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## POETRY.

### DINNA FORGET.

HERE, put on your finger this ring, love,  
And, when thou art far o'er the sea,  
Perhaps to thy mind it will bring, love,  
Some thought—some remembrance of me;  
Our moments of rapture and bliss, love,  
The haunts where so oft we have met,  
These tears, at this last parting kiss, love,  
It tells thee—O "dinna forget!"

We might look on yonder fair moon, love,  
Or gaze on by us with delight,  
And think of each other alone, love,  
At one sacred hour every night;  
But, ah! ere she'd rise to thy view, love,  
To me, she long would be set;  
Then look to this token more true, love,  
On thy finger, and—"dinna forget!"

Thou mayest meet faces more fair, love,  
And charms more attractive than mine—  
Be moved by more winning air, love,  
Or struck by a finger more fine;  
But shouldst thou a brighter eye see, love,  
Or ringlets of more glossy jet,  
Let this still thy talisman be, love—  
Look on it, and—"dinna forget!"

And O when thou writest to me, love,  
The sealing impress with this ring;  
And that a sweet earnest will be, love,  
To which, with fond hope, I will cling.  
That thou to thy vows will be true, love—  
That happiness waiteth us yet;  
One parting embrace—now, adieu, love—  
O, this moment I'll never forget!

## Miscellany.

### THE SHOT IN THE EYE.

A True Story of Texas Border Life.

My word for it, reader, I should never have ventured to construct a professed romance out of incidents so wild and strange as those of this narration. It is only with the hope that you will accept in good faith the assurance given in the same spirit, that these things really did occur while I was in the country, and most of them within my personal knowledge—that I venture to relate them at all. Remember, the scene is laid in a frontier county of Texas, and if you have even a remote conception of the history of that Republic, and the general character of its social elements, you will be prepared for a good deal. But, though you might even have visited its cities and older settlements, you would still find it difficult to realize all that is true of frontier life, unless, by extensive travel and experience, your faith should be fortified. When you have to say, as I can, "what mine eyes have seen and ears heard," on that ground alone you will be "of audience though few," to receive as matters of course, relations which would doubtless for the moment shock others as monstrous in improbability, if not, indeed, in impossibility. The man of high civilization will find great difficulty in understanding how such a deed as I am about to relate, requiring months to consummate, would have been carried through in the open face of law and the local authorities—but the man who knows this frontier will tell him that the rifle and bowie-knife are all the law and local authority recognized. Witness the answer that President Houston gave when application was first made to him for his intervention with the civil force to quell the bloody "Regulator Wars," which afterwards sprang up in this very country—"Fight it out among yourselves, and be damned to you." A speech entirely characteristic of the man and the country, as is then was. It was in the earliest stages of the organization of this same "Regulator" association, that our story commences.

Shelby county, lying in Western Texas, on the border of the "Red Lands," was rather thinly settled in the latter part of '59. What population it had was generally the very worst caste of border life. The bad and desperate men who had been driven over our frontier, formed a rallying ground and headquarters here, seemingly with the determination to hold the country good against the intrusion of all honest persons, and as a sort of "Alsatia" of the West, for the protection of outlaws and villains of every grade. And, indeed, to such an extent had this prescription been carried, that it had become notoriously as much as a man's life or conscience was worth who settled among them with any worthy purpose in view; for he must either fall into their confederacy, leave, or die! This was perfectly understood, and the objects of this confederacy, may be readily appreciated when it is known that every now and then a party of men would rally out from this settlement, painted and equipped like Comanches, with

the view of carrying off the horses, plundering or murdering some marked men of a neighboring county; then returning with great speed, they would rebrand their plunder, resume their accustomed appearance, and defy pursuit or investigation. Not only did they band together for their operations in this way, but a single man would carry off a fine horse or commit a murder with the most open audacity; and if he only succeeded in escaping here, was publicly protected. I do not mean to have it understood that the whole population at this time were men of such stamp avowedly.

