

THE DEAD CHILD AND THE MOCKING-BIRD.

[The following poem is in no sense a mere fancy. On the contrary, the strange, pathetic incident it commemorates actually occurred, not long ago, in the neighborhood of Jacksonville, Florida.]

Once, in a land of balm and flowers,
Of rich fruit-laden trees,
Where the wild wreaths from jasmine bowers
Trail o'er Floridian seas,

We marked our Jeannie's footsteps run
Athwart the twinkling glade:
She seemed a Hebe in the sun,
A Dryad in the shade.

And all day long her winsome song,
Her trebles and soft trills,
Would wave-like flow, or silvery low
Die down the whispering rills.

One morn midst the foliage dim
A dark gray pinion stirred;
And hark! along the vine-clad limb
What strange voice blends with hers?

It blends with hers, which soon is stilled—
Braver the mock-bird's note
Than all the strains that ever filled
The queenliest human throat!

As Jeannie heard, she loved the bird,
And sought thenceforth to share
With her new favourite, dawn by dawn,
Her daintiest morning cheer.

But ah! a blight beyond our ken,
From some far feverish wild,
Brought that dark shadow feared of men
Across the fated child.

It chilled her drooping curls of brown,
It dimmed her violet eyes,
And like an awful cloud crept down
From vague, mysterious skies.

At last one day our Jeannie lay
All pulseless, pale, forlorn;
The sole sweet breath on lips of death
The flattering breath of morn;

When just beyond the o'er-curtained room
(How tender, yet how strong!)
Rose through the misty morning gloom
The mock-bird's sudden song.

Dear Christ! those notes of golden peal
Seem caught from heavenly spheres,
Yet through their marvellous cadence steal
Tones soft as chastened tears.

Is it an angel's voice that throbs
Within the brown bird's breast,
Whose rhythmic magic soars or sobes
Above our darling's rest?

The fancy passed—but came once more
When, stolen from Jeannie's bed,
That eve, along the porchway floor
I found our minstrel—dead!

The fire of that transcendent strain
His life-chords burned apart,
And, merged in sorrow's earthlier pain,
It broke the o'erladen heart.

Maiden and bird!—the self-same grave
Their wedded dust shall keep,
While the long low Floridian wave
Moans round their place of sleep.

PAUL H. HAYNE, in *Harper's*.

BERTHA.

III

AFTER THE DARKNESS COMETH THE DAWN.

The bright day is slowly fading. The sun is sinking to rest. Bertha sits dreamily gazing on its departing glory, thinking how grand are all things in nature, how beautiful is the world, and yet how sorrowful amid all its glory are the lives of its people. Only to make one little mistake, to turn away from the sunshine of right and truth, and forever and ever darkness covers the life that fell from right and stooped to wrong.

The child of the cottager with whom she lodged came bounding towards her, holding out a cluster of tiny white rosebuds. She took them gently from the little hand and taking the child in her arms thought of her own little babe that God had taken from her because she was not worthy the love of a little child, she who had been so untrue to her own womanhood.

Her little daughter would have been near the age of this chubby, laughing little miss who nestles in her arms. It falls asleep gathered to her bosom, and she hands it to the happy mother, and the thought comes over her that but for that one mistake, that one false step, her own life might have been filled with joy, when alas! it had held only sorrow. Her fair, girlish face still looks very young despite the shadows in it, and the sad, weary look in the once bright blue eyes. The golden hair retains its bright sheen.

The only change in the face is its settled, weary look of sadness that never lifts even for one hour.

Since the night on which they parted she has never looked upon the face of her husband. Alone she has been since her sin found her out. She left the Abbey where she had known such suffering and removed to London.

Then later she came to the quiet cottage away from the voice of the world and buried herself with her sorrow.

She lived on the small settlement left to herself and mother at her father's death. Sir Earls court had settled on her the half of his private fortune ere he left her forever, but it she felt she could not touch, and in the retired life she led she had sufficient for her few wants. She felt that she no longer held a right to either her husband's name or fortune, and passed by

the name of Mrs. Easton, her mother's maiden name.

