

## APART.

BY MORGAN EVANS.

My love, why dost thou leave me thus forlorn,  
In weary solitude through day and night?  
I miss thy shadow in the noonday light—  
Thy fair and luminous brow at waking morn  
Gleams not beside me, and my heart is torn  
With painful longings, and my tearful sight  
Swims with strange visions of thy homeward flight  
'Mid rain and broken bows, of sorrow born.  
Return, sweet dove! I have found perennial  
springs  
On sunny banks, where thou mayst lave and  
rest.  
Come quickly ere the darkness round thee  
clings.  
Hie hitherward up the shadows from the west  
With shimmer of golden sunlight on thy wings,  
To sink in cooling murmurs on my breast!

## THE PIKE'S PENANCE.

Where they came from no one knew. Among the farmers near the Bend there was ample ability to conduct researches beset by far more difficulties than was that of the origin of the Pike; but a charge of buckshot which a good-natured Yankee received one evening, soon after putting questions to a venerable Pike, exerted a great depressing influence upon the spirit of investigation. They were not blood-thirsty, these Pikes; but they had good reason to suspect all inquirers of being at least deputy sheriffs, if not worse, and a Pike's hatred of officers of the law is equalled in intensity only by his hatred of manual labor.

But while there was doubt as to the fatherland of the little colony of Pikes at Jagger's Bend, their every neighbor would willingly make affidavit as to the cause of their locating and their remaining at the Bend. When humanitarians and optimists argued that it was because the water was good and convenient, that the Bend itself caught enough drift-wood, and that the dirt would yield a little gold when manipulated by placer and pan, all farmers and stock owners would freely admit the validity of these reasons; but the admission was made with a countenance whose indignation and sorrow indicated that the greater causes were yet unnamed. With eyes speaking emotions which words could not express, they would point to sections of wheat fields minus their grain-bearing heads; to hides and hoofs of cattle unslaughtered by themselves; to mothers of promising calves, whose tender bleatings answered not the maternal call; to the places which had once known fine horses, but had been untenanted since certain Pikes had gone across the mountains for game. They would accuse no man wrongfully; but in a country where all farmers had wheat and cattle and horses, and where prowling Indians and Mexicans were not, how could these disappearances occur?

But to people owning no property in the neighborhood—to tourists and artists—the Pike settlement at the Bend was as interesting and ugly as a Skye terrier. The architecture of the village was of original style, and no duplicate existed. Of the half-dozen residences, one was composed exclusively of sod, another of bark, yet another of poles, roofed with a wagon-cover, and plastered on the outside with mud; the fourth was of slabs, nicely split from logs which had drifted into the Bend; the fifth was of hide, stretched over a frame, strictly Gothic from foundation to ridgepole; while the sixth, burrowed into the hillside, displayed only the barrel which formed its chimney.

A more aristocratic community did not exist on the Pacific coast. Visit the Pikes when you would, you could never see any one working. Of churches, school-houses, stores, and other plebeian institutions, there were none, and no Pike demeaned himself by entering a trade or selling his hands by agriculture.

Yet into this peaceful, contented neighborhood there found his way a visitor who had been everywhere in the world without once being made welcome. He came to the house built of slabs, and threatened the wife of Sam Trotwine, owner of the house; and Sam, after sunning himself uneasily for a day or two, mounted a pony and rode off for a doctor to drive the intruder away.

When he returned he found all the men in the camp seated on a log in front of his own door, and then he knew he must prepare for the worst—only one of the great influences of the world could force every Pike from his own door at exactly the same time. There they sat, yellow-faced, bearded, long-backed and bent, each looking like the other, and all like Sam, and, as he dismounted, they looked at him.

"How is she?" said Sam, tying his horse and the doctor's, while the latter went in.

"Well," said the oldest man, with deliberation, "the wimmin's all thar, if that's any sign."

Each man on the log inclined his head slightly but positively to the left, thus manifesting belief that Sam had been correctly and sufficiently answered. Sam himself seemed to regard his information in about the same manner.

Suddenly the raw hide which formed the door of Sam's house was pushed aside, and a woman came out and called Sam, and he disappeared from his log.

As he entered his hut all the women lifted

sorrowful faces and retired; no one even lingered, for the Pike has not the common human interest in other people's business—he lacks that, as well as certain similar virtues of civilization.

Sam dropped by the bedside and was human; his heart was in the right place, and, though heavily entrenched by years of laziness and whiskey and tobacco, it could be brought to the front, and it came now.

