians. [Pg 64]

The light of reason shall at length break upon the benighted and afflicted world. The truth shall be told. It shall be believed. The causes of calamity shall be unveiled. The friends of the human race shall speak and be respected. Rational man shall be ashamed of his follies and his crimes, and humbled to the dust that he was so long ignorant of their origin. Governments shall be ashamed that they so long tolerated and sustained the most costly and cruel foe that man has ever encountered. Avarice itself shall be conscience-stricken and penitent. It shall remain where nature placed it for use; and it shall be odious in the sight of *Heaven* and of *Earth* to convert the fruits of the soil into poison.

THE DAUGHTER OF THE DESERT.

[Pg 65]

BY JAMES CLARENCE HARVEY.

An opulent lord of Ispahan,
In luxury, lolled on a silk divan,
Dreaming the idle hours away
In a cloud of smoke from his nargile.
Weary with nothing to do in life,
  He thought, as he watched the smoky whirls,
"'Twill be diversion to choose a wife
  From my peerless bevy of dancing-girls.
There are beauties fair from every land—
Lustrous eyes from Samarcand,
Dusky forms from the upper Nile,
Teeth that glisten when red lips smile,
Gypsy faces of olive hue,
  Stolen from some wild wandering clan,
Fair complexions and eyes of blue,
  From the sunny isles of Cardachan,
Regal beauties of queenly grace
And sinuous sirens of unknown race;
Some one among them will surely bless
Hours that grow heavy with idleness."
Then the slave that waited his lightest need,
  Fell on his knee, by the silk divan,
And the swarthy, listening ear gave heed
  To the will of the lord of Ispahan.

"Send hither my dancing-girls," he said,
  "And set me a feast to please the eye
And tempt the palate, for this shall be
A wedding breakfast before us spread,
  If the charm of beauty can satisfy
And one of their number pleaseth me.
I will wed no maiden of high degree
  With the tips of her fingers henna-stained
  And the dew of youth from her life-blood drained,
But a child of nature wild and free."

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Then the slave bent low and said: "O Sire,
  A woman lingers beside the gate;
Her eyes are aglow like coals of fire
  And she mourns as one disconsolate;
And when we bid her to cease and go,
  Each eye grows bright, like an evening star,
And she sayeth: 'The master will hear my woe,
  For I come from the deserts of Khandakar.'"
"Bid her to enter," the master said,
And the frown from his forehead swiftly fled.
The hasty word on his lip way stayed
  As he thought of his youth, in the land afar,
And the peerless eyes of a Bedouin maid,
  In the desert places of Khandakar.
The woman entered and swift unwound
The veil that mantled her face around,
And in matchless beauty, she stood arrayed,
In the scant attire of a Bedouin maid.

The indolent lord of Ispahan
Started back on the silk divan,
For in form and feature, in very truth,
It seemed the love of his early youth.
The almond eyes and the midnight hair,
  The rosebud mouth and the rounded chin—
Time had not touched them; they still were fair,
  And the passion of yore grew strong within.
Then she made him the secret Bedouin sign,
  Which only dishonor can fail to heed;
The solemn pact of the races nine,
  To help each other in time of need.
But her eyes beheld no answering sign,
  Though a crimson tide to his forehead ran,
And the trembling maiden could not divine
  The will of the lord of Ispahan.
With the sound of a rippling mountain brook,
The voice of the woman her lips forsook;
  And thus her tale of despair began
  In the lordly palace of Ispahan:

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"On a stallion black as the midnight skies,
From a desert I come, where my lover lies
At death's dark verge; and the hostile clan
That struck him down, are in Ispahan
With slaves to sell, in the open street;
And only because my steed was fleet
Am I now free; but here I bide,
For this morning the hard-rid stallion died.
Out of your opulence, one swift steed
  Only a drop from the sea will be;
A grain of sand on the shore, to my need;
  But the wealth of the whole, wide world to me.
My soul to the soul of my loved one cries,
  At dawn or in darkness, whate'er betide,
And the pain of longing all peace denies,
  To the heart that strains to my lover's side."
"You shall mourn no more, but sit with me
And rejoice in a scene of revelry;
For the pleasures of life are the rights of man,"
Said the indolent lord of Ispahan.

The curtains parted and noiseless feet
  Of dusky slaves stole over the floor.
Their strong arms laden with burden sweet
  Of fruits and flowers a goodly store.
Luscious peaches and apricots,
Plucked from the sunniest garden spots;
Syrian apples and cordials rare;
Succulent grapes that filled the air
With heavy sweetness, while rivers ran,
From beakers of wine from Astrakhan;
Cooling salvers of colored ice;
Almonds powdered with fragrant spice;
Smoking viands, on plates of gold,
And carven vessels of price untold,
Kindling the appetite afresh
For dainty morsels of fowl and flesh.
The musical notes of the mellow flute,
  From a source remote, rose higher and higher,
With the quivering sounds from a hidden lute,
  The plaintive sweep of the tender lyre.

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Then a whirlwind of color filled the air—
  A misty vapor of filmy lace,
With gleams of silk and of round arms bare,
  In a mazy whirl of infinite grace;
And the lustrous glow of tresses blent
With the shimmer of pearls, from the Orient.
The half-sobbed, breathless, sweet refrain,
  A swelling burst of sensuous sound,
Sank lower to swell and sink again,
  Then died in silence most profound.
The panting beauties with cheeks aglow,
  Scattered about on the rug-strewn floor,

Like bright-hued leaves when the chill winds blow,
Or tinted sea-shells along the shore.
But the lord of the palace turned and cried;
"Heavy and languid these maidens are."
And he said, to the Bedouin at his side:
"Teach them the dances of Khandakar."
Her dark eyes lit with the flash of fire,
And she said: "You will pity my need most dire?
You will give me steed to fly afar,
To my love in the deserts of Khandakar?"
"Half that I own shall be yours," he said,
"If the love of my youth that was under ban
Comes back to me like a soul from the dead
Bringing joy to the palace of Ispahan."

She sprang to the floor with an agile bound.
The music broke in a swirl of sound,
Her hair from its fillet became unbound.
And the dancing-girls that stood apart,
Gazed rapt and speechless, with hand to heart,
At the wild, untrammelled curves of grace
Of the dancing-girl from the desert race.
Not one of them half so fair to see;
Not one as lithe in the sinuous twist
Of twirling body and bending knee,
Of supple ankle and curving wrist.
The wilder the music, the wilder she;
It seemed like the song of a bird set free
To thrill in the heart of a cloud of mist
And live on its own mad ecstasy. [Pg 69]
Spellbound and mute, on the silk divan,
Sat the lord of the palace of Ispahan.

But the thoughts of the master were drifting far
To his youth in the deserts of Khandakar;
To the time when another had danced as well,
And listened with tenderness in her eyes,
To the burning words his lips might tell,
With kisses freighting her soft replies.
And he had thought that her smile would bless
His roving life, in the land afar,
And cheer him in hours of loneliness,
In the tents of the deserts of Khandakar.
But the tribe had chosen the maid to wed
With the powerful chief of a hostile clan,
And the flattered woman had turned and fled
From the pleading voice of a stricken man;
Then out of the desert the lover sped,
To become a great lord of Ispahan.

And now this child, with the subtle grace
Of the mother that bore her, had come to him
With the desert's breath upon her face,
Rousing within him a purpose grim.
"By the beard of the Prophet! but you shall be
The light and the joy of my life to me!
As your mother was, you are to-day.
Your lover, perchance, hath lived his span;
You shall dry your maidenly tears and stay
As the wife of the lord of Ispahan."
That night, when the dusky shadows crept
Across the tiles of the banquet-room,
They found the form of a man who slept
On a silk divan, in the gathering gloom.
The window screens were wide to the air,
And the hedge, where the fragrant roses grew,
Was cleft and trodden to earth, just where
A frightened fugitive might pass through.
[Pg 70]
And the groom of the stables, heavy with wine,
Wakened not at the prancing tread
Of the milk-white steed and made no sign,
As the Bedouin maid from the palace fled.
And the indolent lord of Ispahan
Seemed resting still, on the silk divan;

But his heart was beating with love no more,
  In his eyes no light of passion gleamed;
His listless fingers touched the floor,
  Where the crimson tide of his life-blood streamed,
And he slept the last, long, dreamless sleep;
  For the end had come to life's brief span;
And his jewelled dagger was handle deep,
  In the heart of the lord of Ispahan.

HORNETS.

BY BILL NYE.

Last fall I desired to add to my rare collection a large hornet's nest. I had an embalmed tarantula and her porcelain-lined nest, and I desired to add to these the gray and airy house of the hornet. I procured one of the large size, after cold weather, and hung it in my cabinet by a string. I forgot about it until spring. When warm weather came something reminded me of it; I think it was a hornet. He jogged my memory in some way, and called my attention to it. Memory is not located where I thought it was. It seemed as though when ever he touched me he awakened a memory,— [Pg 71]
a warm memory, with a red place all around it.

Then some more hornets came, and began to rake up old personalities. I remember that one of them lit on my upper lip. He thought it was a rosebud. When he went away it looked like a gladiolus bulb. I wrapped a wet sheet around it to take out the warmth and reduce the swelling, so that I could go through the folding doors, and tell my wife about it. Hornets lit all over me, and walked around on my person. I did not dare to scrape them off, because they were so sensitive. You have to be very guarded in your conduct toward a hornet.

I remember once while I was watching the busy little hornet gathering honey and June-bugs from the bosom of a rose, years ago, I stirred him up with a club, more as a practical joke than anything, and he came and lit in my sunny hair;—that was when I wore my own hair—and he walked around through my gleaming tresses quite a while, making tracks as large as a water-melon all over my head. If he hadn't run out of tracks my head would have looked like a load of summer squashes. I remember I had to thump my head against the smoke-house in order to smash him; and I had to comb him out with a fine comb, and wear a waste-paper basket two weeks for a hat. Much has been said of the hornet; but he has an odd, quaint way after all, that is [Pg 72]
forever new.

SINCE SHE WENT HOME.

BY R. J. BURDETTE.

Since she went home—
The evening shadows linger longer here,
The winter days fill so much of the year,
And even summer winds are chill and drear,
Since she went home.

Since she went home—
The robin's note has touched a minor strain,
The old glad songs breathe but a sad refrain,
And laughter sobs with hidden, bitter pain,
Since she went home.

Since she went home—
How still the empty room her presence blessed;
Untouched the pillow that her dear head pressed;
My lonely heart has nowhere for its rest,
Since she went home.

Since she went home—
The long, long days have crept away like years,
The sunlight has been dimmed with doubts and fears,
And the dark nights have rained in lonely tears,
Since she went home.

THE CHILDREN WE KEEP.

The children kept coming, one by one,
Till the boys were five and the girls were three,
And the big brown house was alive with fun
From the basement floor to the old roof-tree.
Like garden flowers the little ones grew,
Nurtured and trained with the tenderest care;
Warmed by love's sunshine, bathed in its dew,
They bloomed into beauty, like roses rare.

But one of the boys grew weary one day,
And leaning his head on his mother's breast,
He said, "I'm tired and cannot play;
Let me sit awhile on your knee and rest."
She cradled him close in her fond embrace,
She hushed him to sleep with her sweetest song,
And rapturous love still lighted his face
When his spirit had joined the heavenly throng.

Then the eldest girl, with her thoughtful eyes,
Who stood where the "brook and the river meet,"
Stole softly away into paradise
Ere "the river" had reached her slender feet.
While the father's eyes on the grave are bent,
The mother looked upward beyond the skies;
"Our treasures," she whispered, "were only lent,
Our darlings were angels in earth's disguise."

The years flew by and the children began
With longing to think of the world outside;
And as each, in his turn, became a man,
The boys proudly went from the father's side.
The girls were women so gentle and fair
That lovers were speedy to woo and win;
And with orange blossoms in braided hair,
The old home was left, the new home to begin.

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So, one by one, the children have gone,—
The boys were five and the girls were three;
And the big brown house is gloomy and lone,
With but two old folks for its company.
They talk to each other about the past,
As they sit together in eventide,
And say, "All the children we keep at last
Are the boy and the girl who in childhood died."

AMERICA FOR GOD.

BY T. DE WITT TALMAGE.

But now what are the weapons by which, under our Omnipotent Leader, the real obstacles in the way of our country's evangelization, the ten thousand mile Sebastopols, are to be leveled? The first columbiad, with range enough to sweep from eternity to eternity, is the Bible, millions of its copies going out, millions on millions. Then there are all the Gospel batteries, manned by seventy thousand pastors and home missionaries, over the head of each one of whom is the shield of Divine protection, and in the right hand of each one the gleaming, two-edged sword of the Infinite Spirit! Hundreds of thousands of private soldiers for Christ, marching under the one-starred, blood-striped flag of Emanuel! On our side, the great and mighty theologians of the land the heavy artillery, and the hundreds of thousands of Christian children the infantry. They are [Pg 75] marching on! Episcopacy, with the sublime roll of its liturgies; Methodism, with its battle-cry of "The sword of the Lord and John Wesley;" the Baptist Church, with its glorious navy sailing up our Oregons and Sacramentos and Mississippis; and Presbyterians, moving on with the battle-cry of "The sword of the Lord and John Knox." And then, after awhile will come the great tides of revival, sweeping over the land, the five hundred thousand conversions in 1857 eclipsed by the salvation of millions in a day, and the four American armies of the Lord's host marching toward each other, the Eastern army marching west, the Western army marching east, the Northern army marching south, the Southern army marching north; shoulder to shoulder! Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! until they meet mid-continent, having taken America for God!

The thunder of the bombardment is already in the air, and when the last bridge of opposition is taken, and the last portcullis of Satan is lifted, and the last gun spiked, and the last tower

dismantled, and the last charger of iniquity shall have been hurled back upon its haunches, what a time of rejoicing!

OUR OWN.

[Pg 76]

BY MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

If I had known, in the morning,
  How wearily all the day
The words unkind would trouble my mind
  That I said when you went away,
I had been more careful, darling,
  Nor given you needless pain;
But—we vex our own with look and tone
  We might never take back again.

For though in the quiet evening
  You may give me the kiss of peace,
Yet it well might be that never for me
  The pain of the heart should cease;
How many go forth at morning
  Who never come home at night,
And hearts have broken for harsh words spoken
  That sorrow can ne'er set right.

We have careful thought for the stranger,
  And smiles for the sometime guest,
But oft for our own the bitter tone,
  Though we love our own the best.
Ah, lip with the curve impatient,
  Ah, brow with the shade of scorn,
'T were a cruel fate were the night too late
  To undue the work of morn.

BEHIND TIME.

[Pg 77]

BY FREEMAN HUNT.

A railroad train was rushing along at almost lightning speed. A curve was just ahead, and beyond it was a station, at which the cars usually passed each other. The conductor was late, so late that the period during which the down train was to wait had nearly elapsed; but he hoped yet to pass the curve safely. Suddenly a locomotive dashed into sight right ahead. In an instant there was a collision. A shriek, a shock, and fifty souls were in eternity; and all because an engineer had been *behind time*.

A great battle was going on. Column after column had been precipitated for eight mortal hours on the enemy posted along the ridge of a hill. The summer sun was sinking to the west; re-inforcements for the obstinate defenders were already in sight; it was necessary to carry the position with one final charge, or everything would be lost. A powerful corps had been summoned from across the country, and if it came up in season all would yet be well. The great conqueror, confident in its arrival, formed his reserve into an attacking column, and ordered them to charge the enemy. The whole world knows the result. Grouchy failed to appear; the imperial guard was [Pg 78] beaten back; Waterloo was lost. Napoleon died a prisoner at St. Helena because one of his marshals was *behind time*.

A leading firm in commercial circles had long struggled against bankruptcy. As it had enormous assets in California, it expected remittances by a certain day; and, if the sums promised arrived, its credit, its honor, and its future prosperity would be preserved. But week after week elapsed without bringing the gold. At last came the fatal day on which the firm had bills maturing to enormous amounts. The steamer was telegraphed at daybreak; but it was found, on inquiry, that she brought no funds, and the house failed. The next arrival brought nearly half a million to the insolvents, but it was too late; they were ruined because their agent, in remitting, had been *behind time*.

A condemned man was led out for execution. He had taken human life, but under circumstances of the greatest provocation, and public sympathy was active in his behalf. Thousands had signed petitions for a reprieve; a favorable answer had been expected the night before; and, though it had not come, even the sheriff felt confident that it would yet arrive in season. Thus the morning passed without the appearance of the messenger. The last moment had come. The prisoner took [Pg 79]

his place on the drop, the cap was drawn over his eyes, the bolt was drawn, and a lifeless body swung revolving in the wind. Just at that moment a horse-man came into sight, galloping down hill, his steed covered with foam. He carried a packet in his right hand, which he waved rapidly to the crowd. He was the express rider with the reprieve. But he had come too late. A comparatively innocent man had died an ignominious death, because a watch had been five minutes too slow, making its bearer arrive *behind time*.

It is continually so in life. The best-laid plans, the most important affairs, the fortunes of individuals, the weal of nations, honor, happiness, life itself, are daily sacrificed because somebody is "behind time." There are men who always fail in whatever they undertake, simply because they are "behind time." There are others who put off reformation year by year, till death seizes them, and they perish unrepentant, because forever "*behind time*."

Five minutes in a crisis is worth years. It is but a little period, yet it has often saved a fortune or redeemed a people. If there is one virtue that should be cultivated more than another by him who would succeed in life, it is punctuality; if there is one error that should be avoided, it is being *behind time*.

KITTENS AND BABIES.

[Pg 80]

BY LIZZIE M. HADLEY.

There were two kittens, a black and a gray,
  And grandmamma said, with a frown,
"It never will do to keep them both,
  The black one we'd better drown."

"Don't cry, my dear," to tiny Bess,
  "One kitten's enough to keep;
Now run to nurse, for 'tis growing late
  And time you were fast asleep."

The morrow dawned, and rosy and sweet
  Came little Bess from her nap.
The nurse said, "Go into mamma's room
  And look in grandma's lap."

"Come here," said grandma, with a smile,
  From the rocking-chair where she sat,
"God has sent you two little sisters;
  Now! what do you think of that?"

Bess looked at the babies a moment,
  With their wee heads, yellow and brown,
And then to grandma soberly said,
  "*Which one are you going to drown*?"

AN UNACCOUNTABLE MYSTERY.

BY PAUL DENTON.

Intemperance is the strangest and most unaccountable mystery with which we have to deal. Why, as a rule, the human soul is passionately jealous of its own happiness, and tirelessly selfish as to [Pg 81] its own interest. It delights to seek the sunshine and the flowers this side the grave: ardently hopes for heaven in the life to come. It flashes its penetrating thought through the dark chambers of the earth; or lighted by the lurid flames of smouldering, volcanic fires, wings them through buried ovens. It lights up the ocean's bed, melting its mysteries into solution, detecting its coral richness, and causing its buried pearls, which have rested for long centuries beneath the black waves, to glow with their long-hoarded beauty. It holds converse with the glittering planets of the skies and compels them to tell it of their mountain ranges, their landscapes, and their utility. It toys with the mad lightnings which break from the darkness, and guides death and destruction through the earth, until it allures the impetuous element into docility and subserviency. It bids the panting waters breathe their hot, heavy breath upon the piston-rod and make the locomotive a beautiful thing of life, majestically thundering its way over continents, screaming forth the music of civilization in the midst of wild forests and the heat of burning deserts, beneath scorching, torrid suns. It leaps over burning plains and scalding streams; restless and daring, it lights its casket over arctic zones and seas; and perhaps tiring of such incumbrance, deserts it in [Pg 82] the cold shade of the ice mountain and speeds on untrammeled and alone. Franklin followed the beckonings of his tireless spirit until worn out and weary, his body laid down on the cold ice and

slept. Kane coaxed himself home to the old churchyard, and then bade his spirit drop the machine it had so sadly wrenched and fly through earth or the eternities, as God might will. Livingstone marched through the jungles and cheerless forests of uninviting Africa, but his limbs were too feeble to keep up with his hungry soul, which tore itself from its burden and left it to crumble beneath the burning sun. And thus the soul flies from zone to zone and from world to world, sipping the sweets of wisdom, as the bee sucks honey from the flowers; reading lessons from the leaflet on the tree, studying the language of the soft whispering zephyr, and of the hurricane which springs from nothing into devastating power; and it is ever restless in its researches, for it seeks its own happiness and improvement in its new discoveries, and in a better knowledge of God's creation. Speak to the human soul of liberty, and swell it with gratitude, and, beaming with smiles, it will follow whereever you lead. Speak to it of its immortality and of the divine grandeur of its faculties, and, warmed by your appreciation, it will strive harder for a fuller development and brighter existence. Lead it among the roses, and it will seldom fail to light your [Pg 83] pathway with smiles and to remind you of its gratitude. It loves to be noticed; loves to be assisted; loves to be made happy; loves to be warned of danger, and yet, with reference to that which pierces it with the most bleeding wounds, which more than anything else bars from it the sunlight and robs it of happiness—Intemperance—IT IS AS HEEDLESS AS THE STONE.

IMPERFECTUS.

BY JAMES CLARENCE HARVEY.

I wonder if ever a song was sung,
  But the singer's heart sang sweeter!
I wonder if ever a rhyme was rung,
  But the thought surpassed the meter!
I wonder if ever a sculptor wrought,
Till the cold stone echoed his ardent thought!
Or if ever a painter, with light and shade,
The dream of his inmost heart portrayed!

I wonder if ever a rose was found,
  And there might not be a fairer!
Or if ever a glittering gem was ground,
  And we dreamed not of a rarer!
Ah! never on earth do we find the best,
But it waits for us in a Land of Rest,
And a perfect thing we shall never behold,
Till we pass the portals of shining gold.

A WOMAN'S POCKET. [Pg 84]

BY JAMES M. BAILEY.

The most difficult thing to reach is a woman's pocket. This is especially the case if the dress is hung up in a closet, and the man is in a hurry. We think we are safe in saying that he always is in a hurry on such an occasion. The owner of the dress is in the sitting room serenely engrossed in a book. Having told him that the article which he is in quest of is in her dress pocket in the closet she has discharged her whole duty in the matter and can afford to feel serene. He goes at the task with a dim consciousness that he has been there before, but says nothing. On opening the closet door and finding himself confronted with a number of dresses, all turned inside out and presenting a most formidable front, he hastens back to ask "Which dress?" and being told the brown one, and also asked if *she* has so *many* dresses that there need be any great effort to find the right one, he returns to the closet with alacrity, and soon has his hands on the brown dress. It is inside out like the rest,—a fact he does not notice, however, until he has made several ineffectual attempts to get his hand into it. Then he turns it around very carefully and passes over [Pg 85] the pocket several times without knowing it. A nervous movement of his hands, and an appearance of perspiration on his forehead are perceptible. He now dives one hand in at the back, and feeling around, finds a place, and proceeds to explore it, when he discovers that he is following up the inside of a lining. The nervousness increases, also the perspiration. He twitches the dress on the hook, and suddenly the pocket, white, plump and exasperating, comes to view. Then he sighs the relief he feels and is mentally grateful he did not allow himself to use any offensive expressions. It is all right now. There is the pocket in plain view—not the inside but the outside—and all he has to do is to put his hand right around in the inside and take out the article. That is all. He can't help but smile to think how near he was to getting mad. Then he puts his hand around to the other side. He does not feel the opening. He pushes a little further—now he has got it; he shoves the hand down, and is very much surprised to see it appear opposite his knees. He had made a mistake. He tries again; again he feels the entrance and glides down it

only to appear again as before. This makes him open his eyes and straighten his face. He feels of the outside of the pocket, pinches it curiously, lifts it up, shakes it, and, after peering closely about the roots of it, he says, "How funny!" and commences again. He does it calmly this time, because hurrying only makes matters worse. He holds up breadth after breadth, goes over them carefully, gets his hand first into a lining, then into the air again (where it always surprises him when it appears), and finally into a pocket, and is about to cry out with triumph, when he discovers that it is the pocket to another dress. He is mad now; the closet air almost stifles him; he is so nervous he can hardly contain himself, and the pocket looks at him so exasperatingly that he cannot help but "plug" it with his clenched fist, and immediately does it. Being somewhat relieved by this performance he has a chance to look about him, and sees that he has put his foot through a band-box and into the crown of his wife's bonnet; has broken the brim of his Panama hat which was hanging in the same closet, and torn about a yard of bugle trimming from a new cloak. All this trouble is due directly to his wife's infatuation in hanging up her dresses inside out, so he immediately starts after her, and impetuously urging her to the closet, excitedly and almost profanely intimates his doubts of their being a pocket in the dress, anyway. The cause of the unhappy disaster quietly inserts her hand inside the robe, and directly brings it forth with the sought for article in its clasp. He doesn't know why, but this makes him madder than anything else.

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MOTHER'S DOUGHNUTS.

BY CHARLES F. ADAMS.

El Dorado, 1851.

I've just been down ter Thompson's, boys,
'N feelin' kind o' blue,
I thought I'd look in at "The Ranch,"
Ter find out what wuz new;
When I seed this sign a-hangin'
On a shanty by the lake:
"Here's whar yer get your doughnuts
Like yer mother used ter make."

I've seen a grizzly show his teeth,
I've seen Kentucky Pete
Draw out his shooter, 'n advise
A "tenderfoot" ter treat;
But nuthin' ever tuk me down,
'N made my benders shake,
Like that sign about the doughnuts
That my mother used ter make.

A sort o' mist shut out the ranch,
'N standin' thar instead,
I seen an old, white farm-house,
With its doors all painted red.
A whiff came through the open door—
Wuz I sleepin' or awake?
The smell wuz that of doughnuts
Like my mother used ter make.

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The bees wuz hummin' round the porch
Whar honeysuckles grew;
A yellow dish of apple-sass
Wuz settin' thar in view.
'N on the table, by the stove,
An old-time "Johnny-cake,"
'N a platter full of doughnuts
Like my mother used ter make.

A patient form I seemed ter see,
In tidy dress of black,
I almost thought I heard the words,
"When will my boy come back?"
'N then—the old sign creaked:
But now it was the boss who spake:
'Here's whar yer gets yer doughnuts
Like yer mother used ter make.

Well, boys, that kind o' broke me up,
'N ez I've "struck pay gravel,"

I ruther think I'll pack my kit,
  Vamoose the ranch, 'n travel.
I'll make the old folks jubilant,
  'N if I don't mistake,
I'll try some o' them doughnuts
  Like my mother used ter make.

LITERARY ATTRACTIONS OF THE BIBLE.

BY DR. HAMILTON.

God made the present earth as the Home of Man; but had he meant it as a mere lodging, a world less beautiful would have served the purpose. There was no need for the carpet of verdure, or the [Pg 89] ceiling of blue; no need for the mountains, and cataracts, and forests; no need for the rainbow, no need for the flowers. A big, round island, half of it arable, and half of it pasture, with a clump of trees in one corner, and a magazine of fuel in another, might have held and fed ten millions of people; and a hundred islands, all made in the same pattern, big and round, might have held and fed the population of the globe.

But man is something more than the animal which wants lodging and food. He has a spiritual nature, full of keen perceptions and deep sympathies. He has an eye for the sublime and the beautiful, and his kind Creator has provided man's abode with affluent materials for these nobler tastes. He has built Mont Blanc, and molten the lake in which its image sleeps. He has intoned Niagara's thunder, and has breathed the zephyr which sweeps its spray. He has shagged the steep with its cedars, and be-sprent the meadow with its king-cups and daisies. He has made it a world of fragrance and music,—a world of brightness and symmetry,—a world where the grand and the graceful, the awful and lovely, rejoice together. In fashioning the Home of Man, the Creator had an eye to something more than convenience, and built, not a barrack, but a palace— not a Union work-house, but an Alhambra; something which should not only be very comfortable, [Pg 90] but very splendid and very fair; something which should inspire the soul of its inhabitant, and even draw forth the "very good" of complacent Deity.

God also made the Bible as the guide and oracle of man; but had He meant it as the mere lesson-book of duty, a volume less various and less attractive would have answered every end. But in giving that Bible, its divine Author had regard to the mind of man. He knew that man has more curiosity than piety, more taste than sanctity; and that more persons are anxious to hear some new, or read some beauteous thing, than to read or hear about God and the great salvation. He knew that few would ever ask, "What must I do to be saved?" till they came in contact with the Bible itself; and, therefore, He made the Bible not only an instructive book, but an attractive one, —not only true, but enticing. He filled it with marvelous incident and engaging history; with sunny pictures from Old World scenery, and affecting anecdotes from the patriarch times. He replenished it with stately argument and thrilling verse, and sprinkled it over with sententious wisdom and proverbial pungency. He made it a book of lofty thoughts and noble images,—a book of heavenly doctrine, but withal of earthly adaptation. In preparing a guide to immortality, [Pg 91] Infinite Wisdom gave, not a dictionary, nor a grammar, but a Bible—a book which, in trying to reach the heart of man, should captivate his taste; and which, in transforming his affection, should also expand his intellect. The pearl is of great price; but even the casket is of exquisite beauty. The sword is of ethereal temper, and nothing cuts so keen as its double edge; but there are jewels on the hilt, an exquisite inlaying on the scabbard. The shekels are of the purest ore; but even the scrip which contains them is of a texture more curious than any which the artists of earth can fashion. The apples are gold; but even the basket is silver.

The Bible contains no ornamental passages, nothing written for mere display; its steadfast purpose is, "Glory to God in the highest," and the truest blessedness of man; it abounds in passages of the purest beauty and stateliest grandeur, all the grander and all the more beautiful because they are casual and unsought. The fire which flashes from the iron hoof of the Tartar steed as he scours the midnight path is grander than the artificial firework; for it is the casual effect of speed and power. The clang of ocean as he booms his billows on the rock, and the echoing caves give chorus, is more soul-filling and sublime than all the music of the orchestra, for [Pg 92] it is the music of that main so mighty that there is a grandeur in all it does,—in its sleep a melody, and in its march a stately psalm. And in the bow which paints the melting cloud there is a beauty which the stained glass or gorgeous drapery emulates in vain; for it is the glory which gilds beneficence, the brightness which bespeaks a double boon, the flush which cannot but come forth when both the sun and shower are there. The style of Scripture has all this glory. It has the gracefulness of a high utility; it has the majesty of intrinsic power; it has the charm of its own sanctity: it never labors, never strives, but, instinct with great realities and bent on blessed ends, it has all the translucent beauty and unstudied power which you might expect from its lofty object and all-wise Author.

THE CHRISTMAS BABY.

BY WILL CARLETON.

"Tha'rt welcome, little bonny brid.
But shouldn't ha' come just when tha' did:
Teimes are bad."

English Ballad.

Hoot! ye little rascal! ye come it on me this way,
Crowdin' yerself amongst us this blusterin' winter's day,
Knowin' that we already have three of ye, an' seven, [Pg 93]
An' tryin' to make yerself out a Christmas present o' Heaven?

Ten of ye have we now, Sir, for this world to abuse;
An' Bobbie he have no waistcoat, an' Nellie she have no shoes,
An' Sammie he have no shirt, Sir (I tell it to his shame),
An' the one that was just before ye we ain't had time to name!

An, all o' the banks be smashin', an' on us poor folk fall;
An' Boss he whittles the wages when work's to be had at all;
An' Tom he have cut his foot off, an' lies in a woful plight,
An' all of us wonders at mornin' as what we shall eat at night;

An' but for your father an' Sandy a-findin' somewhat to do,
An' but for the preacher's woman, who often helps us through,
An' but for your poor dear mother a-doin' twice her part,
Ye'd 'a seen us all in heaven afore *ye* was ready to start!

An' now *ye* have come, ye rascal! so healthy an' fat an' sound,
A-weighin', I'll wager a dollar, the full of a dozen pound!
With yer mother's eyes a flashin', yer father's flesh an' build,
An' a big mouth an' stomach all ready for to be filled!

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No, no! don't cry, my baby! hush up, my pretty one!
Don't get my chaff in yer eye, boy—I only was just in fun.
Ye'll like us when ye know us, although we're cur'us folks;
But we don't get much victual, and half our livin' is jokes!

Why, boy, did ye take me in earnest? come, sit upon my knee;
I'll tell ye a secret, youngster, I'll name ye after me.
Ye shall have all yer brothers an' sisters with ye to play,
An' ye shall have yer carriage, an' ride out every day!

Why, boy, do ye think ye'll suffer? I'm gettin' a trifle old,
But it'll be many years yet before I lose my hold;
An' if I should fall on the road, boy, still, them's yer brothers, there,
An' not a rogue of 'em ever would see ye harmed a hair!

Say! when ye come from heaven, my little name-sake dear,
Did ye see, 'mongst the little girls there, a face like this one here?
That was yer little sister—she died a year ago,
An' all of us cried like babies when they laid her under the snow!

Hang it! if all the rich men I ever see or knew
Came here with all their traps, boy, an' offered 'em for you,
I'd show 'em to the door, Sir, so quick they'd think it odd,
Before I'd sell to another my Christmas gift from God!

A DREAM OF THE UNIVERSE. [Pg 95]

BY JEAN PAUL RICHTER.