There were some few whose wealth, to a degree, protected them in the observance of a more seemly life, though they were compelled to at least wink at the doings of their ruffianly and more numerous neighbors; while there was yet another, but not large class of sturdy, straight forward emigrants, who, attracted by the beauty of the country, had come into it, settled themselves down wherever they took a fancy, with a characteristic recklessness, neither caring nor inquiring who were their neighbors, but trusting in their own stout arms and hearts to keep a footing. Of course all such were very soon engaged in desperate feuds with the horse thieves and plunderers around them; and as they were not yet strong enough to make head efficiently, were one after another finally ousted and shot. It was to exterminate this honest class that the most lawless and brutal of the others associated themselves and assumed the name of "Regulators." They numbered from eight to twelve, and under the organization of the Rangers, commanded by a bearded wretch named Hinch, they professed to undertake the task of purifying the county limits of all bad and suspicious characters; or in other words of all men who dared to refuse to be as vile as they were, or if they were, who chose to act independently of them and their schemes. This precious brotherhood soon became the scourge of all that region. Whenever an individual was unfortunate enough to make himself obnoxious to them, whether by a successful villainy, the proceeds of which he refused to share with them, or by the hateful contrast of the propriety of his course, he was forthwith surrounded, threatened,—had his stock driven off or killed wantonly; and if these annoyances and hints were not sufficient to drive him away, they would publicly warn him to leave the country in a certain number of days, under the penalty of being scourged or shot. The common pretext for this was the accusation of having committed some crime, which they themselves had perpetrated with a view of furnishing a charge to bring against him. Their hate was entirely ruthless and never stopped short of accomplishing its purpose; and in many a bloody fray and cruel outrage had the question of their supremacy been mooted, until at last there were few left to dispute with them, and they tyrannized at will.

Among these few was Jack Long as he was called, who neither recognized nor devalued his power, and indeed never troubled himself about them one way or the other. He kept himself to himself, hunted incessantly, and nobody knew much about him. Jack had come of a "wild turk breed," as the western term is for a roving family; and though still a young man, had pushed on ahead of the settlement of two territories, and had at last followed the game towards the south and finding it abundant in Shelby county, had stopped here, just as he would have stopped at the foot of the Rocky Mountains had it been necessary to pursue it so far. He had never been in the habit of asking leave of any power where he should settle, and of course scarcely thought of the necessity of doing so now; but quietly set to work—built him a nice log cabin, as far off from everybody as he could get, and the first thing that was known of him he had his pretty young wife and two little ones snugly stowed away in it, and was slaying the deer and the bears right and left.

The honest brotherhood had made several attempts at feeling Jack's pulse, and ascertaining his availability; but he had always seemed so impressively good-natured, and put them off so pleasantly, that they could find no ground for either disturbing or quarrelling with him. What was more, he was physically rather an ugly-looking "cut-throat," with his six feet four inches of brawn and bone; though the inclination, just discoverable in his figure, to corpulence, together with a broad, full, good-humored face, gave an air of sluggishness to his energies, and an expression of easy simplicity to his temper offered neither invitation to gratuitous insult, nor provocation to dislike. He was the very impersonation of inoffensive loyalty, honesty, slumbering on his conscious strength; and these men, without exactly knowing why, felt some little disinclination to waking him. He had evidently never been roused to a full knowledge of himself, and others felt just as uncertain what that

knowledge might bring forth as he did, and were not specially zealous of the honor of having it first tested upon their own persons. So that Jack Long might have been left for many a day in quiet, even in this formidable neighborhood to cultivate his passion for marksmanship, but for an unfortunate display he was accidentally induced to make of it.

Happening to fall short of ammunition, he went one day to "the store" for a fresh supply. This cabin, together with the blacksmith's shop, and one or two other huts constituted the "country town," and as powder and liquor were only to be obtained there, it was the central resort of the Regulators. Jack found them all collected for a great shooting match, in preparation for which they were getting drunk as fast as possible, to steady their nerves. Hinch, the Regulator captain, had always been the hero of such occasions; for in addition to being a first rate shot, it was known that it would be a dangerous exercise of skill for any man to beat him,—for he was a furious and vindictive bully, and would not fail to make a personal affair of it, with any one who should mortify his vanity by carrying off the prize from him. In addition, the band of scoundrels he commanded was entirely at his service in any extreme, so that they made fearful odds for a single man to contend with.

Everybody else in the country was aware of these things but Jack Long, and he either didn't know or didn't care. After they had fired several rounds he went lounging listlessly into the crowd which had gathered around the target, exclaiming in admiration over the last brilliant shot of Hinch, which was a humphing work as that. The bully was blustering vehemently, taunting every one around him, and when he saw Jack looking very coolly at the famous shot which was not a grain of that deferential admiration in his expression which was demanded, he snatched up the board, and thrusting it insultingly close up to his face, roared out—  
"Here! You Jack Long-shanks! look at that! Take a good look! Can you beat it?" Jack drew back with a quiet laugh, and said good humoredly:

"Pshaw! You don't brag on such shootin' as that, do you?"  
"Brag on it! I'd like to see such a moon-eyed chap as you beat it!"

"I don't know as I'd be very proud to beat such a bunglin' work as that."  
"You don't, don't you?" yelled the fellow, now fairly in a rage, at Jack's coolness.  
"You'll try it, won't you? You must try it! You shall try it. We'll see what sort of a swell you are!"

