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Poetry.

TO JOHN HAY.

I ain't no great at palaver,
And sayin' things purty and sweet,
Whether I mean them or not, Sir,
To everybody I meet;
But I know when a thing just suits me,
And I'm very apt to tell;
And I think I know a pearl, Sir,
If it be in an oyster shell.

I kinder want to thank you
For them verses that you've writ—
"Little Breeches" and "Jim Blues"—
And West's say, "They fit";
And to my way of thinkin',
If more folks held your creed
'Bout God and Christ and the Angels,
'Twould help them in time of need.

There's some folks think they know it all,
And deal out death and gloom
As if they held at their finger-ends
The very crack of doom;
But many a poor uncultured soul;
Compelled through life to plod,
Will get his claim in the City of Gold,
With the tithe-deeds from God.

I've often seen the old "Mowstar,"
And called on the "Prairie Belle,"
And if I didn't know Jim, Sir,
I've known his like right well;
I've watched the race on the Mississippi
And heard the "Wildfire" scream,
And your verses brought to me'nry things
That were not all a dream.

P. S.—I cooked a dinner in war time
That you ate and praised one day;
You liked my work and said so—
And I liked yours, John Hay. A. G. S.

Interesting Tale.

THE MYSTERY OF JANE VERE.

[CONCLUDED.]

There! exclaimed Jane, suddenly. I see a white azalea in flower. And before I could anticipate the movement, she had plunged into the recesses of the dark wood there.

Shall I stay with you Mr. Vere, or had I better follow her? I asked turning to the aged man at my side.

I think she had rather you would remain with me, he answered, glancing nervously at a heavy wagon that was then approaching the bridge. She will take care of herself, but go if you like.

No, I said, giving him the support of my arm, as the wagon rolled heavily over. She is coming back already, I added as the dust fell, and showed Jane, in her picturesque dress emerging from the shrubbery.

She came up—pale, agitated, trembling. Jane, what is the matter? asked her father.

Has anything happened to alarm you, Miss Vere? I questioned, hurriedly.

I am not frightened she answered, hastily drawing her father's hand within her arm—Come, we must go. It is getting far too late for you to be out, dear papa.

And you did not get your azalea? he said. No, she replied; but never mind. I can get it another time.

Mentally making a note of the spot, I resolved to seek her safely home with her father, and then return for the flowers. The moon was in the right quarter to come up brilliantly at eight o'clock. I could gather the large white clusters of bloom easily by its light.

As we came in sight of the hotel Jane said in a thoughtful tone, Mr. Lester, how long have you known Mr. Slowick?

Only since last year, I answered. She was silent for a moment; then she said he seems to me to have grown very singular.

Others have remarked it, I replied; but I have made his acquaintance so lately—

She interrupted me with a slight excited manner.

He used to be a gay, frank person. He is like—she hesitated, then concluded with a gesture of abhorrence—a ghoul.

I looked at her with surprise. She said no more. She was silent until she reached the hotel; then, going with her father to their room, she bade me good night in her usual manner.

When she had gone, I turned instantly back towards the bridge. The moon was coming up round and full. The air blew in my face dense and dewy. I walked rapidly up the road, and hurriedly entered the wood. The right fell in broken patches through the branches, moist with the evening dew. All of a sudden I started at the sound of a brush cracking behind me. Turning, I saw the dark figure of a man gliding through the trees.

Some poor tramp taking a night's rest here, I have distrusted him, I thought.

My hands were already full of the luscious bloom, and I turned away.

The next morning I presented the flowers to Jane.

What I did you get them there? was her first exclamation.

Yes, I went back last night.

How kind and thoughtful of you! But, Mr. Lester, did you see no one?

No; all was as quiet and beautiful as a scene of enchantment. Yes, I interrupted myself. Some stranger stole off through the bushes as I was gathering the flowers.

I saw her shudder as she turned away.

Four days later Helen Vere came. She was a little thing, but very pretty, with a torrent of bronze brown curls that almost enveloped her dainty figure. Yes, she was a mere child then, my Helen. She brought with her a beautiful King Charles spaniel, which she called Gyp. As she stood in the hall that morning, displaying her pet's tricks, while I made my first endeavors at acquaintance, I said, Your little favorite is very cunning, Miss Helen, but I must show you a hound as here here. He will take the cat down stairs, fetch his master's hat, find his slippers, and ring the bell.

I referred to Slowick's dog Sultan. So I called Sultan! Sultan! He did not come. Slowick sat upon the terrace just outside the door. I asked him where the hound was. He is not here he answered, and Helen was disappointed.

I could not but notice that at this time Slowick was so moody as to be almost unrecognizable. And he seemed to regard me with a furtive dislike—I had always wished to be his friend—that made me uncomfortable. I had no feeling for him but one of pity. I thought him ailing, unhappy. I would have rendered him any relief in my power. So I said to Jane Vere. She turned very pale, appeared about to tell me something, but stopped.