Into the great vestibule of heaven, God called up a man from dreams, saying, "Come thou hither, and see the glory of my house." And, to the servants that stood around His throne, He said, "Take him, and undress him from his robes of flesh; cleanse his vision, and put a new breath into his nostrils; only touch not with any change his human heart,—the heart that weeps and trembles."

It was done; and, with a mighty angel for his guide, the man stood ready for his infinite voyage; and from the terraces of heaven, without sound or farewell, at once they wheeled away into endless space. Sometimes, with solemn flight of angel wings, they fled through Saharas of darkness,—through wildernesses of death, that divided the world of life; sometimes they swept

over frontiers that were quickening under the prophetic motions from God.

Then, from a distance that is counted only in heaven, light dawned for a time through a sleepy film; by unutterable pace the light swept to them; they by unutterable pace to the light. In a moment, the rushing of planets was upon them; in a moment, the blazing of suns was around them. [Pg 96]

Then came eternities of twilight, that revealed, but were not revealed. On the right hand and on the left, towered mighty constellations, that by self-repetition and answers from afar, that by counter-positions, built up triumphal gates, whose architraves, whose archways—horizontal, upright—rested, rose—at altitudes by spans that seemed ghostly from infinitude. Without measure were the architraves, past number were the archways, beyond memory the gates.

Within were stairs that scaled the eternities below; above was below,—below was above, to the man stripped of gravitating body; depth was swallowed up in height insurmountable; height was swallowed up in depth unfathomable. Suddenly, as thus they rode from infinite to infinite; suddenly, as thus they tilted over abysmal worlds, a mighty cry arose that systems more mysterious, that worlds more billowy, other heights and other depths, were coming—were nearing—were at hand.

Then the man sighed, and stopped, and shuddered, and wept. His overladen heart uttered itself in tears; and he said, "Angel, I will go no farther; for the spirit of man acheth with this infinity. Insufferable is the glory of God. Let me lie down in the grave, and hide me from the persecutions of the Infinite; for end, I see, there is none." [Pg 97]

And from all the listening stars that shone around, issued a choral cry, "The man speaks truly; end there is none that ever yet we heard of." "End is there none?" the angel solemnly demanded: "Is there indeed no end, and is this the sorrow that kills you?" But no voice answered that he might answer himself. Then the angel threw up his glorious hands toward the heaven of heavens, saying, "End is there none to the universe of God! Lo, also there is no beginning!"

KEENAN'S CHARGE.

BY GEORGE P. LATHROP.

(*Chancellorsville, May, 1863.*)

The sun had set;
The leaves with dew were wet;
Down fell a bloody dusk
On the woods, that second of May,
Where Stonewall's corps, like a beast of prey,
Tore through, with angry tusk.

"They've trapped us, boys!"—
Rose from our flank a voice.
With a rush of steel and smoke
On came the Rebels straight,
Eager as love and wild as hate:
And our line reeled and broke;
Broke and fled. [Pg 98]
No one staid—but the dead!
With curses, shrieks and cries,
Horses and wagons and men
Tumbled back through the shuddering glen,
And above us the fading skies.

There's one hope, still,—
Those batteries parked on the hill!
"Battery, wheel!" (mid the roar)
"Pass pieces; fix prolonge to fire
Retiring. Trot!" In the panic dire
A bugle rings "Trot"—and no more.

The horses plunged,
The cannon lurched and lunged,
To join the hopeless rout.
But suddenly rode a form
Calmly in front of the human storm,
With a stern, commanding shout:

"Align those guns!"
(We knew it was Pleasonton's)

The cannoneers bent to obey,
And worked with a will, at his word:
And the black guns moved as if *they* had heard.
But ah, the dread delay!

"To wait is crime;
O God, for ten minutes' time!"
The general looked around.
There Keenan sat, like a stone,
With his three hundred horse alone—
Less shaken than the ground.

"Major, your men?"
"Are soldiers, General." "Then,
Charge, Major! Do your best:
Hold the enemy back, at all cost,
Till my guns are placed;—else the army is lost.
You die to save the rest!"

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By the shrouded gleam of the western skies,
Brave Keenan looked in Pleasonton's eyes
For an instant,—clear, and cool, and still;
Then, with a smile, he said: "I will."
"Cavalry, charge!" Not a man of them shrank.
Their sharp, full cheer, from rank on rank,
Rose joyously, with a willing breath,
Rose like a greeting hail to death.
Then forward they sprang, and spurred and clashed;
Shouted the officers, crimson-sashed;
Rode well the men, each brave as his fellow,
In their faded coats of the blue and yellow;
And above in the air with an instinct true,
Like a bird of war their pennon flew.

With clank of scabbards and thunder of steeds,
And blades that shine like sunlit reeds,
And strong brown faces bravely pale
For fear their proud attempt shall fail,
Three hundred Pennsylvanians close
On twice ten thousand gallant foes.

Line after line the troopers came
To the edge of the wood that was ringed with flame;
Rode in and sabered and shot—and fell;
Nor came one back his wounds to tell.
And full in the midst rose Keenan, tall
In the gloom, like a martyr awaiting his fall,
While the circle-stroke of his saber, swung
Round his head like a halo there, luminous hung.
Line after line, ay, whole platoons,
Struck dead in their saddles, of brave dragoons
By the maddened horses were onward borne
And into the vortex flung, trampled and torn;
As Keenan fought with his men, side by side.
So they rode, till there were no more to ride.

But over them, lying there, shattered and mute,
What deep echo rolls?—'Tis a death-salute
From the cannon in place; for heroes, you braved
Your fate not in vain: the army was saved!

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Over them now,—year following year,
Over their graves the pine-cones fall,
And the whip-poor-will chants his spectre-call;
But they stir not again; they raise no cheer:
They have ceased. But their glory shall never cease,
Nor their light be quenched in the light of peace.
The rush of their charge is resounding still
That saved the army at Chancellorsville.

USEFUL PRECEPTS FOR GIRLS.

First catch your lover.

Hold him when you have him.

Don't let go of him to catch every new one that comes along.

Try to get very well acquainted with him before you take him for life.

Unless you intend to support him, find out whether he earns enough to support you.

Don't make up your mind he is an angel. Don't palm yourself off on him for one either.

Don't let him spend his salary on you; that right should be reserved until after marriage.

If you have any conscientious scruples about marrying a man with a mother, say so in time that he may either get rid of her to oblige you, or get rid of you to oblige her, as he thinks best.

If you object to secret societies and tobacco, it is better to come with your objections now than to reserve them for curtain lectures hereafter. [Pg 101]

If your adorer happens to fancy a certain shade of hair, don't color bleach yours to oblige him. Remember your hair belongs to you and he doesn't.

Be very sure it is the man you are in love with, and not the clothes he wears. Fortune and fashion are both so fickle it is foolish to take a stylish suit for better or worse.

If you intend to keep three servants after marriage, settle the matter beforehand. The man who is making love to you may expect you to do your own washing.

Don't try to hurry up a proposal by carrying on a flirtation with some other fellow. Different men are made of different material, and the one you want might go off in a fit of jealousy and forget to come back.

If you have a love letter to write, do not copy it out of a "letter writer." If your young man ever happened to consult the same book he would know your sentiments were borrowed.

Don't marry a man to oblige any third person in existence. It is your right to suit yourself in the matter. But remember at the same time that love is blind, and a little friendly advice from one whose advice is worth having may insure you a lifetime of happiness, or prevent one of misery.

In love affairs always keep your eyes wide open, so that when the right man comes along you may see him. [Pg 102]

When you see him you will recognize him and the recognition will be mutual.

If you have no fault to find with him personally, financially, conscientiously, socially, morally, politically, religiously, or in any other way, he is probably perfect enough to suit you, and you can afford to—

Believe in him; hope in him; love him; marry him!

WIDDER BUDD.

I'm fifty, I'm fair, and without a gray hair,
  An' I feel just ez young as a girl.
When I think o' Zerubbabel Lee, I declare
  It sets me all into a whirl.
Last night he waz here, an' I told him to "clear"—
  An' my! How supprised he did look:
Perhaps I wuz rash, but he's after my *cash*—
  I see through his plans like a book.

Some offers I've had that I cannot call bad;
  There was Deacon Philander Breezee;
I'd a sartin sed *Yes*, when he wanted a kiss,
  Ef he hadn't so flustrated me.
It took me so quick that it felt like a kick—
  I flew all to pieces at once;
Sez I, "You kin go—I'm not wanting a beau;"
  I acted, I know, like a dunce.

Sez he, ez he rose, "I hev come to propose."
  I stopped him afore he began:
Sez I, "You kin go, an' see Hepzibah Stow—
  I won't be tied down to a man."
"Mariar," ses he, "Widder Tompkins an' me [Pg 103]
  Kin strike up a bargain, I know;
An', seein' ez we can't decide to agree,
  I guess that I hed better go."

He picked up his hat from the chair where it sat,
An' solemnly started away.
Sez I, with a look that I'm *sure* he mistook,
"You're perfectly welcome to stay."
My face got ez red ez our old waggin-shed—
I thought for the land I should melt.
Sez he, "I am done. Good night, leetle one,"
I *wish* he'd a known how I felt.

To-day, Isaac Beers, with his snickers and sneers,
Whose face is ez ugly ez sin,
Dropped in just to see about buyin' my steers,
An' tickled the mole on my chin.
Sez I, "You jest quit; I don't like you a bit;
You can't come your sawder on me.
You'd better behave till Jane's cold in her grave,
Your manners is ruther too free."

When dear David died (sniff—sniff), ez I sot by his side (sniff—sniff);
He ketched up my hand in his own (sniff—sniff);
He squeezed it awhile (sniff—sniff), an' he sez with a smile (sniff—sniff),
"You'll soon be a widder alone (sniff—sniff—sniff),
An' when I am gone (sniff—sniff) don't you fuss an' take on (sniff—sniff)
Like old Widder Dorothy Day (sniff—sniff).
Look out for your tin (sniff—sniff) if you marry agin (sniff—sniff),
Nor throw your affections away (sniff—sniff—sniff)."

[Pg 104]

My children hev grown, an' have homes o' their own—
They're doin' ez well ez they can (*wipes her eyes and nose*):
An' I'm gettin' sick o' this livin' alone—
I wouldn't mind havin' a man.
Fur David hez gone to the mansion above—
His body is cold in the ground,
Ef you know of a man who would marry for love,
Jest find him an' send him around.

HIS LAST COURT.

Old Judge Grepson, a justice of the peace, was never known to smile. He came to Arkansas years ago, and year after year, by the will of the voters, he held his place as magistrate. The lawyers who practiced in his court never joked with him, because every one soon learned that the old man never engaged in levity. Every morning, no matter how bad the weather might be, the old man took his place behind the bar which, with his own hands, he had made, and every evening, just at a certain time, he closed his books and went home. No one ever engaged him in private conversation, because he would talk to no one. No one ever went to his home, a little cottage among the trees in the city's outskirts, because he had never shown a disposition to make welcome the visits of those who even lived in the immediate vicinity. His office was not given him through the influence of "electioneering," because he never asked any man for his vote. He was first elected because, having been once summoned in a case of arbitration, he exhibited the executive side of such a legal mind that the people nominated and elected him. He soon gained the name of the "hard justice," and every lawyer in Arkansas referred to his decision. His rulings were never reversed by the higher courts. He showed no sentiment in decision. He stood upon the platform of a law which he made a study, and no one disputed him.

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One day, a woman, charged with misdemeanor, was arraigned before him. "The old man seems more than ever unsteady," remarked a lawyer as the magistrate took his seat. "I don't see how a man so old can stand the vexation of a court much longer."

"I am not well to-day," said the Judge, turning to the lawyers, "and any cases that you may have you will please dispatch them to the best, and let me add, quickest of your ability."

Every one saw that the old man was unusually feeble, and no one thought of a scheme to prolong a discussion, for all the lawyers had learned to reverence him.

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"Is this the woman?" asked the Judge. "Who is defending her?"

"I have no defence, your Honor," the woman replied. "In fact, I do not think I need any, for I am here to confess my guilt. No man can defend me," and she looked at the magistrate with a curious gaze. "I have been arrested on a charge of disturbing the peace, and I am willing to submit my case. I am dying of consumption, Judge, and I know that any ruling made by the law can have but little effect on me;" and she coughed a hollow, hacking cough, and drew around her an old black shawl that she wore. The expression on the face of the magistrate remained unchanged, but his eyelids dropped and he did not raise them when the woman continued:

"As I say, no man can defend me. I am too near that awful separation of soul and body. Years ago I was a child of brightest promise. I lived with my parents in Kentucky. Wayward and light-hearted, I was admired by all the gay society known in the neighborhood. A man came and professed his love for me. I don't say this, Judge, to excite your sympathy. I have many and many a time been drawn before courts, but I never before spoke of my past life."

She coughed again and caught a flow of blood on a handkerchief which she pressed to her lips. "I [Pg 107] speak of it now because I know that this is the last court on earth before which I will be arraigned. I was fifteen years old when I fell in love with the man. My father said he was bad, but I loved him. He came again and again, and when my father said that he should come no more I ran away and married him. My father said I should never come home again. I had always been his pride and had loved him dearly, but he said that I must never again come to his home,—my home, the home of my youth and happiness. How I longed to see him. How I yearned to put my head on his breast. My husband became addicted to drink. He abused me. I wrote to my father, asking him to let me come home, but the answer that came was 'I don't know you!' My husband died—yes, cursed God and died! Homeless and wretched, and with my little boy I went out into the world. My child died, and I bowed down and wept over a pauper's grave. I wrote to my father again, but he answered: 'I know not those who disobey my commandments!' I turned away from that letter, hardened. I spurned my teachings. Now I am here."

Several lawyers rushed forward. A crimson stream flowed from her lips. They leaned her lifeless head back against the chair. The old magistrate had not raised his eyes; "Great God!" said a [Pg 108] lawyer, "he is dead!"

The woman was his daughter.

THE DEAD DOLL.

BY MARGARET VANDEGRIFT.

You needn't be trying to comfort me—I tell you my dolly is dead!
There's no use in saying she isn't with a crack like that in her head;
It's just like you said it wouldn't hurt much to have my tooth out, that day,
And then, when the man 'most pulled my head off, you hadn't a word to say.

And I guess you must think I'm a baby, when you say you can mend it with
glue,
As if I didn't know better than that! Why, just suppose it was you?
You might make her look all mended—but what do I care for looks?
Why glue's for chairs and tables, and toys, and the backs of books!

My dolly! my own little daughter! Oh, but it's the awfullest crack!
It just makes me sick to think of the sound when her poor head went whack
Against that horrible brass thing that holds up that little shelf.
Now, Nursey, what makes you remind me? I know that I did it myself?

I think you must be crazy—you'll get her another head!
What good would forty heads do her? I tell you my dolly is dead!
And to think I hadn't quite finished her elegant new Spring hat! [Pg 109]
And I took a sweet ribbon of her's last night to tie on that horrid cat!

When my mamma gave me that ribbon—I was playing out in the yard—
She said to me most expressly, "Here's a ribbon for Hildegarde."
And I went and put it on Tabby, and Hildegarde saw me do it;
But I said to myself, "Oh, never mind, I don't believe she knew it!"

But I know that she knew it now, and I just believe I do,
That her poor little heart was broken, and so her head broke too.
Oh, my baby! my little baby! I wish my head had been hit!
For I've hit it over and over, and it hasn't cracked a bit.

But since the darling is dead, she'll want to be buried, of course;
We will take my little wagon, Nurse, and you shall be the horse;
And I'll walk behind and cry; and we'll put her in this, you see—
This dear little box—and we'll bury her there out under the maple tree.

And papa will make me a tombstone, like the one he made for my bird;
And he'll put what I tell him on it—yes, every single word!
I shall say, "Here lies Hildegarde, a beautiful doll, who is dead;
She died of a broken heart, and a dreadful crack in her head."

AT THE STAMP WINDOW.

[Pg 110]

Just before twelve o'clock yesterday fore-noon there were thirteen men and one woman at the stamp window of the post-office. Most of the men had letters to post for the out-going trains. The woman had something tied up in a blue match-box. She got there first, and she held the position with her head in the window and both elbows on the shelf.

"Is there such a place in this country as Cleveland?" she began.

"Oh, yes."

"Do you send mail there?"

"Yes."

"Well, a woman living next door asked me to mail this box for her. I guess it's directed all right. She said it ought to go for a cent."

"Takes two cents," said the clerk, after weighing it. "If there is writing inside it will be twelve cents."

"Mercy on me, but how you do charge!"

Here the thirteen men began to push up and hustle around and talk about one old match-box delaying two dozen business letters, but the woman had lots of time.

"Then it will be two cents, eh?"

"If there is no writing inside."

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"Well, there may be. I know she is a great hand to write. She's sending some flower seeds to her sister, and I presume she has told her how to plant 'm."

"Two threes!" called out one of the crowd, as he tried to get to the window.

"Hurry up!" cried another.

"There ought to be a separate window here for women," growled a third.

"Then it will take twelve cents?" she calmly queried, as she fumbled around for her purse.

"Yes."

"Well, I'd better pay it, I guess."

From one pocket she took two coppers. From her reticule she took a three cent piece. From her purse she fished out a nickel; and it was only after a hunt of eighty seconds that she got the twelve cents together. She then consumed four minutes in licking on the stamps, asking where to post the box, and wondering if there really was any writing inside,—but woman proposes and man disposes. Twenty thousand dollars' worth of business was being detained by a twelve-cent woman, and a tidal wave suddenly took her away from the window. In sixty seconds the thirteen men had been waited on and gone their ways, and the woman returned to the window, handed in the box, and said:

"Them stamps are licked on kind o' crooked, but it won't make any difference, will it?"

THE NAMELESS GUEST.

[Pg 112]

BY JAMES CLARENCE HARVEY.

I wonder if ever the Angel of Death
  Comes down from the great Unknown,
And soars away, on the wings of night,
  Unburdened and alone!
I wonder if ever the angels' eyes,
  Are filled with pitying tears,
As they grant to the souls, unfit for flight,
  A few more weary years!

For it seems, at times, when the world is still,
  And the soft night winds are whist,
As though some spirit were hovering near,
  In folds of dream-like mist,
And I feel, though mortals are nowhere near,
  That I am not quite alone,
And, with dreary thoughts of dying and death,
  My heart grows cold as stone.

But whether 'tis death that hovers near,
   And knocks at the door of my heart,
Or whether 'tis some bright angel, come
   To be of my life a part,
I cannot tell, and I long in vain,
   The secret strange to know,
While the moments of mirth and grief and pain,
   Move on in their ceaseless flow.

And at night, when I kneel to a Higher Power
   And ask His tender care,
One yearning cry of a wayward life
   Is the burden of my prayer,
That I may bend, with willing lips,
   To kiss the chastening rod,
And learn the way, through the golden gate,
   To the great white throne of God.

OUR HEROES SHALL LIVE.

[Pg 113]

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

This brief extract from a splendid oration should be spoken in clear, defined tones, rather high pitch, the utterance slow, with a rather long pause after each question:

Oh, tell me not that they are dead—that generous host, that airy army of invisible heroes. They hover as a cloud of witnesses above this nation. Are they dead that yet speak louder than we can speak, and a more universal language? Are they dead that yet act? Are they dead that yet move upon society, and inspire the people with nobler motives, and more heroic patriotism?

Ye that mourn, let gladness mingle with your tears. It *was* your son, but now he is the nation's. He made your household bright: now his example inspires a thousand households. Dear to his brothers and sisters, he is now brother to every generous youth in the land. Before, he was narrowed, appropriated, shut up to you. Now he is augmented, set free, and given to all. Before he was yours: he *is* ours. He has died from the family, that he might live to the nation. Not one name shall be forgotten or neglected: and it shall by and by be confessed of our modern heroes, as it is of an ancient hero, that he did more for his country by his death than by his whole life.

LULLABY.

[Pg 114]

"Rockaby, baby, thy cradle is green;
Father's a nobleman, mother's a queen."
Rockaby, lullaby, all the day long,
Down to the land of the lullaby song.
Babyland never again will be thine,
Land of all mystery, holy, divine,
      Motherland, otherland,
      Wonderland, underland,
Land of a time ne'er again to be seen;
      Flowerland, bowerland,
      Airyland, fairyland,
Rockaby, baby, thy cradle is green.

Rockaby, baby, thy mother will keep
Gentle watch over thine azure-eyed sleep;
Baby can't feel what the mother-heart knows,
Throbbing its fear o'er your quiet repose.
Mother-heart knows how baby must fight
Wearily on through the fast coming night;
      Battle unending,
      Honor defending,
Baby must wage with the power unseen.
      Sleep now, O baby, dear!
      God and thy mother near;
Rockaby, baby, thy cradle is green.

Rockaby, baby, the days will grow long;
Silent the voice of the mother-love song,
Bowed with sore burdens the man-life must own,

Sorrows that baby must bear all alone.
Wonderland never can come back again;
Thought will come soon—and with reason comes pain,
Sorrowland, motherland,
Drearyland, wearyland,
Baby and heavenland lying between.
Smile, then, in motherland,
Dream in the otherland,
Rockaby, baby, thy cradle is green.

PENNING A PIG.

[Pg 115]

JAMES M. BAILEY.

Two families in Slawson had a somewhat singular experience several weeks ago. These families live in a double house, and each had a pen with two pigs. Last Friday the woman in one part discovered that her two pigs were free from their pen, and looking after geological specimens at the foot of the yard. She also discovered at the same time that the gate to a cabbage yard adjoining was open, and that the pigs might at any moment become ravished by a view of the glories within.

Her husband being away she hurriedly secured the gate, and then set about to return the truants by the following ingenious plan: Taking a shovelful of corn, she approached as close to the animals as possible, and, holding the tempting morsel near enough for them to learn its inviting character, she screwed her face into an expression of winning sweetness, and backed slowly toward the pen.

It was a beautiful illustration of woman's faith, and we regret to write that it did not work. The pigs took one snuff at the contents of the shovel, just to show that they took some interest in the matter, and, being convinced thereby that there was nothing injurious in the experiment, fell to [Pg 116] rooting about again with renewed fervor.

The nearer the woman came to the pen the straighter her face grew, and presently lost every vestige of solicitude, and assumed instead an expression of medium ferocity. What she may have done will never be known, as at this juncture her husband made his appearance on the back stoop, and, her eye resting upon him, she commenced to apostrophize him in the language married people alone are adepts at.

After requesting somebody to show him the idiot who had left those hogs out that he might punch his head, he drove straight at the truants, and missed them, of course. Then he drove at them again with a clothes pole, and missed them again, although he made another pole by hitting that on a stone. Any one who has helped to drive one or two pigs will readily understand the number of articles that passed through the air, and the style of conversation the man kept up during the chase.

Finally, he got one of the animals in a corner, and, being by this time utterly regardless of personal appearance or consequences, threw himself upon the brute, neatly scraping the fence with the top of his head, and falling upon the pig in such a way as to hold in abeyance every one of its muscles except those in the throat. These were at once put into active operation, and the [Pg 117] man for a moment thought he had captured a planing-mill. Then he raised slowly, keeping a tight hold of the animal, and getting on his feet with a pig in his arms, struck out for the pen, preceded by his wife and the other woman, and closely and anxiously observed by all the neighbors for a half-mile around.

In this way the procession laboriously moved. The pig, having worked its head within two inches of the man's ear, was pouring therein a tale of unparalleled distress, which, if not calculated to melt the stoutest heart, actually threatened to split open the stoutest head. The man was utterly powerless to remedy the horror, having both hands engaged, and could only twist his ear a little out of range, and scream at the top of his voice his plans for the future of "them hogs."

On reaching the pen, and while in the act of dumping the howling viper over the side, the woman next door made an unfortunate discovery. *His* hogs were in the pen; the truants were *hers*. The man, who was still holding the pig, and might have, with reason, taken a prominent part in the debate, contented himself by merely expressing a hope that he might be blessed, and then trudged around to the other pen, where he arrived after much unlooked for tribulation, and again hoisted the howling monster up to the top, when the woman next door made another and still [Pg 118] more remarkable discovery. Her pigs were in their pen.

"What's that?" screamed the man, who was so fixed he could not very well see into the pen, and was obliged to lift his voice to make himself heard above the din.

"Them ain't my pigs," screamed the woman.

"Why ain't they?" he yelled.

"Cause my pigs are here," she shrieked back.

It is needless to say that the strange animals were urged out of that garden without the use of subterfuge.

LITTLE JIM.

BY GEORGE R. SIMS.

Our little Jim
Was such a limb
His mother scarce could manage him.
His eyes were blue,
And looked you through,
And seemed to say,
"I'll have my way!"
His age was six,
His saucy tricks
But made you smile,
Though all the while
You said, "You limb,
You wicked Jim,
Be quiet, do!"

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Poor little Jim!
Our eyes are dim
When soft and low we speak of him.
No clattering shoe
Goes running through
The silent room,
Now wrapped in gloom.
So still he lies,
With fast-shut eyes,
No need to say,
Alas! to-day,
"You little limb,
You baby Jim,
Be quiet, do!"

GET ACQUAINTED WITH YOURSELF.

BY R. J. BURDETTE.

Telemachus, it will do you ever so much good if every once in a while you will go away by yourself for an hour or two and get real well acquainted with yourself. As a man thinketh, so he is. And you will never "know thyself" thoroughly unless now and then you get alone and sit down and talk to yourself, cross-examine yourself; learn what you know; what are your ambitions, your aims, your hopes,—what is your real character; because, my dear boy, your reputation may be one thing and your character quite another. Sometimes it does happen, in this faulty old world, that a really good man, a man whose character is above reproach, may bear the reputation of a rascal; and once in a while—two or three times in a while, in fact—a rascal wears the stolen reputation of an honest man. Go away now and then, my boy, and sit down all by yourself and think. Think of nothing under the sun only yourself. Yes, I know, my son, there are men who never think of anything else, and God never made more useless men; but that is because they do all their thinking about themselves publicly and loud. They never think alone.

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You will be honest with yourself when you are alone, my boy. A man is apt to be honest with himself in the dark. He does not pose in heroic postures when he has no audience. When he stands face to face with himself, with no human eye to watch him, and no human ear to listen to his confession, and only his Maker, who knows every secret motive and thought of his life to see and to listen, a man has to be honest. How could he be a hypocrite then?

Get away from the crowd a little while every day, my boy. Stand one side and let the world run by, while you get acquainted with yourself, and see what kind of a fellow you are. Ask yourself hard questions about yourself. Find out all you can about yourself. Ascertain from original sources if you are really the manner of man people say you are. Find out if you are always honest; if you always tell the square, perfect truth in business deals; if your life is as good and upright at eleven o'clock at night as it is at noon; if you are as sound a temperance man on a fishing expedition as you are at a Sabbath-school picnic; if you are as good a boy when you go to Chicago

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as you are at home; if, in short, you really are the manner of young man your father hopes you are, your mother says you are, and your sweetheart believes you are. Get on intimate terms with yourself, my boy, and, believe me, every time you come out from one of those private interviews you will be a better, stronger, purer man. Don't forget this, Telemachus, and it will do you good.

THE LITTLE WHITE HEARSE.

BY J. W. RILEY.

As the little white hearse went glimmering by—
  The man on the coal cart jerked his lines,
And smutted the lid of either eye,
  And turned and stared at the business signs;
And the street-car driver stopped and beat
His hands on his shoulders and gazed up street
Till his eye on the long track reached the sky—
As the little white hearse went glimmering by.

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As the little white hearse went glimmering by—
  A stranger petted a ragged child
In the crowded walk, and she knew not why,
  But he gave her a coin for the way she smiled;
And a bootblack thrilled with a pleasure strange
As a customer put back his change
With a kindly hand and a grateful sigh—
As the little white hearse went glimmering by.

As the little white hearse went glimmering by—
  A man looked out of a window dim,
And his cheeks were wet and his heart was dry—
  For a dead child even were dear to him!
And he thought of his empty life and said:
"Loveless alive and loveless dead,
Nor wife nor child in earth or sky!"—
As the little white hearse went glimmering by.

THERE'LL BE ROOM IN HEAVEN.

She was a little old woman, very plainly dressed in black bombazine that had seen much careful wear; her bonnet was very old-fashioned, and people stared at her tottering up the aisle of the church, evidently bent on securing one of the best seats, for a great man preached that day. The house was filled with splendidly dressed people who had heard of the fame of the preacher, of his learning, his intellect and goodness, and they wondered at the presumption of the poor old woman. She must have been in her dotage, for she picked out the pew of the richest and proudest member of the church and took a seat. The three ladies who were seated there beckoned to the sexton, who bent over the intruder and whispered something, but she was hard of hearing, and smiled a little withered smile, as she said, gently: "Oh, I'm quite comfortable here, quite comfortable."

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"But you are not wanted here," said the sexton, pompously; "there is not room. Come with me, my good woman; I will see that you have a seat."

"Not room," said the old woman, looking at her shrunken proportions, and then at the fine ladies. "Why, I'm not crowded a bit. I rode ten miles to hear the sermon to-day, because—"

But here the sexton took her by the arm, shook her roughly in a polite underhand way, and then she took the hint. Her faded old eyes filled with tears, her chin quivered; but she rose meekly and left the pew. Turning quietly to the ladies, who were spreading their rich dresses over the space she left vacant, she said gently: "I hope, my dears, there'll be room in heaven for us all." Then she followed the pompous sexton to the rear of the church where, in the last pew, she was seated between a threadbare girl and a shabby old man.

"She must be crazy," said one of the ladies in the pew which she had first occupied. "What can an ignorant old woman like her want to hear Dr. —— preach for? She would not be able to understand a word he said."

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"Those people are so persistent! The idea of her forcing herself into our pew! Isn't that voluntary lovely? There's Dr. —— coming out of the vestry. Is he not grand?"

"Splendid! What a stately man! You know he has promised to dine with us while he is here."

He was a commanding looking man, and as the organ voluntary stopped, and he looked over the great crowd of worshipers gathered in the vast church, he seemed to scan every face. His hand was on the Bible when suddenly he leaned over the reading desk and beckoned to the sexton, who obsequiously mounted the steps to receive a mysterious message. And then the three ladies in the grand pew were electrified to see him take his way the whole length of the church to return with the old woman, when he placed her in the front pew of all, its other occupants making willing room for her. The great preacher looked at her with a smile of recognition, and then the services proceeded, and he preached a sermon that struck fire from every heart.

"Who was she?" asked the ladies who could not make room for her, as they passed the sexton at the door.

"The preacher's mother," was the reply.

THE RETORT DIS-COURTEOUS.

[Pg 125]

BY JAMES CLARENCE HARVEY.

Mr. Michael McGlynn, of Dublin town,
And Dinny O'Doyle, of Kildare,
Through the streets of the city, went up and down,
A remarkably guileless pair.
Said Michael to Dinny: "Me darlin' bhoy,
Since the roise o' the mornin' sun,
Niver a dhrop or a boite have Oi,
Oi think I could ate a bun."

Said Dinny to Michael: "Av coorse: av coorse!
To ate is the woise man's part;
Oi have a sinsation loike that mesilf,
Oi think Oi could touch a tart."
So the kindred souls of this guileless pair,
An eating house speedily found,
And before them a jar on the table sat,
Full of horseradish, freshly ground.

With a tablespoon, Mr. Michael McGlynn
Took all that his mouth would hold,
Then gasped for breath, while his head turned hot
And his spine turned icy cold.
The tears on his cheeks came rolling down,
But he had no breath to swear,
So he simply clutched at the tablecloth,
And tore at his red, red hair.

Amazed and surprised, Mr. Dinny O'Doyle
Said: "Michael, me darlin' bhoy,
Phwat's troublin' yer sowl? Phwat's wrong wid ye now?
Phwat's the raison ye've tears in yer oi?"

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"Oh, nothin," said Michael; "my grandfather doid
Some twenty-foive years ago,
Oi chanced to remember the fine owld man,
An' Oi couldn't help croiyin', ye know.

"But, Dinny O'Doyle, doant mind it at all;
How wake an' how choildish Oi same,"
Then he passed the horseradish and spoon and all;
"Have some of this nice oice crame!"
So Dinny dipped into the treacherous jar,
And the tears quickly sprang to his eyes,
While Michael McGlynn, who had got back his breath,
Affected a strange surprise.

"Phy, Dinny, me bhoy, ye're croiyin' yersilf,"
He said with a chuckle and grin;
"Phwat's troublin' *yer* sowl? Phwat's wrong wid *ye* now?
Is it wapin' ye are for a sin?"
"Is it askin' ye are, phwat's makin' me croiy?"
Said Dinny, "Oi'll spake as Oi'm bid,
Oi'm croiyin' bekase Mr. Michael McGlynn,
Didn't doi when his grandfather did."

ZENOBIA'S DEFENCE.

BY WILLIAM WARE.

[Zenobia became Queen of Palmyra A. D. 267, after the murder of her husband, Odenatus. She was a woman of great energy and assumed the title of Queen of the East. She was deprived of her dominion by Aurelian A. D. 272, and died in retirement near Rome.]

