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Poetry.

My Home, I'll Think of Thee.

I'll think of thee my youthful home,
Yes, ever think of thee;
And when I sing of thee
Oh then I'll sing of thee!

For why should not thy memory live,
And highest, holiest be,
Of all the thoughts that in me dwell,
My childhood's home of thee.

'Twas there I first was taught to speak,
To know and meditate
On all I saw above, below,
And God their Maker Great;

'Twas there my senses first were charmed
With songs of melody,
That ever calm and soothe my mind
Like tears of sympathy.

'Twas there I heard my mother sing
The songs of other times,
And listened while my father told
Of distant lands and climes;

And there I first was taught the ways
Of Truth and Holiness,
That are engraven on my mind
As guides to usefulness.

'Twas there the happiest of my days
Were passed so sweetly by,
While sitting round the cheerful hearth
With friends of nearest tie;

But the reflection, oh, how sad!
When memory takes her range,
The full destroyer hath been there
And wrought a wondrous change.

Yet, I'll think of thee, my youthful home,
Yes, ever think of thee;
And when I sing of thee
Oh then I'll sing of thee!

For why should not thy memory live,
And highest, holiest be,
Of all the thoughts that in me dwell,
My childhood's home of thee.

Miscellany.

MY PUNISHMENT.

A Lesson for Wives.

BY EMMA GARRISON.

The love we bear our friends is in no way commensurate to their merits or demerits. Indeed, I have sometimes thought that we turn towards those who are prone to error with a tenderness and fondness that we never feel for the upright, inflexible ones, who never cause us a heart-ache, or an anxious misgiving. Be that as it may, however, I am quite sure that I loved my husband fully as well as Mary Sigman loved hers, and she married the minister.

He was an old soldier of mine, this self same minister, Stephen March by name. Better marry him, Mary, my old father said, shaking his gray head, wisely, and let Tom Milburn go along—he's a good fellow in his way, but his wild habits will cause the woman who marries him many a heart-ache.

I'd sooner take the heart-ache, father, than a husband I couldn't love. Ay, ay, that's always the way of women—Well, well, have it your own way—but mind, I wish my hands clear of you—as you make your bed, so you must lie.

I took my old father at his word, and married Tom. He was wonderfully gratified when I rejected Mr. March, the minister, and accepted him; he seemed to regard the act as a personal compliment. I can scarcely believe it, Mary, he said, as we sat together beneath the lonesome chestnut tree, the westward going sun throwing a thousand glances.

He did make me a good husband. For a year no two robins were ever cozier or happier in their summer nest than we in our little suburban cottage. Tom was a model of steadiness and propriety.

I'm doing quite as well, as if I'd married the minister you see, father, I said, exultantly, one afternoon, when he was down to drink tea with us.

We were sitting on the porch, waiting for Tom, who was coming up from his shop, looking as smart and trim as possible, in the new black suit I had cut and made for him with my own hands. Just then, Stephen March went by, in his old-fashioned "one horse shay," and put on his neck face, and rusty hat, to say, good evening! My father laughed, and patted my cheek, in a half-pleasant, half-reproving manner.

Don't exult too much, Molly, he said, "a new broom sweeps clean, you know." It'll always sweep clean with us, father—no trouble will ever come between Tom and me—he's a changed man—he'll never do wrong again.

Then, see that you don't, was his gruff rejoinder; you had tendered enough in your girlhood; don't let it ever get the mastery over you again. If Tom ever leans towards his old habits again, win him back by love—that'll be the only way—unkindness and reproaches would drive him to a desperate end.

For pity's sake, father, I interrupted, bursting into tears, what's the use of this horrid lecture; I've done the best I could since my marriage.

There, there, now—no whimpering—I don't dispute what you say—you mean well, I know, and so does Tom; but you haven't come to your hour of trial yet. We can't always live in the sunlight, Molly—by and by when the darkness comes—don't forget your old father's advice. A woman may love her husband into the right path, but she never can drive him—remember that, Molly.

My hour of trial came even sooner than I sawed old father dreamed it would; and not withstanding his timely warning, it found me unprepared. On a winter afternoon six months later, I sat in my cosy, little supper-room making pinfolds and dainty slips for the little rose-bud of a babe, that had come to make our cup of life run over. Tom was down to his shop, but in the course of the afternoon I received a written message from him.

"Two of my old friends are in town, he wrote. I shall show them around awhile, and be home to tea at nine o'clock sharp. Have a good supper, Mary."