The dying woman cast her eyes appealingly at the surgeon, and that worthy stepped outside the door. Then the yellow-faced woman said: "Sam, doctor says I ain't got much time left."

"Mary," said Sam, "I wish ter God I could die for yer. The children—"

"It's them I want to talk about, Sam," replied his wife. "An' I wish they could die with me, rather'n hev 'em live ez I've hed to. Not that you ain't been a kind husband to me, for you hev. Whenever I wanted meat yev got it somehow; an' when yev been ugly drunk yev kept away from the house. But I'm dyin', Sam, and it's cos you've killed me."

"Good God, Mary!" cried the astonished Sam, jumping up; "you're crazy—here, doctor."

"Doctor can't do no good, Sam; keep still and listen, ef yer love me like yer once said yer did; fur I hev'n't got much breath left," gasped the woman.

"Mary," said the aggrieved Sam, "I swear to God I dunno what yer drivin' at."

"It's jest this, Sam," replied the woman. "Yer tuk me, tellin' me y'd love me, an' honor me, an' pect me. You mean to say now yer done it? I'm a-dyin', Sam—I ain't got no favors to ask of nobody, an' I'm telling the truth, not knowin' what word 'I'll be my last."

"Then tell a feller where the killin' came in, Mary, for heaven's sake," said the unhappy Sam.

"It's come in all along, Sam," said the woman. "There is women in the States, so I've heard, that marries fur a home an' bread an' butter, but you promised me re'n that, Sam. An' I've waited, an' it ain't come. An' there's somethin' in me that's all starved an' out to pieces. An' it's your fault, Sam. I tuk yer fur better or fur wuss, an' I've never grumbled."

"I know yer aint, Mary," whispered the conscience-stricken Pike. "An' I know what yer mean. Ef God'll only let yer be fur a few years, I'll see of the thing can't be helped. Don't cuss me, Mary—I've never knowed how I've been a-goin'. I wish there was something I could do 'fore you go, to pay yer all I owe yer. I'd go back on everything that makes life worth hev'n'."

"Pay it to the children, Sam," said the sick woman, raising herself in her miserable bed. "I'll forgive yer everything if you'll do the right thing for them. Do—do—everything!" said the woman, throwing up her arms and falling backward. Her husband's arms caught her; his lips brought to her wan face a smile, which the grim visitor, who an instant later stole her breath, pityingly left in full possession of the rightful inheritance from which it had been so long excluded.

Sam knelt for an instant with his face beside his wife—what he said or did the Lord only knew, but the doctor, who was of a speculative mind, afterwards said that when Sam appeared at the door he showed the first Pike face in which he had ever seen any signs of a soul.

Sam went to the sod house, where lived the oldest woman in the camp, and briefly announced the end of his wife. Then, after some consultation with the old woman, Sam rode to town on one of his horses, leading another. He came back with but one horse and a large bundle; and soon the women were making for Mrs. Trotwine her last earthly robe, and the first new one she had worn for years. The next day a wagon brought a coffin and a minister, and the whole camp silently and respectfully followed Mrs. Trotwine to a home with which she could find no fault.

For three days all the male Pikes in the camp sat on the log in front of Sam's door and expressed their sympathy, as did three friends of the fourth their tongues were unloosed. As a conversationalist the Pike is not a success, but Sam's actions were so unusual and utterly unheard of that it seemed as if even the stones must have wondered and communed among themselves.

"I never heard of such a thing," said Brown Buck; "he's gone an' bought new clothes for each of the four young 'uns."

"Yes," said the patriarch of the camp, "an' this mornin', when I went down to the bank to soak my head, 'cos last night's liquor didn't agree with it, I seed Sam with all his young 'uns as they was washin' their faces an' hands with soap. They'll ketch their death and be on the hill with their mother 'fore long, if he don't look out. Somebody ort to reason with him."

"'Twon't do no good," sighed Limping Jim. "He's lost his head, an' reason just goes into one ear an' out at t'other ear. When he was scrapin' around this front door t'other day, an' I asked him what he wuz a-layin' the ground all bare and desolate fur, he said he was done keepin' pig-pen. Now, everybody but him knows he never had a pig. His head's gone, just mark my words."

On the morning of the fourth day, Sam's friends had just secured a full attendance on the log, and were at work upon their first pipes, when they were startled by seeing Sam harness his horse in the wagon and put all his children into it.

"Whar ye bound fur, Sam?" asked the patriarch.