I am charged with pride and ambition. The charge is true, and I glory in its truth. Whoever achieved anything great in letters, arts, or arms, who was not ambitious? Cæsar was not more [Pg 127] ambitious than Cicero. It was but in another way. All greatness is born of ambition. Let the ambition be a noble one, and who shall blame it? I confess I did once aspire to be queen, not only of Palmyra, but of the East. That I am. I now aspire to remain so. Is it not an honorable ambition? Does it not become a descendant of the Ptolemies and of Cleopatra? I am applauded by you all for what I have already done. You would not it should have been less.

But why pause here? Is *so* much ambition praiseworthy, and *more* criminal? Is it fixed in nature that the limits of this empire should be Egypt on the one hand, the Hellespont and the Euxine on the other? Were not Suez and Armenia more natural limits? Or hath empire no natural limit, but is broad as the genius that can devise, and the power that can win? Rome has the West. Let Palmyra possess the East. Not that nature prescribes this and no more. The gods prospering, I mean that the Mediterranean shall not hem me in upon the west, or Persia on the east. Longinus is right,—I would that the world were mine. I feel, within, the will and the power to bless it, were it so.

Are not my people happy? I look upon the past and the present, upon my nearer and remoter [Pg 128] subjects, and ask, nor fear the answer, Whom have I wronged? What province have I oppressed, what city pillaged, what region drained with taxes? Whose life have I unjustly taken, or whose estates have I coveted or robbed? Whose honor have I wantonly assailed? Whose rights, though of the weakest and poorest, have I violated? I dwell, where I would ever dwell, in the hearts of my people. It is written in your faces, that I reign not more over you than within you. The foundation of my throne is not more power than love.

Suppose, now, my ambition should add another province to our realm. Would that be an evil? The kingdoms already bound to us by the joint acts of ourselves and the late royal Odenatus, we found discordant and at war. They are now united and at peace. One harmonious whole has grown out of hostile and sundered parts. At my hands they receive a common justice and equal benefits. The channels of their commerce have I opened, and dug them deep and sure. Prosperity and plenty are in all their borders. The streets of our capital bear testimony to the distant and various industry which here seeks its market.

This is no vain boasting: receive it not so, good friends. It is but the truth. He who traduces himself sins in the same way as he who traduces another. He who is unjust to himself, or less [Pg 129] than just, breaks a law, as well as he who hurts his neighbor. I tell you what I am, and what I have done, that your trust for the future may not rest upon ignorant grounds. If I am more than just to myself, rebuke me. If I have over-stepped the modesty that became me, I am open to your censure, and I will bear it.

But I have spoken that you may know your queen, not only by her acts, but by her admitted principles. I tell you, then, that I am ambitious, that I crave dominion, and while I live will reign. Sprung from a line of kings, a throne is my natural seat. I love it. But I strive, too—you can bear me witness that I do—that it shall be, while I sit upon it, an honored, unpolluted seat. If I can, I will hang a yet brighter glory around it.

A SERENADE.[1]

BY THOMAS HOOD.

"Lullaby, oh, lullaby!"
Thus I heard a father cry.
"Lullaby, oh, lullaby!
The brat will never shut an eye;
Hither come, some power divine!
Close his lids or open mine!

[Pg 130]

"Lullaby, oh, lullaby!
What the mischief makes him cry?
Lullaby, oh, lullaby!
Still he stares—I wonder why;
Why are not the sons of earth

Blind, like puppies, from their birth?

"Lullaby, oh, lullaby!"
Thus I heard the father cry;
"Lullaby, oh, lullaby!
Mary, you must come and try!
Hush, oh, hush, for mercy's sake—
The more I sing, the more you wake!

"Lullaby, oh, lullaby!
Fie, you little creature, fie!
Lullaby, oh, lullaby!
Is no poppy-syrup nigh?
Give him some, or give him all,
I am nodding to his fall!

"Lullaby, oh, lullaby!
Two such nights and I shall die!
Lullaby, oh, lullaby!
He'll be bruised, and so shall I—
How can I from bedposts keep,
When I'm walking in my sleep?

"Lullaby, oh, lullaby!
Sleep his very looks deny;
Lullaby, oh, lullaby!
Nature soon will stupefy—
My nerves relax—my eyes grow dim—
Who's that fallen, me or him?"

FOOTNOTES:

[1] This poem can be made very effective as a humorous recitation by the performer imitating a sleepy father vainly endeavoring to quiet a restless child. A doll, or something to represent one, should be held in the arms.

QUEEN VASHTI.

[Pg 131]

BY T. DEWITT TALMAGE.

We stand amid the palaces of Shushan. The pinnacles are aflame with the morning light. The columns rise festooned and wreathed, the wealth of empires flashing from the grooves; the ceilings adorned with images of bird and beast, and scenes of prowess and conquest. The walls are hung with shields, and emblazoned until it seems that the whole round of splendors is exhausted. Each arch is a mighty leap of architectural achievement,—golden stars, shining down on glowing arabesque; hangings of embroidered work, in which mingle the blueness of the sky, the greenness of the grass and the whiteness of the sea foam; tapestries hung on silver rings, wedding together the pillars of marble. Pavilions reach out in every direction,—these for repose, filled with luxuriant couches, in which weary limbs sink until all fatigue is submerged; these for carousal, where kings drink down a kingdom at one swallow.

Amazing spectacle! Light of silver dripping down over stairs of ivory on shields of gold; floors of stained marble, sunset red and night black, and inlaid with gleaming pearl. Why, it seems as if a heavenly vision of amethyst, and jacinth, and topaz, and chrysoprasus had descended and [Pg 132] alighted upon Shushan. It seems as if a billow of celestial glory had dashed clear over heaven's battlements upon this metropolis of Persia.

In connection with this palace there is a garden, where the mighty men of foreign lands are seated at a banquet. Under the spread of oak, and linden, and acacia, the tables are arranged. The breath of honey-suckle and frankincense fills the air. Fountains leap up into the light, the spray struck through with rainbows falling in crystalline baptism upon flowering shrubs—then rolling down through channels of marble, and widening out here and there into pools swirling with the finny tribes of foreign aquariums, bordered with scarlet anemones, hypericums, and many colored ranunculus; meats of rarest bird and beast smoking up amid wreaths of aromatics; the vases filled with apricots and almonds; the basket piled up with apricots, and dates, and figs, and oranges, and pomegranates; melons tastefully twined with leaves of acacia; the bright waters of Eulæus filling the urns, and sweating outside the rim in flashing beads amid the traceries; wine from the royal vats of Ispahan and Shiraz, in bottles of tinged shell, and lily-shaped cups of silver, and flagons and tankards of solid gold.

The music rises higher, and the revelry breaks out into wilder transport, and the wine has flushed [Pg 133] the cheek and touched the brain, and louder than all other voices are the hiccough of the

inebriates, the gabble of fools, and the song of the drunkards.

In another part of the palace Queen Vashti is entertaining the princesses of Persia at a banquet. Drunken Ahasuerus says to his servants: "Go out and fetch Vashti from that banquet with the women, and bring her to this banquet with the men, and let me display her beauty." The servants immediately start to obey the king's command, but there was a rule in Oriental society that no woman might appear in public without having her face veiled. Yet here was a mandate that no one dare dispute, demanding that Vashti come in unveiled before the multitude. However, there was in Vashti's soul a principle more regal than Ahasuerus, more brilliant than the gold of Shushan, of more wealth than the revenue of Persia, which commanded her to disobey the order of the King; and so all the righteousness and holiness and modesty of her nature rises up into one sublime refusal. She says: "I will not go into the banquet unveiled." Of course, Ahasuerus was infuriated; and Vashti, robbed of her position and her estate, is driven forth in poverty and ruin to suffer the scorn of a nation, and yet to receive the applause of after generations, who shall rise up to admire this martyr to kingly insolence. [Pg 134]

The last vestige of that feast is gone; the last garland has faded; the last arch has fallen; the last tankard has been destroyed, and Shushan is a ruin; but as long as the world stands there will be multitudes of men and women, familiar with the Bible, who will come into this picture-gallery of God and admire the divine portrait of Vashti, the Queen; Vashti, the veiled; Vashti, the sacrifice; Vashti, the silent.

W'EN DE DARKY AM A-WHIS'LIN' IN DE CO'N.

BY S. Q. LAPIUS.

W'en de jewdraps 'gins to glisten,
  An' de east am growin' red,
An' de catbird am a-singin' in de trees;
W'en de swallers an' de martins
  Am a-quar'lin' in de shed,
An' de hollyhocks am callin' to de bees;
W'en de gray mule 'gins to whinny
  An' de porker 'gins to squeal,
Den it's time to be a-wo'kin' in de mo'n,
Kase de sun am climbin' higher
  An' de han's am in de field—
An' de darky am a whis'lin' in de c'on.

W'en de fog hab lef' de valley,
  An' de blue am in de sky,
An' de bees am wo'kin' in de medder lot;
W'en de hollyhocks am drowsin',
  An' de sun am ridin' high,
An' de dusty country road am blazin' hot;
Den de darky 'gins to listen— [Pg 135]

  As de catbird quits his song—
Fo' de soundin' ob de welcome dinner-ho'n,
Kase his knees am growin' wabbly,
  An' de rows am growin' long—
An' he's hoin' an' a-whis'lin' in de co'n!

W'en de fiery sun am smilin'
  An' a-sinkin' in de wes',
An' de shadders creep along de dusty road;
W'en de martins am a-chatter'n'
  An' dey hurry home to res',
An' de longes' row ob all am nea'ly hoed;
W'en de bullfrog 'gins to holler,
  An' de cowbell down de lane
'Gins to tinkle in a way dat's mos' fo'lo'n,
Den amid de gloomy echoes
  Comes dat soul-refreshin' strain—
Ob de darky as he whis'les in de co'n!

THE PILOT.

BY JOHN B. GOUGH.

John Maynard was well known in the lake district as a God-fearing, honest, and intelligent man. He was pilot on a steamboat from Detroit to Buffalo. One summer afternoon—at that time those steamers seldom carried boats—smoke was seen ascending from below; and the captain called out, "Simpson, go below and see what the matter is down there."

Simpson came up with his face as pale as ashes, and said, "Captain, the ship is on fire!" [Pg 136]

Then "Fire! fire! fire!" on shipboard.

All hands were called up; buckets of water were dashed on the fire, but in vain. There were large quantities of rosin and tar on board, and it was found useless to attempt to save the ship. The passengers rushed forward and inquired of the pilot, "How far are we from Buffalo?"

"Seven miles."

"How long before we can reach there?"

"Three-quarters of an hour at our present rate of steam."

"Is there any danger?"

"Danger! Here, see the smoke bursting out!—go forward, if you would save your lives!"

Passengers and crew—men, women and children—crowded the forward part of the ship. John Maynard stood at the helm. The flames burst forth in a sheet of fire; clouds of smoke arose.

The captain cried out through his trumpet, "John Maynard!"

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"Are you at the helm?"

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"How does she head?"

"Southeast by east, sir."

"Head her southeast and run her on shore," said the captain. Nearer, nearer, yet nearer she approached the shore. Again the captain cried out, "John Maynard!" [Pg 137]

The response came feebly this time, "Ay, ay, sir!"

"Can you hold on five minutes longer, John?" he said.

"By God's help, I will!"

The old man's hair was scorched from the scalp; one hand was disabled; his knee upon the stanchion, his teeth set, his other hand upon the wheel, he stood firm as a rock. He beached the ship; every man, woman, and child was saved, as John Maynard dropped, and his spirit took its flight to God.

THE FATAL GLASS.

BY LAURA U. CASE.

He raised the cup to his pure, sweet lips—
  Lips fresh from a mother's kisses;
Merry the banquet hall that night,
For youth and beauty were there, and bright
  The glittering lamps shone o'er them;
And one had sung with a voice divine,
A song in praise of the ruby wine,
  That graced the feast before them.
Little he dreamed as he lightly quaffed
The sparkling wine, that the first rare draught
  Was a link in the chain to bind him,
And drag his soul, like a servile slave,
Down slippery steps to a shameful grave,
  From a throne where love enshrined him.

She raised the cup to her tainted lips—
  Lips foul with the vilest curses—
In a loathsome haunt of sin and shame,
Where Christian charity seldom came,
  With its holy words to teach them [Pg 138]
Of the pastures green and waters sweet—
Of her who wept at the Master's feet,
  Whose boundless love could reach them.

Is love so dear, and life so cheap,
That one poor soul, like a wandering sheep,
  Alone on the bleak, cold mountain,
Should gladly turn from a life accursed,
To drown the past and quench the thirst
  In draughts from a poisonous fountain?

He raised the cup to his trembling lips—
  Lips wrinkled by age and hunger;
The meagre pittance he'd begged for food,
Brightened the palm of the man who stood
  At his bar with his wines around him.
He drank, and turned on tottering feet
To the bitter storm and the cold, dark street,
  Where a corpse in the morn they found him.
And oh! could those speechless lips have told
Of the want and sorrow, hunger and cold
  He had known, or the answer given,
When his trembling soul for entrance plead
At the crystal gates, where One has said,
  "No drunkard shall enter Heaven!"

KATRINA'S VISIT TO NEW YORK.

Vell, von morning I says to Hans (Hans vos mein husband): "Hans, I tinks I goes down to New York, und see some sights in dot village."

Und Hans he say: "Vell Katrina, you vork hard pooty mooch, I tinks it vould petter be dot you goes und rest yourself some." So I gets meinself ready righd avay quick und in two days I vos de [Pg 139] shteam cars on vistling avay for New York. Ve vent so fast I tinks mein head vould shplit sometimes. De poles for dot delegraph vires goes by like dey vos mad und running a races demselves mit to see vich could go de fastest mit de oder. De engine vistled like sometimes it vos hurt bad, und screeched mit de pain, und de horses by dem fields vould run as dey vas scared.

I vas pooty mooch as ten hours ven ve rushed into some houses so big enough as all our village, und de cars begin to shtop vith so many leetle jerks I dinks me I shall lose all de dinner vot I eat vile I vas coming all de vay apoudt.

Vell, ven dem cars got shtopped, de peoples all got oudt und I picked mein traps oup und got oudt too. I had shust shtepped de blatform on, ven so mooch as ein hundert men, mit vips in dere hands, und dere fingers all in de air oup, asked me all at vonce, "Vere I go?" Und every one of dem fellers vanted me to go mit him to his hotel. But I tells em I guess not; I vas going mit my brudder-mit-law, vot keeps ein pakeshop on de Powery, vere it didn't cost me notings. So I got me in dot shtreet cars, und pays de man mit brass buttons on his coat to let me oudt mit de shtreet vere dot Yawcup Schneider leeves. Oh, my! vot lots of houses! De shtreets vos all ofer filled mit [Pg 140] dem. Und so many peoples I tinks me dere must be a fire, or a barade, or some oxcitement vot gets de whole city in von blaces. It dakes me so mooch time to look at everytings I forgot me ven to got oudt und rides apast de blaces I vants to shtop to, und has to valk again pack mit dree or four shquares. But I vind me dot brudder-mit-law who vos make me so velcome as nefer vos.

Vell, dot vos Saturday mit de afternoon. I vas tired mit dot day's travel und I goes me pooty quick to bed und ven I vakes in de morning de sun vas high oup in de shky. But I gets me oup und puts on mein new silk vrock und tinks me I shall go to some fine churches und hear ein grosse breacher. Der pells vas ringing so schveet I dinks I nefer pefore hear such music. Ven I got de shtreet on de beoples vos all going quiet und nice to dere blaces mit worship, und I makes oup my mind to go in von of dem churches so soon as von comes along. Pooty soon I comes to de von mit ein shteeples high oup in de shky und I goes in mit de beoples und sits me down on ein seat all covered mit a leetle mattress. De big organ vas blaying so soft it seemed likes as if some angels must be dere to make dot music.

Pooty soon de breacher man shtood in de bulbit oup und read de hymn oudt, und all de beoples [Pg 141] sing until de churches vos filled mit de shweetness. Den de breacher man pray, und read de Pible, und den he say dot de bulbit would be occupied by de Rev. Villiam R. Shtover mit Leavenworth, Kansas.

Den dot man gommence to breach und he read mit his dext, "Und Simon's vife's mudder lay sick mit a fever." He talks for so mooch as ein half hour already ven de beoples sings again und goes homes. I tells mein brudder-mit-law it vos so nice I tinks me I goes again mit some oder churches. So vot you tinks? I goes mit anoder churches dot afternoon und dot same Villiam R. Shtover vos dere und breach dot same sermon ofer again mit dot same dext, "Und Simon's vife's mudder lay sick mit a fever." I tinks to my ownself—dot vos too bad, und I goes home und dells Yawcup, und he says, "Nefer mind, Katrina, to-night ve goes somevhere else to churches." So ven de night vas come und de lamps vos all lighted mit de shtreets, me und mein brudder-mit-law, ve goes over to dot Brooklyn town to hear dot Heinrich Vard Peecher.

My but dot vos ein grosse church, und so many beobles vas dere, ve vas crowded mit de vall back. Ven de singing vas all done, a man vot vos sitting mit a leetle chair got oup und say dot de Rev. Heinrich Vard Peecher vas to de Vhite Mountains gone mit dot hay fever, but dot de bulbit [Pg 142] vould be occupied on this occasion by de Rev. Villiam R. Shtover mit Leavenworth, Kansas. Und dot Villiam R. Shtover he gots mit dot bulbit oup und breaches dot same sermon mit dot same dext, "Und Simon's vife's mudder lay sick mit a fever."

Dot vos too bad again und I gets mad. I vos so mad I vish dot he got dot fever himself.

Vell, von dot man vas troo Yawcup says to me, "Come, Katrina, ve'll go down to dot ferry und take de boat vot goes to New York!" Ven ve vas on dot boat de fog vas so tick dot you couldn't see your hands pehind your pack. De vistles vas plowing, und dem pells vos ringing, und von man shtepped up mit Yawcup und say "Vot vor dem pells pe ringing so mooch?"

Und ven I looked around dere shtood dot Villiam R. Shtover mit Leavenworth, Kansas—und I said pooty quick: "Vot vor dem pells vas ringing? Vy for Simon's vife's mudder, vot must be died, for I hear dree times to-day already dot she vas sick mit ein fever."

THE RABBI AND THE PRINCE. [Pg 143]

BY JAMES CLARENCE HARVEY.

Versified from the Talmud.

A monarch sat in serious thought, alone,
But little reck'd he of his robe and throne;
Naught valuing the glory of control,
He sought to solve the future of his soul.
"Why should I bow the proud, imperious knee,
To mighty powers no mortal eye can see?"
So mused he long and turned this question o'er,
Then, with impatient tread, he paced the floor,
Till maddened by conflicting trains of thought
And speculation vague, which came to naught,
With feverish haste he clutched a tasseled cord
As desperate hands, in battle, clutch a sword.
"Summon Jehoshua," the monarch cried.
The white-haired Rabbi soon was at his side.

........*....*

"I bow no more to powers I cannot see;
Thy faith and learning shall be naught to me,
Unless, before the setting of the sun,
Mine eyes behold the uncreated one."

........*....*

The Rabbi led him to the open air.
The oriental sun with furious glare
Sent down its rays, like beams of molten gold.
The aged teacher, pointing, said: "Behold."
"I cannot," said the Prince, "my dazzled eyes
Refuse their service, turned upon the skies."

........*....*

"Son of the dust," the Rabbi gently said
And bowed, with reverence, his hoary head,
"This one creation, thou canst not behold,
Though by thy lofty state and pride made bold.

[Pg 144]

How canst thou then behold the God of Light,
Before whose face the sunbeams are as night?
Thine eyes before this trifling labor fall,
Canst gaze on him who hath created all?
Son of the dust, repentance can atone;
Return and worship God, who rules alone."

THE MAID OF ORLEANS.

BY J. E. SAGEBEER.

It was just at the dawn of day, when the first rays of morning were breaking over Europe and dispelling the darkness of the Middle Ages. France and England were engaged in a desperate struggle, the one for existence, the other for a throne. All the western part of France had avowed the English cause, and the English king had been proclaimed at Paris, at Rouen and at Bordeaux, while the strongly fortified city of Orleans, the key to the French possessions, was besieged. The thunder and lightning of the battlefield are bad enough, but the starvation and pestilence of a besieged city are infinitely worse. The supplies of Orleans were exhausted; the garrison was reduced to a few desperate men, and the women and children had been abandoned to the English. But far away on the border of Germany, in the little village of Domremy, the Nazareth of France, God was raising up a deliverer for Orleans, a savior for the nation. [Pg 145]

The out-door life of a peasant girl had given to Joan of Arc a well-developed form, while the beauties of her soul and the spiritual tendencies of her nature must have given to her face that womanly beauty that never fails to win respect and love. Her standard was a banner of snowy silk; her weapon a sword, that from the day she first drew it from its scabbard until she finally laid it down upon the grave of St. Denis, was never stained with blood; and her inspiration was a self-sacrificing devotion to the will of God, to the rights of France and her king. Without a single opposing shot she passed under the very battlements of the besieging English, and entered Orleans with soldiers for empty forts and food for starving people.

It needed no eloquent speech to incite the men of Orleans to deeds of valor and of vengeance. The ruins of their homes choked the streets; the desolated city was one open sepulchre, while the cries of half-starved children and the wails of heartbroken mothers, stirred them to such a mad frenzy of enthusiasm, that now, since a leader had come, they would have rushed headlong and thoughtlessly against the English forts as into a trap of death.

And now the attack was planned and the lines were formed; and then as the crumbling walls of [Pg 146] the city echoed back the wild shouts of the Orleanites, the maid of Domremy, waving her sword aloft and followed by her snowy banner, led her Frenchmen on to slaughter and to victory. Then from the English archers came flight after flight of swift-winged arrows, while the wild catapults threw clouds of death-laden stones crashing among the French. Broadsword and battle-axe clashed on shield and helmet, while the wild horses, mad with rage and pain, rushed with fierce yells upon the foe; but ever above the din and noise of battle, above death shouts and saber strokes, though the dust and smoke obscured her banner, ever could be heard the clear, ringing voice of their leader, shouting for victory and for France. An arrow pierced her bosom, but drawing it out with her own hand and throwing it aside, she showed the French her blood-stained corselet, and once more urged them on. As when the Archangel Michael, leading the heavenly cohorts, forced the rebellious angels to the very brink of hell, then hurled them over and so saved the throne of heaven, so did the maid of Orleans, leading on frenzied Frenchmen, press back the English step by step, and slaughtered rank by rank, till the whole army turned and fled, and Orleans was free and France was safe.

And now her work was done. Would that some kindly voice had bade her now go home to tend [Pg 147] the sheep and roll their white wool on her distaff! But she who had raised the siege of Orleans and led the way to Rheims, could not escape a jealous fate. The Duke of Burgundy had laid siege to Compiegne. Joan of Arc went to the rescue and was repulsed, and while bravely fighting in the rear of her retreating troops, fell prisoner to the recreant French and was sold by them to the English. For one long year she languished in her prison tower. Her keepers insulted her and called her a witch; and when in desperation she sprang from the tower and was taken up insensible, they loaded her poor body with chains, and two guards stayed in her cell day and night.

Her trial came, but her doom was already sealed. The Bishop of Beauvais, with a hundred doctors of theology, were her judges. Without a particle of evidence against her, they convicted her of sorcery and sentenced her to be burnt at the stake. A howl of fiendish joy went up from the blood-thirsty court of Paris,—a howl of fiendish joy that made its way to every battlefield where she had fought; it rang against the rescued walls of Orleans and was echoed to the royal court at Rheims; it reached to the bottomless pit and made the imps of Satan dance with glee; it echoed through the halls of heaven and made the angels weep; but there was no rescuer for the helpless [Pg 148] girl. Even the gladiator, forced into the fight, against his will, when fallen in the arena, his sword broken and the enemy's knee upon his breast, might yet hope for "thumbs down," and mercy from the hard-hearted Roman spectators. But not a single hand was raised to save the maid of Domremy, the saviour of Orleans.

Had she not faithfully done her work? Had she not bled for them? Had she not saved the kingdom? And in all chivalrous France was there not a champion to take up the gauntlet in defence of a helpless girl? When she led their armies, their spears blazed in heaven's sunlight; now they would quench them in her blood. With scarcely time to think of death, she was hurried away to the public square and chained to the stake, and when the fagots were fired, more painful than the circling flames, she heard the mocking laugh of the angry crowd. Higher and higher rose the flames, until, pressing the cross to her heart, her unconscious head sank upon her bosom, and her pure spirit went up amid the smoke and soared away to heaven.

GENTLE ALICE BROWN.

BY W. S. GILBERT.

[This is one of the Bab-Ballads, on which the very successful comic opera "Pinafore" was founded.]

It was a robber's daughter, and her name was Alice Brown,
Her father was the terror of a small Italian town;
Her mother was a foolish, weak, but amiable old thing;
But it isn't of her parents that I'm going for to sing.

As Alice was a sitting at her window-sill one day,
A beautiful young gentleman he chanced to pass that way;
She cast her eyes upon, and he looked so good and true,
That she thought: "I could be happy with a gentleman like you!"

And every morning passed her house that cream of gentlemen,
She knew she might expect him at a quarter unto ten;
A sorter in the Custom-house, it was his daily road
(The Custom-house was fifteen minutes' walk from her abode).

But Alice was a pious girl, who knew it wasn't wise
To look at strange young sorters with expressive purple eyes;
So she sought the village priest to whom her family confessed,
The priest by whom their little sins were carefully assessed.

"Oh, holy father," Alice said, "'twould grieve you, would it not,
To discover that I was a most disreputable lot?
Of all unhappy sinners I'm the most unhappy one!"
The padre said: "Whatever have you been and gone and done?"

"I have helped mamma to steal a little kiddy from its dad,
I've assisted dear papa in cutting up a little lad,
I've planned a little burglary and forged a little check,
And slain a little baby for the coral on its neck!"

The worthy pastor heaved a sigh, and dropped a silent tear,
And said: "You mustn't judge yourself too heavily, my dear;
It's wrong to murder babies, little corals for to fleece;
But sins like these one expiates at half a crown apiece.

"Girls will be girls—you're very young, and flighty in your mind;
Old heads upon young shoulders we must not expect to find:
We mustn't be too hard upon these little girlish tricks—
Let's see—five crimes at half-a-crown—exactly twelve-and-six."

"Oh, father!" little Alice cried, "your kindness makes me weep,
You do these little things for me so singularly cheap—
Your thoughtful liberality I never can forget;
But, oh! there is another crime I haven't mentioned yet!

"A pleasant looking gentleman, with pretty purple eyes,
I've noticed at my window, as I've sat acatching flies;
He passes by it every day as certain as can be—
I blush to say I've winked at him, and he has winked at me!"

"For shame!" said father Paul, "my erring daughter! On my word
This is the most distressing news that I have ever heard.
Why, naughty girl, your excellent papa has pledged your hand
To a promising young robber, the lieutenant of his band!

"This dreadful piece of news will pain your worthy parent so!
They are the most remunerative customers I know;
For many, many years they've kept starvation from my doors;
I never knew so criminal a family as yours!

"The common country folk in this insipid neighborhood
Have nothing to confess, they're so ridiculously good;
And if you marry any one respectable at all.
Why, you'll reform, and what will then become of Father Paul?"

The worthy priest, he up and drew his cowl upon his crown,
And started off in haste to tell the news to Robber Brown—
To tell him how his daughter, who was now for marriage fit,
Had winked upon a sorter, who reciprocated it.

Good Robber Brown he muffled up his anger pretty well; [Pg 152]
He said: "I have a notion, and that notion I will tell;
I will nab this gay young sorter, terrify him into fits,
And get my gentle wife to chop him into little bits.

"I've studied human nature, and I know a thing or two:
Though a girl may fondly love a living gent, as many do—
A feeling of disgust upon her senses there will fall
When she looks upon his body chopped particularly small."

He traced that gallant sorter to a still suburban square;
He watched his opportunity, and seized him unaware;
He took a life-preserver and he hit him on the head,
And Mrs. Brown dissected him before she went to bed.

And pretty little Alice grew more settled in her mind,
She never more was guilty of a weakness of the kind,
Until at length good Robber Brown bestowed her pretty hand
On the promising young robber, the lieutenant of his band.

YOUNG AMERICA. [Pg 153]

The central figure was a bareheaded woman with a broom in her hand. She stood on the back step, and was crying:

"George!"

There was no response, but anybody who had been on the other side of the close-boarded fence at the foot of the garden might have observed two boys intently engaged in building a mud pie.

"That's your mother hollerin' Georgie," said one of the two, placing his eye to a knothole and glancing through to the stoop.

"I don't care," said the other.

"Ain't you going in?"

"No!"

"Georgie!" came another call, short and sharp; "do you hear me?"

There was no answer.

"Where is she now?" inquired Georgie, putting in the filling of the pie.

"On the stoop," replied his friend at the knothole.

"What's she doin'?"

"Ain't doin' nothin'."

"George Augustus!"

Still no answer.

"You needn't think you can hide from me, young man, for I can see you, and if you don't come in here at once, I'll come out there in a way that you'll know it." [Pg 154]

Now this was an eminently natural statement, but hardly plausible as her eyes would have had to pierce an inch board fence to see Georgie; and even were this possible, it would have required a glance in that special direction, and not over the top of a pear tree in an almost opposite way. Even the boy at the knothole could hardly repress a smile.

"What's she doin' now?" inquired Georgie.

"She stands there yet."

"I won't speak to you again, George Augustus," came the voice. "Your father will be home in a few minutes, and I shall tell him all about what you have done."

Still no answer.

"Ain't you afraid?" asked the conscientious young man, drawing his eye from the knothole to rest it.

"No! she won't tell pa; she never does, she only says it to scare me."

Thus enlightened and reassured, the guard covered the knothole again.

"Ain't you acoming in here, young man?" again demanded the woman, "or do you want me to come out there to you with a stick? I won't speak to you again, sir!"

"Is she comin'?" asked the baker. [Pg 155]

"No."

"Which way is she lookin'?"

"She's lookin' over in the other yard."

"Do you hear me, I say?" came the call again.

No answer.

"George Augustus! do you hear your mother?"

Still no answer.

"Oh, you just wait, young man, till your father comes home, and he'll make you hear, I'll warrant ye."

"She's gone in now," announced the faithful sentinel, withdrawing from his post.

"All right! take hold of this crust and pull it down on that side, and that'll be another pie done," said the remorse-stricken George Augustus.

SHWATE KITTIE KEHOE.

BY JAMES CLARENCE HARVEY.

Shwate Kittie Kehoe,
Can ye tell, I do' know.
Phwat the mischief's about ye that bothers me so?
For there's that in yer eye.
That I wish I may die
If it doesn't pursue me wherever I go.
Och hone!
Shwate Kitty Kehoe.

[Pg 156]

It's a livin' disgrace
That yer shwate purty face
Should be dhrivin' me sinses all over the place!
I go this way an' that,
Loike a man fur a hat,
Wid the wind up an alley-way, runnin' a race.
Och hone!
Shwate Kittie Kehoe.

Oh! Faith, but I'm sad,
Fur to know that I'm mad,
That only intinsifies all that is bad;
But phwat can I do,
Whin a shwate smile from you
Turns everythin' rosy and makes me sowl glad?
Och hone!
Shwate Kittie Kehoe.

Shwate Kittie Kehoe,
I beg of ye, go
To the outermost inds of the earth, I do' know;
If ye'll only do this,
Jist lave me wan kiss,
An' I'll die whin yer sthartin', Shwate Kittie Kehoe.
Och hone! Och hone!
Shwate Kittie Kehoe.

THE COUNTRY'S GREATEST EVIL.

[A short speech by Vice-President Henry Wilson, delivered at the National Temperance Convention, in Chicago, June, 1875.]

Forty years of experience and observation have taught me that the greatest evil of our country, next, at any rate, to the one that has gone down in fire and blood to rise no more, is the evil of [Pg 157] intemperance. Every day's experience, every hour of reflection, teaches me that it is the duty of patriotism, the duty of humanity, the duty of Christianity, to live Christian lives, and to exert

temperance influence among the people.

There was a time, when I was younger than I am now, when I hoped to live long enough to see the cause which my heart loves and my judgment approves stronger than it is to-day. I may be mistaken, but it seems to me that the present is a rather dark and troubled night for that cause, and it is because it so seems to me that I believe it to be the duty of every honest, conscientious, self-sacrificing man of our country to speak and to work for the cause in every legitimate and proper way. And my reliance for the advancement of the cause of temperance is the same reliance which I have for the spread of the Gospel of our Divine Lord and Master.

The heart, the conscience and the reason must be appealed to continually; and Christian men and women must remember that the heart of Christianity is temperance. If it costs a sacrifice, give it. What is sacrifice to doing good and lifting toward heaven our fellow-men? We have got to rely on appeals and addresses made to the heart of this nation, to the conscience of the people and the reason of the country. We have got to train up our children in the cause from infancy. We must [Pg 158] teach it in the schools and everywhere by word, and above all by example; and it seems to me that Christian ministers, in this dark hour of our country, when they see so much intemperance, and what looks to some of us like a reaction, should make the voice of the pulpits of this land heard.

Members of Christian churches should remember that they have something to do in this cause. If anything stands in the way of Christianity it is the drunkenness in our land. A word for temperance at this time is the strongest blow against the kingdom of Satan and for the cause of our Lord and Master.