I coaxed baby into a profound nap, and then went to work in good earnest. Tom was a kind of an epicure in his way, and I was bent on pleasing him. I made biscuit and waffles, and light cream-cakes—I broiled venison, and steamed mackerel—that would have turned my faintest dinnest and china. Nine o'clock, but Tom had not come! I replenished the stove, and sat down to my sewing. An hour went by, but no Tom. The biscuit began to fall; the waffles grew tough, and the cream-cakes lost their lightness, while the venison blackened and shrivelled up, and the mackerel tasted deliciously astringent.

Baby waked with an imperative cry. I took her up and nursed her to sleep again, and by that time the clock struck eleven. Still, no sight or sign of Tom; and the supper, over which I had expended so much pains, completely spoiled. I could have cried from sheer vexation. Tom had never been absent from home a single night since our marriage—What would detain him now? The wind that had been howling dimly all the evening, rose to a gale, while I sat watching and waiting; and rain and sleet began to beat sharply against the windows. A dreadful fear seized upon my heart. Something had happened to Tom—he was ill—dead, waylaid and murdered on some lonely corner; or he never would stay away on such a night, and cause me so much anxiety.

I took the babe from her crib, and carried her up to my bed-chamber; and then I raised the sash, and leaned out in the driving sleet, to watch and listen. The suburban part of the town in which we lived seemed awfully quiet and desolate; the occasional barking of a dog, or the footstep of a solitary pedestrian, being the only sounds of life that broke the dismal roar of the wind and rain. At last, after waiting until my limbs ached with cold, I heard the bells, at the shawes, and the clocks in the city, ringing out the hour of twelve; and a moment after, a faltering, uncertain step beat the wet pavement in front of our door.

Not Tom's step, surely, for that had a peculiar ring of its own, that I could distinguish on a London thoroughfare. Yet this pitiful, shuffling tread came nearer and nearer, until it sounded just beneath me. I looked down through the driving sleet, and saw a dark form on the porch.

"Who's that?" I called out; not you, Tom, is it?

Ye-ye-yes, Mary, what's left of me; come down, won't ye; and let a feller in; it's precious cold down here.

A burning, stinging sensation of shame and humiliation ginged through me to my very finger-tips, as the thick, half-articulate words reached my ear; for I knew the voice, changed as it was I went down and unlocked the door. Tom entered, bringing with him a sickening odor of tobacco and whiskey punch.

That you, Mary? he said, catcling at my arm, "ain't you goin' to tell a fellow, how-d'ye?"

But I sprang past him without a word, and flying up the steps, entered my chamber, and closed and locked the door. I heard him founder about in the parlor, craning over the chairs, and imploring for a light; and knowing how wet and comfortless he must feel, my woman's heart urged me to go down and administer to his wants; no matter if he had done wrong. But I was too proud; he had broken his promise, and disgraced me and my child, and I was bent upon making him see how deeply I resented it.

The "two, small hours" of the night went by slowly enough; and when, at last, the gray light of a cheerless morning broke through my windows, the pain in my head and at my heart was terrible. Baby awoke, and began to cry and shiver, and I was forced to carry her down. Tom met me, at the foot of the stairs, with his old firm step, but his face wore a white, remorseful look that was pitiful to see.

Mary, he said humbly, beginning the moment he saw me, forgive me—don't look so—my own feelings are punishment enough—forgive and forget this once, Mary, and as for my witness, I'll never stand before you in this plight again.

The tremor in his voice, and the humble, entreaty look in his eyes, went straight to my heart. I longed to clasp him in my arms, and hold him there safe from all future temptation; to assure him that his error should be forgiven and forgotten, but the devil-hardened my heart.

You've broken the promise you made me, I replied, coldly, I can never trust you again. He put out his hands to grasp mine, but I turned away.

Mary, Mary, for God's sake, don't say that, he entreated; you must trust me again. I wasn't my fault; I didn't mean to break my promise; the boys led me into it before I knew what I was about; but 'tis the last time. Come here, baby; you'll forgive poor papa, won't you?

The child sprang towards him with a gleeful laugh, but I drew her back. No, I said, you've disgraced your child by your shameful conduct, and I never want her to call you father again.

Mary! I mean what I say. You've deceived me. I'm going home to my father.

It staggered back a step or two, and leant against the wall with a look of misery on his pale face, that will go with me to my dying day.

Mary, he murmured, holding out his hands, come back—don't take the baby from me—come back, and forgive me.

But I turned away. No, I replied, I'm going back to my father; I forgive you, but I never wish to see you again.

Very well, you shall have your wish. The calmness and decision of his voice startled me into my senses, but I had time to move or speak, he had darted past me, and the next instant I heard the street door close with a slam. I chided like that of death sped down upon my heart, and I stood in a kind of paralysis, until baby's cries awoke me to consciousness. Tom had gone out into the cheerless stormy morning, driven by my unkindness. Just then, my old father's words came back to my memory; my hour of trial had indeed come, and I had failed.