Sam blushed as near as a Pike could, but answered with only a little hesitation:

"Goin' to take 'em to school to Maxfield—go in' to do it ev'ry day."

The incumbents of the log were too nearly paralyzed to remonstrate, but after a few moments of silence the patriarch remarked, in tones of feeling, yet decision:

"He's hed a tough time of it, but he's no business to ruin the settlement. I'm an old man myself and I need peace of mind, so I'm going to pack up my traps and mosey. When the folks at Maxfield knows what he's doin', they'll make him a constable or a justice, an' I'm too much of a man to live nigh any sich."

And next day the patriarch wheeled his family and property to parts unknown.

A few days later Jim Merrick, a brisk farmer a few miles from the Bend, stood in front of his own house, and shaded his eyes in solemn wonder. It couldn't be—he'd never heard of such a thing before—yet it was—there was no doubt of it—there was a Pike, riding right towards him, in open daylight. He could swear that Pike had often visited him—that is, his wheat-field and corral—after dark, but a daylight visit from a Pike was unusual as a social call of a Samaritan upon a Jew. And when Sam—for it was he—approached Merrick and made his business known, the farmer was more astonished and confused than he had ever been in his life before. Sam wanted to know for how much money Merrick would plough and plant a hundred and sixty acres of wheat for him, and whether he would take Sam's horse—a fine animal brought from the States, and for which Sam could show a bill of sale—as security for the amount until he could harvest and sell his crop. Merrick so well understood the Pike nature that he made a very liberal offer, and afterward said he would have paid handsomely for the chance.

A few days later and the remaining Pikes at the Bend experienced the greatest scare that ever visited their souls. A brisk man came into the Bend with a tripod on his shoulder and a wire chain and some wire pins, and a queer machine under his arm, and before dark the Pikes understood that Sam had deliberately constituted himself a renegade by entering a quarter section of land. Next morning two more residences were empty, and the remaining fathers of the hamlet adorned not Sam's log, but wandered about with faces vacant of all expression, save the agony of the patriot who sees his home invaded by corrupting influences too powerful for him to resist.

Then Merrick sent up a plough-gang and eight horses, and the tender green of Sam's quarter-section was rapidly changed to a dull-brown color, which is odious unto the eye of the Pike. Day by day the brown spot grew larger, and one morning Sam arose to find all his neighbors departed, having wreaked their vengeance upon him by taking away his dogs. And in his delight at their disappearance Sam freely forgave them all.

Regularly the children were carried to and from school, and even to Sunday-school. Regularly every evening Sam visited the grave on the hillside, and came back to lie by the hour watching the sleeping darlings. Little by little farmers began to realize that their property was undisturbed. Little by little Sam's wheat grew and waxed golden, and then there came a day when a man from Frisco came and changed it into a heavier gold—more gold than Sam had ever seen before. And the farmers began to step in to see Sam, and their children came to see his, and kind women were unusually kind to the orphans; and, as day by day Sam took his solitary walk on the hillside, the load on his heart grew lighter, until he ceased to fear the day when he, too, should lie there.—*California Exchange.*

## DINING OUT AND AT HOME.

Few things to a man of a certain age, with a rightly constituted mind, are more enjoyable than a pleasant dinner party, either at his own table or that of a friend.

Supposing a man to be married, and in easy circumstances, with a good cook and well-arranged *ménage*, probably dining at home is most agreeable; for there he not only likes what he eats, but he knows what he drinks, which in houses of some friends is impossible.

I have sat at most richly and well appointed boards, with every edible luxury in and out of season; "where the table it groaned with the weight of the feast," and where the wine I have been invited to imbibe has been simply diluted poison. Either the host had altogether lost his taste, and had been grossly imposed upon by his wine merchant, or, what is more likely, he is an ostentatious without being a liberal man, and attempts, amid the glitter of his glass and plate and the carvings and gildings of his entertainment, to pass off without observation his wretched case, public-dinner champagne, and public-house claret. In many instances undoubtedly he is successful. To the majority of ladies, who are no judges of wine, most liquids well iced taste much the same; and many men, taking what is offered to them in blind confidence, only the next day discover that they have drunk neither wisely nor too well. Giving bad or indifferent wine is inexcusable, and never ought to be forgiven.