Did you ever think, she said, at a moment, that he might not be quite—well, quite sane?

No, indeed! I answered. Oh, that is impossible.

She heard me eagerly.

I am glad you think so, she said.

Pray don't harbor that fancy regarding the poor fellow, I said, with a shudder. Nothing is so repugnant to me. I had rather any one would call me wicked than crazy.

She smiled a certain soft smile she had, and we passed out at a side door into the garden. I had a wish then to tell her my love. But I did not—I hardly knew why, for there was hope in my young heart. But perhaps the angel of death warned me not to intrude earthly troubles upon her last hours.

At dinner (we dined together early) Jane was missing. Mr. Vere was petulant. Where could she be? He would not dine without her. But Helen and I covered him to his place at table, and she did her best to make the dinner as pleasant as possible.

The soup was too salt, the meat over cooked. He could not take his dinner unless Jane was with him.

It was strange what had become of her—Singularly enough, she had gone to walk alone at about 11 o'clock during the forenoon. Perhaps she had gone into some of the poor cottages, and would be found with a case of distress on her fair hands. Perhaps she had only strayed further than she meant, and was too weary to hasten home. So I said to Helen. But secretly I was afraid of some accident—that she had sprained an ankle, and was waiting in some out of the way place for help to come to her.

Making only a faint of dinner, yet doing this so that old Mr. Vere might not have his anxiety increased by perceiving mine, I set forth to find her.

It was five o'clock in the afternoon. The day was close and sultry. No air stirred; the birds twittered with sudden sharpness and restlessness as I walked along.

I went to the village. No one had seen her there; she had been neither to the post-office nor to the little circulating library for several days. I turned back, diverging from my path constantly to visit some spring, or walk, or romantic spot, where she would be likely to tarry. All these places were unoccupied, save by the birds and shadows. I stopped at several of the little cottages, but obtained no news.

I made my way back to the hotel at last, harassed by care, yet with a hope that Jane might have returned there.

She had not come.

It was now seven o'clock in the evening—Jane Vere had been gone nearly all day. As time passed, her absence began to have a terrifying significance.

Keep Mr. Vere quiet if possible, I said to Helen, who showed a womanly composure, which I had hardly expected under the circumstances. But there was a strained, absent look to her eyes that filled me with tender compassion. I will get together some women and scour the whole neighborhood before nightfall. She will surely be found.

It was nearly dark before I could get efficient help. About eight o'clock, however, three men rode away in different directions, while I took the road to the bridge on foot.

A thunder storm was coming up, it was almost dark. The lightning that cleft the heavy purple of the sky was sharp and zigzag.

This filled me with me with fresh anxiety. If Jane was abroad, where would she find shelter from the tempest? On the darkening road I stood still, and called her name. Only the sullen echoes of the lonely place answered me.

I had nearly reached the bridge. The thunder clouds gathered so thickly in the sky, that almost entire darkness enveloped me. I hurried on, but stopped upon the bridge, with a hand on the railing. In spite of the rattle of the now fast descending rain, I could hear the soft gliding of the water that I could hardly see; and I fancied there was an ominous significance in that almost inaudible flow. I listened, shuddering at the loneliness, and straining my frowning gaze into the black tide.

A savage clutch—four furious blows raining upon my defenceless head into my eyes, upon my gasping mouth! I was down, and bent blind and dead before I could make a stroke of resistance, so powerful and overwhelming was the attack. I can seem to see what I never knew—my enemy raising my passive body, and casting it over the railing of the bridge into the water, the lightning playing over us, and the solitude of nature around.

I came to my senses, making half-efforts to swim. Having been an adept at swimming from from a child, I felt it was almost impossible to drown me, half dead as I was. I paddled about in a half unconscious state for a while.

At last, my senses clearing, I comprehended my situation, and struck out collectively, but feebly, for the bank. When I crawled up the grassy slope, I put my hand to my temples, which felt strangely, and found them shiny with my own warm, clotting blood.

I stood for a while unable to tell which way to go, and still somewhat dazed. I did not even have the thought to fear the reappearance of my enemy. I only felt desperately the need of a place of rest and refuge; and unable to guess the direction to take, I stumbled blindly and dizzily about in the dark until a streak of lightning showed me a winding path in the hill-side leading to a road above.

I pulled myself up by the bushes, and then, in sudden alarm, listened to a noise that sounded like a footstep. Was it coming help or another attack? Neither, for it died away, and I stood clinging to a tree, alone in the stormy darkness, the rain beating upon my face, which felt stiff, swollen, and distorted.

By nervous excitement, and sheer force of will, I worked my way back to the hotel. I staggered up to the door, pushed it open into the hall, and my first words were—where did you find Miss Vere?