A dull, burning misery throbbled in my temples, I felt as if I should go mad. It was impossible to stand there idle, the sting in my heart was too sharp. I put the baby in her crib, and fell to work, cleansing and putting the room to rights, listening all the while, with a feverish impatience that amounted to torture, for Tom's returning step, but he did not come. I got up an extra dinner just the dishes I know he fancied; and dressed baby in her best robes. If he only would come back we would give him such a welcome that the trouble of the morning would be all forgotten! But the day passed, and another cheerless night set in. All through the tedious, stormy darkness I watched and waited; cursing myself for what I had done, and begging God to give me back my husband. I beguiled the time by repeating over to myself the assurance of love and forgiveness I would pour into his ear, but he did not return to hear them. My repentance was too late. He had taken me at my word. I should never see his face again.

Morning came with a roll of drums, and the tramp of marching troops. Towards noon, while I sat by the window still keeping my watch, my old father made his appearance, with a face that convinced me the moment I saw it, that he knew all.

What is it? he questioned sternly, what has

happened, Mary, between you and Tom? O father, I have been cruel, cruel. I have driven him away—where is he? let me go to him.

'Tis too late, he answered gloomily; he enlisted last night, and his regiment marched at day break this morning. I warned you of this, Mary, but you wouldn't heed me.

The truth of his words was slow to strike me, but when it did, it felled me like a cruel blow, and for days and weeks even, I was unconscious of all things in the delirium of a sudden fever. That long night of watching and exposure to the winds and sleet, had done its work.

From the border village where-in I dwell I could hear the distant rush and roar of battle. The war was at its height. A hundred happy valleys ran crimson with the blood of brave hearts; all the balmy odorous air shook with the thunder of artillery, and the green hills were darkened by the sulphurous smoke of death and carnage. And out in the mist of all this, facing death at every breath, was my husband. I had driven him there, had parted from him in anger, and hoped never to look upon his face again, that, dearer a thousand times than my own soul. Even then it might be lying white and lifeless amid the mangled bodies, on some blood-stained battle-ground. My Tom's face so brave and handsome, so brave and handsome, so full of unpretending love! I had banished him from me, driven him out with bitter cruel words, all for one little fault, because he had yielded in his hour of temptation; I, so full of all manner of wickedness myself. A loving word a little gentle entreaty, would have won him over for all time yet knowing this I had withheld them and driven him out into danger. God would grant me my desire; I should never look upon his face again.

Day after day, night after night, I sat thinking all this over, and hoping and waiting for some tidings from Tom, but none came, and at last, feeling myself on the very edge of madness, I made a desperate resolve. I would go in search of Tom, I would find him, and beg his forgiveness, though I followed him to the ends of the earth. Accordingly, I made my preparations.

The very last thing my poor Tom had done before enlisting, was to make a deed of gift of all his property to me, to the wife who had treated him with such heartless cruelty. I in turn, transferred it to baby, in case I should never return, and then consigning her to my mother's keeping, I packed my trunk with lint and bandages, looked up my happy little cottage, and started on my long journey.

The seventeenth regiment, the one to which Tom belonged, was somewhere in the vicinity of Richmond, so the papers stated, so it was that direction that I bent my steps. I reached the headquarters of the grand Potomac army just after a prolonged and bloody battle, and in a torture of agonizing suspense proceeded to make my enquiries.

Yes the seventeenth was there, but it had been in the heat of the fray, and suffered fearfully. Days of lingering anguish dragged by before the list of losses could be made out; days, when in the midst of that sublime hill country, with the tropical glory of a southern summer about me, I experienced all the agony and remorse that it is possible for a human soul to bear. At last the tidings came, Lieutenant Tom Milburn was wounded, and a prisoner.

I would follow him, no matter where! my determination never wavered. I made my way to Fortress Monroe, and after indescribable trouble and delay, I succeeded in getting a passage in a flag of truce ship to Richmond. One fair, breezy morning I found myself in the very heart of the Confederate capital, a weak, lonely woman a stranger in a strange land. But my endorsements were satisfactory and I enjoyed considerable freedom. "Stunt" taneous with my arrival, I began my search for him for days it seemed utterly in vain. No one seemed to know anything of the prisoner for whom I sought.

One afternoon heart-sick and weary, I wandered down the busy thoroughfare, on my way to see some military depot. The sun was going down with unusual splendor, gilding all the windows, and making the distant waters gleam like gold.