"Oh, well," said Jack, interrupting him as he was proceeding to take for quantity,—"just set up your board, if you want to see me put a ball through every hole you can make!"  
Perfectly astonished at this rash bearding of the lion, for it was difficult to tell whether contempt or simplicity dictated Jack's manner—the men set up the board, while he walked back to the stand, and carelessly swinging his heavy rifle from his shoulder, fired seemingly as quick as thought. "It's a trick of mine," said he, moving toward the mark, as he lowered his gun; "I caught it from shooting varmints in the eye; always takes 'em there. It is a notion I've got—'my fun.' They all ran eagerly to the target, his ball which was larger than Hinch's, had passed through the same hole, widening it!

"He's a humbug! It's all accident! He can't do that again!" shouted the ruffian, turning pale, till his lips looked blue, as the board was held up. "I'll bet the ears of a buffalo call against him, that he can't do it again."

"If you mean by that to bet your own ears against mine, I'll take you up," said Jack, laughing, while the men could not resist joining him. Hinch glared around him with a fierce, chafed look, before which, those who knew him best, quailed, and with compressed lips silently loaded his gun.

A new target was put up, at which, after a long and careful aim, he fired. The shot was a fine one. The edge of the ball had just broken the centre. Jack, after looking at it quietly remarked—  
"Pumping out the centre is my fashion. I'll show you a kink or two about the clear thing in shooting, Captain Hinch. Give us another board there, boys!"

Another was set up, and after throwing out his gun on the level, in the same rapid, careless style as before, he fired; and when the eager crowd around the target announced that he had driven the centre cross clear, he turned upon his heel, and with a pleasant nod to Hinch started to walk off. The ruffian shouted hoarsely after him.

"I thought you were a d— coward. You've made two good shots by accident, and now you sneak off to brag that you have beat me. Come back, sir, you can't shoot before me, or muzzle him as true!"

Jack walked on without noticing this insult and challenge, while Hinch laugh-

ed tauntingly long and loud,—jeering him with exulting bitterness as long as he could make himself heard, as a flash in the pan,—a dunghill cock, who had spread his white feather, while the men who had been surprised into a profound respect for Long, and were now still more astonished at what they considered his "back out," joined clamorously in hooting his retreat.

The fob! They made a fatal mistake, in supposing he left the insult unresented from any fear for himself.

Jack Long had a young and pretty wife at home, and his love for her was stronger than his resentment for his own indignity. His passions were slow, and had never been fully roused—none of them at least but this love, and that instantly presented her, forlorn and deserted, with her little ones, in this wild country, should he throw away his life with such desperate odds; and seeing the turn the affair was likely to take, he had prudently determined to get away before it had gone too far. But had any of those men perceived the spasm of agony which shivered across his massive features, as these gibing voices rang upon his ears, they would have taken the hint to beware of chafing the silently foaming bear any longer.

This was an ill starred day for Jack, tho'; from this time troubles began to thicken about him. The even tenor of his simple, happy life was destroyed, and indignity and outrage followed each other fast. Hinch never forgave the unlucky skill which had robbed him of his proudest boast, that of being the best marksman on the frontier; and he swore in his base, vindictive hate, to dog him to the death, or make him leave the country. Soon after this a valuable horse belonging to a rich and powerful planter, disappeared. He was one of those men who had compromised with the Regulators paying them so much black mail for exemption from their depredations, and protection against others of the same stamp; and he now applied to Hinch for the recovery of the horse, and the punishment of the thief. This, Hinch, under their contract was bound to do, and promised to accomplish forthwith. He and some of his men went off on the trail of the missing horse, and returned next day, to announce that they had followed it with all their skill through a great many windings, evidently intended to throw off pursuit, and had at last traced it to Jack Long's picket fence, and there could be no doubt that he was the thief! The planter knew nothing of Jack but that he was a new comer, and demanded that he should be forced to give up the horse, and punished to the extremity of the frontier code. But this was not Hinch's policy yet awhile. He knew the proof was not strong enough to make the charge plausible even before a Lynch court, of which he was himself prosecutor, judge, and executioner. His object was first to get up a hue and cry against Long, and under cover of a general excitement accomplish his devilish purposes without question or mock trial even. So that after a great deal of ransacking for eight or ten days, during which time the charge against Long was industriously circulated by his myrmidons, so far as to attract general attention and expectations as to the result of this investigation,—he proclaimed far and wide that he had found the horse at last, hid in a timber bottom near Long's!

This, of course, secured strong confirmation of his guilt, and though the mob were most of them horse thieves, to and intents, yet it was an unpardonable crime for any one to practice professionally among themselves; so that Long was loudly denounced and threatened, on every side, ordered to leave the country forthwith.