The group who stood there talking, cried out and recoiled. My face was like a horrible mask, littered with my blood. My clothing was wet, muffled and torn, and they told me afterwards that my eyes glared like a wild man's.

I was very much excited, for I was in the first stages of brain disorder, and wandered restlessly about the rooms; but I recollect seeing Helen weeping and beseeching them to take care of me. All is as a dream from that time; but I was put to bed, and a doctor sent for.

Not until I was entirely recovered, and able to leave my room, and then they were forced to it, did they tell me that the body of beautiful Jane Vere had been found in the wood, near the bridge, utterly without life; and, when examined, discolored marks about the throat showed that she had been strangled to death.

This was six weeks later. The body had been taken to the family vault in her native place; but her betrothed, a noble gentleman, the servants said, had come down to Westwood, and taken charge of everything, though greatly racked with grief. Mr. Vere had been taken home very ill; and Helen, had of course, gone also.

My love dream had turned into a horrible nightmare, and had ended in an awful reality.

My life had turned also into a dreadful blank, peopled only with the wildest and most confused thoughts and memories. I was visited by detectives; but my report seemed only to add to their perplexity. In some way it was probably connected with Jane Vere's murder; but who the enemy was in either case there seemed no clue to finding out. My situation was too painful to be endurable. As soon as I was able to return to London I did so, and busied myself with work that required the closest attention.

But a most disinterested desire to learn of the welfare of Miss Vere's father and sister induced me to find them out soon afterwards.

They had secluded themselves utterly from society. Mr. Vere was confined entirely to his room, and considered very feeble. Helen was devoted to him, and left school, and saw no one.

A year passed. As was natural, the first sharp shock of this most painful experience had worn

off. More immediate occurrences occupied my thoughts, but I could never recall that fatal time without a shudder.

One night, at a sacred concert, I saw the face of Helen Vere. It was more beautiful than ever, matured by the chastening influence of suffering. She was dressed in deep mourning, and by her side sat a man of peculiar elegance and dignity.

As I watched Helen Vere, a sharp jealousy of her companion's attention stole over me. There seemed between them, to my attentive eyes, the familiarity of a close sympathy. I saw her slip her little black-gloved hand within his; I observed when she grew weary that he supported her.

When the concert was ended, I hastened to approach them. Helen seemed startled and agitated by my appearance, but gave me her hand, and introduced me to Sir Alfred Sutton. A few words aside informed me that this was Jane's betrothed. She urged me to visit her. I did so. Her father was dead. She lived with an aunt in a beautiful house at Clapham. How greatly she had changed, from the gay little school-girl of hardly more than a year back! She had lost all the abandon of girlhood, even the bloom, but she was very lovely, and as I watched her, a new pang of jealousy of Sir Alfred Sutton rose in my breast.

But in a little while I understood her better. Her feeling for her sister's betrothed husband was only sisterly; his love for her only brotherly. Carefully, tenderly, I sought and won her.

Six months after our marriage a gentleman came in a carriage to my house, and asked to see me alone. I conducted him to my library, and shut the door.

He was a man of polished address, and evidently of strong character. He introduced himself as Dr. Carr, of the private asylum, Hildesdale. At this announcement I felt a slight consternation and bewilderment, that I think was apparent in my manner.

About a year ago, said he, after some preliminary, I received a patient whose name may not be unknown to you—Mr. Thomas Slowick.

Good heavens! I cried.

You know him?

I have known him very well!

Yes. He was placed in my care by his father; pronounced insane by his family physician. I have given him the best care and particular attention, but he is incurable. At present, his physical strength is fast failing—in short, I fear he is dying. But as life fails, reason returns; and as I now consider his state perfectly natural, and his reason lucid, I feel required to treat his wishes with indulgence. He desires to see you and I have come for you.

For me? I said involuntarily.

He has made in my ear some dying confessions, that induced me to seek you without delay, continued the doctor, significantly.

The words went through me like a knife. I felt myself tremble violently. I rose to my feet, and for an instant the grave professional countenance of the physician was not before me, for the lovely and appealing face of Jane Vere hovered in the air within my vision close to my bewildered eyes.

Take some water, I heard the doctor say. It will calm your excitement.

I drank from the glass he held to my lips, and sank into my seat.

Now you are better, you understand all I can tell you, I think, he added, after a moment. The murder of that beautiful girl, with which the country rang two years ago, is no longer a mystery.

I rose, and began looking for my hat. When a servant had brought it, I followed Dr. Carr to his carriage.

I was too confused to observe what course we took. I only knew, with a sudden thrill, that we stopped at last before the portals of the asylum. My companion gave me some refreshment, for I was, I confess, very nervous; and then I followed him through several light, pleasant corridors to a door.