Suppose you have been disappointed. Suppose that many of your laws have failed. We know that we are right. We personally feel and see it. The evidence is around and about us that we cannot be mistaken in living total abstinence lives and recommending such a course to our neighbors.

When it costs something to stand by the temperance cause, then is the hour to stand by it. If I could be heard to-day by the people of the land, by the patriotic young men of this country, full of life, vigor and hope, I would say that it is among the first, the highest, and the grandest duties, which the country, God, and the love of humanity impose, to work for the cause of *total abstinence*. [Pg 159]

I WONDER.

BY JAMES CLARENCE HARVEY.

I wonder if, under the grass-grown sod,
  The weary human heart finds rest!
If the soul, with its woes, when it flies to God,
  Leaves all its pain, in the earth's cold breast!
Or whether we feel, as we do to-day,
That joy holds sorrow in hand, alway.

I wonder if, after the kiss of death,
  The love that was sweet, in days of yore.
Departs with the last, faint, fleeting breath,
  Or deeper grows than ever before!
I wonder if, there in the great Unknown,
Fond hearts grow weary when left alone!

I think of the daily life I lead,
  Its broken dreams and its fitful starts,
The hopeless hunger, the heart's sore need,
  The joy that gladdens, the wrong that parts,
And wonder whether the coming years
Will bring contentment, or toil and tears.

SPEECH OF PATRICK HENRY. [Pg 160]

[Delivered before the Convention of Delegates of Virginia, March 23, 1775.]

Mr. President: It is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the song of that siren, till she transforms us into beasts. Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty? Are we disposed to be of the number of those who, having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not, the things which so nearly concern our temporal salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth,—to know the worst, and to provide for it!

I have but one lamp, by which my feet are guided; and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging of the future but by the past. And, judging by the past, I wish to know what there has been in the conduct of the British ministry, for the last ten years, to justify those hopes with which gentlemen have been pleased to solace themselves and the House? Is it that insidious smile with which our petition has been lately received? Trust it not, sir; it will prove a snare to your feet! Suffer not yourselves to be betrayed with a kiss! Ask yourselves how this gracious [Pg 161] reception of our petition comports with those warlike preparations which cover our waters and darken our land. Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation? Have we shown ourselves so unwilling to be reconciled, that force must be called in to win back our love?

Let us not deceive ourselves, sir. These are the implements of war and subjugation,—the last arguments to which kings resort. I ask gentlemen, sir, what means this martial array, if its purpose be not to force us to submission? Can gentlemen assign any other possible motive for it? Has Great Britain any enemy in this quarter of the world, to call for all this accumulation of navies and armies? No, sir, she has none. They are meant for us; they can be meant for no other. They are sent over to bind and rivet upon us those chains which the British ministry have been so long forging. And what have we to oppose to them?—Shall we try argument? Sir, we have been trying that, for the last ten years. Have we anything new to offer upon the subject? Nothing. We have held the subject up in every light of which it is capable; but it has been all in vain.

Shall we resort to entreaty and humble supplication? What terms shall we find which have not already been exhausted? Let us not, I beseech you, sir, deceive ourselves longer. Sir, we have [Pg 162] done every thing that could be done, to avert the storm which is now coming on. We have petitioned, we have remonstrated, we have supplicated, we have prostrated ourselves before the throne, and have implored its interposition to arrest the tyrannical hands of the ministry and Parliament. Our petitions have been slighted, our remonstrances have produced additional violence and insult, our supplications have been disregarded, and we have been spurned, with contempt, from the foot of the throne.

In vain, after these things, may we indulge the fond hope of peace and reconciliation. There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free, if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending, if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained,—we must fight; I repeat it, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms, and to the God of Hosts, is all that is left us!

They tell us, sir, that we are weak,—unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally [Pg 163] disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance by lying supinely on our backs, and hugging the delusive phantom of hope, until our enemies shall have bound us hand and foot? Sir, we are not weak, if we make a proper use of those means which the God of nature hath placed in our power.

Three millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations, and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we were base enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest. There is no retreat but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged! Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable; and let it come! I repeat it, sir, let it come!

It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry: Peace, peace!—but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the North will bring to our ears [Pg 164] the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!

MUTATION.

BY JAMES CLARENCE HARVEY.

Upon the shores of No-man's-land,
  I met an angel, one whose wings
Shed beams of light on either hand,
  As radiant as the sunrise brings.
And happy souls, with eager tread,
  Passed up and down the sandy slope;
"Oh, tell me your fair name!" I said;
She turned and smiled, and answered: "Hope."

Along the shores of No-man's-land,
  The angel walked, with folded wings,
And shadows fell on every hand,
  The burden that the night-wind brings.
With head turned backward, sad and slow
  She paced the sands, her eyelids wet,
"Hope mourns," I said, and soft and low,
The angel sighed: "I am Regret."

SIX LOVE LETTERS

[Pg 165]

"Are there any more of those letters?"

When her father asked this question in an awful tone, Lucilla Richmond could not say No, and dared not say Yes, but as an intermediate course burst into tears and sobbed behind her handkerchief.

"Bring them to me, Lucilla," said her father, as if she had answered him, as indeed she had; and the girl, trembling and weeping, arose to obey him.

Then Mrs. Richmond, her daughter's own self grown older, came behind her husband's chair and patted him on the shoulder. "Please don't be hard with her, my dear," she said, coaxingly. "He's a nice young man, and it's all our fault, after all, as much as hers."

"Perhaps you approve of the whole affair, ma'am," said Mr. Richmond.

"I—no—that is I only—" gasped the little woman; and hearing Lucilla coming, she sank into a chair, blaming herself dreadfully for not having been present at all her daughter's music lessons during the past year.

"It was inexcusable in a poor music teacher, who should have known his place," Mr. Richmond declared; and he clutched the little perfumed billet which had fallen into his hands, as he might a [Pg 166] scorpion, and waited for the others with a look upon his face which told of no softening. At last six little white envelopes, tied together with blue ribbons, were laid at his elbow by his trembling daughter.

"Lock these up until I return home this evening," he said to his wife; "I will read them then. Meanwhile Lucilla is not to see this music teacher on any pretence whatever."

Mr. Richmond put on his hat and departed, and Lucilla and her mother took the opportunity of falling into each other's arms.

"It is so naughty of you," said Mrs. Richmond. "But oh, dear, I can't blame you. It was exactly so with your father, and my father objected because of his poverty. He used to be very romantic himself in those old times. Such letters as he wrote to me. I have them in my desk yet. He said he'd die if I refused him."

"So does Fred," said Lucilla.

"And that life would be worthless without me, and about my being beautiful,—I'm sure he ought to sympathize a little," said Mrs. Richmond.

She went into her own room to put the letters into her desk; and as she placed them into one of the pigeon holes, she saw in another a bundle, tied exactly as these were, and drew them out. [Pg 167] These letters were to a Lucilla also, one who had received them twenty years before. A strange idea came into Mrs. Richmond's mind.

When she left the desk she looked guilty and frightened. The dinner hour arrived, and with it came her husband, angered and more determined than ever. The meal was passed in silence; then, having adjourned to the parlor, Mr. Richmond seated himself in a great arm-chair, and demanded, in a voice of thunder: "Those absurd letters, if you please."

"Six letters—six shameful pieces of deception, Lucilla," said the indignant parent. "I am shocked that a child of mine should practice such duplicity. Hem! let me see. Number one, I believe. June, and this is December. Half a year you have deceived us then, Lucilla. Let me see—ah! 'From the first moment I adored you,' bah! Nonsense. People don't fall in love in that absurd manner. 'With your smiles for a goal, I would win both fame and fortune, poor as I am!' Fiddlesticks, Lucilla. A man who has common sense would always wait until he had a fair commencement before he proposed to a girl. Praising your beauty, eh? 'The loveliest creature I ever saw!' Exaggeration, my dear. You are not plain, but such flattery is absurd. 'Must hear from you or die!' Dear, dear, dear [Pg 168] —how absurd!" And Mr. Richmond dropped the first letter and picked another. "The same stuff," he commented. "I hope you do not believe a word he says. Ah! now in number three he calls you 'an angel!' He's romantic, upon my soul! And what is this? 'Those who forbid me to see you can find no fault with me but my poverty. I am honest—I am earnest in my efforts. I am by birth a gentleman, and I love you from the depths of my soul. Do not let them sell you for gold, Lucilla.' Great heavens, what impertinence to your parents!"

"I don't remember Fred saying anything of that kind," said poor little Lucilla. "He never knew you would object."

Mr. Richmond shook his head, frowned and then read on until the last sheet lay under his hand. Then with an ejaculation of rage, he sprang to his feet.

"Infamous!" he cried! "I'll go to him this instant—I'll horsewhip him, I'll—I'll murder him! As for you, by Jove, I'll send you to a convent. Elope—elope with a music teacher! Here, John, call a cab, I——"

"Oh, papa! you are crazy!" said Lucilla. "Frederick never proposed such a thing. Let me see the letter. Oh, that is not Fred's—upon my word it is not. Do look, papa, it is dated twenty years back, [Pg 169] and Frederick's name is not Charles! Papa, these are your letters to mamma, written long ago. Mother's name is Lucilla, you know."

Mr. Richmond sat down in his arm-chair in silence, very red in the face.

"How did this occur?" he said, sternly; and little Mrs. Richmond, retreating into a corner, with her handkerchief to her eyes, sobbed:

"I did it on purpose! You know, Charles, it's so long ago, and I thought you might not exactly remember how you fell in love with me at first sight; how papa and mamma objected, and how, at last, we ran away together; and it seemed to me if we could bring it back all plainly to you as it was then, we might let Lucilla marry the man she loves, who is good, if he is not rich. I do not need to be brought back any plainer myself; women have more time to remember, you know. And we've been very happy—have we not?"

And certainly Mr. Richmond could not deny that. The little ruse was favorable to the young music teacher, who had really only been sentimental, and had not gone one half so far as an elopement; and in due course of time the two were married with all the pomp and grandeur befitting the nuptials of a wealthy merchant's daughter, with the perfect approbation of Lucilla's father.

A ROMAN LEGEND. [Pg 170]

BY JAMES CLARENCE HARVEY.

Hour by hour, with skillful pencil, wrought the artist, sad and lone,
Day by day, he labored nobly, though to all the world unknown;
He was brave, the youthful artist, but his soul grew weak and faint,
As he strove to place before him, the fair features of a saint;
Worn and weary, he strove vainly, for the touch of Heavenly grace,
Till, one day, a radiant sunbeam fell upon the up-turned face,
And the very air was flooded with a presence strangely sweet,
For the soul, within the sunbeam, seemed to make the work complete;
Swift as thought the artist's pencil deftly touched the features fair,
Night came down, but one bright sunbeam left its soul imprisoned there;
And around his dingy garret gazed the artist, wondering,
For the work sublime illumed it like the palace of a king;
And within the artist nature flamed his first fond love divine,
Which bewildered all his senses, as with rare, old, ruby wine.
Yearningly, he cried: "I love thee," to the radiant saintly face,
But the never-ceasing answer was a look of Heavenly grace.
Out into the world he wandered, questioning, searching everywhere,
And the stars above, full often, heard his soul burst forth in prayer: [Pg 171]
"God in Heaven, in mercy, hear me! Hear thy suppliant's pleading cry,
Lead, oh lead! my footsteps to her. Grant but this, or let me die."
Friends forsook and want pursued him, still he struggled on alone,
Till, at last, outworn and trembling, reason tottered on its throne,
And he seemed the helpless plaything of some mad, relentless fate,
Till the Sisterhood of Mercy found him lying at their gate;
Made him welcome, gave him shelter and with ever-patient care
Bathed his brow and brushed the tangled, matted tresses of his hair.
Long he lingered on the borders of the holy-land of death,
One fair Sister, by his bedside, counting low each fluttering breath.
Softly fell the evening shadows, shutting out the golden glow,
Of a gorgeous, lingering sunset, gilding all the earth below,
When, upon his pillow turning, swift came to him hope's bright gleams,
For the anxious face above him was the loved one of his dreams.
But her life was one of mercy, and the band across her brow,
Gave the spotless testimony of a maiden's holy vow.
"Is this Heaven? Are you an angel?" swift he questioned her, the while
She smoothed back his wavy tresses, only answering with a smile;
"Tell me truly, couldst thou love me, since thou wouldst not let me die?"
But she pointed to the band about her brow and breathed a sigh. [Pg 172]

In her hours of patient watching, she had learned the bitter truth,
That the Sisterhood of Mercy has its anguish and its ruth;
Nevermore she came, well-knowing, from temptation se must fly,
For his eager, tender questions in her heart had found reply.
Every morning he would question: "Will she come to me to-day?"
And the tender, truthful Sisters shook their heads and turned away,
For adown his classic features passed the shadow of his pain,
As he closed his eyes and murmured: "She will never come again."
In his dreams, one night, he fancied she had bent above his bed,
And his loving arms reached upward, but the vision sweet had fled.
Hopeless, in his great heart-hunger, through a storm of wind and rain,
To his picture turned the artist, bowing low with grief and pain;
Open wide he threw the shutters of his garret casement high,
Heeding not the vivid lightning, as it flashed athwart the sky.
On his lowly couch reclining, soon in weariness he slept,
While the storm clouds o'er him thundering, long and loud their vigils kept.
Wilder grew the night and fiercer blew the winds, until at last,
Like a bird of prey or demon, through the shattered casement, passed
The old shutter, rending, tearing every wondrous touch and trace
Of the artist's patient labor, from the radiant, saintly face; [Pg 173]
And the jagged bands of lightning, as they flashed along the floor,
Lit the crushed and crumpled canvas, worthless now forevermore.
And the artist, slowly rising, groped his way across the room,
Feeling, knowing he had lost her, though enshrouded in the gloom.
Then besought his couch and murmured: "It is well, God knoweth best."
And the sunbeams of the morning found a weary soul—at rest.

A FRIEND OF THE FLY.

With a fly-screen under one arm and a bundle of sticky fly-paper under the other, an honest agent entered a grocery store one day in the summer and said: "Why don't you keep 'em out?"

"Who vash dot?" asked the grocery-man.

"Why, the pesky flies. You've got 'em by the thousand in here, and the fly season has only begun. Shall I put fly-screens in the doors?"

"What for?"

"To keep the flies out."

"Why should I keep der flies oudt? Flies like some shance to go aroundt und see der city de same ash agents. If a fly ish kept out on der street all der time he might ash vhell be a horse." [Pg 174]

"Yes, but they are a great nuisance. I'll put you up a screen door there for three dollars."

"Not any for me. If a fly vhants to come in here, und he behaves himself in a respectable manner, I have notings to say. If he don't behave, I bounce him oudt pooty queek, und don't he forget her!"

"Well, try this fly-paper. Every sheet will catch five hundred flies."

"Who vhants to catch 'em?"

"I do—you—everybody."

"I don't see it like dot. If I put dot fly-paper on der counter somebody comes along und wipes his nose mit it, or somebody leans his elbow on her und vhalks off mit him. It would be shust like my boy Shake to come in und lick all der molasses off, to play a shoke on his fadder."

"Say, I'll put down a sheet, and if it doesn't catch twenty flies in five minutes I'll say no more."

"If you catch twenty flies I have to pry 'em loose mit a stick und let 'em go, und dot vhas too much work. No, my agent friendt; flies must have a shance to get along und take some comfort. I vhas poor once myself, und I know all about it."

"I'll give you seven sheets for ten cents."

"Oxactly, but I won't do it. It looks to me like shmall beesness for a big agent like you to go around mit some confidence games to shwindle flies. A fly vhas born to be a fly, und to come into my shtore ash often ash he likes. When he comes I shall treat him like a shentleman. I gif him a fair show. I don't keep an axe to knock him in der headt, und I don't put some molasses all oafer a sheet of paper und coax him to come und be all stuck up mit his feet till he can't fly away. You can pass along—I'm no such person like dot." [Pg 175]

ANSWERED PRAYERS.

BY ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

I prayed for riches, and achieved success,—
  All that I touched turned into gold. Alas!
My cares were greater, and my peace was less
  When that wish came to pass.

I prayed for glory; and I heard my name
  Sung by sweet children and by hoary men.
But ah! the hurts, the hurts that come with fame!
  I was not happy then.

I prayed for love, and had my soul's desire;
  Through quivering heart and body and through brain
There swept the flame of its devouring fire;
  And there the scars remain.

I prayed for a contented mind. At length
  Great light upon my darkened spirit burst.
Great peace fell on me, also, and great strength.
  Oh! had that prayer been first!

GOD IN THE AMERICAN CONSTITUTION.

[Pg 176]

BY T. DE WITT TALMAGE.

Not only because of the kindness of God to this nation in the past should such a reverential insertion be made, but because of the fact that we are going to want Divine interposition still further in our national history. This gold and silver question will never be settled until God settles it. This question of tariff and free trade will never be settled until God settles it. This question between the East and the West, which is getting hotter and hotter, and looks toward a Republic of the Pacific, will not be settled until God settles it. We needed God in the one hundred and twenty years of our past national life, and we will need Him still more in the next one hundred and twenty years. Lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates of our glorious Constitution, and let the King of Glory come in! Make one line of that immortal document radiant with Omnipotence! Spell at least one word with Thrones! At the beginning, or at the close, or in the centre, recognize Him from whom as a nation we have received all the blessing of the past and upon whom we are dependent for the future. Print that one word "God," or "Lord," or "Eternal Father," or "Ruler of [Pg 177] Nations," somewhere between the first word and the last. The Great Expounder of the Constitution sleeps at Marshfield, Massachusetts, the Atlantic Ocean still humming near his pillow of dust its prolonged lullaby; but is there not some one now living, who, in the white marble palace of the nation on yonder hill, not ten minutes away, will become the Irradiator of the Constitution by causing to be added the most tremendous word of our English vocabulary, the name of that Being before whom all nations must bow or go into defeat and annihilation, —"God?"

THE ENCHANTED SHIRT.

BY JOHN HAY.

The king was sick. His cheek was red,
  And his eye was clear and bright;
He ate and drank with a kingly zest,
  And peacefully snored at night.

But he said he was sick—and a king should know;
  And doctors came by the score;
They did not cure him. He cut off their heads,
  And sent to the schools for more.

At last two famous doctors came,
  And one was poor as a rat;
He had passed his life in studious toil
  And never found time to grow fat.

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The other had never looked in a book;

His patients gave him no trouble;
If they recovered, they paid him well,
If they died, their heirs paid double.

Together they looked at the royal tongue,
As the king on his couch reclined;
In succession they thumped his august chest,
But no trace of disease could find.

The old sage said, "You're as sound as a nut."
"Hang him up!" roared the king, in a gale,
In a ten-knot gale of royal range;
The other grew a shadow pale;

But he pensively rubbed his sagacious nose,
And thus his prescription ran:
"The king will be well if he sleeps one night
In the shirt of a happy man."

Wide o'er the realm the couriers rode,
And fast their horses ran,
And many they saw, and to many they spake,
But they found no happy man.

They found poor men who would fain be rich,
And rich who thought they were poor;
And men who twisted their waists in stays,
And women that short hose wore.

They saw two men by the roadside sit,
And both bemoaned their lot;
For one had buried his wife he said,
And the other one had not.

At last they came to a village gate;
A beggar lay whistling there;
He whistled and sang and laughed, and rolled
On the grass in the soft June air.

[Pg 179]

The weary couriers paused and looked
At the scamp so blithe and gay,
And one of them said, "Heaven save you, friend,
Yon seem to be happy to-day."

"Oh yes, fair sirs," the rascal laughed,
And his voice rang free and glad;
"An idle man has so much to do
That he never has time to be sad."

"This is our man," the courier said,
"Our luck has led us aright.
I will give you a hundred ducats, friend,
For the loan of your shirt to-night."

The merry blackguard lay back on the grass
And laughed till his face was black;
"I would do it, God wot," and he roared with fun,
"But I haven't a shirt to my back."

Each day to the king the reports came in
Of his unsuccessful spies,
And the sad panorama of human woes
Passed daily under his eyes.

And he grew ashamed of his useless life,
And his maladies hatched in gloom;
He opened the windows, and let in the air
Of the free heaven into his room;

And out he went in the world, and toiled
In his own appointed way,
And the people blessed him, the land was glad,
And the king was well and gay.

PRAYING FOR PAPA.

[Pg 180]

A man who had been walking for some time in the downward path, came out of his house and started down town for a night of carousal with some old companions he had promised to meet. His young wife had besought him with imploring eyes to spend the evening with her, and had reminded him of the time when evenings passed in her company were all too short. His little daughter had clung about his knees and coaxed in her pretty, wilful way for "papa" to tell her some bedtime stories, but habit was stronger than love for wife and child, and he eluded their tender questioning by the special sophistries the father of evil advances at such times from his credit fund, and went his way.

But when he was a few blocks distant from his home, he found that in changing his coat he had forgotten to remove his wallet, and he could not go out on a drinking bout without money, even though he knew his family needed it, and his wife was economizing every day more and more in order to make up his deficits, and he hurried back and crept softly past the windows of the little house, in order that he might steal in and obtain it without running the gauntlet of either questions or caresses.

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But something stayed his feet; there was a fire in the grate within—for the night was chilly—and it lit up the little parlor and brought out in startling effects the pictures on the wall. But these were as nothing to the pictures on the hearth. There, in the soft glow of the fire-light knelt his child at the mother's feet, its small hands clasped in prayer, its fair head bowed; and as its rosy lips whispered each word with distinctness, the father listened, spell-bound to the spot:

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take."

Sweet petition! The man himself, who stood there with bearded lips shut tightly together, had said that prayer once at his mother's knee. Where was that mother now? The sunset gates had long ago unbarred to let her through. But the child had not finished; he heard her say "God bless mamma, papa, and my ownself"—and there was a pause, and she lifted her troubled blue eyes to her mother's face.

"God bless papa," prompted the mother, softly.

"God bless papa," lisped the little one.

"And—please send papa home sober"—he could not hear the mother as she said this, but the child followed in a clear, inspired tone:

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"God—bless—papa—and—please—send—him—home—sober. Amen."

Mother and child sprang to their feet in alarm when the door opened so suddenly, but they were not afraid when they saw who it was, returned so soon. That night, when little Mamie was being tucked up in bed after such a romp with papa, she said in the sleepiest and most contented of voices:

"Mamma, God answers most as quick as the telegraph, doesn't he?"

BECALMED.

BY SAMUEL, K. COWAN.

It was as calm as calm could be;
  A death-still night in June;
A silver sail on a silver sea,
  Under a silver moon.

Not the least low air the still sea stirred;
  But all on the dreaming deep
The white ship lay, like a white sea-bird,
  With folded wings, asleep.

For a long, long month, not a breath of air;
  For a month, not a drop of rain;
And the gaunt crew watched in wild despair,
  With a fever in throat and brain.

And they saw the shore, like a dim cloud, stand
  On the far horizon-sea;
It was only a day's short sail to the land,
  And the haven where they would be.

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Too faint to row—no signal brought
An answer, far or nigh.
Father, have mercy; leave them not
Alone, on the deep, to die.

And the gaunt crew prayed on the decks above;
And the women prayed below:
"One drop of rain, for Heaven's great love!
Oh, Heaven, for a breeze to blow!"

But never a shower from the cloud would burst,
And never a breeze would come:
O God, to think that man can thirst
And starve in sight of home!

But out to sea with the drifting tide
The vessel drifted away—
Till the far-off shore, like the dim cloud, died;
And the wild crew ceased to pray!

Like fiends they glared, with their eyes aglow;
Like beasts with hunger wild:
But a mother prayed, in the cabin below,
By the bed of her little child.

It slept, and lo! in its sleep it smiled,—
A babe of summers three:
"O Father, save my little child,
Whatever comes to me!"

Calm gleamed the sea, calm gleamed the sky,
No cloud—no sail in view;
And they cast them lots, for who should die
To feed the starving crew!

Like beasts they glared, with hunger wild,
And their red-glazed eyes aglow,
And the death-lot fell on the little child
That slept in the cabin below!

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And the mother shrieked in wild despair:
"O God, my child—my son.
They will take his life, it is hard to bear;
Yet, Father, Thy will be done."

And she waked the child from its happy sleep,
And she kneeled by the cradle bed;
"We thirst, my child, on the lonely deep;
We are dying, my child, for bread.

"On the lone, lone sea no sail—no breeze;
Not a drop of rain in the sky;
We thirst—we starve—on the lonely seas;
And thou, my child, must die!"

She wept: what tears her wild soul shed
Not I, but Heaven knows best.
And the child rose up from its cradle bed,
And crossed its hands on its breast:

"Father," he lisped, "so good, so kind,
Have pity on mother's pain:
For mother's sake, a little wind;
Father, a little rain!"

And she heard them shout for the child from the deck,
And she knelt on the cabin stairs:
"The child!" they cry, "the child—stand back—
And a curse on your idiot prayers!"

And the mother rose in her wild despair,
And she bared her throat to the knife:
"Strike—strike me—me; but spare, oh, spare
My child, my dear son's life!"

O God, it was a ghastly sight,—
Red eyes, like flaming brands,

And a hundred belt-knives flashing bright
In the clutch of skeleton hands!

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"Me—me—strike—strike, ye fiends of death!"
But soft—through the ghastly air
Whose falling tear was that? whose breath
Waves through the mother's hair?

A flutter of sail—a ripple of seas—
A speck on the cabin pane;
O God; it's a breeze—a breeze—
And a drop of blessed rain!

And the mother rushed to the cabin below,
And she wept on the babe's bright hair.
"The sweet rain falls the sweet winds blow;
Father has heard thy prayer!"

Bu the child had fallen asleep again,
And lo! in its sleep it smiled.
"Thank God," she cried, "for His wind and His rain!
Thank God, for my little child!"

IN THE BOTTOM DRAWER.

I saw wife pull out the bottom drawer of the old family bureau this evening, and went softly out, and wandered up and down, until I knew that she had shut it up and gone to her sewing. We have some things laid away in that drawer which the gold of kings could not buy, and yet they are relics which grieve us until both our hearts are sore. I haven't dared look at them for a year, but I remember each article.

There are two worn shoes, a little chip hat with part of the brim gone, some stockings, pants, a coat, two or three spools, bits of broken crockery, a whip and several toys. Wife—poor thing—goes to that drawer every day of her life, and prays over it, and lets her tears fall upon the precious articles; but I dare not go.

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Sometimes we speak of little Jack, but not often. It has been a long time, but somehow we can't get over grieving. He was such a burst of sunshine into our lives that his going away has been like covering our every-day existence with a pall. Sometimes, when we sit alone of an evening, I writing and she sewing, a child on the street will call out as our boy used to, and we will both start up with beating hearts and a wild hope, only to find the darkness more of a burden than ever.

It is so still and quiet now. I look up at the window where his blue eyes used to sparkle at my coming, but he is not there. I listen for his pattering feet, his merry shout, and his ringing laugh; but there is no sound. There is no one to climb over my knees, no one to search my pockets and tease for presents: and I never find the chairs turned over, the broom down, or ropes tied to the door-knobs.

I want some one to tease me for my knife; to ride on my shoulder; to lose my axe; to follow me to the gate when I go, and be there to meet me when I come; to call "good-night" from the little bed, now empty. And wife, she misses him still more; there are no little feet to wash, no prayers to say; no voice teasing for lumps of sugar, or sobbing with the pain of a hurt toe; and she would give her own life, almost, to awake at midnight, and look across to the crib and see our boy there as he used to be.

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So we preserve our relics; and when we are dead we hope that strangers will handle them tenderly, even if they shed no tears over them.

EMULATION (UP TO DATE).

BY JAMES CLARENCE HARVEY.

"He who would thrive must rise at five,"
The old folks used to say,
And so, of course, to thrive the more,
Tis better still to rise at four,
And make a longer day.

Still smarter he who wakes at three,
And hurries out of bed;

And he who would this man outdo
Must rise when clocks are striking two,
To earn his daily bread.

To rise and run at stroke of one,
Advantage still may keep;
But he who would them all forestall
Must never go to bed at all,
And die for lack of sleep.

DESTINY OF OUR COUNTRY.

[Pg 188]

BY R. C. WINTHROP.

Here, then, sir, I bring these remarks to a close. I have explained, to the best of my ability, the views which I entertain of the great questions of the day. Those views may be misrepresented hereafter, as they have been heretofore; but they cannot be misunderstood by any one who desires, or who is even willing, to understand them.

Most gladly would I have found myself agreeing more entirely with some of the friends whom I see around me, and with more than one of those elsewhere, with whom I have always been proud to be associated, and whose lead, on almost all occasions, I have rejoiced to follow.

Our tie, however, I am persuaded, still remains to us all—a common devotion to the Union of these States, and a common determination to sacrifice everything but principle to its preservation. Our responsibilities are indeed great. This vast republic, stretching from sea to sea, and rapidly outgrowing everything but our affections, looks anxiously to us, this day, to take care that it receives no detriment.

Nor is it too much to say, that the eyes and the hearts of the friends of constitutional freedom throughout the world are at this moment turned eagerly here,—more eagerly than ever before,— [Pg 189]
to behold an example of successful republican institutions, and to see them come out safely and triumphantly from the fiery trial to which they are now subjected!

I have the firmest faith that these eyes and these hearts will not be disappointed. I have the strongest belief that the visions and phantoms of disunion which now appall us will soon be remembered only like the clouds of some April morning, or "the dissolving views" of some evening spectacle.

I have the fullest conviction that this glorious republic is destined to outlast all, all, at either end of the Union, who may be plotting against its peace, or predicting its downfall.

"Fond, impious man! think'st thou yon sanguine cloud
Raised by thy breath, can quench the orb of day?
To morrow, it repairs its golden flood,
And warms the nations with redoubled ray!"

Let us proceed in the settlement of the unfortunate controversies in which we find ourselves involved, in a spirit of mutual conciliation and concession:—let us invoke fervently upon our efforts the blessings of that Almighty Being who is "the author of peace and lover of concord:"—
and we shall still find order springing out of confusion, harmony evoked from discord, and peace, [Pg 190]
union and liberty, once more reassured to our land!

THE WOMEN OF MUMBLES HEAD.

BY CLEMENT SCOTT.

Bring, novelist, your note-book! bring, dramatist, your pen!
And I'll tell you a simple story of what women do for men.
It's only a tale of a lifeboat, of the dying and the dead,
Of the terrible storm and shipwreck that happened off Mumbles Head!
Maybe you have traveled in Wales, sir, and know it north and south;
Maybe you are friends with the "natives" that dwell at Oystermouth;
It happens, no doubt, that from Bristol you've crossed in a casual way,
And have sailed your yacht in the summer in the blue of Swansea Bay.

Well! it isn't like that in the winter, when the lighthouse stands alone,
In the teeth of Atlantic breakers that foam on its face of stone;
It wasn't like that when the hurricane blew, and the storm-bell tolled, or when
There was news of a wreck, and the lifeboat launched, and a desperate cry for men.

When in the world did the coxswain shirk? a brave old salt was he!
Proud to the bone of as four strong lads as ever had tasted the sea,
Welshmen all to the lungs and loins, who, about that coast, 'twas said, [Pg 191]
Had saved some hundred lives apiece—at a shilling or so a head!

So the father launched the lifeboat, in the teeth of the tempest's roar,
And he stood like a man at the rudder, with an eye on his boys at the oar.
Out to the wreck went the father! out to the wreck went the sons!
Leaving the weeping of women, and booming of signal guns;
Leaving the mother who loved them, and the girls that the sailors love,
Going to death for duty, and trusting to God above!
Do you murmur a prayer, my brothers, when cozy and safe in bed,
For men like these, who are ready to die for a wreck off Mumbles Head?

It didn't go well with the lifeboat! 'twas a terrible storm that blew!
And it snapped the rope in a second that was flung to the drowning crew;
And then the anchor parted—'twas a tussle to keep afloat!
But the father stuck to the rudder, and the boys to the brave old boat.
Then at last on the poor doomed lifeboat a wave broke mountains high!
"God help us now!" said the father. "It's over, my lads! Good-bye!"
Half of the crew swam shoreward, half to the sheltered caves,
But father and sons were fighting death in the foam of the angry waves.
[Pg 192]

Up at a lighthouse window two women beheld the storm,
And saw in the boiling breakers a figure,—a fighting form;
It might be a gray-haired father, then the women held their breath;
It might be a fair-haired brother, who was having a round with death,
It might be a lover, a husband, whose kisses were on the lips
Of the women whose love is the life of men going down to the sea in ships.
They had seen the launch of the lifeboat, they had seen the worst, and more,
Then, kissing each other, these women went down from the lighthouse,
straight to shore.

There by the rocks on the breakers these sisters, hand in hand,
Beheld once more that desperate man who struggled to reach the land.
'Twas only aid he wanted to help him across the wave,
But what are a couple of women with only a man to save?
What are a couple of women? well, more than three craven men
Who stood by the shore with chattering teeth, refusing to stir—and then
Off went the women's shawls, sir; in a second they're torn and rent,
Then knotting them into a rope of love, straight into the sea they went!