A bath of blossoms filled the air, and soft, melody sound of music, mingled with deep roll of drums, filled in from the surrounding camp. A feeling of inexpressible loneliness took possession of my soul; my husband seemed to be separated from me by a distance as infinite as eternity itself; I should never, in truth look upon his face again.

At that instant, a squad of Union prisoners passed by me, closely guarded. They had just come from the Libby, and were on their way to the far South. Their tattered uniforms, and pallid wan pinched faces, caught my attention, and brought the hot tears to my eyes. Tom was like one of these. Just then an inexpressible something about the air and bearing one of these prisoners made me stand still, with a wild flutter at my heart. Could it be, or was I insane, dreaming? I must know!

Tom! I called gently. He turned his face full upon me; it was wad and haggard, but Tom's own face. O my God, O Tom, have I found you at last?

He sprang from the ranks, at the sound of my voice, extending both his to clasp mine, but the sword of the rebel captain who commanded them flashed between us, driving the prisoners on.

O Tom, I called after them, my heart is breaking, forgive me, forgive me!

He tamed for an instant, his poor face glowing with tender, pitying love; then the tyrant drove them round a corner, and the forgiving face faded from my sight, and all the world with it, for I fell senseless where I stood. Stranger care hands raised me up, and stranger care brought me back to life, once more I began my search. I followed Tom southward, down to the sickly sun-dried cities, from hospital to hospital, following the faintest clue, only sustained by my deathless hope, and love. Terrible scenes met my eyes in those burning summer days—scenes that can never be blotted from my memory.

But to return to my story, the summer waned away and autumn came robing all the Southern country in its gorgeous livery—still my search was unavailing; I could find no trace of Tom. My hope grew weaker and weaker, and after a short while went out, and at last found myself in the Union lines again with a dull despair settled down upon my soul. But my hands not neglect the work that had been given them to do. Unflinchingly and tenderly I administered to the wants of the brave men who were risking all for their country's sake; and as the days wore on, and the great crimson tide of war ebbed and flowed, my constant labor began to work out on its own reward. At feeling half spent, resignation filled my heart, I tried to be willing to give my husband up; to look forward to an eternal reunion of love and forgiveness. It was hard, how hard, only those can tell, who know that the gasses of some distant battle ground are springing up above the hearts of the husbands and fathers, and sons and brothers, dearer to them than life. But at last I conquered, and was able to say sincerely, "Gods will be done!"

One afternoon, soon after the awful battles in front of Richmond, I sat in a Southern hospital. The air was torrid and heavy, and the scorching pines stood sloped down towards the lurid west through clouds of sulphurous smoke. All day long I had been at my post administering to the wants of the wounded men who were arriving before me in long double rows behind cooling draughts to parched lips and applying ice-cold cloths to burning foreheads. At last there came an interval of repose, and I sat down by the low window to rest and meditate.

The red sun dropped lower and lower, and a lurid twilight came, hot and murky, with a low westerling moon, and a stifling breath of battle. Every moment the stifling breeze, rising and falling with a wail of human like pain brought in the boom of some distant battery or the sharp crack of a solitary picket gun. The roar of ambulance wheels was incessant and our losses had been fearful, and our dead and wounded were pouring in. I sat there listening and thinking, thinking of days gone by, happy summer afternoons, when the bees hummed amid the sweet briar on our cottage porch, and the winds were sweet with flower scents, and I wandered down the mossy wood path, with baby in my arms, to meet Tom coming home from his shop. But those days were gone, and so was Tom. I had my wish—I should never look upon his face again.

At that moment, a murmur of voices in an adjoining ward attracted my attention. The board partition was thin, and I could hear distinctly:

Mary, Mary where are you? Over and over again I heard these pitious, inquiry the poor sufferer's voice plaintive with pain and loving tenderness.

Mary I was wrong—but you will forgive me, don't O don't take the baby away!

Something in the words, and in the trembling tremulous tones, went to my heart like a knife. I sprang up, and flew round to the entrance. But the surgeon barred my way.

Not this way, madam, he said imperatively this man's life hangs by the slightest thread, and the country can't afford to lose him.

But I pushed him aside, and leaping forward, caught one glimpse of the deathly face lying on the low cot bed, and that glimpse was sufficient.

Let me pass, sir, I said, that man is my husband.

Still he held me back, with a grasp like steel.

Can't help it madam—he must not be disturbed.

Mary, Mary bring the baby—can't you ever forgive me?—moaned the plaintive voice within.

I wrenched myself from the surgeon's hand and pushed into the room. There he lay, a colonel's leaves gleaming on his shoulders, and

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