A dinner may fail from a cook being incompetent or tipsy, a pastry-cook false or unpunctual; and the compassion of the guests is some consolation to their unfortunate entertainers. But bad wine is something more than a misfor-

tune to those who receive it; to those who give it, it is a crime. Fortunately for myself, my acquaintance with persons committing such offences is very limited; and, as I happen not to be particularly well off, I gladly accept hospitalities in return for those I am able to offer.

Every one knows that the success of a dinner-party greatly depends upon the judicious choice and arrangement of the guests. Friends should be asked to meet those with whom they are likely to assimilate, and have feelings and sympathies in common, though it often happens, oddly enough, that a most carefully and judiciously arranged selection turns out a comparative failure, whereas a sort of scratch crew (if I may use such an expression) forms a most merry, happy party. But of course it does not do in these matters to trust to chance; and in dinner-giving, as in every other circumstance of life, the best way to command success is to deserve it. The number of one's guests is a first consideration. Some rich dictatorial individual has laid down, as a rule, "not more than the Muses, nor fewer than the Graces;" but persons of ordinary income cannot afford to give dinner-parties every other day, and twelve or fourteen (including host and hostess) is a very allowable average.

A friend of mine, famous for his dinners, compares much larger entertainments to feeding friends like pigs in a sty. The idea, though the reverse of agreeable, is to a certain extent true; but even for feeds of twenty or twenty-four excuse may be made. Such gastronomic excesses should, however, be rare, and confined to the reception of irreconcilables—by whom I mean dinner acquaintances who cannot be made to fit-in at ordinary social gatherings. In saying this I am speaking of mixed parties, for I hold that a bachelor dinner should never exceed twelve, and if possible be confined to nine or ten.

I shudder at the remembrance of one of more than thirty I recently partook of at a certain club. It was like a first day's dinner at the *table d'hôte* of a foreign hotel. After all there is very little necessity to crowd men together, for irreconcilables as a rule consist almost invariably of the softer sex.

Who does not know the pompous and ponderous dowager, who overweighs any ordinary festive meeting, who is offended if not taken down to dinner by the martyr host (in preference, perhaps, to one of the most agreeable women in London), and who patronizes fellow-guests probably as greatly her superior in position as they are in good breeding? She is an irreconcilable who, at a very large dinner party, is comparatively harmless. Even she will not expect necessarily to be first among so many, and she has fuller scope for discourse respecting her aristocratic proclivities and family connections than where she is better known, and, therefore, less appreciated. But, in addition to the dowager, there are certain old maids, not very produceable in limited circles, who may with advantage be judiciously dotted about in large gatherings, and also *exigentes* mammas, with marriageable daughters, who give large parties themselves, and like and expect to be asked to the same in return. Of course, one of the component parts of an entertainment of this sort is the padding; by which I mean a certain number of dull heavy men whom it is necessary to ask, because they, or their fathers or mothers, give agreeable dinners, or because their acquaintance is in some way or other valuable or useful, though they come to your house apparently for no other purpose than, like Sir Thrifty's friends, "to stare about them and to eat." Then perhaps one, or possibly two (if you place them some distance apart) really clever men and good talkers, and your party is complete—irreconcilables, padding, lion or lions.

The good talker, especially if he has no rival present, enjoys himself to his heart's content. His audience, like the House of Commons, is very easily amused, and he has no one to cap his somewhat threadbare anecdotes and ancient jokes, which in other company he would not venture to produce. Indeed, some effective talkers are never so much in their element as at a large dinner-party; like certain actors or orators, they require a full audience to stimulate them to exertion, and think that in the presence of only five or six listeners they comparatively "waste their sweetness on the desert air." Even a very large party, judiciously composed, may be a success, though not of the highest order.

The most charming dinners are where all share in the conversation to a less or greater degree, the lead being taken by two or three good raconteurs, who did not monopolize, but direct, suggest, and control the talk.

What delightful recollections long remain of such a "feast of reason and flow of soul," especially if the body is as well refreshed as the mind!

Some too-amiable people assert that, provided they meet agreeable friends, they are indifferent about what they eat and drink; but I dissent entirely from this opinion. A good dinner is, of course, of less importance when you meet clever than when you meet stupid people, for in the latter case you have nothing left you but the consolations of the table. But well-dressed viands and choice wines add not a little to the zest with which the happy repartee or well-turned epigram is received.

When one's creature comforts are amply supplied, the faculty of appreciating wit and humor is undoubtedly largely augmented; and, as beautiful scenery can scarcely be enjoyed while the traveller is suffering under bodily discomfort, so, in connection with unpalatable food and spirituous fluids, even the best anecdote