Is he quite prepared to see me? I asked.

He is waiting, was the reply.

I was ushered into a chamber of moderate size. The light was subdued. A woman stood at the side of a bed, fanning the ghastly face among the pillows. The head was shaven, the cheeks deeply fallen; I never should have known Thomas Slowick—not even by his voice.

Come close, he said, in a strained whisper, motioning me to the bedside.

Dr. Carr placed a chair for me, and stood with a hand upon my shoulder.

I can talk only a moment, said Slowick, with a painful effort. I killed her—I killed Jane Vere. You see, I had money, plate, and jewels hid there under a chestnut tree. My dog saw me bury the treasure. He was a sagacious brute. He dug it up, and I killed him for it. I was burying him near the spot, and I was all marked with his blood, you know, when Miss Vere came and saw me. I thought she saw all, for there lay the bags and parcels as Sultan had pawed them out of the dirt. It was the only hiding place I had; I thought she

would tell, and determined to kill her. Perhaps, after all, she did not see the things; I don't know, but I pretended to be ill the next day, and told her I was in great trouble, and wanted to talk with her. She promised to meet me near the bridge. She came. I strangled her. Then I hid all day in the woods. At night I heard you calling her. I stole out, and tried to kill you, too; I thought I had. Then I ran away, and got safe to town. No one ever suspected me. You see I am dying now. Don't let any innocent man suffer for what I did. The treasure is there now under the chestnut tree. You will know it, because it is splashed with Sultan's blood.

He stopped here. He evidently wished to say more, but was unable. The doctor started forward, and raised him to a sitting position. When he laid him down, he was dead.

As Slowick had said, the treasure—valued at five thousand pounds—was found, but no one appropriated it; and it was given to a charitable institution.

Usefulness of a piece of Mirror.

The trick often played by mischievous children, of reflecting the solar rays by means of a piece of looking-glass to a certain spot, thus amusing themselves and annoying their neighbors, may be turned into many ways to useful purposes. In case the bottom of a well needs examining, it is easy to hold a mirror or a piece of the same in such a position as to reflect its rays in the water, so that not only anything floating on the surface can then be plainly seen, but also whether the water be clear. If the contents of the well are not turbid, the smallest object on the bottom can be distinguished. We have in this way traced and recovered objects dropped in wells of 60 feet in depth, and which contained more than 20 feet of water. When the objects are small, or a minute examination of the bottom is required, an opera-glass may be put in requisition. If the top of the well is not exposed to sunlight, a mirror may be placed outside, even at a great distance, to reflect the light over its top, where a second mirror may reflect it downward. Impurities and sediments at the bottom may thus be discovered, and the experiment thus serve as a sanitary precaution. Letting a lamp, candle, or lantern down gives by no means so successful a result, as the light in very weak compared with sunlight, and its glare, even when the eyes are shaded from its direct rays, prevents distinct vision. The only thing which can replace solar light in such a case is the oxygen flame, magnesium or electric light, generated above the well, and reflected down and by a concave mirror, or its rays rendered parallel, like solar rays, by means of a large lens.

The method mentioned of two mirrors, one outside reflecting the solar rays in a room, and a second small mirror in its path to reflect these rays into a dark cavity, is at the present day—successfully employed by physicians, for the examination of cavities of the body; for instance, to explore the tympanum in the human ear, the larynx or throat, &c.

There is another use of a piece of looking glass, by which the annoyance of smoking chimneys and even the danger of fire may be saved. It is to hold in the hole in the chimney wall, into which the stove pipe is to go, a piece of mirror, inclined at angle of 45-degrees. If the observer can see the light of the sky, he will also see the whole interior of the chimney, and any obstruction in the same. As most chimneys are straight and perpendicular, reflection will make the top opening clearly visible.

A few days ago the wife of Samuel Hammet of Carlisle, Ill., was kicked in the chin by a mule, causing her to bite off the end of her tongue. Since then Mr. Hammet has been offered thousands of dollars for that mule, but will not part with it—his chance to marry a second time being probable. The brute!

"A devoted little wife," in Lafayette, seeing her husband throwing in the muzzle of a gun while holding back the hammer with his foot, tripped down to ask a milliner about the cost of mourning, and whether it would be becoming to her complexion. The hussy.

A Racine girl wanted her lover to swear off the Bible that "she was all the world to him," and when he wouldn't she knocked him down with the sacred volume.

A householder in Florida, in filling up his census schedule, under the heading "where born" described one of his children as "born in the parlor," and the other "up stairs." A strict return.

A remarkable preacher was that who called upon his congregation to be thankful that Providence should have placed death at the end of life, and not in the middle, so that we might have all possible time to prepare for it.

Chinese call geometry "the science of the how much."

Philadelphia exports nearly a million gallons of petroleum every week.