Through her Sir Earls court had become a wanderer seeking for the rest that to the end he never found.

Broken-hearted he died abroad and the abbey never saw its master after that terrible night when he learned the truth.

The abbey passed to a distant cousin as he died without issue, and the world thought that the bereaved widow preferred remaining abroad. She had been supposed to join Sir Earls court when she left the abbey.

None but the family solicitor knew of the separation between husband and wife. Alone and in obscurity Bertha suffered the penalty of the wrong she had done.

There was one face she prayed that she might never in this life look upon. In that other life when they once more met he would understand it all as he could never here. That of Claude whom she had truly loved and even while loving, forsaken.

The memory of his bright, boyish face as it had looked into her own filled with such love and faith and hope, four long years ago, was ever before her. She could not bear to think that that bright light would vanish too when once again they met.

He had grown famous and wealthy. She hoped she had died out of his heart, that he had found rest in forgetfulness of her, and yet she felt he had not; that the memory of that bright and sorrowful past enchaind him still, and if so, she prayed that they might never look into each other's faces again, and read there the changes she had wrought. To see those eyes that had looked into her own filled then with such love and faith, darken with distrust and contempt, she felt would kill her. That they might never meet was the one cry now, the one cry.

She had hidden herself where none would ever find her, and he, in time, would forget her. She had passed out of his life so long ago, so long ago.

And she sat and thought of the two noble lives that had borne through their love for her such a burden of sorrow.

And she felt that no punishment could be too just for her great sin. In that other life God, not man, would judge her. The merciful Father who knew every thought of her bleeding heart would understand it all. She suffered in this life and her sufferings atoned for her sin. Rest would come after the strife, when the grave gave up its dead.

Alone, ever alone she and her sorrow lived; she would hardly know herself without it. It had dwelt with her so long it had become the greater part of herself.

No wife, no mother; all that had been hers had left her to dwell alone. No little gleeful voice to soothe the wild, ceaseless pain of the tired, aching heart, to fill the void and render life more bearable. Yet she felt 'twas better so, for the child were it with her would ask her of its father. And she even thanked her God that that little life would not suffer through her wrong.

She fastened the cluster of white rosebuds that the child had brought her on the bosom of her dress, and beneath their perfume drifted backward again to the hour of her parting with Claude. He had gathered a half-blown white rose and called it the emblem of her innocence, truth and purity. And lo! as she touched it, its leaves fell one by one. She had shuddered as she watched them, taking it as an omen of the darkness that would follow.

She had never touched a rose since that night. Yet now she placed the little cluster of tiny buds upon her bosom.

"No second path ah! no returning.
No second crossing that rivers flow."

"Ah no," she wailed, "ah no."

Night had fallen, and the stars came out, and the moon arose and shone brightly in upon her where she knelt amid its silence praying for strength to live the burden of her days.

Res.—she wondered would she ever know it. What atonement for her sin could in this life gain her peace?

"My feet are wearied, and my hands are tired,
My soul oppressed—
And with desire have I long desired
Rest, only rest."

As her voice died on the quiet of the night, loving arms were clasped about her, and again the bright blue eyes of Claude gazed lovingly, trustingly, entreatingly into her own.

The bright full moon shone down upon them, and Claude's sweet tones broke the awful stillness.

"In my arms you shall find it, Bertha darling, the old rest and joy. Beneath my love must fade even the memory of all your sorrow."

"Claude you forgive me; you—"

"Forgive you darling, I have nothing to forgive. I who loved you understood it all. You sacrificed yourself to a sense of duty. I thought only through the weary past of your sufferings. I had freedom, the right to cherish the memory of our love. You fettered had not even that joy. That memory urged me on; I tried to be something, because you had loved me. I felt that in the days to come you might need a friend, and the hope that I might yet be able to serve you sustained me, and work, work was my salvation. The cherished past still abode with me. There were none to strike its memories from me, no fetters bound me, or made it sin to dwell upon my life's great passion."

"'Tis the most tender part of love
Each other to forgive."