These proceedings Jack by no means comprehended, or felt disposed to be moved by; but gave them one and all to understand that he meant to remain where he was, until it entirely suited his convenience to go; and that if his time and theirs did not happen to agree they might make the most of it. And Jack was such an unpromising, snaggish looking somebody, and his reputation which had now spread everywhere—of possessing such consummate skill with the rifle, that he thought it a concession to shoot game anywhere else but in the eyes—was so formidable that no individual felt disposed to push the matter to a personal collision. He might still, therefore, have been left in quiet, but Hinch had unfortunately taken up the impression, from Jack's conduct in the shooting match affair, that he must be a coward, and if this was true, then all his skill was of little avail; and like any other bloody, wolfish brute, he followed him up the more eagerly for the very reason which would have disarmed a generous foe. Jack had given fresh and weightier matter of offence, in that he had refused to obey, and defied his authority as Regulator. The very being of that authority seemed to require now that a wholesome example should be made of him, for the awing of all refractory persons hereafter. The wretch, who was cunning as well as ferocious, and had sworn in his

inmost heart to ruin and disgrace Long from the moment of that triumph, now availed himself remorselessly of his influence and knowledge of the society around him to accomplish it. Several horses now disappeared, and robberies of other kinds, perpetrated with singular dexterity, followed in quick succession. All these things he managed, through the clamors of his scoundrelly troops, to have directly or indirectly laid at Jack's door.

But in the popular estimation they counted as nothing in fixing the charge of dangerous malice upon poor Long, in comparison with one other incident. About this time, not only Hinch, but every other individual who had made himself conspicuous, by insisting upon Jack's guilt, and the necessity of punishing him summarily, began to lose, every day or two, a valuable stock, which was wantonly shot down, sometimes in sight of their houses; and it soon began to be remarked that every animal lost in this way, had been shot in the eye! This was instantly associated of course with Jack's well known and curious predilection for that mark in hunting, and a perfect storm of indignation followed. A meeting was at once convened at "the store," of which the planter, was chairman; and at it, by a unanimous vote, a resolution was passed condemning Jack Long to be whipped and driven out of the country—and Hinch with his Regulators appointed to carry it into effect! He could hardly contain himself for joy; for now, whatever extreme his pitiless malignity might choose to indulge in, he had no tears of after-claps or questioning. The meeting had been a mere form as any rate. But these "formalities" are a powerful everywhere; and unsettled and elementary as was the condition of the society here, the ruffian leader of ruffians, felt the necessity of acting under their sanction, though he himself had dictated it. He would and could have consummated his purposes without it; but the faint life of conscience within him—by a species of logic peculiar to itself—felt relieved of the grievous responsibility of such a crime, in the sense of participating with so many others. Many a man has gone to the devil in a crowd, who would have been horrified at undertaking the journey alone.

The third day after this meeting had arrived. Jack during all this persecution had devoted himself with the most stolid indifference. Avoiding all intercourse with the settlers, he had continued to hunt with even more assiduity than usual, and was in a great measure ignorant of the unenviable notoriety he was enjoying. He had heard some thing of the charges with which his character had been assailed, but attributed them all to the zealous enmity he had incurred at the shooting match. He could understand perfectly how one man could hate another who had beat him in shooting, and thought it natural enough; but he could not understand how that hatred could be meanly and desperately vindictive, and no therefore gave himself no uneasiness about it. He was only anxious that his wife should not hear and be annoyed by any of these things, and preserved his usual cheerfulness of demeanor.

He had just returned from hunting, and laying aside his accoutrements partook of the simple meal her neat housewifery had prepared for him; then stretching himself upon the buffalo robe on the floor, romped with his two rosy-cheeked boys, who rolled over his great body and gambolled and screamed in riotous joy around him; but mother wanted some water from the brook, and the frolic must be given up while Jack would go and bring it.

[Conclusion next week.]

Good!—"The Ohio," says a correspondent, "is a sickly stream." Yes, replies the Louisville Democrat, "it is confined to its bed."

Life's song indeed would lose its charm, Were there no habit to begin it;  
A doleful place this world would be, Were there no little people in it.

The reason an old maid is generally so devoted to her cat, is, that not having a husband, she naturally takes to the next most treacherous animal.

The Journal of Commerce says that on the bloody field of Shiloh, when the carnage was over, a soldier was found standing, his legs somewhat spread apart, and his arms thrown convulsively outward, his posture that of a living man, agitated, perhaps, by a strong emotion; he was nevertheless stark dead, a ghastly monument of seeming life, alongside the betacomb of fallen corpses. Another body lay partially prostrated on one side, the right hand holding to the mouth a piece of cheese, which the set teeth were almost in the act of grasping.

A contemporary is publishing "Hours with Hyman," hours with more are much admired by young ladies who are not so fastidious.