"Come back!" cried the lighthouse-keeper, "For God's sake, girls, come back!"
As they caught the waves on their foreheads, resisting the fierce attack.
"Come back!" moaned the gray-haired mother, as she stood by the angry sea, [Pg 193]
"If the waves take you, my darlings, there's nobody left to me!"
"Come back!" said the three strong soldiers, who still stood faint and pale,
"You will drown if you face the breakers! you will fall if you brave the gale!"
"*Come back!*" said the girls, "we will not! go tell it to all the town,
We'll lose our lives, God willing, before that man shall drown!"

"Give one more knot to the shawls, Bess! give one strong clutch of your hand!
Just follow me, brave, to the shingle, and we'll bring him safe to land!
Wait for the next wave, darling! only a minute more,
And I'll have him safe in my arms, dear, and we'll drag him to the shore."
Up to the arms in the water, fighting it breast to breast,
They caught and saved a brother alive. God bless them! you know the rest—
Well, many a heart beat stronger, and many a tear was shed,
And many a hearty cheer was raised for "The Women of Mumbles Head!"

A REASONABLE REQUEST. [Pg 194]

MR. DARNELLE ASKS HIS FIANCEE A FAVOR, AFTER THEIR ENGAGEMENT.

"It is so sudden, Mr. Darnelle."

"I know it is," responded the young man gently.

He stood before her with his weight resting easily on one foot, his left elbow on the mantel-piece, his right arm behind him, and his whole attitude one of careless, unstudied ease and grace, acquired only by long and patient practice.

"I know it is," he repeated. "Measured by ordinary standards and by the cold conventionalities of society, it is indeed sudden. We have known each other only twenty-four hours. Until 8.25 o'clock last night neither of us had ever heard of the other. Yet with the heart one day is as one hundred years. Could we have known one another better, darling," he went on, with a tremor in his cultivated B flat baritone voice, "if we had attended the theatre, the concert, the church and the oyster parlor together for a dozen seasons? Does not your heart beat responsive to mine?"

"I will not pretend to deny, Mr. Darnelle," replied the young lady, with a rich blush mantling her cheek and brow, "that your avowal moves me strangely." [Pg 195]

"I know it—I feel it," he responded eagerly. "Love is not the slow, vegetable-like growth of years. It does not move in its course with the measured, leisurely step of a man working by the day. It springs up like a mushr—like an electric flash. It takes instant possession. It does not need to be jerked in, as it were. It needs not the agonized coaxing of—of a young man's first chin whiskers, my darling. It is here! You will forgive my presumption, will you not, and speak the words that tremble on your lips—the words that will fill my cup of joy to overflowing?"

The evening had passed like a beautiful dream. Mr. Darnelle, admonished by the clock that it was time to go, had risen reluctantly to his feet, and stood holding the hand of his beautiful betrothed.

"My love," he said, in eager passionate accents, "now that you have blessed my life with a measureless, ineffable joy, and made all my future radiant with golden hope, you will not think I am asking too much if I plead for just one favor?"

"What is it?" shyly responded the lovely maiden.

"Will you please tell me your first name?"

RESIGNATION. [Pg 196]

BY H. W. LONGFELLOW.

There is no flock, however watched and tended,
  But one dead lamb is there!
There is no fireside howso'er defended,
  But has one vacant chair!

The air is full of farewells to the dying;
  And mournings for the dead;
The heart of Rachel, for her children crying.
  Will not be comforted!

Let us be patient! These severe afflictions
  Not from the ground arise,
But oftentimes celestial benedictions
  Assume this dark disguise.

We see but dimly through the mists and vapors;
  Amid these earthly damps
What seem to us but sad, funereal tapers
  May be heaven's distant lamps.

There is no Death! What seems so is transition;
  This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
  Whose portal we call Death.

She is not dead,—the child of our affection,—
  But gone unto that school
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,
  And Christ himself doth rule.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion,
  By guardian angels led,
Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,
  She lives, whom we call dead.

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Day after day we think what she is doing
  In those bright realms of air;
Year after year, her tender steps pursuing,
  Behold her grown more fair.

Thus do we walk with her, and keep unbroken
  The bond which nature gives,
Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken,
  May reach her where she lives.

Not as a child shall we again behold her;
  For when with raptures wild
In our embraces we again enfold her,
  She will not be a child;

But a fair maiden, in her Father's mansion,
  Clothed with celestial grace;
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion
  Shall we behold her face.

And though at times impetuous with emotion
  And anguish long suppressed,
The swelling heart heaves moaning like the ocean,
  That cannot be at rest,—

We will be patient and assuage the feeling
  We may not wholly stay;
By silence sanctifying, not concealing,
  The grief that must have way.

AN AFFECTIONATE LETTER.

[Pg 198]

Tipperary, Ireland, September the ten.

My Dear Nephew:

I have not heard anything of you sens the last time I wrote ye. I have moved from the place where I now live, or I should have written to you before. I did not know where a letter might find you first, but I now take my pen in hand to drop you a few lines, to inform you of the death of your own living uncle, Kilpatrick. He died very suddenly after a long illness of six months. Poor man, he suffered a great deal. He lay a long time in convulsions, perfectly quiet and speechless, and all the time talking incoherently and inquiring for water.

I'm much at a loss to tell you what his death was occasioned by, but the doctor thinks it was caused by his last sickness, for he was not well ten days during his confinement.

His age ye know jist as well as I can tell ye; he was 25 years old last March, lacking fifteen months; and if he had lived till this time he would be just six months dead.

N. B. Take notis. I inclose to you a tin pound note, which ye father sends to ye unbeknown to me. Your mother often speaks of ye; she would like to send ye the brindle cow, and I would inclose her to ye but for the horns.

[Pg 199]

I would beg of ye not to break the sale of this letter until two or three days after ye read it, for thin ye will be better prepared for the sorrowful news.

Patrick O'Branigan.

To Michael Glancy, No. — Broad Street, United States of Ameriky, State of Massachusetts, in Boston.

THE WHISTLING REGIMENT.

BY JAMES CLARENCE HARVEY.

[In the recitation which follows, the effect can be heightened by an accompaniment of the piano and by the whistling of strains from Annie Laurie, adapting the style to the sentiment of the verses.

The melody should be played very softly, except where the battle is alluded to, and the whistling should be so timed that the last strain of Annie Laurie may end with the words, "would lay me down and die." The beat of the drums can be introduced with good effect, but it is better to omit it unless it can be done skilfully. It is well to state before reciting, that the escape described is not entirely imaginary as many prisoners made their way through underground passages from rebel prisons, during the Civil War. An asterisk (*) at the end of a line denotes where the whistling should commence, and a dagger (†) where it should cease.]

When the North and South had parted, and the boom of the signal gun
Had wakened the Northern heroes, for the great deeds to be done,
When the nation's cry for soldiers had echoed o'er hill and dale,
When hot youth flushed with courage, while the mother's cheeks turned pale, [Pg 200]
In the woods of old New England, as the day sank down the west,
A loved one stood beside me, her brown head on my breast.
From the earliest hours of childhood our paths had been as one,
Her heart was in my keeping, though I knew not when 'twas won;
We had learned to love each other, in a half unspoken way,
But it ripened to full completeness when the parting came, that day;
Not a tear in the eyes of azure, but a deep and fervent prayer,
That seemed to say: "God bless you, and guard you, everywhere."
At the call for volunteers, her face was like drifted snow,
She read in my eyes a question and her loyal heart said, "Go."
As the roll of the drums drew nearer, through the leaves of the rustling
trees,*
The strains of Annie Laurie were borne to us, on the breeze.
Then I drew her pale face nearer and said: "Brave heart and true,
Your tender love and prayers shall bring me back to you."
And I called her *my* Annie Laurie and whispered to her that I
For her sweet sake was willing—to lay me down and die.
And I said: "Through the days of danger, that little song shall be
Like a pass word from this hillside, to bring your love to me."†
Oh! many a time, at nightfall, in the very shades of death,
When the picket lines were pacing their rounds with bated breath,* [Pg 201]

The lips of strong men trembled and brave breasts heaved a sigh,
When some one whistled softly, "I'd lay me down and die."†
The tender little ballad our watchword soon became,
And in place of Annie Laurie, each had a loved one's name.
In the very front of battle, where the bullets thickest fly,*
The boys from old New England oftimes went rushing by,
And the rebel lines before us gave way where'er we went,
For the gray coats fled in terror from the "whistling regiment."
Amidst the roar of the cannon, and the shriek of the shells on high,
Yon could hear the brave boys whistling: "I'd lay me down and die."†
But, Alas! Though truth is mighty and right will at last prevail,
There are times when the best and bravest, by the wrong outnumbered, fail;
And thus, one day, in a skirmish, but a half-hour's fight at most,
A score of the whistling soldiers were caught by the rebel host.
With hands fast tied behind us, we were dragged to a prison pen,
Where, hollow-eyed and starving, lay a thousand loyal men.
No roof but the vault of Heaven, no bed save the beaten sod,
Shut in from the world around us, by a wall where the sentries trod.
For a time our Annie Laurie brought cheer to that prison pen;
A hope to the hearts of the living; a smile to the dying men. [Pg 202]
But the spark of Hope burned dimly, when each day's setting sun
Dropped the pall of night o'er a comrade, whose sands of life were run.
One night, in a dismal corner, where the shadows darkest fell,
We huddled close together to hear a soldier tell
The tales of dear New England and of loved ones waiting there,
When, Hark! a soft, low whistle, pierced through the heavy air,*
And the strain was Annie Laurie. Each caught the other's eye,
And with trembling lips we answered, "I'd lay me down and die."
From the earth, near the wall behind us, a hand came struggling through,
With a crumpled bit of paper for the captive boys in blue.
And the name! My God! 'Twas Annie, my Annie, true and brave,
From the hills of old New England she had followed me to save.†
"Not a word or a sign, but follow, where'er you may be led,
Bring four of your comrades with you," was all hat the writing said.
Only eight were left of the twenty and lots were quickly thrown,
Then our trembling fingers widened the space where the hand had shown.
With a stealthy glance at the sentries, the prisoners gathered round,
And the five whom fate had chosen stole silent underground,
On, on, through the damp earth creeping, we followed our dusky guide,
Till under a bank o'erhanging we came to the river side: [Pg 203]
"Straight over," a low voice whispered, "where you see yon beacon light,"
And ere we could say, "God bless you," he vanished into the night.
Through the fog and damp of the river, when the moon was hid from sight,
With a fond, old, faithful negro, brave Annie had crossed each night;
And the long, dark, narrow passage had grown till we heard close by
The notes of the dear old pass-word: "I'd lay me down and die."
With oarlocks muffled and silent, we pushed out into the stream,
When a shot rang out on the stillness. We could see by the musket gleam,
A single sentry firing, but the balls passed harmless by,

For the stars had hid their faces and clouds swept o'er the sky.
O God! How that beacon burning, brought joy to my heart that night,*
For I knew whose hand had kindled that fire to guide our flight.
The new-born hope of freedom filled every arm with strength,
And we pulled at the oars like giants till the shore was reached at length.
We sprang from the skiff, half-fainting, once more in the land of the free,
And the lips of my love were waiting to welcome and comfort me.
In my wasted arms I held her, while the weary boys close by
Breathed low, "For Annie Laurie, I'd lay me down and die."†

THE MINISTER'S GRIEVANCES.

[Pg 204]

"Brethren," said the aged minister, as he stood up before the church meeting on New Year's Eve, "I am afraid we will have to part. I have labored among you now for fifteen years, and I feel that that is almost enough, under the peculiar circumstances in which I am placed. Not that I am exactly dissatisfied; but a clergyman who has been preaching to sinners for fifteen years for five hundred dollars a year, naturally feels that he is not doing a great work when Deacon Jones, acting as an officer of the church, pays his last quarter's salary in a promissory note at six months, and then, acting as an individual, offers to discount it for him at ten per cent if he will take it part out in clover seed and pumpkins.

"I feel somehow as if it would take about eighty-four years of severe preaching to prepare the deacon for existence in a felicitous hereafter. Let me say, also, that while I am deeply grateful to the congregation for the donation party they gave me on Christmas, I have calculated that it would be far more profitable for me to shut my house and take to the woods than endure another one. I will not refer to the impulsive generosity which persuaded Sister Potter to come with a [Pg 205] present of eight clothes pins; I will not insinuate anything against Brother Ferguson, who brought with him a quarter of a peck of dried apples of the crop of 1872; I shall not allude to the benevolence of Sister Tynhirst, who came with a pen-wiper and a tin horse for the baby; I shall refrain from commenting upon the impression made by Brother Hill, who brought four phosphorescent mackerel, possibly with an idea that they might be useful in dissipating the gloom in my cellar. I omit reference to Deacon Jones' present of an elbow of stove-pipe and a bundle of tooth-picks, and I admit that when Sister Peabody brought me sweetened sausage-meat, and salted and peppered mince-meat for pies, she did right in not forcing her own family to suffer from her mistake in mixing the material. But I do think I may fairly remark respecting the case of Sister Walsingham, that after careful thought I am unable to perceive how she considered that a present of a box of hair-pins to my wife justified her in consuming half a pumpkin pie, six buttered muffins, two platefuls of oysters, and a large variety of miscellaneous food, previous to jamming herself full of preserves, and proceeding to the parlor to join in singing 'There is rest for the weary!' Such a destruction of the necessaries of life doubtless contributes admirably to the [Pg 206] stimulation of commerce, but it is far too large a commercial operation to rest solely upon the basis of a ten-cent box of hair-pins.

"As for matters in the church, I do not care to discuss them at length. I might say much about the manner in which the congregation were asked to contribute clothing to our mission in Senegambia; we received nothing but four neckties and a brass breast-pin, excepting a second-hand carriage-whip that Deacon Jones gave us. I might allude to the frivolous manner in which Brother Atkinson, our tenor, converses with Sister Priestly, our soprano, during my sermons, and last Sunday he kissed her when he thought I was not looking; I might allude to the absent-mindedness which has permitted Brother Brown twice lately to put half a dollar on the collection-plate and take off two quarters and a ten-cent piece in change; and I might dwell upon the circumstance that while Brother Toombs, the undertaker, sings 'I would not live alway' with professional enthusiasm that is pardonable, I do not see why he should throw such unction into the hymn 'I am unworthy though I give my all,' when he is in arrears for two years' pew-rent, and is always busy examining the carpet-pattern when the plate goes round. I also——"

But there Brother Toombs turned off the gas suddenly, and the meeting adjourned full of [Pg 207] indignation at the good pastor. His resignation was accepted unanimously.

THE GOOD OLD WAY.

John Mann had a wife who was kind and true,—
  A wife who loved him well;
She cared for the house and their only child;
  But if I the truth must tell,
She fretted and pined because John was poor
  And his business was slow to pay;
But he only said, when she talked of change,
  "We'll stick to the good old way!"

She saw her neighbors were growing rich
And dwelling in houses grand;
That she was living in poverty,
With wealth upon every hand;
And she urged her husband to speculate,
To risk his earnings at play;
But he only said, "My dearest wife,
We'll stick to the good old way."

For he knew that the money that's quickly got
Is the money that's quickly lost;
And the money that stays is the money earned
At honest endeavor's cost.
So he plodded along in his honest style,
And he bettered himself each day,
And he only said to his fretful wife,
"We'll stick to the good old way."

[Pg 208]

And at last there came a terrible crash,
When beggary, want, and shame
Came down on the homes of their wealthy friends,
While John's remained the same;
For he had no debts and he gave no trust,
"My motto is this," he'd say,—
"It's a charm against panics of every kind,—
'Tis stick to the good old way!"

And his wife looked round on the little house
That was every nail their own,
And she asked forgiveness of honest John
For the peevish mistrust she had shown;
But he only said, as her tearful face
Upon his shoulder lay,
"The good old way is the best way, wife;
We'll stick to the good old way."

EXTRACT FROM BLAINE'S ORATION ON JAMES A. GARFIELD.

[Delivered in the City of Washington, Monday, February 27, 1882.]

On the morning of Saturday, July 2, the President was a contented and happy man—not in an ordinary degree, but joyfully, almost boyishly happy. On his way to the railroad station, to which he drove slowly, in conscious enjoyment of the beautiful morning, with an unwonted sense of leisure and keen anticipation of pleasure, his talk was all in the grateful and congratulatory vein. He felt that after four months of trial his administration was strong in its grasp of affairs, strong [Pg 209] in popular favor and destined to grow stronger; that grave difficulties confronting him at his inauguration had been safely passed; that trouble lay behind him and not before him; that he was soon to meet the wife whom he loved, now recovering from an illness which had but lately disquieted and at times almost unnerved him; that he was going to his Alma Mater to renew the most cheerful associations of his young manhood and to exchange greetings with those whose deepening interest had followed every step of his upward progress from the day he entered upon his college course until he had attained the loftiest elevation in the gift of his countrymen.

Surely, if happiness can ever come from the honors or triumphs of this world, on that quiet July morning James A. Garfield may well have been a happy man. No foreboding of evil haunted him; no slightest premonition of danger clouded his sky. His terrible fate was upon him in an instant. One moment he stood erect, strong, confident in the years stretching peacefully out before him. The next he lay wounded, bleeding, helpless, doomed to weary weeks of torture, to silence and the grave.

Great in life, he was surpassingly great in death. For no cause, in the very frenzy of wantonness and wickedness, by the red hand of murder, he was thrust from the full tide of this world's [Pg 210] interest, from its hopes, its aspirations, its victories, into the visible presence of death—and he did not quail. Not alone for the one short moment in which, stunned and dazed, he could give up life hardly aware of its relinquishment, but through days of deadly languor, through weeks of agony, that was not less agony because silently borne, with clear sight and calm courage he looked into his open grave. What blight and ruin met his anguished eyes whose lips may tell—what brilliant, broken plans, what baffled, high ambitions, what sundering of strong, warm, manhood's friendships, what bitter rending of sweet household ties! Behind him a proud expectant nation; a great host of sustaining friends; a cherished and happy mother, wearing the full, rich honors of her early toil and tears; the wife of his youth, whose whole life lay in his; the little boys not yet emerged from childhood's days of frolic; the fair young daughter; the sturdy

sons just springing into closest companionship, claiming every day and every day rewarding a father's love and care; and in his heart the eager, rejoicing power to meet all demands. Before him, desolation and great darkness! And his soul was not shaken. His countrymen were thrilled with instant, profound and universal sympathy. Masterful in his mortal weakness, he became the [Pg 211] centre of a nation's love, enshrined in the prayers of a world. But all the love and all the sympathy could not share with him his suffering. He trod the winepress alone. With unfaltering front he faced death. With unfailing tenderness he took leave of life. Above the demoniac hiss of the assassin's bullet he heard the voice of God. With simple resignation he bowed to the Divine decree.

As the end drew near his early craving for the sea returned. The stately mansion of power had been to him the wearisome hospital of pain, and he begged to be taken from its prison walls, from its oppressive, stifling air, from its homelessness and its hopelessness. Gently, silently, the love of a great people bore the pale sufferer to the longed-for healing of the sea, to live or to die, as God should will, within sight of its heaving billows, within sound of its manifold voices. With wan, fevered face tenderly lifted to the cooling breeze he looked out wistfully upon the ocean's changing wonders; on its far sails, whitening in the morning light; on its restless waves, rolling shoreward to break and die beneath the noonday sun; on the red clouds of evening, arching low to the horizon; on the serene and shining pathway of the stars. Let us think that his dying eyes read a mystic meaning which only the rapt and parting soul may know. Let us believe that in the [Pg 212] silence of the receding world he heard the great waves breaking on a farther shore, and felt already upon his wasted brow the breath of the eternal morning.

HOW SHALL I LOVE YOU?

WILL C. FERRIL.

How shall I love you? I dream all day
Dear, of a tenderer, sweeter way;
Songs that I sing to you, words that I say,
Prayers that are voiceless on lips that would pray;
These may not tell of the love of my life;
How shall I love you, my sweetheart, my wife?

How shall I love you? Love is the bread
Of life to a woman—the white and the red
Of all the world's roses, the light that is shed
On all the world's pathways, till life shall be dead!
The star in the storm and the strength in the strife;
How shall I love you, my sweetheart, my wife?

Is there a burden your heart must bear?
I shall kneel lowly and lift it, dear!
Is there a thorn in the crown that you wear?
Let it hide in my heart till a rose blossom there!
For grief or for glory—for death or for life,
So shall I love you, my sweetheart, my wife.

THE LITTLE BROWN CURL. [Pg 213]

A quaint old box with a lid of blue,
  All faded and worn with age;
A soft little curl of a brownish hue,
  A yellow and half-written page.

The letters, with never a pause nor dot,
  In a school-boy's hand are cast;
The lines and the curl I may hold to-day,
  But the love of the boy is past.

It faded away with our childish dreams,
  Died out like the morning mist,
And I look with a smile on the silken curl
  That once I had tenderly kissed.

One night in the summer—so long ago—
  We played by the parlor door,
And the moonlight fell, like a silver veil,
  Spreading itself on the floor.

And the children ran on the graveled walk
   At play in their noisy glee;
But the maddest, merriest fun just then
   Was nothing to John and me.

For he was a stately boy of twelve,
   And I was not quite eleven—
We thought as we sat by the parlor door
   We had found the gate to heaven.

That night when I lay on my snowy bed,
   Like many a foolish girl,
I kissed and held to my little heart
   This letter and silken curl.

[Pg 214]

I slept and dreamed of the time when I
   Should wake to a fairy life;
And sleeping, blushed, when I thought that John
   Had called me his little wife.

I have loved since then with a woman's heart,
   Have known all a woman's bliss,
But never a dream of the after life
   Was ever so sweet as this.

The years went by with their silver feet,
   And often I laughed with John
At the vows we made by the parlor door
   When the moon and stars looked on.

Ah? boyish vows were broken and lost,
   And a girl's first dream will end,
But I dearly loved his beautiful wife,
   While he was my husband's friend.

When at last I went to my childhood's home
   Far over the bounding wave,
I missed my friend, for the violets grew
   And blossomed over his grave.

To-day as I opened the old blue box,
   And looked on this soft brown curl,
And read of the love John left for me
   When I was a little girl,

There came to my heart a throb of pain,
   And my eyes grew moist with tears,
For the childish love and the dear, dear friend,
   And the long-lost buried years.

DE PINT WID OLE PETE.

[Pg 215]

Upon the hurricane deck of one of our gunboats, an elderly looking darkey, with a very philosophical and retrospective cast of countenance, squatted on his bundle, toasting his shins against the chimney, and apparently plunged into a state of profound meditation. Finding, upon inquiry, that he belonged to the Ninth Illinois, one of the most gallantly behaved and heavy losing regiments at the Fort Donelson battle, I began to interrogate him upon the subject.

"Were you in the fight?"

"Had a little taste of it, sa."

"Stood your ground, did you?"

"No, sa, I runs."

"Run at the first fire, did you?"

"Yes, sa; and would hab run soona, had I know'd it was comin'."

"Why, that wasn't very creditable to your courage."

"Massa, dat isn't my line, sa; cookin's my profeshun."

"Well, but have you no regard for your reputation?"

"Yah, yah! reputation's nuffin to me by de side ob life."

"Do you consider *your* life worth more than other people's?" [Pg 216]

"It is worth more to me, sa."

"Then you must value it very highly?"

"Yes, sa, I does; more dan all dis world, more dan a million ob dollars, sa; for what would dat be wuth to a man wid the bref out ob him? Self-preserbation am de fust law wid me."

"But why should you act upon a different rule from other men?"

"Because different men set different values upon deir lives; mine is not in the market."

"But if you lost it, you would have the satisfaction of knowing that you died for your country."

"What satisfaction would dat be to me when de power ob feelin' was gone?"

"Then patriotism and honor are nothing to you?"

"Nuffin whatever, sa; I regard them as among the vanities."

"If our soldiers were like you, traitors might have broken up the government without resistance."

"Yes, sa; dar would hab been no help for it."

"Do you think any of your company would have missed you, if you had been killed?"

"Maybe not, sa; a dead white man ain't much to dese sogers, let alone a dead nigga; but I'd a missed myself, and dat was de pint wid me."

MOTHER'S FOOL.

[Pg 217]

"'Tis plain to see," said a farmer's wife,
"These boys will make their mark in life;
They were never made to handle a hoe,
And at once to a college ought to go;
There's Fred, he's little better than a fool,
But John and Henry must go to school."

"Well, really, wife," quote Farmer Brown,
As he sat his mug of cider down,
"Fred does more work in a day for me
Than both his brothers do in three.
Book larnin' will never plant one's corn,
Nor hoe potatoes, sure's your born,
Nor mend a rod of broken fence—
For my part give me common sense."

But his wife was bound the roast to rule,
And John and Henry were sent to school,
While Fred, of course, was left behind
Because his mother said he had no mind.

Five years at school the students spent;
Then into business each one went.
John learned to play the flute and fiddle,
And parted his hair, of course, in the middle;
While his brother looked rather higher than he,
And hung out a sign, "H. Brown, M. D."

Meanwhile, at home, their brother Fred
Had taken a notion into his head;
But he quietly trimmed his apple trees,
And weeded onions and planted peas,
While somehow or other, by hook or crook,
He managed to read full many a book.
Until at last his father said
He was getting "book larnin'" into his head;
"But for all that," added Farmer Brown, [Pg 218]
"He's the smartest boy there is in town."

The war broke out and Captain Fred
A hundred men to battle led,
And when the rebel flag came down,
Went marching home as General Brown.
But he went to work on the farm again,
And planted corn and sowed his grain;

He shingled the barn and mended the fence,
Till people declared he had common sense.

Now, common sense was very rare,
And the State House needed a portion there;
So the "family dunce" moved into town—
The people called him Governor Brown;
And his brothers, who went to the city school,
Came home to live with "mother's fool."

AN HOUR OF HORROR.

It was close upon the hour of midnight.

A man sat alone in an upper room in a tumble-down tenement—a man whose face showed by his furrowed brow, glaring eyes and pallid lips the effects of a terrible mental struggle going on within him.

Before him were several pages of manuscript, and his nervous hand convulsively clutching a pen, was rapidly adding to them.

Close to his right hand and frequently touched by it as he plied his pen, was a gleaming, glittering object—ivory, silver and steel—a loaded revolver. [Pg 219]

The window beside him was open, and through it the cool breeze entered and fanned his fevered brow. The night without was calm and placid. Nature was lovely, bathed in the light of the summer moon; but the man was oblivious of the beauties of the night. He glanced at the clock now and then, and observing the long hand climbing up the incline toward the figure twelve, he redoubled his labor at his manuscript.

Anon he glanced at the revolver on the desk beside him. He touched its ivory handle as if faltering in his resolution; and then went on with his writing.

Hark!

What sound is that that is borne upon the breeze of the summer night? A long, low wail, like the cry of a woman in mortal anguish.

The man started like a guilty soul, dashed the dews of perspiration from his clammy brow, and uttered an incoherent exclamation.

Again! again, that moaning, uncanny cry!

The man heard it and groaned aloud. He dashed aside the last page of his manuscript, and glanced again at the clock. The hands marked the hour of midnight. He grasped the revolver with a resolute air and exclaimed through his clenched teeth:

"It must be done!" [Pg 220]

And, going to the window, he fired twice. * * * There was a scattering sound in the backyard, and the next day a gray cat was found dead close to the woodshed. The story and the deed were done.

GO VAY, BECKY MILLER, GO VAY!

I don'd lofe you now von schmall little bit,
My dream vas blayed oudt, so blease git up und git;
Your false-heardted vays I can't got along mit—
Go vay, Becky Miller, go vay!

Vas all der young vomans so false-heardted like you,
Mit a face nice und bright, but a heart black und plue,
Und all der vhile schworing you lofed me so drue—
Go vay, Becky Miller, go vay!

Vy, vonce I t'ought you vas a shtar vay up high;
I liked you so better as gogonut bie:
But oh, Becky Miller, you hafe profed von big lie—
Go vay, Becky Miller, go vay!

You dook all de bresents vat I did bresent,
Yes, gobbled up efery virst thing vot I sent;
All der vhile mit anoder young rooster you vent—
Go vay, Becky Miller, go vay!

Vhen first I found oudt you vas such a big lie,
I didn't know vedder to schmudder or die;
Bud now, by der chingo, I don't efen cry—
Go vay, Becky Miller, go vay!

[Pg 221]

Don'd dry make belief you vas sorry aboudt,
I don'd belief a dings vot coomes oudt by your moudt;
Und besides I don'd care, for you vas blayed oudt—
Go vay, Becky Miller, go vay!

IT IS A WINTER NIGHT.

BY RICHARD HENRY STODDARD.

It is a winter night,
And the stilly earth is white,
With the blowing of the lilies of the snow;
Once it was as red,
With the roses summer shed;
But the roses fled with summer, long ago.

We sang a merry tune,
In the jolly days of June,
As we danced adown the garden in the light,
But now December's come,
And our hearts are dark and dumb,
As we huddle o'er the embers here to-night.

WHAT THE LITTLE GIRL SAID.

"Ma's upstairs changing her dress," said the freckle-faced little girl, tying her doll's bonnet strings and casting her eye about for a tidy large enough to serve as a shawl for that double-jointed young person.

"Oh, your mother needn't dress up for me," replied the female agent of the missionary society, taking a self-satisfied view of herself in the mirror. "Run up and tell her to come down just as she is in her every-day clothes, and not stand on ceremony."

[Pg 222]

"Oh, but she hasn't got on her every-day clothes. Ma was all dressed up in her new brown silk dress, 'cause she expected Miss Dimmond to-day. Miss Dimmond always comes over here to show off her nice things, and ma doesn't mean to get left. When ma saw you coming she said, 'the dickens!' and I guess she was mad about something. Ma said if you saw her new dress, she'd have to hear all about the poor heathen, who don't have silk, and you'd ask her for money to buy hymn books to send 'em. Say, do the nigger ladies use hymn-book leaves to do their hair up on and make it frizzy? Ma says she guesses that's all the good the books do 'em, if they ever get any books. I wish my doll was a heathen."

"Why, you wicked little girl! what do you want of a heathen doll?" inquired the missionary lady, taking a mental inventory of the new things in the parlor to get material for a homily on worldly extravagance.

"So folks would send her lots of nice things to wear, and feel sorry to have her going about naked. Then she'd have hair to frizz, and I want a doll with truly hair and eyes that roll up like Deacon Silderback's when he says amen on Sunday. I ain't a wicked girl, either, 'cause Uncle Dick—you know Uncle Dick, he's been out West and swears awful and smokes in the house—he says I'm a holy terror, and he hopes I'll be an angel pretty soon. Ma'll be down in a minute, so you needn't take your cloak off. She said she'd box my ears if I asked you to. Ma's putting on that old dress she had last year, 'cause she didn't want you to think she was able to give much this time, and she needed a muff worse than the queen of the cannon-ball islands needed religion. Uncle Dick says you oughter get to the islands, 'cause you'd be safe there, and the natives would be sorry they was such sinners anybody would send you to 'em. He says he never seen a heathen hungry enough to eat you, 'less 'twas a blind one, an' you'd set a blind pagan's teeth on edge so he'd never hanker after any more missionary. Uncle Dick's awful funny, and makes ma and pa die laughing sometimes."

[Pg 223]

"Your Uncle Richard is a bad, depraved wretch, and ought to have remained out West, where his style is appreciated. He sets a horrid example for little girls like you."

"Oh, I think he's nice. He showed me how to slide down the banisters, and he's teaching me to whistle when ma ain't around. That's a pretty cloak you've got, ain't it? Do you buy all your clothes with missionary money? Ma says you do."

[Pg 224]

Just then the freckle-faced girl's ma came into the parlor and kissed the missionary lady on the cheek and said she was delighted to see her, and they proceeded to have a real sociable chat. The little girl's ma cannot understand why a person who professes to be so charitable as the missionary agent does should go right over to Miss Dimmond's and say such ill-natured things as she did, and she thinks the missionary is a double-faced gossip.

"WE'RE BUILDING TWO A DAY!"

BY REV. ALFRED J. HOUGH.

[During the Freethinkers' Convention, at Watkins, N. Y., in response to statements that the churches throughout the land were losing all aggressive power, a message was received from Chaplain McCabe, of the Methodist Episcopal Church Extension Board saying in substance and speaking only of his own denomination, "All hail the power of Jesus' name; we're building two a day!"]

The infidels, a motley band,
In council, met and said:
"The churches die all through the land,
The last will soon be dead."
When suddenly a message came,
It filled them with dismay:
"All hail the power of Jesus' name!
We're building two a day."

[Pg 225]

"We're building two a day," and still,
In stately forests stored,
Are shingle, rafter, beam, and sill,
For churches of the Lord;
And underpinning for the same,
In quarries piled away;
"All hail the power of Jesus' name!
We're building two a day."

The miners rend the hills apart,
Earth's bosom is explored,
And streams from her metallic heart
In graceful molds are poured,
For bells to sound our Saviour's fame
From towers,—and, swinging, say,
"All hail the power of Jesus' name!
We're building two a day."

The King of saints to war has gone,
And matchless are His deeds;
His sacramental hosts move on,
And follow where He leads;
While infidels His church defame,
Her corner-stones we lay;
"All hail the power of Jesus' name!
We're laying two a day."