"Never darling has one hard thought of you dwelt in my heart. I have stood apart while your fetters held you bound so that your strength should sustain you. I would not come before you until now when you are free. Yet I watched over you from afar; this was my blessed privilege. I fancied it all easier for you to bear without my presence to bring back to you the memories of our past, for I knew your heart was ever mine, and my duty to you was to help you to forget. But now—now when to none you owe a duty I come to ask you to uplift the sorrow from my life, and give me back the lost joy. There are long years left to us in which to regain more than the past happiness. Look up darling, and repeat again those words of promise you gave me when four years ago we parted."

"True to you in heart shall I ever be."

And this hour that she had dreaded had come at last and it was the happiest hour her life had ever known. Out of the darkness he had led her, and she stood beneath the light of his love bathed in its glory. The third eventful evening in her life had closed. She had passed from her darkness into the light. The new morn would dawn with greater brightness for the storm, and her childhood came back to her with the perfume from the crushed roses.

THE END.

ECHOES FROM LONDON.

THE Wesleyans must be awfully rich—they deserve the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for a squeeze. Within a very short time, we are told, they have succeeded in raising nearly £300,000 for what they call their Thanksgiving Fund. Anybody who can raise such a sum may indeed be thankful.

THE death of a judge on the morrow of his appointment is not absolutely without precedent, but no other instance than that of the melancholy case of Charles Yorke, who accepted the Great Seal one evening and died three days afterwards without ever taking his seat in Court, can be cited as at all similar to that of Sir Henry Jackson; and the parallel fails in this, that Sir Henry's death was natural, while that of Yorke, there is too much reason to believe, was self-inflicted.

THE terms of peace offered to the Boers give them autonomy, freedom in regard to taxation, and monopoly of local institutions founded by themselves—in fact, all the privileges enjoyed by the inhabitants of the Dominion of Canada, but it is prescribed, as in the case of Canada, that the Transvaal should be under the sovereignty of the British Crown. To this stipulation, it is believed in Ministerial circles, the Boers will not assent. In that case very serious complications are likely to arise within the Cabinet as to the policy of enforcing British ascendancy upon the colony.

IT must be confessed that the building of a stable for twenty horses on the top of a private mansion, access to which is obtained by means of a lift, is calculated to awaken a feeling of astonishment even in these days of marvels. Yet this is the case of a house just erected in Belgrave square by Mr. Sassoon. Ground is, of course, very valuable in Belgrave square, and by relegating the horses to the top of the house two birds are killed with one stone, for space is saved and the smell of the stables avoided. The horses do not seem by any means to object to the mode of ascent; possibly they are unconscious of it, on account of the closed shutters of the lift. This is by no means the first occasion of the experiment of giving horses a mount to the sky-parlour for their stables.

SOME hyper-critic may possibly discover in the *Times* Parliamentary report, the vulgar misuse of the word "lay." The mistake is a telephonic one. A great portion of the *Times* report is now transmitted from Westminster to Printing House Square by telephone, and it has been found by experience that the telephone introduces far greater possibilities of error than the telegraph. The danger is threefold. There is in the first place, the danger arising from the faulty pronunciation on the part of the transmitting clerk; secondly, that of imperfect hearing on the part of the operator at the type-setting machine; and lastly that of the ignorant use of words on the part of one or other of these persons. As an example of the effects of imperfect hearing, the words *chef d'œuvre* were reproduced the other day as "car-drivers," but were, fortunately, set right in time.

It does not seem to be known what really passed when O'Connell used the coarse expression which Mr. Finnigan, in a more refined age, thought it clever to reproduce. No sooner had the Liberator used the expression "Beastly bellowing," than a cry of "Order" came from all parts of the house. O'Connell asked what was objected to. The adjective was indicated by an almost unanimous shout. "Very well," said O'Connell, "I withdraw the adjective; but, in doing so, I hope I shall be permitted to remark that I know of no 'bellowing' which is not beastly." Whereon, of course, the House laughed at the clever turn its eloquent tormentor had given to the objection. It forgave him his coarseness for his wit. His successors have all his coarseness and more, but none of his wit.

MISQUOTATIONS FROM SCRIPTURE.

"God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb." From Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* to Italy. Compare Isaiah xxvii. 8.