The Christless few the cross would hide,
The light of life shut out,
And leave the world to wander wide
Through sunless realms of doubt.
The pulpits lose their ancient fame,
Grown obsolete, they say;
"All hail the power of Jesus' name!
We're building two a day."

"Extend," along the line is heard,
"Thy walls, O Zion, fair!"
And Methodism heeds the word,
And answers everywhere.

[Pg 226]

A new church greets the morning's flame,
Another evening's gray.
"All hail the power of Jesus' name!
We're building two a day."

When infidels in council meet
Next year, with boastings vain,

To chronicle the Lord's defeat,
  And count His churches slain,
Oh then may we with joy proclaim,
  If we His call obey:
"All hail the power of Jesus' name!
  We're building THREE a day."

THE MODERN BELLE.

The daughter sits in the parlor,
  And rocks in her easy-chair;
She is dressed in silks and satins,
  And jewels are in her hair;
She winks, and giggles, and simpers,
  And simpers, and giggles, and winks;
And though she talks but little,
  It's vastly more than she thinks.

Her father goes clad in russet—
  All brown and seedy at that;
His coat is out at the elbows,
  And he wears a shocking bad hat.
He is hoarding and saving his dollars,
  So carefully, day by day,
While she on her whims and fancies
  Is squandering them all away.

She lies in bed of a morning
  Until the hour of noon,
Then comes down, snapping and snarling
  Because she's called too soon.
Her hair is still in papers, [Pg 227]
  Her cheeks still bedaubed with paint—
Remains of last night's blushes
  Before she attempted to faint.

Her feet are so very little,
  Her hands so snowy white,
Her jewels so very heavy,
  And her head so very light;
Her color is made of cosmetics—
  Though this she'll never own;
Her body is mostly cotton,
  And her heart is wholly stone.

She falls in love with a fellow
  Who swells with a foreign air;
He marries her for her money,
  She marries him for his hair—
One of the very best matches;
  Both are well mated in life;
She's got a fool for a husband,
  And he's got a fool for a wife.

THE PUZZLED DUTCHMAN.

ANONYMOUS.

A Humorous Recitation.

One who does not believe in immersion for baptism was holding a protracted meeting, and one night preached on the subject of baptism. In the course of his remarks he said that some believe it necessary to go down in the water, and come up out of it, to be baptized. But this he claimed to be fallacy, for the preposition "into" of the Scriptures should be rendered differently, as it does [Pg 228] not mean into at all times. "Moses," he said, "we are told, went up into the mountain; and the Saviour was taken up into a high mountain, etc. Now we do not suppose either went into a mountain but went unto it. So with going down into the water; it means simply going down close by or near to the water, and being baptized in the ordinary way, by sprinkling or pouring." He carried this idea out fully, and in due season closed his discourse, when an invitation was given

for any one so disposed to rise and express his thoughts. Quite a number of his brethren arose and said they were glad they had been present on this occasion, that they were well pleased with the sound sermon they had just heard, and felt their souls greatly blessed. Finally, a corpulent gentleman of Teutonic extraction, a stranger to all, arose and broke the silence that was almost painful, as follows:

"Mister Breacher, I is so glad I vash here to-night, for I has had explained to my mint some dings dat I never could pelief pefore. Oh, I is so glad dat into does not mean into at all, but shust close py or near to, for now I can pelief many dings vot I could not pelief pefore. We reat, Mr. Breacher, dat Taniel vos cast into de ten of lions, and came out alife. Now I neffer could pelief [Pg 229] dat, for wilt peasts would shust eat him right off; but now it is fery clear to my mint. He vash shust close py or near to, and tid not get into de ten at all. Oh, I ish so glad I vash here to-night. Again we reat dat de Heprew children vas cast into de firish furnace, and dat always look like a beeg story too, for they would have been purnt up; but it ish all blain to my mint now, for dey was shust cast py or close to de firish furnace. Oh, I vas so glad I vos here to-night. And den, Mister Breacher, it ish said dat Jonah vash cast into de sea, and taken into de whale's pelly. Now I neffer could pelief dat. It alwish seemed to me to be a beeg fish story, but it ish all blain to my mint now. He vash not into de whale's pelly at all, but shump onto his pack and rode ashore. Oh, I vash so glad I vash here to-night.

"And now, Mister Breacher, if you will shust exblain two more bassages of Scriptures, I shall be oh so happy dat I vas here to-night! One of dem ish vere it saish de vicked shall be cast into a lake dat burns mit fire and primstone alwish. Oh, Mister Breacher, shall I be cast into dat lake if I am vicked, or shust close py or near to—shust near enough to be comfortable? Oh, I hope you tell me I shall be cast only shust py a good veys off, and I vill pe so glad I vash here to-night. Do oder bassage is dat vich saish blessed are they who do these commandments, dat dey may have right [Pg 230] to de dree of life, and enter in droo de gates of the city, and not shust close py or near to—shust near enough to see vat I have lost—and I shall pe so glad I vash here to-night."

THE FAST MAIL AND THE STAGE.

BY JOHN H. YATES.

Lay by the weekly, Betsey, it's old like you and I,
And read the morning's daily, with its pages scarcely dry.
While you and I were sleepin', they were printing them to-day,
In the city by the ocean, several hundred miles away.

"How'd I get it?" Bless you, Betsey, you needn't doubt and laugh;
It didn't drop down from the clouds nor come by telegraph;
I got it by the lightning mail we've read about you know,
The mail that Jonathan got up about a month ago.

We farmers livin' 'round the hill went to the town to-day
To see the fast mail catch the bags that hung beside the way;
Quick as a flash from thundering clouds, whose tempest swept the sky,
The bags were caught on board the train as it went roarin' by.

[Pg 231]

We are seein' many changes in our fast declinin' years;
Strange rumors now are soundin' in our hard-of-hearin' ears.
Ere the sleep that knows no wakin' comes to waft us o'er the stream,
Some great power may be takin' all the self-conceit from steam.

Well do we remember, Betsey, when the post-man carried mails,
Ridin' horseback through the forest 'long the lonely Indian trails,
How impatiently we waited—we were earnest lovers then—
For our letters comin' slowly, many miles through wood and glen.

Many times, you know, we missed them—for the post-man never came—
Then, not knowin' what had happened, we did each the other blame;
Long those lover quarrels lasted, but the God who melts the proud
Brought our strayin' hearts together and let sunshine through the cloud.

Then at last the tidings reached us that the faithful post-man fell
Before the forest savage with his wild terrific yell,
And your letters lay and moldered, while the sweet birds sang above,
And I was savin' bitter things about a woman's love.

Long and tedious were the journeys—few and far between, the mails,
In the days when we were courtin'—when we thrashed with wooden flails;
Now the white winged cars are flyin' long the shores of inland seas. [Pg 232]
And younger lovers read *their* letters 'mid luxury and ease.

We have witnessed many changes in our three-score years and ten;
We no longer sit and wonder at the discoveries of men;
In the shadow of life's evenin' we rejoice that our dear boys
Are not called to meet the hardships that embittered half our joys.

Like the old mail through the forest, youthful years go slowly by;
Like the fast mail of the present, manhood's years how swift they fly;
We are sitting in the shadows; soon shall break life's brittle cord—
Soon shall come the welcome summons by the fast mail of the Lord.

STORY OF THE LITTLE RID HIN.

BY MRS. WHITNEY.

Well, thin, there was once't upon a time, away off in the ould country, livin' all her lane in the woods, in a wee bit iv a house be herself, a little rid hin. Nice an' quiet she was, and niver did no kind o' harrum in her life. An' there lived out over the hill, in a din o' the rocks, a crafty ould felly iv a fox. An' this same ould villain iv a fox, he laid awake o' nights, and he prowled around shly iv [Pg 233] a day-time, thinkin' always so busy how he'd git the little rid hin, an' carry her home an' bile her up for his shupper. But the wise little rid hin niver went intil her bit iv a house, but she locked the door afther her and pit the kay in her pocket. So the ould rashkill iv a fox, he watched, an' he prowled, an' he laid awake nights, till he came all to skin an' bone, an' sorra a ha'porth o' the little rid hin could he git at. But at lasht there came a shcame intil his wicked ould head, an' he tuk a big bag one mornin', over his shouldher, an' he says till his mother, says he, "Mother, have the pot all bilin' agin' I come home, for I'll bring the little rid hin to-night for our shupper." An' away he wint, over the hill, an' came crapin' shly an' soft through the woods to where the little rid hin lived in her shnug bit iv a house. An' shure, jist at the very minute that he got along, out comes the little rid hin out iv the door, to pick up shticks to bile her tay-kettle. "Begorra, now, but I'll have yees," says the shly ould fox, an' in he shlips, unbeknownst, intil the house, an' hides behind the door. An' in comes the little rid hin, a minute afther, with her apron full of shticks, an' shuts too the door an' locks it, an' pits the kay in her pocket. An' thin she turns round,—an' there stands the baste iv a fox in the corner. Well, thin, what did she do, but jist dhrop down her [Pg 234] shticks, and fly up in a great fright and flutter to the big bame acrass the inside o' the roof, where the fox couldn't git at her!

"Ah, ha!" says the fox, "I'll soon bring you out o' that!" An' he began to whirrul round, an' round, an' round, fashter, an' fashter, an' fashter, on the floor, afther his big, bushy tail, till the little rid hin got so dizzy wid lookin', that she jist tumbled down aff the bame, and the fox whipped her up and popped her intil his bag, and stharted off home in a minute. An' he wint up the wood and down the wood, half the day long, with the little rid hin shut up shmotherin' in the bag. Sorra a know she knowed where she was at all, at all. She thought she was all biled an' ate up, an' finished shure! But, by an' by, she remimbered herself, an' pit her hand in her pocket, an' tuk out her little bright scissors, and shnipped a big hole in the bag behind, an' out she leapt, an' picked up a big shtone an' popped it intil the bag, an' rin aff home, an' locked the door.

An' the fox he tugged away up over the hill, with the big stone at his back thumpin' his shouldhers, thinkin' to himself how heavy the little rid hin was, an' what a fine shupper he'd have. An' whin he came in sight iv his din in the rocks' and shpied his ould mother awatchin' for him at the door, he says, "Mother! have ye the pot bilin'?" An' the ould mother says, "Sure, an' it is; an' [Pg 235] have ye the little rid hin?" "Yes, jist here in me bag. Open the lid o' the pot till I pit her in," says he.

An' the ould mother fox she lifted the lid o' the pot, an' the rashkill untied the bag, and hild it over the pot o' bilin' wather, an' shuk in the big, heavy shtone. An' the bilin' wather shplashed up all over the rogue iv a fox, an' his mother, an' schalded them both to death. An' the little rid hin lived safe in her house foriver afther.

ONLY A SONG.

It was only a simple ballad,
  Sung to a careless throng;
There were none that knew the singer,
  And few that heeded the song;
Yet the singer's voice was tender
  And sweet as with love untold;
Surely those hearts were hardened
  That it left so proud and cold.

She sang of the wondrous glory
  That touches the woods in spring,

Of the strange, soul-stirring voices
  When "the hills break forth and sing;"
Of the happy birds low warbling
  The requiem of the day,
And the quiet hush of the valleys
  In the dusk of the gloaming gray.

[Pg 236]

And one in a distant corner—
  A woman worn with strife—
Heard in that song a message
  From the spring-time of her life.
Fair forms rose up before her
  From the mist of vanished years;
She sat in a happy blindness,
  Her eyes were veiled in tears.

Then, when the song was ended,
  And hushed the last sweet tone,
The listener rose up softly
  And went on her way alone
Once more to her life of labor
  She passed; but her heart was strong;
And she prayed, "God bless the singer!
  And oh, thank God for the song!"

THE BICYCLE RIDE.

BY JAMES CLARENCE HARVEY.

[Whether bicycle riding on Sunday be sinful or not, depends entirely upon the spirit in which it is done and the associations of the ride.]

You have read of the ride of Paul Revere,
And of Gilpin's ride, so fraught with fear;
Skipper Ireson's ride in a cart,
And the ride where Sheridan played a part;
Calendar's ride on a brazen hack,
And Islam's prophet on Al Borak;
The fateful ride to Aix from Ghent,
And a dozen others of like portent,
But you never have heard of a bicycle spin
Which was piously ended, though started in sin.

[Pg 237]

Tom was a country parson's son,
Fresh from college and full of fun,
Fond of flirting with bright-eyed girls,
Raving, in verse, over golden curls,
Sowing a wild oat, here and there,
In a way that made the parson stare
And chide him sternly, when face to face,
While, in private, he laughed at the young scape-grace.
But the wildest passion the boy could feel
Was the love he bore for his shining wheel.

He rode it by night and he rode it by day,
If he went two rods or ten miles away;
And Deacon Smith was heard to remark
That he met that "pesky thing in the dark
And it went right by with a glint and a gleam
And a wild 'hoot-toot' that made him scream;
In spite of the fact that he knew right well
That evil spirits were all in—well—
He wouldn't meet that thing again
For a corn-crib full of good, ripe grain."

One Sunday morning, the sun was bright,
The bird's throats bursting with glad delight,
The parson-mounted his plump old bay
And jogged to the church, two miles away,
While Tom wheeled round, ten miles or more
And hid his wheel by the chancel door,
And he thought, as he sat in the parson's pew,

"I wonder what makes dad look so blue,"
Till it came like a flash to his active mind,
He left his sermon and specs behind.

Now the parson was old and his eyes were dim
And he couldn't have read a line or a hymn,
Without his specs for a mint of gold,
And his head turned hot while his toes turned cold,
And right in the midst of his mental shock, [Pg 238]
The parson deceived his trusting flock,
And gave them eternal life and a crown
From the book he was holding upside down.
Tom, the rascal, five minutes before,
Like an arrow had shot from the chancel door.

The horses he frightened I never can tell,
Nor how the old church folk were shocked, as well,
And they said they feared that the parson's lad
"Was a-gettin' wild" and would go to the bad,
For 'twas wicked enough to set folks in a craze
Without "ridin' sech races on Sabbath days,"
And they thought the length of the parson's prayer
Had something to do with his fatherly care.
While the truth of it was, which he afterwards dropped,
He didn't know what he could do when he stopped.

Of course you know how the story will end,
The prayer was finished and duly "Amen'd,"
When Tom, all dust, to the pulpit flew
And laid down the specs and the sermon too.
Then the parson preached in a timid way,
Of sinful pleasure on Sabbath-day,
And he added a postscript, not in the text.
Saying that, when they were sore perplexed,
Each must decide as he chanced to feel.
And Tom chuckled: "Sundays, I'll ride my wheel."

THE LAND OF OUR BIRTH. [Pg 239]

BY LILLIE E. BARR.

O! where is the land that each mortal loves best,
  The land that is dearest and fairest on earth?
It is North, it is South, it is East, it is West;
  For this beautiful land is the land of our birth.

'Tis the home of our childhood; the fragrance and dew
  Of our innocent days are all linked with the spot;
And its fields were so green, and its mountains so blue,
  That our hearts must be cold ere that land is forgot.

We have wandered, perchance, far away from the place,
  But how often we see it in thought and in dreams!
Feel its winds, as of old, blowing cool on our face,
  Hear the songs of its birds, and the plash of its
streams.

We may build grander homes than the home of our youth,
  On far loftier objects our eyes may be cast;
But we never forget all its love and its truth;
  It has charms that will hallow it unto the last.

We may learn other tongues, but that language is best
  That we lisped with our mothers in infancy's days—
The language she sung when she rocked us to rest,
  And gave us good counsel and comfort and praise.

We may love other lands, but wherever we be
  The land that is greenest and fairest on earth
Is the one that, perhaps, we may never more see—
  The home of our fathers—the land of our birth.

[Pg 240]

May its daughters and sons grow in beauty and worth!

May the blessing of God give it freedom and rest!
Be it northward, or southward, or eastward, or west,
The land of our birth is of all lands the best.

THE TEACHER'S DIADEM.

Sitting 'mid the gathering shadows, weary with the Sabbath's care;
Weary with the Sabbath's burdens, that she dearly loves to bear;
For she sees a shining pathway, and she gladly presses on;
'Tis the first Great Teacher's footprints—it will lead where He has gone;
With a hand that's never faltered, with a love that's ne'er grown dim,
Long and faithfully she's labored, to His fold the lambs to bring.

But to-night her soul grows heavy; through the closed lids fall the tears,
As the children pass before her, that she's taught these many years;
And she cries in bitter anguish: "Shall not one to me be given,
To shine upon my coronet amid the hosts of heaven!
Hear my prayer to-night, my Saviour, in Thy glorious home above;
Give to me some little token—some approval of Thy love."

[Pg 241]

Ere the words were scarcely uttered, banishing the evening gloom,
Came a soft and shining radiance, bright'ning all within the room;
And an angel in white raiment, brighter than the morning sun,
Stood before her, pointing upward, while he softly whispered, "Come."
As he paused, she heard the rustle of his starry pinions bright,
And she quickly rose and followed, out into the stilly night;

Up above the dim blue ether; up above the silver stars;
On, beyond the golden portals; through the open pearly doors;
Far across the sea of crystal, to the shining sapphire Throne,
Where she heard amid the chorus, "Welcome, child; thy work's well done."
Surely 'tis her Saviour speaking; 'tis His hands, aye, 'tis His feet;
And she cries: "Enough! I've seen Him; all my joys are now complete."

All forgot earth's care and sorrow; all forgot the starry crown;
'Twas enough e'en to be near Him; to behold Him on His Throne.
"Not enough," the Saviour answered; "thou wouldst know through all these
years,
If in vain has been thy teaching, all thy labor and thy prayers;
That from thee the end was hidden, did thy faith in me grow less?
Thou hast asked some little token, I will grant thee thy request."

[Pg 242]

From out a golden casket, inlaid with many a gem,
He took—glist'ning with countless jewels—a regal diadem;
Bright a name shone in each jewel, names of many scholars dear,
Who she thought had passed unheeded all her earnest thought and care.
"But," she asked, "how came these names here—names I never saw before?"
And the Saviour smiling answered, "'Tis the fruit thy teachings bore;

"'Tis the seed thy love hath planted, tended by my faithful hand;
Though unseen by thee, it's budded, blossoming in many lands.
Here are names from darkened Egypt, names from Afric's desert sands;
Names from isles amid the ocean, names from India's sunny strands;
Some from Greenland's frozen mountains, some from burning tropic plains;
From where'er man's found a dwelling, here you'll find some chosen name.
When thine earthly mission's ended, that in love to thee was given,
This is the crown of thy rejoicing, that awaits thee here in heaven."

Suddenly the bright light faded; all was dark within the room;
And she sat amid the shadows of the Sabbath evening gloom;
But a peaceful, holy incense rested on her soul like dew;
Though the end from her was hidden, to her Master she'd be true;
Sowing seed at morn and even, pausing not to count the gain;

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If her bread was on the waters, God would give it back again;
If the harvest she had toiled for other hands than hers should reap,
He'd repay her for her labor, who had bade her, "Feed my sheep."

TOBE'S MONUMENT.

BY ELIZABETH KILHAM.

It was "after taps," a sultry, Southern-summer night. On the extreme edge of the encampment, on the side nearest the enemy, a sentinel paused in his walk, and peered cautiously out into the darkness. "Pshaw!" he said; "it's nothing but a dog." He was resuming his walk, when the supposed quadruped rose suddenly, and walked along on two feet in a manner so unmistakably human, that the sentinel lowered his musket once more, and shouted, "Halt! Advance, and give the counter-sign!" A faint, childish voice said, "Ain't got none, massa."

"Well, there now!" said the sentinel, "if it ain't just a little darkey, and I guess I've frightened him half to death. Come here, snowball." [Pg 244]

The child crept up, and said, tremblingly: "'Deed, massa, I ain't got nuffin ter gib yer."

"Well, who asked you to give me anything?"

"Yer don ax me fer gib yer suffin jes' now; and I ain't got nuffin 'cep' my close what I got on."

"Well, you needn't fret; I don't want 'em. Corporal of the guard! Post two."

The corporal hastened to "post two," and found the sentinel with his hand on the shoulder of a little black boy, who, between fear, fatigue, and hunger, was unable to give any account of himself. "I'll take him to Captain Leigh," the corporal said; "he's officer of the day. Maybe he'll be able to get something out of him."

The captain stood in front of his tent, looking out into the night, when the corporal and his charge approached.

"Captain," said he, "here's a boy just come into the lines."

"Very well; you can leave him here."

At the first sound of the captain's voice the boy drew nearer to him, as knowing instinctively that he had found a friend.

"You can go into that tent and sleep till morning," said the captain.

"What is your name!" was Captain Leigh's first question the next morning.

"Name Tobe." [Pg 245]

"Is that all?"

"Dat's all, Mass Cap'n."

"How old are you?"

"Dunno, Massa Cap'n. Nobody nebber done tole me dat ar."

"Where have you come from?"

"Come fum de back o' Richmon', Mass Cap'n."

"What did you come here for?"

"All de res' ob 'em runned away; an' ole mass he wor so mad, I wor jes' feared o' my life. 'Sides, I t'ought I mought fin' my mammy ef I got 'mong der Unions."

"Where is your mother?"

"Dunno, Mass Cap'n. Ole mass done sol' her down in Georgy las' corn-shuckin', an' I ain't nebber heerd ob her sence. But I t'ought mebby she mought ha' runned 'way too, an' I'd fin' her wid der Unions."

"Well, now, what are you going to do?"

"Dunno, Mass Cap'n. I'd like ter stay 'long wid you."

"What can you do?"

"Kin wait on yer, Mass Cap'n; kin shine up boots, an'"—brightening up as his eyes, wandering round caught sight of the horses—"kin clean de hosses right smart." * * *

"If I keep you with me you must be a good boy, and do as I tell you."

"'Deed I will, Mass Cap'n. I'se do ebery work yer say, sho's yer born." [Pg 246]

So when the troops left Harrison's Landing, Tobe went too, in charge of the captain's horse and baggage; and, when the steamer was fairly under way, he brightened into a new creature as every revolution of the wheel placed a greater distance between himself and "old massa." * * *

It proved that Tobe had told the truth about his skill in taking care of horses. Captain Leigh's horse had never looked so well as now, and the captain was delighted. Tobe turned out, moreover, to be a very good boy. But the army is not a very good place for boys. So one day Captain Leigh said:—

"Tobe, how would you like to go North?"

"Whar's it at, Mass Cap'n?"

"I mean my home at the North."

"When is yer gwine, Mass Cap'n?"

"I am not going at all now."

"Does yer mean ter sen' me away from yer, Mass Cap'n?"

Captain Leigh was touched, and answered him very gently,—

"Yes, I want to send you away from me now, because it will be better for you. But, when the war is over, I shall go home, and then you can stay with me always if you are a good boy."

"I allus does jes' de t'ings yer tell me, Mass Cap'n." [Pg 247]

"I know you do. And, just because you do what I tell you so well I want to send you to my home, to run errands for my wife, and do what work she will give you in the house. And I have three little children—two little girls and a baby boy. I want you to go with them when they go out to play and take care of them. My home is in a very pleasant place in the country. Don't you think you would like to go there?"

"Ef yer goes too, Mass Cap'n."

"But, my boy, I can't possibly go now."

"I'se do jes de t'ing yer say, Mass Cap'n. Ef yer tells me to go, I'se go. An' I'se jest do ebery word the missus say, an' I look af'r de chillens de bes' I knows, ontel yer comes dar. On'y please come right soon, Mass Cap'n."

And, as the captain left the tent, Tobe laid his head upon his arm and cried as if his heart would break.

Captain Leigh found a brother officer who was expecting to go home on a furlough, and who readily agreed to take charge of the boy in whom his friend was so deeply interested.

But that night came news that made everybody give up the idea of a "furlough," or "going home." The Richmond government, being determined to "make the North feel the war as she had not felt it," had organized the "grand raid." [Pg 248]

An order came for Captain Leigh's regiment to march at daylight.

"Tobe," said the captain, "you can go in one of the baggage-wagons. Strap up my blanket and poncho, and take them along; and these boots, take particular care of them, for it's not often I can get a pair of cavalry boots to fit as they do."

"Yer needn't be feared, Mass Cap'n; I'se take care of 'em de bes' I knows."

The main body of the raiders were reported on the line of the South Mountains, making for Gettysburg. Scouting expeditions were sent out from the Northern army in all directions, and a body of troops, including Captain Leigh's regiment, was ordered to proceed by the shortest route to Gettysburg and head the rebels off. One of the baggage-wagons broke down. The driver of another wagon stopped to help his comrade. The troops passed on, and the two wagons were left alone on the mountain. In one of them was Tobe with the captain's boots, over which he kept constant watch. The men worked busily at the wagon and Tobe sat watching them. Suddenly a tramping of horses' feet was heard, and a party of cavalry came round a turn in the road.

"That's good," said one of the men; "there's some of the boys. If they'll wait a few minutes we can go along with 'em." [Pg 249]

"'Tain't none of our boys," said the other, after a keen glance; "them's rebs."

At the word, Tobe slid down in the bottom of the wagon under some blankets, and lay silent and motionless with the boots clasped in his arms.

As the soldiers advanced the officer said, apparently in reply to a question, "No, let the men go; we can't do anything with prisoners here. But we'll look through the wagon, and, if the Yanks have anything we want, 'all's fair in war.'"

They reined their horses by the wagon, and, after a few short, sharp questions, proceeded to break open trunks and bags, and appropriate their contents.

The soldiers were about finishing their examination, when one of them said, "What's that under the seat of that wagon?"

"Oh! nothing but a torn blanket," said another. "'Tain't worth taking. We have got all we want."

"There may be something under it, though."

He pushed aside the blanket with his sabre, and there lay Tobe endeavoring, but unsuccessfully, to hide the boots under him.

"Ah!" said the officer, "this is worth while. Here's just what I wanted. Come, boy, hand over those boots, quick."

"'Deed, massa," said Tobe, "I can't gib 'em ter yer. Dey 'longs ter Mass Cap'n, an' he tole me take keer ob 'em mos' partic'lar." [Pg 250]

"Can't help that. I've got to have them, so pass them along."

"Please, Massa," began Tobe; but the rebel cut him short.

"Will you give me those boots? If you don't do it, and in double-quick time, too, I'll put a ball through your black skin. I won't ask you again. Now, will you give them up?" and he pulled out his pistol.

"'Deed, massa, I can't, case Massa Cap'n"—

There was a sharp click, a flash, a long, sobbing moan, and Tobe lay motionless, the boots still clasped in his arms, and great drops of blood slowly gathering upon them.

"Enemy in sight," shouted a picket riding up.

The officer hastily gave an order, and the rebels dashed off at a furious speed a few moments before a party of Union cavalry, with Captain Leigh at their head, appeared, riding from the opposite direction.

A few words sufficed for explanation. Captain Leigh laid his hand on Tobe's shoulder, and spoke his name. At the sound of the voice he loved so well, his eyes opened, and he said faintly, "Mass Cap'n, I done de bes' I knowed. I keep de boots.'"

"O Tobe!" groaned the captain, "I wish you had given them up. I would have lost everything rather than have had this." [Pg 251]

"Mass Cap'n."

"Yes, Tobe, what is it?"

"De little chillens, Mass Cap'n; I meaned ter wait on 'em right smart. Tell 'em"—His voice grew fainter, and his eyes closed.

"Yes, my boy: what shall I tell them?"

"Tell 'em I didn't lose de boots; I kep 'em de bes'—I knowed."

There was a faint sigh, a flutter of the eyelids, and the little life that had been so truly "de bes' he knowed" (ah! if we could all say that!) was ended.

Very reverently Captain Leigh lifted the boots, all wet and stained with blood. "I will never wear those boots again," he said; "but I will never part with them. They shall be Tobe's monument."

In the hall of Captain Leigh's house is a deep niche, and in it, on a marble slab covered with a glass case, stands a pair of cavalry boots with dark stains upon them, and on the edge of the slab, in golden letters, is the inscription:

"In memory of Tobe,
Faithful unto death."

THE CROWDED STREET. [Pg 252]

BY WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

Let me move slowly through the street,
  Filled with an ever-shifting train,
Amid the sound of steps that beat
  The murmuring walks like autumn rain.

How fast the flitting figures come!
  The mild, the fierce, the stony face—
Some bright with thoughtless smiles, and some
  Where secret tears have left their trace.

They pass to toil, to strife, to rest—
  To halls in which the feast is spread—
To chambers where the funeral guest
  In silence sits beside the dead.

And some to happy homes repair,
  Where children pressing cheek to cheek,
With mute caresses shall declare
  The tenderness they cannot speak.

And some, who walk in calmness here,
  Shall shudder as they reach the door
Where one who made their dwelling dear,
  Its flower, its light, is seen no more.

Youth, with pale cheek and slender frame,
  And dreams of greatness in thine eye!
Go'st thou to build an early name,
  Or early in the task to die?

Keen son of trade, with eager brow!
  Who is now fluttering in thy snare?
Thy golden fortunes, tower they now,
  Or melt the glittering spires in air?

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Who of this crowd to-night shall tread
  The dance till daylight gleam again?
Who sorrow o'er the untimely dead?
  Who writhe in throes of mortal pain?

Some, famine-struck, shall think how long
  The cold, dark hours, how slow the light;
And some, who flaunt amid the throng,
  Shall hide in dens of shame to-night.

Each where his tasks or pleasures call,
  They pass, and heed each other not.
There is who heeds, who holds them all
  In His large love and boundless thought.

These struggling tides of life, that seem
  In wayward, aimless course to tend,
Are eddies of the mighty stream
  That rolls to its appointed end.

BESSIE KENDRICK'S JOURNEY.

BY MRS. ANNIE A. PRESTON.

"Cars stop twenty minutes!" called out Conductor Richardson at Allen's Junction. Then, as the train came to a dead halt, he jumped down upon the depot platform, ran along to the front of the long line of passenger cars, to where the engine was standing, and, swinging himself up into the cab, said to the engineer:

"Frank; I want you to come back to the first passenger coach, and see a little girl that I don't know hardly what to make of."

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Frank nodded, and, without speaking, deliberately wiped his oily hands in a bunch of waste, took a look at his grim, dusty face in a narrow little mirror that hung beside the steam gauge, pulled off his short frock, put on a coat, changed his little black, greasy cap for a soft felt, taking these "dress-up" articles from the tender-box, where an engineer has something stowed away for all emergencies, and went back to the cars as requested.

He entered the car and made his way to the seat where the conductor sat talking to a bright-looking little girl, about nine years old, oddly dressed in a woman's shawl and bonnet.

Several of the passengers were grouped around the seat, evidently much interested in the child, who wore a sad, prematurely old countenance, but seemed to be neither timid nor confused.

"Here is the engineer," said the conductor, kindly, as Frank approached.

She held up her hand to him, with a winsome smile breaking over her pinched little face, and said:

"My papa was an engineer before he became sick and went to live on a farm in Montana. He is dead, and my mamma is dead. She died first, before Willie and Susie. My papa used to tell me that after he should be dead there would be no one to take care of me, and then I must get on the cars and go to his old home in Vermont. And he said, 'cause I hadn't any ticket, I must ask for the engineer and tell him I am James Kendrick's little girl, and that he used to run on the M. & S. road."

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The pleading blue eyes were now suffused with tears; but she did not cry after the manner of childhood in general.

Engineer Frank stooped down and kissed her very tenderly; and then, as he brushed the tears from his own eyes, said:

"Well, my dear, so you are little Bessie Kendrick. I rather think a merciful Providence guided you on board this train."

Then, turning around to the group of passengers, he went on:

"I knew Jim Kendrick well. He was a man out of ten thousand. When I first came to Indiana, before I got acclimated, I was sick a great part of the time, so that I could not work, and I got homesick and discouraged. Could not keep my board bill paid up, to say nothing of my doctor's bill, and I didn't much care whether I lived or died.

"One day, when the pay car came along and the men were getting their monthly pay, and there wasn't a cent coming to me, for I hadn't worked an hour for the last month, I felt so 'blue' that I sat down on a pile of railroad ties and leaned my elbows on my knees, with my head in my hands, [Pg 256] and cried like a boy, out of sheer homesickness and discouragement.

"Pretty soon one came along and said, in a voice that seemed like sweet music in my ears, for I hadn't found much real sympathy, although the boys were all good to me in their way: 'You've been having a rough time of it, and you must let me help you out.'

"I looked up, and there stood Jim Kendrick, with his month's pay in his hand. He took out from the roll of bills a twenty-dollar note and held it out to me.

"I knew he had a sickly wife and two or three children, and that he had a hard time of it himself to pull through from month to month, so I said, half-ashamed of the tears that were still streaming down my face, 'Indeed, I cannot take the money; you must need it yourself.'

"'Indeed, you will take it, man,' said Jim. 'You will be all right in a few days, and then you can pay it back. Now come home with me to supper and see the babies. It will do you good.'

"I took the note and accepted the invitation, and after that went to his house frequently, until he moved away, and I gradually lost sight of him.

"I had returned the loan, but it was impossible to repay the good that little act of kindness did [Pg 257] me, and I guess Jim Kendrick's little girl here won't want for anything if I can prevent it."