"In the midst of life we are in death." From the burial service; and this originally from a hymn of Luther.

"Bread and wine which the Lord hath commanded to be received." From the English Catechism.

"Not to be wise above what is written." Not in Scripture.

"That the spirit would go from heart to heart, a soil from vessel to vessel." Not in Scripture.

"The merciful man is merciful to his beast." The Scriptural form is: "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast." Prov. xii. 10.

"A nation shall be born in a day." In Isaiah it reads: "Shall a nation be born at once?" lxxvi. 8.

"As iron sharpeneth iron, so doth a man the countenance of his friend." "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." Prov. xxvii. 17.

"That he who runs may read." "That he may run that readeth." Heb. ii. 2.

"Owe no man anything but to love." "Owe no man anything, but to love one another." Rom. xiii. 8.

"Proned to sin as the sparks fly upward." "Born to trouble as the sparks fly upward," Job. v. 7.

"Exalted in heaven in point of privilege." Not in the Bible.

Eve was not Adam's helpmate, but a help meet for him. Nor was Absalom's long hair, of which he was so proud, the instrument of his destruction; his head, and not the hair upon it, having been caught in the boughs of the tree." 2 Sam. xviii. 9.

VARIETIES.

Apropos of the Irish Jury System, we have been reminded of the anecdote of a once well-known Irish law officer of the Crown, now on the Bench. "I saw the jurors," he said, "loafing about the Court, and I told them to get into the box, when, out of sheer force of habit, they got—into the dock."

A YANKEE last week lost himself at Oxford amid the network of the colleges. He wanted to find a student friend, and was compelled at last to ask his way. On being put in the right track, he said, "Thanks, stranger; I reckoned Oxford was one place, when I came down first, but I find it's thirty."

A CHARMING and coquettish woman deserts her husband's roof. "What grieves me most," he says to a friend, "is that I cannot understand why she should have flown, whether for this reason, or that, or the other." "Oh," says his friend, "make your mind easy, she has left you for the other."

BODY-SNATCHING in the States has increased (so they say) to such an alarming extent that several expedients are tried to ensure the sanctity of the dead. One gentleman whose daughter had died placed dynamite in such a manner that the disturbing of the coffin would explode it. It did explode, and blew one of the body-snatchers into atoms and fatally injured another.

A GENTLEMAN in the New York Swamp met a rather "uncertain" acquaintance the other day, when the latter said: "I'm a little short and would like to ask you a conundrum in mental arithmetic." "Proceed," observed the gentleman. "Well," said the "short" man, "suppose you had ten dollars in your pocket, and I should ask you for five, how much would remain?" "Ten dollars," was the prompt answer.

MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC.

THE Belfast Theatre Royal was burned to the ground on the 8th inst.

NILSSON had sufficiently recovered from her illness to appear at the recent State concert in London.

VIEUXTEMPS, *le roi de violon*, as his admirers delighted to call him, has gone to St. Rest.

LAST week Madame Gerster-Gardini held a reception at the Everett House, New York, prior to taking her departure for Europe, which she did next day.

MISS Gertrude M. Griswold, of New York, has made a successful debut in the rôle of *Ophélie*, in "Hamlet," at the Paris Grand Opera.

SARAH BERNHARDT is again the lioness of Paris. Alexandre Dumas, Jr., went to Havre to see her disembark, and, on shaking hands, exclaimed: "This is a return from the other world!"

THE WALKER HOUSE, Toronto.

This popular new hotel is provided with all modern improvements; has 125 bedrooms, commodious parlours, public and private dining-rooms, sample rooms, and passenger elevator.

The dining-rooms will comfortably seat 200 guests, and the bill of fare is acknowledged to be unexcelled, being furnished with all the delicacies of the season.

The location is convenient to the principal railway stations, steamboat wharves, leading wholesale houses and Parliament Buildings. This hotel commands a fine view of Toronto Bay and Lake Ontario, rendering it a pleasant resort for tourists and travellers at all seasons.

Terms for board \$2.00 per day. Special arrangements made with families and parties remaining one week or more.