Then turning to the child, whose bright eyes were wide open now, the engineer said to her:

"I'll take you home with me when we get up to Wayne. My wife will fix you up, and we'll find out whether these Vermont folks want you or not. If they do, Mary or I shall go with you. But, if they don't care much about having you, you shall stay with us and be our girl, for we have none of our own. You look very much like your father, God bless him."

Just then the eastern train whistled, Engineer Frank vanished out of the car door and went forward to the engine, wiping the tears with his coat sleeve, while the conductor and passengers could not suppress the tears this little episode evoked during the twenty minutes' stop at Allen's Junction.

THERE IS A TONGUE IN EVERY LEAF.

There is a tongue in every leaf,
A voice in every rill—
A voice that speaketh everywhere,
In flood, and fire, through earth and air!
A tongue that's never still!

[Pg 258]

'Tis the Great Spirit, wide diffused
Through everything we see,
That with our spirits communeth
Of things mysterious—life and death,
Time and eternity!

I see Him in the blazing sun,
And in the thunder-cloud;
I hear Him in the mighty roar
That rusheth through the forest hoar
When winds are raging loud.

I feel Him in the silent dews,
By grateful earth betray'd;
I feel Him in the gentle showers,
The soft south wind, the breath of flowers,
The sunshine and the shade.

I see Him, hear Him, everywhere,
In all things—darkness, light,
Silence and sound; but, most of all,
When slumber's dusty curtains fall,

I' the silent hour of night.

LET US GIVE THANKS.

BY ELLEN ISABELLA TUPPER.

For all that God in mercy sends:
For health and children, home and friends,
For comfort in the time of need,
For every kindly word and deed,
For happy thoughts and holy talk,
For guidance in our daily walk—
For everything give thanks!

[Pg 259]

For beauty in this world of ours,
For verdant grass and lovely flowers,
For song of birds, for hum of bees,
For the refreshing summer breeze,
For hill and plain, for streams and wood,
For the great ocean's mighty flood—
In everything give thanks!

For the sweet sleep which comes with night,
For the returning morning's light,
For the bright sun that shines on high,
For the stars glittering in the sky;
For these and everything we see,
O Lord! our hearts we lift to Thee
For everything give thanks!

LITTLE FEET.

Up from all the city's by-ways,
From the breathless, sickening heat,
To the wide-swung gate of heaven,
Eager throng the little feet.

Not a challenge has the warder
For these souls so sinless white;
Round each brow the Saviour's blessing
Circles like a crown of light.

See, the Lord Himself stands waiting,
Wide His loving arms are spread;
On his heart of hearts is pillowed
Every weary baby's head.

But below, with tear-wet faces,
And with hearts all empty grown,
Stand the mourning men and women,
Vainly calling back their own.

[Pg 260]

Upward floats the voice of mourning—
"Jesus, Master, dost thou care?"
Aye, He feels each drop of anguish—
"He doth all our sorrows bear."

Wipe thine eyes, O heavy laden;
Look beyond the clouds and see,
With your dear one on His bosom,
Jesus stands and calls to thee.

Waits with yearning, all unfathomed—
Love you cannot understand,
Lures you upward with the beckoning
Of your buried baby's hand.

A RAINY DAY.

Patter, patter, patter,
   On the window-pane;
Drip, drip, drip,
   Comes the heavy rain.

Now the little birdies
   Fly away to bed,
And each tender blossom
   Droops its pretty head.

But the little rootlets,
   In the earth below,
Open wide their tiny mouths
   Where the rain-drops flow;

And the thirsty grasses
   Soon grow fresh and green,
With the pretty daisies
   Springing up between.

FASHIONABLE.

[Pg 261]

A fashionable woman
   In a fashionable pew;
A fashionable bonnet
   Of a fashionable hue;
A fashionable mantle
   And a fashionable gown;
A fashionable Christian
   In a fashionable town;
A fashionable prayer-book.
   And a fashionable choir;
A fashionable chapel
   With a fashionable spire;
A fashionable preacher
   With a fashionable speech;
A fashionable sermon
   With a fashionable reach;
A fashionable welcome
   At the fashionable door;
A fashionable penny
   For the fashionable poor;
A fashionable heaven
   And a fashionable hell;
A fashionable Bible
   For this fashionable belle;
A fashionable kneeling
   And a fashionable nod;
A fashionable everything,
   But no fashionable God.

RESURGAM.

[Pg 262]

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

"There is no God," he said, and turned away
   From those who sought to lead him to the light;
"Here is a violet, growing for a day,
   When winter comes, and all the world is white,
It will be dead. And I am like the flower,
   To-day, here am I, and to-morrow, dust.
Is life worth living for its little hour
   Of empty pleasure, if decay we must?"

The autumn came, and under fallen leaves
   The little violet was hid away.

"Dead! dead!" cried he. "Alas, all nature grieves
For what she loves is destined to decay.
Soon like the violet, in soft, damp earth
I shall be hidden, and above my head
A stone will tell the record of my birth
And of my nothingness when I am dead."

Spring came, and from the mold the little flower
He had thought dead, sprung up to sweetest bloom.
He saw it, and his heart was touched that hour,
And grasped the earth-old mystery of the tomb.
"God of the flower," he said, with reverent voice,
"The violet lives again, and why not I?
At last my blind eyes see, and I rejoice.
The soul within me was not born to die!"

THE FAULT OF THE AGE.

[Pg 263]

BY ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

The fault of the age is a mad endeavor
To leap to heights that were made to climb;
By a burst of strength or a thought that is clever
We plan to outwit and forestall Time.

We scorn to wait for the thing worth having;
We want high noon at the day's dim dawn,
We find no pleasure in toiling and saving
As our forefathers did in the good times gone.

We force our roses before their season
To bloom and blossom that we may wear;
And then we wonder and ask the reason
Why perfect buds are so few and rare.

We crave the gain, but despise the getting;
We want wealth, not as reward, but dower;
And the strength that is wasted in useless fretting
Would fell a forest or build a tower.

To covet the prize, yet to shrink from the winning;
To thirst for glory, yet fear the fight—
Why, what can it lead to at last but sinning,
To mental languor and moral blight?

Better the old slow way of striving
And counting small gains when the year is done,
Than to use our forces all in contriving
And to grasp for pleasures we have not won.

THE BOOK CANVASSER.

[Pg 264]

BY MAX ADELER.

He came into my office with a portfolio under his arm. Placing it upon the table, removing a ruined hat, and wiping his nose upon a ragged handkerchief that had been so long out of the wash that it was positively gloomy, he said: "Mr. ——, I'm canvassing for the National Portrait Gallery; splendid work; comes in numbers, fifty cents apiece; contains pictures of all the great American heroes from the earliest times down to the present day. Everybody subscribing for it, and I want to see if I can't take your name.

"Now, just cast your eyes over that," he said, opening his book and pointing to an engraving, "That's—lemme see—yes, that's Columbus, perhaps you've heard sumfin' about him? The publisher was telling me to-day before I started out that he discovered—No; was it Columbus that dis—Oh! yes. Columbus, he discovered America—was the first man here. He came over in a ship, the publisher said, and it took fire, and he stayed on deck because his father told him to, if I remember right, and when the old thing busted to pieces he was killed. Handsome picture, ain't it? Taken from a photograph, all of 'em are; done especially for this work. His clothes are kinder [Pg 265] odd but they say that's the way they dressed in them days. Look at this one. Now isn't that

splendid? William Penn, one of the early settlers. I was reading t'other day about him. When he first arrived he got a lot of Indians up a tree, and when they shook some apples down, he set one on top of his son's head, and shot an arrow plump through it and never fazed him. They say it struck them Indians cold; he was such a terrific shooter. Fine countenance, hasn't he? Face shaved clean; he didn't wear a mustache, I believe, but he seems to have let himself out on hair. Now, my view is, that every man ought to have a picture of that Patriarch so's to see how the fust settlers looked and what kind of weskets they yoused to wear. See his legs; too! Trousers a little short maybe, as if he was going to wade in a creek; but he's all there. Got some kind of a paper in his hand, I see. Subscription list, I reckon. Now, how does that strike you? There's something nice. That I think, is—is—that's a—a—yes, to be sure, Washington—you recollect him, of course? Some people call him Father of his Country, George—Washington. He had no middle name, I believe. He lived about two hundred years ago and he was a fighter. I heard the publisher telling a man about him crossing the Delaware River up yer at Trenton, and seems to me, if I recollect [Pg 266] right, I've read about it myself. He was courting some girl on the Jersey side, and he used to swim over at nights to see her when the old man was asleep. The girl's family were down on him, I reckon. He looks like a man to do that, don't he? He's got it in his eye. If it'd been me I'd gone over on a bridge, but he probably wanted to show off afore her; some men are so reckless, you know. Now, if you'll conclude to take this I'll get the publisher to write out some more stories about him, and bring 'em round to you, so's you can study up on him. I know he did ever so many other things, but I've forgot 'em; my memory's so awful poor.

"Less see! Who have we next? Ah! Franklin! Benjamin Franklin! He was one of the old original pioneers, I think. I disremember exactly what he is celebrated for, but I think it was a flying a—oh! yes, flying a kite, that's it. The publisher mentioned it. He was out one day flying a kite, you know, like boys do now-a-days, and while she was a flickering up in the sky, and he was giving her more string, an apple fell off a tree and hit him on the head;—then he discovered the attraction of gravitation, I think they call it. Smart, wasn't it? Now, if you or me'd a been hit, it'd just a made us mad like as not and set us a ravin'. But men are so different. One man's meat's [Pg 267] another man's pison. See what a double chin he's got. No beard on him, either, though a goatee would have been becoming to such a round face. He hasn't got on a sword and I reckon he was no soldier;—fit some when he was a boy, maybe, or went out with the home-guard, but not a regular warrior. I ain't one, myself, and I think all the better of him for it. Ah, here we are! Look at that! Smith and Pocahontas! John Smith! Isn't that gorgeous? See, how she kneels over him, and sticks out her hands while he lays on the ground, and that big fellow with a club tries to hammer him up. Talk about woman's love! There it is for you. Modocs, I believe, Anyway some Indians out West there, somewheres; and the publisher tells me that Captain Shackanasty, or whatever his name is there, was going to bang old Smith over the head with a log of wood, and this here girl she was sweet on Smith, it appears, and she broke loose, and jumped forward and says to the man with the stick, 'Why don't you let John alone? Me and him are going to marry, and if you kill him I'll never speak to you as long as I live,' or words like them, and so the man he give it up, and both of them hunted up a preacher and were married and lived happy ever afterward. Beautiful story, isn't it? A good wife she made him, too, I'll bet, if she was a little [Pg 268] copper-colored. And don't she look just lovely in that picture? But Smith appears kinder sick, evidently thinks his goose is cooked, and I don't wonder, with that Modoc swooping down on him with such a discouraging club. And now we come to—to ah—to—Putnam—General Putnam:—he fought in the war, too; and one day a lot of 'em caught him when he was off his guard, and they tied him flat on his back on a horse and then licked the horse like the very mischief. And what does that horse do but go pitching down about four hundred stone steps in front of the house, with General Putnam lying there nearly skeered to death. Leastways the publisher said somehow that way, and I oncet read about it myself. But he came out safe, and I reckon sold the horse and made a pretty good thing of it. What surprises me is he didn't break his neck, but maybe it was a mule, for they're pretty sure footed, you know. Surprising what some of these men have gone through, ain't it? Turn over a couple of leaves. That's General Jackson. My father shook hands with him once. He was a fighter, I know. He fit down in New Orleans. Broke up the rebel Legislature, and then when the Ku Kluxes got after him he fought 'em behind cotton breastworks and licked 'em 'til they couldn't stand. They say he was terrific when he got real mad. Hit straight [Pg 269] from the shoulder and fetched his man every time. Andrew, his fust name was; and look how his hair stands up. And then, here's John Adams and Daniel Boone and two or three pirates, and a whole lot more pictures, so you see it's cheap as dirt. Lemme have your name, won't you?"

THE MISNOMER.

BY JOSIE C. MALOTT.

It sounds rather queer, I must freely confess,
To hear a man ask kind heaven to bless
Himself and his neighbor, when over the way
His drinking saloon stands open all day.

You may call it a "drug store," but doesn't God know?
Can you hide from *His* eye the sorrow and woe—
The pain and the anguish, the grief and the shame

That comes from the house with a high-sounding name?

Such ill gotten wealth will surely take wing
And leave naught behind but the deadliest sting;
And oh, the account must be settled some day,
For the drug store saloon kept over the way.

Can you face the just Judge and the souls you have wrecked?
Oh, pause ere too late and note the effect.
Do you know you're destroying both body and soul [Pg 270]
Of the men whose honor and manhood you've stole?

Does the hard accusation arouse you to fright?
Have you never looked at yourself in the light
Of a thief, nay, worse, a murderer, too?
God brands you as such, and you know it is true!

They're the deadliest poisons you have for sale—
The liquors you keep—yet you always fail
To mark them as such, and the men who drink
Can have what they want if they bring you the "chink."

Don't call such a place a *drug store*, pray;
But "drinking saloon," and you'd better say
On the sign o'er the door in letters clear,
"Ye abandon all hope who enter here!"

THE DOORSTEP.

BY E. C. STEDMAN.

The conference-meeting through at last,
  We boys around the vestry waited
To see the girls come tripping past
  Like snowbirds willing to be mated.

Not braver he that leaps the wall
  By level musket-flashes litten,
Than I, who stepped before them all,
  Who longed to see me get the mitten.

But no; she blushed and took my arm!
  We let the old folks have the highway,
And started toward the Maple Farm
  Along a kind of lover's by-way.

[Pg 271]

I can't remember what we said,
  'Twas nothing worth a song or story;
Yet that rude path by which we sped
  Seemed all transformed and in a glory.

The snow was crisp beneath our feet,
  The moon was full, the fields were gleaming;
By hood and tippet sheltered sweet,
  Her face with youth and health was beaming.

The little hand outside her muff—
  O sculptor, if you could but mould it!
So lightly touched my jacket-cuff,
  To keep it warm I had to hold it.

To have her with me there alone,—
  'Twas love and fear and triumph blended.
At last we reached the foot-worn stone
  Where that delicious journey ended.

The old folks, too, were almost home;
  Her dimpled hand the latches fingered,
We heard the voices nearer come,
  Yet on the doorstep still we lingered.

She took her ringlets from her hood,
  And with a "Thank you, Ned," dissembled;

But yet I knew she understood
With what a daring wish I trembled.

A cloud past kindly overhead,
The moon was slyly peeping through it,
Yet hid its face, as if it said,
"Come, now or never! do it! *do it*!"

My lips till then had only known
The kiss of mother and of sister,
But somehow full upon her own
Sweet, rosy, darling mouth—I kissed her!

[Pg 272]

Perhaps 'twas boyish love, yet still,
O, listless woman! weary lover!
To feel once more that fresh, wild thrill
I'd give—but who can live youth over?

HOW "OLD MOSE" COUNTED EGGS.

Old Mose, who sold eggs and chickens on the streets of Austin for a living, is as honest an old negro as ever lived, but he has got the habit of chatting familiarly with his customers, hence he frequently makes mistakes in counting out the eggs they buy. He carries his wares around in a small cart drawn by a diminutive donkey. He stopped in front of the residence of Mrs. Samuel Burton. The old lady herself came out to the gate to make the purchases.

"Have you any eggs this morning, Uncle Mose?" she asked.

"Yes, indeed I has. Jest got in ten dozen from the kentry."

"Are they fresh?"

"I gua'ntee 'em. I knows dey am fresh jest the same as ef I had led 'em myself."

"I'll take nine dozen. You can just count them into this basket."

"All right, mum." He counts, "One, two, free, foah, five, six, seben, eight, nine, ten. You kin rely on dem bein fresh. How's your son coming on at de school? He mus' be mos' grown." [Pg 273]

"Yes, Uncle Mose, he is a clerk in a bank at Galveston."

"Why, how ole am de boy?"

"He is eighteen."

"You don't tole me so. Eighteen and getting a salary already, eighteen (counting), nineteen, twenty, twenty-one, twenty-two, twenty-free, twenty-foah, twenty-five, and how's yore gal comin' on? She was mos' growed up de las' time I seed her."

"She is married and living in Dallas."

"Wall, I declar'. How de time scoots away! An' yo' say she has childruns? Why, how ole am de gal? She mus' be jess about—"

"Thirty-three."

"Am dat so?" (counting), "firty-free, firty-foah, firty-five, firty-six, firty-seben, firty-eight, firty-nine, forty, forty-one, forty-two, forty-free. Hit am so singular dat you has sich old childruns. I can't b'leeve you has granchildruns. You don't look more den forty yeahs ole yerseff."

"Nonsense, old man, I see you want to flatter me. When a person gets to be fifty-three years old ——"

"Fifty-free? I jess dun gwinter beleeve hit, fifty-free, fifty-foah, fifty-five, fifty-six—I want you to pay tenshun when I counts de eggs, so dar'll be no mistake—fifty-nine, sixty, sixty-one, sixty-two, [Pg 274] sixty-tree, sixty-foah—Whew. Dat am a warm day. Dis am de time ob yeah when I feels I'se gettin' old myself. I ain't long fer dis world. You comes from an old family. When your fodder died he was sebenty years ole."

"Seventy-two."

"Dat's old, suah. Sebenty-two, sebenty-free, sebenty-foah, sebenty-five, sebenty-six, sebenty-seben, sebenty-eight, sebenty-nine—and your mudder? She was one ob the noblest looking ladies I ebber see. You reminds me ob her so much. She libbed to mos' a hundred. I bleeves she was done pass a centurion when she died."

"No, Uncle Mose, she was only ninety-six when she died."

"Den she warn't no chicken when she died. I know dat—ninety-six, ninety-seben, ninety-eight,

ninety-nine, one hundred, one, two, free, foah, five, six, seben, eight—dar 108 nice fresh eggs—jess nine dozen, and here am one moah egg in case I has discounted myself."

Old Mose went on his way rejoicing. A few days afterward Mrs. Burton said to her husband:

"I am afraid we will have to discharge Matilda. I am satisfied she steals the milk and eggs. I am positive about the eggs, for I bought them day before yesterday, and now about half of them are gone. I stood right there and heard Old Mose count them myself and there were nine dozen." [Pg 275]

ANNIE AND WILLIE'S PRAYER.

BY MRS. SOPHIA P. SNOW.

'Twas the eve before Christmas, "Good-night" had been said,
And Annie and Willie had crept into bed;
There were tears on their pillows, and tears in their eyes,
And each little bosom was heaving with sighs,
For to-night their stern father's command had been given
That they should retire precisely at seven
Instead of at eight—for they troubled him more
With questions unheard of than ever before:
He had told them he thought this delusion a sin,
No such a creature as "Santa Claus" ever had been.
And he hoped, after this, he should never more hear
How he scrambled down chimneys with presents each year.
And this was the reason that two little heads
So restlessly tossed on their soft, downy beds.
Eight, nine, and the clock on the steeple tolled ten,
Not a word had been spoken by either till then,
When Willie's sad face from the blanket did peep,
And whispered, "Dear Annie, is 'ou fast as'eep?"
"Why no, brother Willie," a sweet voice replies,
"I've long tried in vain, but I can't shut my eyes,
For somehow it makes me so sorry because
Dear papa has said there is no 'Santa Claus,'
Now we know there is, and it can't be denied, [Pg 276]
For he came every year before mamma died;
But, then, I've been thinking that she used to pray,
And God would hear everything mamma would say,
And maybe she asked him to send Santa Claus here
With the sack full of presents he brought every year."
"Well, why tan't we p'ay dest as mamma did den,
And ask Dod to send him with p'esents aden?"
"I've been thinking so too," and without a word more
Four little bare feet bounded out on the floor,
And four little knees the carpet pressed,
And two tiny hands were clasped close to each breast.

"Now Willie, you know we must firmly believe
That the presents we asked for we're sure to receive;
You must wait very still till I say the 'Amen,'
And by that you will know that your turn has come then."

"Dear Jesus, look down on my brother and me,
And grant us the favor we are asking of thee.
I want a wax dolly, a tea-set and ring,
And an ebony work-box that shuts with a spring.
Bless papa, dear Jesus, and cause him to see
That Santa Claus loves us as much as does he;
Don't let him get fretful and angry again
At dear brother Willie and Annie. Amen."

"Please, Desus, 'et Santa Taus tum down to-night,
And b'ing us some p'esents before it is light;
I want he should div' me a nice 'ittie s'ed,
With bright shinin' 'unners, and all painted red;
A box full of tandy, a book, and a toy,
Amen, and then Desus, I'll be a dood boy."

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Their prayers being ended, they raised up their heads,
And with hearts light and cheerful, again sought their beds.
They were lost soon in slumber, both peaceful and deep,
And with fairies in dreamland were roaming in sleep.

Eight, nine, and the little French clock had struck ten,
Ere the father had thought of his children again:
He seems now to hear Annie's half-suppressed sighs,
And to see the big tears stand in Willie's blue eyes.
"I was harsh with my darlings," he mentally said,
"And should not have sent them so early to bed;
But then I was troubled; my feelings found vent,
For bank stock to-day has gone down ten per cent
But of course they've forgotten their troubles ere this,
And that I denied them the thrice-asked-for kiss:
But, just to make sure, I'll go up to their door,
For I never spoke harsh to my darlings before."
So saying, he softly ascended the stairs,
And arrived at the door to hear both of their prayers;
His Annie's "Bless papa" drew forth the big tears,
And Willie's grave promise fell sweet on his ears.
"Strange—strange—I'd forgotten," said he with a sigh,
"How I longed when a child to have Christmas draw nigh."
"I'll atone for my harshness," he inwardly said,
"By answering their prayers ere I sleep in my bed."
Then he turned to the stairs and softly went down,
Threw off velvet slippers and silk dressing-gown,
Donned hat, coat, and boots, and was out in the street—
A millionaire facing the cold driving sleet!

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Nor stopped he until he had bought every thing,
From the box full of candy to the tiny gold ring;
Indeed, he kept adding so much to his store,
That the various presents outnumbered a score.
Then homeward he turned, when his holiday load,
With Aunt Mary's help, in the nursery was stowed.
Miss Dolly was seated beneath a pine tree,
By the side of a table spread out for her tea;
A work-box well filled in the centre was laid
And on it the ring for which Annie had prayed.
A soldier in uniform stood by a sled
"With bright shining runners, and all painted red."
There were balls, dogs, and horses, books pleasing to see,
And birds of all colors were perched in the tree!
While Santa Claus, laughing, stood up in the top,
As if getting ready more presents to drop.
And as the fond father the picture surveyed,
He thought for his trouble he had amply been paid,
And he said to himself, as he brushed off a tear,
"I'm happier to-night than I've been for a year;
I've enjoyed more true pleasure than ever before,
What care I if bank stock falls ten per cent more
Hereafter I'll make it a rule, I believe,
To have Santa Claus visit us each Christmas Eve."
So thinking, he gently extinguished the light,
And, tripping down stairs, retired for the night.

As soon as the beams of the bright morning sun
Put the darkness to flight, and the stars one by one.
Four little blue eyes out of sleep opened wide,
And at the same moment the presents espied;
Then out of their beds they sprang with a bound,
And the very gifts prayed for were all of them found.
They laughed and they cried, in their innocent glee,
And shouted for papa to come quick and see
What presents old Santa Claus brought in the night [Pg 279]
(Just the things that they wanted), and left before light;
"And now," added Annie, in a voice soft and low,
"You'll believe there's a 'Santa Claus,' papa, I know;"
While dear little Willie climbed up on his knee,
Determined no secret between them should be,
And told in soft whispers how Annie had said
That their dear blessèd mamma, so long ago dead,
Used to kneel down by the side of her chair,
And that God up in heaven had answered her prayer.
"Den we dot up and prayed dust well as we tould,
And Dod answered our prayers: now wasn't He dood?"
"I should say that He was if He sent you all these,
And knew just what presents my children would please.
(Well, well, let him think so, the dear little elf,

'Twould be cruel to tell him I did it myself.)"

Blind father! who caused your stern heart to relent,
And the hasty words spoken so soon to repent?
'Twas the Being who bade you steal softly up stairs,
And made you His agent to answer their prayers.

THE OLD OAKEN BUCKET.

BY SAMUEL WOODWORTH.

How dear to this heart are the scenes of my childhood,
When fond recollection presents them to view!
The orchard, the meadow, the deep-tangled wild-wood,
And every loved spot which my infancy knew;
The wide-spreading pond, and the mill which stood by it, [Pg 280]
The bridge and the rock where the cataract fell;
The cot of my father, the dairy-house nigh it,
And e'en the rude bucket, which hung in the well.
The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,
The moss-covered bucket, which hung in the well.

That moss-covered bucket I hail as a treasure;
For often, at noon, when returned from the field,
I found it the source of an exquisite pleasure,
The purest and sweetest that nature can yield.
How ardent I seized it, with hands that were glowing!
And quick to the white-pebbled bottom it fell;
Then soon with the emblem of truth overflowing,
And dripping with coolness, it rose from the well.
The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,
The moss-covered bucket arose from the well.

How sweet from the green mossy brim to receive it,
As poised on the curb it inclined to my lips!
Not a full blushing goblet could tempt me to leave it,
Though filled with the nectar that Jupiter sips.
And now, far removed from the loved situation,
The tear of regret will intrusively swell,
As fancy reverts to my father's plantation,
And sighs for the bucket which hangs in the well;
The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,
The moss-covered bucket, which hangs in the well.

MR. WINKLE PUTS ON SKATES. [Pg 281]

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

"Now," said Wardle, after a substantial lunch, "what say you to an hour on the ice? We shall have plenty of time."

"Capital!" said Mr. Benjamin Allen.

"Prime!" ejaculated Mr. Bob Sawyer.

"You skate, of course, Winkle?" said Wardle.

"Ye-yes; O yes," replied Mr. Winkle. "I—I—am rather out of practice!"

"O, do skate, Mr. Winkle," said Arabella. "I like to see it so much."

"O, it is so graceful," said another young lady. A third young lady said it was elegant, and a fourth expressed her opinion that it was "swanlike."

"I should be very happy, I'm sure," said Mr. Winkle, reddening; "but I have no skates."

This objection was at once overruled. Trundle had a couple of pairs, and the fat boy announced that there were half a dozen more down stairs; whereat Mr. Winkle expressed exquisite delight, and looked exquisitely uncomfortable.

Old Wardle led the way to a pretty large sheet of ice; and the fat boy and Mr. Weller having shoveled and swept away the snow which had fallen on it during the night, Mr. Bob Sawyer [Pg 282]

adjusted his skates with a dexterity which to Mr. Winkle was perfectly marvelous, and described circles with his left leg, and cut figures of eight, and inscribed upon the ice, without once stopping for breath, a great many other pleasant and astonishing devices, to the excessive satisfaction of Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Tupman and the ladies; which reached a pitch of positive enthusiasm when old Wardle and Benjamin Allen, assisted by the aforesaid Bob Sawyer, performed some mystic evolutions which they called a reel.

All this time Mr. Winkle, with his face and hands blue with the cold, had been forcing a gimlet into the soles of his feet, and putting his skates on, with the points behind, and getting the straps into a very complicated and entangled state, with the assistance of Mr. Snodgrass, who knew rather less about skates than a Hindoo. At length, however, with the assistance of Mr. Weller, the unfortunate skates were firmly screwed and buckled on, and Mr. Winkle was raised to his feet.

"Now, then, sir," said Sam, in an encouraging tone, "off with you, and show 'em how to do it."

"Stop, Sam, stop!" said Mr. Winkle, trembling violently, and clutching hold of Sam's arm with the grasp of a drowning man. "How slippery it is, Sam!" [Pg 283]

"Not an uncommon thing upon ice, sir," replied Mr. Weller. "Hold up, sir!"

This last observation of Mr. Weller's bore reference to a demonstration Mr. Winkle made at the instant, of a frantic desire to throw his feet in the air, and dash the back of his head on the ice.

"These—these—are very awkward skates," said Mr. Winkle, staggering.

"Now, Winkle," cried Mr. Pickwick, quite unconscious that there was anything the matter. "Come; the ladies are all anxiety."

"Yes, yes," replied Mr. Winkle, with a ghastly smile. "I'm coming."

"Just going to begin," said Sam, endeavoring to disengage himself. "Now, sir, start off!"

"Just hold me at first, Sam, will you?" said Mr. Winkle. "There—that's right. I shall soon get in the way of it, Sam. Not too fast, Sam—not too fast!"

Mr. Winkle stooping forward, with his body half doubled up, was being assisted over the ice by Mr. Weller in a very singular and un-swanlike manner, when Mr. Pickwick most innocently shouted from the opposite bank—"Sam!"

"Sir!" shouted back Mr. Weller.

"Here! I want you."

"Let go, sir," said Sam. "Don't you hear the governor calling? Let go, sir." [Pg 284]

With a violent effort Mr. Weller disengaged himself from the grasp of the agonized Pickwickian, and in so doing administered a considerable impetus to the unhappy Mr. Winkle. With an accuracy which no degree of dexterity or practice could have insured, that unfortunate gentleman bore swiftly down into the centre of the reel at the very moment when Mr. Bob Sawyer was performing a flourish of unparalleled beauty.

Mr. Winkle struck Wildly against him, and with a loud crash they both fell heavily down. Mr. Pickwick ran to the spot. Bob Sawyer had risen to his feet, but Mr. Winkle was far too wise to do anything of the kind in skates. He was seated on the ice, making spasmodic efforts to smile; but anguish was depicted on every lineament of his countenance.

"Are you hurt?" inquired Mr. Benjamin Allen, with great anxiety.

"Not much," said Mr. Winkle, rubbing his back very hard.

"I wish you'd let me bleed you," said Mr. Benjamin, with great eagerness.

"No, thank you," replied Mr. Winkle, hurriedly.

"I really think you had better," said Allen.

"Thank you," replied Mr. Winkle; "I'd rather not." [Pg 285]

"What do you think, Mr. Pickwick?" inquired Bob Sawyer.

Mr. Pickwick was excited and indignant. He beckoned to Mr. Weller and said, in a stern voice, "Take his skates off!"

"No; but really I had scarcely begun," remonstrated Mr. Winkle.

"Take his skates off!" repeated Mr. Pickwick, firmly.

The command was not to be resisted. Mr. Winkle allowed Sam to obey it, in silence.

"Lift him up," said Mr. Pickwick. Sam assisted him to rise.

Mr. Pickwick retired a few paces apart from the bystanders; and, beckoning his friend to approach, fixed a searching look upon him and uttered in a low, but distinct and emphatic tone, these remarkable words:

"You're a humbug, sir!"

"A what?" said Mr. Winkle, starting.

"A humbug, sir! I will speak plainer, if you wish it. An impostor, sir!"

With these words Mr. Pickwick turned slowly on his heel and rejoined his friends.

MY MOTHER'S BIBLE.

[Pg 286]

BY GEORGE P. MORRIS.

This book is all that's left me now!
Tears will unbidden start,—
With faltering lip and throbbing brow
I press it to my heart.
For many generations past,
Here is our family tree:
My mother's hand this Bible clasped;
She, dying, gave it me.

Ah! well do I remember those
Whose names these records bear,
Who round the hearthstone used to close
After the evening prayer,
And speak of what these pages said,
In tones my heart would thrill!
Though they are with the silent dead,
Here are they living still!

My father read this holy book
To brothers, sisters, dear;
How calm was my poor mother's look,
Who leaned God's word to hear.
Her angel-face—I see it yet!
What thronging memories come!
Again that little group is met
Within the halls of home!

Thou truest friend man ever knew,
Thy constancy I've tried;
Where all were false I found thee true,
My counsellor and guide.
The mines of earth no treasure give
That could this volume buy:
In teaching me the way to live,
It taught me how to die.

AFTER-DINNER SPEECH BY A FRENCHMAN.

[Pg 287]

"Milors and Gentlemans—You excellent chairman, M. le Baron de Mount-Stuart, he have say to me, 'Make de toast.' Den I say to him dat I have no toast to make; but he nudge my elbow ver soft, and say dat dere is von toast dat nobody but von Frenchman can make proper; and, derefore, wid your kind permission, I vill make de toast. 'De brevete is de sole of de feet,' as you great philosophere, Dr. Johnson, do say, in dat amusing little vork of his, de Pronouncing Dictionaire; and, derefore, I vill not say ver moch to de point.

"Ah! mes amis! ven I hear to myself de flowing speech, de oration magnifique of your Lor' Maire, Monsieur Gobbledown, I feel dat it is von great privilege for von étranger to sit at de same table, and to eat de same food, as dat grand, dat majestique man, who are de tereur of de voleurs and de brigands of de metropolis, and who is also, I for to suppose, a halterman and de chief of you common scoundrel. Milors and gentlemans, I feel that I can perspire to no greatare honueur dan to be von common scoundrelman myself; but, hélas! dat plaisir are not for me, as I are not freeman of your great cité, not von liveryman servant of von you compagnies joint-stock. But I must not forget de toast. [Pg 288]

"Milors and Gentlemans! De immortal Shakispeare he have write, 'De ting of beauty are de joy for nevermore.' It is de ladies who are de toast. Vat is more entrancing dan de charmante smile, de soft voice, de vinking eye of de beautiful lady! It is de ladies who do sweeten the cares of life. It is de ladies who are de guiding stars of our existence. It is de ladies who do cheer but not inebriate, and, derefore, vid all homage to dere sex, de toast dat I have to propose is, 'De Ladies! Heaven bless dem all!'"

THE WHIRLING WHEEL.

BY TUDOR JENKS.

Oh! the regular round is a kind of a grind!
We rise in the morning only to find
That Monday's but Tuesday, and Wednesday's the same,
And Thursday's a change in nothing but name;
A Friday and Saturday wind up the week;
On Sunday we rest, and attempt to look meek.
So set a firm shoulder
And push on the wheel!
The mill that we're grinding
Works for our weal.

[Pg 289]

And although the dull round is a kind of a grind,
It has compensations that we may find.
Famine and slaughter and sieges no more
Are likely to leave their cards at the door.
Let others delight in adventurous lives—
We read their sore trials at home to our wives.
So set a firm shoulder
And push on the wheel!
The mill that we're grinding
Works for our weal.

The regular round, though a kind of a grind,
Brings thoughts of contentment to quiet the mind:
The babies sleep soundly in snug little beds;
There's a tight little roof o'er the ringletted heads;
The wife's welcome comes with the set of the sun,
And the worker may rest, for the day's work is done.
So set a firm shoulder
And push on the wheel!
The mill that we're grinding
Works for our weal.

Oh! the regular round is a kind of a grind,
But the world's scenes are shifted by workmen behind.
The star who struts central may show no more art
Than the sturdy "first citizen" filling his part.
When the king to our plaudits has graciously bowed,
The crowd sees the king, while the king sees the crowd.
So set a firm shoulder
And push on the wheel!
The mill that we're grinding
Works for our weal.

When the great mill has stopped, and the work is complete,
And the workers receive the reward that is meet,
Who can tell what the Master shall say is the best? [Pg 290]
We but know that the worker who's aided the rest,
Who has kept his wheel turning from morning to night,
Who has not wronged his fellow, is not far from right.
So set a firm shoulder
And push on the wheel!
The mill that we're grinding
Shall work out our weal.

THE BLACK HORSE AND HIS RIDER.

BY CHARLES SHEPPARD.

It was the seventh of October, 1777. Horatio Gates stood before his tent, gazing steadfastly upon the two armies now arrayed in order of battle. It was a clear, bracing day, mellow with the richness of autumn. The sky was cloudless; the foliage of the wood scarce tinged with purple and gold; the buckwheat in yonder fields frostened into snowy ripeness. But the tread of legions shook the ground; from every bush shot the glimmer of the rifle barrel; on every hillside blazed the sharpened bayonet.

Gates was sad and thoughtful as he watched the evolutions of the two armies. But all at once a smoke arose, a thunder shook the ground, and a chorus of shouts and groans yelled along the darkened air. The play of death had begun. The two flags, this of the stars, that of the red cross, [Pg 291] tossed amid the smoke of battle, while the sky was clouded with leaden folds, and the earth throbbed with the pulsations of a mighty heart.

Suddenly, Gates and his officers were startled. Along the height on which they stood came a rider, upon a black horse, rushing toward the distant battle. There was something in the appearance of this horse and his rider that struck them with surprise. Look! he draws his sword, the sharp blade quivers through the air—he points to the distant battle, and, lo! he is gone; gone through those clouds, while his shout echoes over the plains. Wherever the fight is the thickest, there, through intervals of cannon smoke, you may see riding madly forward that strange soldier, mounted on his steed black as death. Look at him, as with face red with British blood he waves his sword and shouts to his legions. Now you may see him fighting in that cannon's glare, and the next moment he is away off yonder, leading the forlorn hope up that steep cliff. Is it not a magnificent sight to see that strange soldier and that noble black horse, dashing like a meteor, down the long columns of battle? Let us look for a moment into those dense war clouds. Over this thick hedge bursts a band of American militiamen, their rude farmer coats stained with blood, [Pg 292] while scattering their arms by the way, they flee before that company of redcoat hirelings, who come rushing forward, their solid front of bayonets gleaming in the battle light. In this moment of their flight, a horse comes crashing over the plains. The unknown rider reins his steed back on his haunches right in the path of a broad-shouldered militiaman. "Now! cowards! advance another step and I'll strike you to the heart!" shouts the unknown, extending a pistol in either hand. "What! are you Americans, men, and fly before British soldiers? Back again, and face them once more, or I myself will ride you down." This appeal was not without its effect. The militiaman turns; his comrades, as if by one impulse, follow his example. In one line, but thirty men in all, they confront thirty sharp bayonets. The British advance. "Now, upon the rebels, charge!" shouts the red-coat officer. They spring forward at the same bound. Look! their bayonets almost touch the muzzles of their rifles. At this moment the voice of the unknown rider is heard: "Now let them have it! Fire!" A sound is heard, a smoke is seen, twenty Britons are down, some writhing in death, some crawling along the soil, and some speechless as stone. The remaining ten start back. "Club your rifles and charge them home!" shouts the unknown. That black horse springs forward, [Pg 293] followed by the militiamen. Then a confused conflict—a cry for quarter, and a vision of twenty farmers grouped around the rider of the black horse, greeting him with cheers.

Thus it was all the day long. Wherever that black horse and his rider went, there followed victory. At last, toward the setting of the sun, the crisis of the conflict came. That fortress yonder, on Bemiss' Heights, must be won, or the American cause is lost! That cliff is too steep—that death is too certain. The officers cannot persuade the men to advance. The Americans have lost the field. Even Morgan, that iron man among iron men, leans on his rifle and despairs of the field. But look yonder! In this moment when all is dismay and horror, here crashing on, comes the black horse and his rider. That rider bends upon his steed, his frenzied face covered with sweat and dust and blood; he lays his hand upon that bold rifleman's shoulder, and, as though living fire had been poured into his veins, he seized his rifle and started toward the rock. And now look! now hold your breath, as that Black Steed crashes up that steep cliff. That steed quivers! he totters! he falls! No! No! Still on, still up the cliff, still on toward the fortress. The rider turns his face and shouts, "Come on, men of Quebec! come on!" That call is needless. Already the bold riflemen are [Pg 294] on the rock. Now British cannon pour your fires, and lay your dead in tens and twenties on the rock. Now, red-coat hirelings, shout your battle-cry if you can! For look! there, in the gate of the fortress, as the smoke clears away, stands the Black Horse and his rider. That steed falls dead, pierced by an hundred balls; but his rider, as the British cry for quarter, lifts up his voice and shouts afar to Horatio Gates waiting yonder in his tent, "Saratoga is won!" As that cry goes up to heaven, he falls with his leg shattered by a cannon-ball. Who was the rider of the black horse? Do you not guess his name? Then bend down and gaze on that shattered limb, and you shall see that it bears the mark of a former wound. That wound was received in the storming of Quebec. That rider of the Black Horse was Benedict Arnold.

SHE CUT HIS HAIR.

You can always tell a boy whose mother cuts his hair. Not because the edges of it look as if it had been chewed off by an absent-minded horse; but you can tell it by the way he stops on the streets and wriggles his shoulders. When a fond mother has to cut her boy's hair she is careful to guard [Pg 295] against any annoyance and muss by laying a sheet on the carpet. It has never yet occurred to her to set him over a bare floor and put the sheet around his neck. Then she draws the front hair over his eyes, and leaves it there while she cuts that which is at the back; the hair which lies over his eyes appears to be surcharged with electric needles, and that which is silently dropping down over his shirtband appears to be on fire. She has unconsciously continued to push his head forward until his nose presses his breast, and is too busily engaged to notice the snuffling sound that is becoming alarmingly frequent. In the meantime he is seized with an irresistible desire to blow his nose, but recollects that his handkerchief is in the other room. Then a fly lights on his nose, and does it so unexpectedly that he involuntarily dodges and catches the points of the shears in his left ear. At this he commences to cry and wish he was a man. But his mother doesn't

notice him. She merely hits him on the other ear to inspire him with confidence and goes on with the work. When she is through she holds his jacket-collar back from his neck, and with her mouth blows the short bits of hair from the top of his head down his back. He calls her attention to this [Pg 296] fact, but she looks for a new place on his head and hits him there, and asks him why he didn't use a handkerchief. Then he takes his awfully disfigured head to the mirror and looks at it, and, young as he is, shudders as he thinks of what the boys on the street will say.

AN APPEAL FOR LIBERTY.

BY JOSEPH STORY.

I call upon you, fathers, by the shades of your ancestors—by the dear ashes which repose in this precious soil—by all you are, and all you hope to be—resist every object of disunion, resist every encroachment upon your liberties, resist every attempt to fetter your consciences, or smother your public schools, or extinguish your system of public instruction.

I call upon you, mothers, by that which never fails in woman, the love of your off-spring; teach them, as they climb your knees, or lean on your bosoms, the blessings of liberty. Swear them at the altar, as with their baptismal vows, to be true to their country, and never to forget or forsake her.

I call upon you, young men, to remember whose sons you are; whose inheritance you possess. [Pg 297] Life can never be too short, which brings nothing but disgrace and oppression. Death never comes too soon, if necessary in defence of the liberties of your country.

I call upon you, old men, for your counsels, and your prayers, and your benedictions. May not your gray hairs go down in sorrow to the grave, with the recollection that you have lived in vain. May not your last sun sink in the west upon a nation of slaves.

No; I read in the destiny of my country far better hopes, far brighter visions. We, who are now assembled here, must soon be gathered to the congregation of other days. The time of our departure is at hand, to make way for our children upon the theatre of life. May God speed them and theirs. May he who, at the distance of another century, shall stand here to celebrate this day, still look round upon a free, happy, and virtuous people. May he have reason to exult as we do. May he, with all the enthusiasm of truth as well as of poetry, exclaim, that here is still his country.

OLD UNCLE JAKE. [Pg 298]

He was bowed by many a year of service; he was white-woolled, thick-lipped, and a true son of Africa, yet a grand and knightly soul animated that dusky breast—a soul that many a scion of the blood royal might envy.

The children loved him, the neighbors respected him, his own color looked up to him as a superior being, and they whose goods and chattels he had formerly been, were sure to heed his counsels in all important family matters. Aye, he had an honorable record. If his skin was black, his soul was white as the whitest and from lusty boyhood to the present there had been no need of "stripes" for Uncle Jake.

He had been the playmate of "young marster," the boon companion in all 'possum hunts and fishing frolics, and when each had arrived at man's estate the goodfellowship contracted in youth knew no surcease.

When the tocsin of war resounded through the South, and the call for volunteers was made, "marster" was one of the first to buckle on his armor and hasten to the front—doing so with greater heart as Uncle Jake was left in charge of those dearer than life to him.

And royally did the poor unlettered African fulfil the trust committed to his keeping. He took [Pg 299] upon himself the burden of all plantation matters and sooner than one hair on the heads of "missus or chillun" should be injured, he would have sacrificed his life freely any day. And when the war was over he positively refused to join in the hegira of his brethren, preferring rather to live on in the same old place that had witnessed his birth and the strength of his manhood's prime.

In grateful recognition of his long servitude a comfortable cottage was built for him in a secluded nook of the plantation, in which, with his faithful old wife, he lived a peaceful and contented life, tilling the few acres which had been granted him and doing all sorts of odd jobs out of the pure love he bore old marse.

But Uncle Jake was getting old now—more and more heavily the weight of years fell upon him—the whiter grew his locks until at last the time came when he could no longer pursue his accustomed duties, and all reluctant and unwilling he took to his bed never to rise again.

For weeks and months he lingered on the "Border Land," attended by loving hands, and his slightest wish was gratified; indeed, so long he hovered between life and death, that those who loved him best began to cherish a faint hope that he would be spared to them. [Pg 300]

But the fiat had gone forth—Uncle Jake must die.

One evening, just as the setting sun was flooding the fair landscape with his golden beams, a tearful group were assembled at his bedside, who had been hastily summoned thither to bid farewell to one who had been so true a friend to them all.

There were marster and missus and their children and Jake's own wife and children, with a few of his fellow servants, all united in a democracy of grief that knew no distinction of caste in the supreme moment.

No sound was heard save a half-suppressed sob now and then—the tick-tick of the clock on the rude mantel and the labored breathing of the dying man.

For hours he had lain in a sort of stupor, broken only at intervals by delirious mutterings, when suddenly his eyes, in which was a preternatural brightness, opened and fixed themselves long and earnestly in turn upon each one of the faces bent so sorrowfully over him.

Then in a feeble, fluttering voice, like the last effort of an expiring taper, he addressed his master, who was tenderly wiping the moisture from his brow:

"Ole marse, I'se been a good and faithful servant to yer all dese years, has I not?"

"Yes, Jake."

"Ebber since we was boys togedder I'se lubed yer, and stuck to yer through thick and thin, and now dat Jake is goin' home yer doan' treasure up nothin' agin me, do yer, marse?" [Pg 301]

"No, no, Jake."

"Old missus, come nearer, honey, Jake's eyes is gettin' mighty dim now, and he kan't see yer. Yer'll nebber forgit how Jake tuk keer of yer an' de chilluns when ole marster gone to de war? An' yer'll be kind to my wife and chilluns for my sake, won't yer?"

"Yes, yes, Jake, I'll be kind to them, and I will never forget your fidelity, old friend."

"T'ank de Lawd! I kin die happy now, when I'se know dat yer an' master will 'member me an' be kind to dem I'se leaving behind. An' de chillun—whar's de chillun? I'se wants ter tell 'em all goodby an' say a las' few words to dem, too."

And in his eagerness, with a strength born of death, the old man half arose upon his elbow and laid a trembling hand upon the head of each of the awe-struck children.

"God bless yer, chillun, one an' all. I lubs my own little picaninnies, but I lubs old marster's just as well. I doan' want none o' yer to forgit how Uncle Jake has trotted yer on his knee an' toted yer on his back an' keep' a watchful eye on yer, les' yet git into mischief by yer pranks. Promise me, [Pg 302] chillun, dat you'll nebber forgit dese ting. It pleases Uncle Jake to think yer'll 'member him arter he's gone from yer sight for ebber."

As well as they were able for their tears, the little ones gave the required promise, and greatly pleased, the old man sank back exhausted upon his pillow.

After lying a few minutes with closed eyes, as if in sleep, he suddenly whispered:

"Dinah, whar is you? I wants yer to cum closer ter me, honey, an' put yer arms around my neck an' lay yer cheek ter mine like yer used ter do when we was courtin' down in de huckleberry patch. I wants ter die in yer arms, ole wife. Yer is black, an' de white folks mought not be able ter see any booty in yer, but Jake knows what a true an' lovin' wife you'se bin ter him, an' he can see de booty dat's hidden out o' sight. I'se gwine ter cross ober der great wide ribber dey call Death, into a kentry whar' dere'll nebber be any mo' black skins—whar' I'll wear de white robe and de golden crown, an' I'se got ter wait fur yer dere. Dinah, my lub! my lub! Hark, honey! doan' yer hear de bells ob heaven a-ringing? An' doan' yer see de pearly gates a-openin' to let ole black Jake go frew? I'se a comin', holy angels—I'se a comin', blessed Lawd! Glory hallelewger! Ole Jake's mos' got ober de ribber. His feet is touchin' de water—but it's gettin' so cold, Dinah, honey [Pg 303] —I can't feel de clasp of yer arms any mo'. I'se—"

And with a last, long, fluttering sigh, as knightly and true a soul as ever dwelt in human breast took its light to a realm where there is indeed neither black nor white, nor bond nor free, but all are like unto the angels.

THE HOT AXLE.

BY T. DE WITT TALMAGE.

The express train was flying from Cork to Queenstown; it was going like sixty—that is, about sixty

miles an hour. No sight of Irish village to arrest our speed, no sign of a breakdown; and yet the train halted. We looked out of a window; saw a brakeman and a crowd of passengers gathering around the locomotive, and a dense smoke arising. What was the matter? *A hot axle!*

I thought then, as I think now, that is what is the matter with people everywhere. In this swift, "express" American life, we go too fast for our endurance. We think ourselves getting on splendidly, when, in the midst of our success, we come to a dead halt. What is the matter? The nerves or muscles or our brain give out; we make too many revolutions in an hour. *A hot axle!* [Pg 304]

Men make the mistake of working according to their opportunities, and not according to their capacity of endurance. Can I be a merchant, and president of a bank, and a director in a life insurance company, and a school commission, and help edit a paper, and supervise the politics of our ward, and run for Congress? "I can!" the man says to himself. The store drives him; the bank drives him; the school drives him; politics drive him. He takes all the scoldings and frets and exasperations of each position. Some day, at the height of the business season, he does not come to the store. From the most important meeting of the bank directors he is absent. In the excitement of the most important political canvass he fails to be at the place appointed. What is the matter? His health has broken down; the train halts long before it gets to the station. *A hot axle!*

Literary men have great opportunities opening in this day. If they take all that open, they are dead men, or worse—*living* men that ought to be dead. The pen runs so easy when you have good ink and smooth paper, and an easy desk to write on, and the consciousness of an audience of one, two, or three hundred thousand readers. So great is the invitation to literary work, that the [Pg 305] professional men of the day are overdone. They sit, faint and fagged out, on the verge of newspapers and books; each one does the work of three. And these men sit up late nights and choke down chunks of meat without mastication, and scold their wives through irritability, and maul innocent authors, and run the physical machinery with a liver miserably given out. The driving shaft has gone fifty times a second. They stop at no station. The steam-chest is hot and swollen. The brain and digestion begins to smoke. Stop, ye flying quills! "Down brakes!" *A hot axle!*

Some of our young people have read—till they are crazed—of learned blacksmiths who at the forge conquered thirty languages; and shoemakers who, pounding sole-leather, got to be philosophers; and of milliners who, while their customers were at the glass trying on their spring hats, wrote a volume of first-rate poems. The fact is, no blacksmith ought to be troubled with more than five languages; and, instead of shoemakers becoming philosophers, we would like to turn our surplus supply of philosophers into shoemakers; and the supply of poetry is so much greater than the demand, that we wish milliners would stick to their business. Extraordinary examples of work and endurance may do us much good. Because Napoleon slept only four hours a night, hundreds of students have tried the experiment; but, instead of Austerlitz and Saragossa, [Pg 306] there came of it only a sick headache and a botch of a recitation.

Let us not go beyond our endurance, cutting short our days and making a wreck of our life work, but labor earnestly, zealously, intelligently for success; and in the twilight of old age peace and happiness will be ours—not the shattered and praised remains of a career disastrously checked.

THE CHILDREN.[2]

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

When the lessons and tasks are ended,
  And the school for the day is dismissed,
And the little ones gather around me
  To bid me "good-night" and be kissed;
Oh, the little white arms that encircle
  My neck in a tender embrace!
Oh, the smiles that are halos of heaven,
  Shedding sunshine and love on my face!

And when they are gone I sit dreaming
  Of my childhood too lovely to last;
Of love, that my heart will remember
  When it wakes to the pulse of the past.
Ere the world and its wickedness made me
  A partner of sorrow and sin,
When the glory of God was about me,
  And the glory of gladness within.

[Pg 307]

Oh, my heart grows weak as a woman's,
  And the fountain of feelings will flow,
When I think of the paths steep and stony
  Where the feet of the dear ones must go;

Of the mountains of sin hanging o'er them,
Of the tempests of fate blowing wild;
Oh, there's nothing on earth half so holy
As the innocent heart of a child.

They are idols of hearts and of households,
They are angels of God in disguise,
His sunlight still sleeps in their tresses,
His glory still beams in their eyes;
Oh, those truants from earth and from heaven,
They have made me more manly and mild,
And I know how Jesus could liken
The kingdom of God to a child.

Seek not a life for the dear ones
All radiant, as others have done,
But that life may have just as much shadow
To temper the glare of the sun;
I would pray God to guard them from evil,
But my prayer would bound back to myself;
Ah, a seraph may pray for a sinner,
But a sinner must pray for himself.

The twig is so easily bended,
I have banished the rule and the rod;
I have taught them the goodness of knowledge,
They have taught me the goodness of God.
My heart is a dungeon of darkness,
Where I shut them from breaking a rule;
My frown is sufficient correction,
My love is the law of the school.

I shall leave the old house in the autumn,
To traverse its threshold no more—
Ah, how I shall sigh for the dear ones
That meet me each morn at the door.
I shall miss the good-nights and the kisses, [Pg 308]
And the gush of their innocent glee,
The group on the green and the flowers
That are brought every morning to me.

I shall miss them at morn and eve,
Their songs in the school and the street,
Shall miss the low hum of their voices,
And the tramp of their delicate feet.
When lessons and tasks are all ended,
And death says the school is dismissed,
May the little ones gather around me
To bid me "good-night" and be kissed.

FOOTNOTES:

[2] Found in the desk of Charles Dickens after his death.

CHARITY.

When you meet with one suspected
Of some secret deed of shame,
And for this by all rejected
As a thing of evil fame,
Guard thine every look and action,
Speak no word of heartless blame,
For the slanderer's vile detraction
Yet may soil thy goodly name.

When you meet with one pursuing
Ways the lost have entered in,
Working out his own undoing
With his recklessness and sin;
Think, if placed in his condition,
Would a kind word be in vain,

Or a look of cold suspicion
  Win thee back to truth again?

[Pg 309]

There are spots that bear no flowers,
  Not because the soil is bad,
But the Summer's genial showers
  Never made their bosoms glad.
Better have an act that's kindly
  Treated sometimes with disdain,
Than, in judging others blindly,
  Doom the innocent to pain.

NO OBJECTION TO CHILDREN.

It was a block of yellow-brown houses in South Boston, looking as much like a sheet of gingerbread as anything.

An express-wagon had just backed up to No. 21 in that block, and the driver, unloosing ropes here and there, proceeded to unpack the luggage.

"What have we here?" exclaimed Mrs. Bacon, the downstairs tenant. "A menagerie, I do believe. Come here, John."

There was, indeed, on the very top of the load a gray horse that in the twilight looked very real till one noticed the rockers on which it stood. But there was a kennel with a live terrier's head at the window, a bird-cage with its fluttering tenant, a crib and high chair besides, suggesting that the folks in the other part might, in the language of Mrs. Bacon, "make music."

[Pg 310]

Now, the downstairs tenants, Mr. and Mrs. Bacon, were precise, orderly people, living, like many other city people, in desert-island fashion, and only hoping that everybody else would mind their own business. It had been for weeks their great comfort that the other part was unoccupied, and now this load of household goods brimming over with pets and their belongings was an unwelcome sight.

There were no young Bacons—no, indeed! Plants did not flourish in their shaded windows nor canary birds splash water from their tiny baths upon the clear glass. No dog barked a noisy welcome when his master returned at night. No cat purred in her mistress's lap. The housekeeping of the Bacons was a fight against dirt, dust, sunshine and noise; and somehow pets bring all these.

"Well, John," said Mrs. Bacon as she turned from the window and pulled the shade over the sacred glass, "there's an end to peace and quiet. We must keep the entry doors locked; and don't you be whistling round to attract a child. Give them an inch and they'll take an ell. If folks must have rocking horses and what goes with them, they ought to move into the country, where they will not be pestering other people."

[Pg 311]

But, to the surprise of the Bacons, they were not pestered, only by the patter of little feet overhead, or a woman's voice singing cradle-songs or joining in her child's laughter. Crying there was, too, sometimes, but it was so soon hushed in motherly caresses that it seemed a sort of rainbow grievance only.

At night, when the father came home, there was quite a joyful noise upstairs, at which time John's face was a little wistful. But the new family did not intrude for ever so small a favor.

Mrs. Bacon took good care to keep out of sight whenever the new tenants were passing through the entry-way. One small pair of boots had considerable traveling to do up and down the stairs for a stroll on the sidewalk or to old Dorchester Heights, just beyond, for spoils of wild flowers.

One day Little Boots came back from this favorite resort, and instead of climbing the stairs, as usual, strayed hesitatingly toward Mrs. Bacon's kitchen door.

"Smells the gingerbread," soliloquized Mrs. Bacon, grimly. "Glad the door is locked." She glanced toward it to be sure; yes, it was locked, though the key had been transferred to another door. But shining through the keyhole was a very bright and sweet-looking star of an eye. Only a moment it twinkled, and then there was thrust in very gently the stem of a dandelion, and the small boots scampered away up the stairs.

[Pg 312]

"Little mischief!" exclaimed Mrs. Bacon, and she would have pushed the intruding stem outside, but her hands were in the dough. "If he wanted a piece of gingerbread, why didn't he say so? Mebbe he was afraid of me; cats run like all possessed when they see me. I can't have my key-holes choked up with dandelion stems—that's so. Soon's I get my hands out of this it will walk into the stove, that dandelion will." But the dandelion was too fresh and perfect, and brought back the old childhood days to Mrs. Bacon so clearly that she changed her mind. There was an old horseradish bottle on the pantry-shelf which, filled with water, received the dandelion. There, resting in the kitchen window, it smiled all day.

There was quite a commotion upstairs that night, and John and his wife, drowsily hearing it, thanked their stars that they were not routed by children's ails. The next day Mrs. Bacon's watchful ear caught the sound of "Little Boots" on the stairs, and again the blue eyes twinkled at the keyhole. This time the door opened in response:

"Well, child, what is it? Want some gingerbread?"

"Oh no, thank you, dear," said the little voice—a very hoarse little voice it was, and the throat was all wrapped in flannel. [Pg 313]

"I wanted to know if you liked my f'ower?"

"See?" Mrs. Bacon pointed to the glorified horseradish bottle.

"Is your name Mrs. Bacon, dear?"

"Bacon—no 'dear' about it."

"I like to call you 'dear.' Don't your little boy call you so?"

"No."

"Ally! Ally, child!" called the mother anxiously; "come back, darling; you'll get cold."

"I'll take him up," responded Mrs. Bacon; and taking with unwonted tenderness the three-years-old darling, she landed him safely upstairs.

"It's the croup," explained the mother. "He got cold yesterday, out for dandelions—his favorite flower, ma'am. Calls 'em preserved sunshine; saw me put up fruit last fall—there's where he got the idea; though, as to telling where he gets all his ideas, that beats me. The doctor says he's that kind of a child the croup is likely to go hard with. Scares me to death to hear him cough."

"Goose oil is good for croup," remarked Mrs. Bacon.

"Did you ever try it?" asked the new neighbor, innocently.

"Me? No use for it. Got a bottle, though. Have it if you like." [Pg 314]

Alas! the doctor's prophecy was true. The fatal disease developed that very night.

Little boots are still and starry eyes shine afar off now. As he lay in his beautiful last sleep, a flower amid the white flowers, a woman's brown hand slipped a few dandelions tenderly—oh, so tenderly!—into the dainty cold fingers.

"That is right, Mrs. Bacon, dear," said the poor mother. "'Preserved sunshine!' That's what he is to us."

The new tenants have moved into the country, and No. 21, upper tenement, is again to let.

Mrs. Bacon hopes the landlord will add to his advertisement, "No objection to children."

BANFORD'S BURGLAR-ALARM.

"Another Daring Burglary!" read Mrs. Banford, as she picked up the morning: paper. "Lucullus," she said, turning to her husband, "this is the fourth outrage of the kind in this town within a week, and if you don't procure a burglar-alarm, or adopt some other means of security, I shall not remain in this house another night. Some morning we'll get up and find ourselves murdered and the house robbed if we have to depend on the police for protection." [Pg 315]

Banford assured his wife that he would have the matter attended to at once. Then he left the house and didn't return until evening. When Mrs. B. asked him if he had given a second thought to the subject which she had broached in the morning, he drew a newspaper from his pocket, and said: "See here, Mirandy! There's no use o' foolin' away money on one o' those new-fangled burglar-alarms. Economy is wealth. Here's a capital idea suggested in this paper—cheap, simple and effective."

And then he read the suggestion about hanging a tin pan on the chamber-door.

"I tell you, Mirandy! the man who conceived that brilliant notion is a heaven-born genius—a boon to mankind; and his name should go ringing down the corridors of time with those of such brilliant intellect as Watt, Morse, Edison, and other successful scientific investigators. You see, the least jar of the door will dislodge the pan, and the noise occasioned thereby will not only awaken the occupants of the room, but will also scare the burglar half to death, and perhaps the pan will strike him on the head and fracture his skull. It is a glorious scheme, and the fact that it was not utilized years ago is the most remarkable thing about it." [Pg 316]

"Well," assented Mrs. B. in less sanguine tones, "it may be better than nothing, and it won't cost

anything; and as Susan has gone out to spend the night with her sick sister, and we'll be all alone, I'll hunt up the pans now."

Accordingly, each inside door was crowned with a tin pan and left slightly ajar. Banford also thoughtfully placed a six-shooter under his pillow and stood a base-ball bat within easy reach.

"Now, Mirandy," he courageously observed, as they were preparing to retire, "if you are awakened by a noise during the night, don't scream and jump out of bed. Just lie still, or some o' the bullets I fire at the burglar may go through you and kill you. Let me wrestle with the intruder, and I'll soon make him regret that he had not postponed being born for a few centuries!"

Then they turned down the gas with a feeling of increased security, and were soon asleep. About half-past midnight they were awakened by a noise that sounded like a sharp clap of thunder, followed by a wail that almost chilled the marrow in their bones.

"Goodness!" screamed Mrs. B., in a voice swollen with terror, as she dived under the bed-clothes. "We'll be murdered in a minute. Shoot him, Lucullus! Quick—shoot him!" [Pg 317]

Banford, after considerable nervous fumbling under the pillow, grasped his revolver with an unsteady hand and discharged its six barrels in rapid succession, but not with very gratifying results. One bullet shattered the mirror in the bureau; another plowed a furrow along the ceiling; another splintered the bed-post; a fourth perforated a portrait of his wife's mother; and the other two left their imprint on the walls.

"D-d-don't be fuf-fuf-frightened, M-mirandy," said Banford, encouragingly, his articulation sounding as if it had "collided" with an Arctic wave: "I gug-guess I've kik-kik-killed him. He'll not kik-kik-come here—"

At this juncture there was a noise in an adjoining room, as if a two-ton meteorite had crashed through a boiler-foundry, and Mrs. B. uttered a series of ear-piercing shrieks that would have scared the life out of any burglar.

"M-mirandy," stammered the frightened and demoralized Banford, grasping the base-ball bat and swinging it around with such reckless promiscuousness that he struck his terror-stricken wife on the head, "Mum-mirandy, the house is fuf-full of midnight mum-marauders, and we'll be bub-bub-butchered in cold bub-bub-blood! Save yourself and don't mum-mind about me!" And leaping out of bed, he sprang through a window on to the roof of a back building, and accidentally rolled off [Pg 318] into the yard, fifteen feet below, just as another burglar-alarm went off with a clamor almost as deafening and harrowing as an amateur orchestra. Mrs. B., thinking she had been hit by the burglar, emitted a fresh outburst of shrieks, while her husband lay groaning in the back yard, with a sprained ankle and a frightful gash in his head.

A policeman had now been awakened by the uproar, and boldly mounting the front stoop, he pulled the door-bell out by the roots without evoking a response. Then he hesitated.

"If a foul murder has been committed," he mused, "the assassin has already made good his escape."

This thought gave him courage, and he forced an entrance. In the entry he collided with a hat-rack, which he mistook for the outlaw, and almost demolished it with several whacks of his club. Then he made a careful reconnaissance, and dislodged one of the burglar-alarms.

"Spare my life," he yelled to his imaginary assailant, "and I'll let you escape!"

He thought he had been stabbed with a frying-pan. He rushed out of the house and secured the assistance of four of his fellow-officers, and a search of the building was resumed. Mrs. Banford was found in bed unconscious. Her husband was found in the yard in nearly a similar condition; [Pg 319] and the burglar was found under the sofa, shivering with fear, and with his tail clasped tightly between his legs.

The cause of the panic was soon explained. Mrs. Banford had overlooked the presence of her pet dog in the house, and this innocent animal, in running from one room to another, had dislodged the "cheap and effective" burglar-alarms.

BETTER THINGS.

BY GEORGE MACDONALD.

Better to smell the violet cool, than sip the glowing wine;
Better to hark a hidden brook, than watch a diamond shine.

Better the love of a gentle heart, than beauty's favor proud;
Better the rose's living seed, than roses in a crowd.

Better to love in loneliness, than to bask in love all day;
Better the fountain in the heart, than the fountain by the way.

Better be fed by a mother's hand, than eat alone at will;
Better to trust in God, than say: "My goods my storehouse fill."

Better to be a little wise, than in knowledge to abound;
Better to teach a child, than toil to fill perfection's round.

Better to sit at a master's feet, than thrill a listening State;
Better suspect that thou art proud, than be sure that thou art great.

Better to walk the real unseen, than watch the hour's event;
Better the "Well done!" at the last, than the air with shouting rent.

Better to have a quiet grief, than a hurrying delight;
Better the twilight of the dawn, than the noonday burning bright.

Better a death when work is done, than earth's most favored birth;
Better a child in God's great house, than the king of all the earth.

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