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Poetry.

THE FARMER'S FRESIDE.

Across the fire, one wintry night,
The farmer's rosy children sat;
The dog lay on the hearth, and
And mirth went round, and harmless chat.

When, hark! a gentle hand they hear
Low tapping at the bolted door,
And thus to pain their willing ear,
A feeble voice was heard implore:

"Cold blows the blast across the moor,
The frost drives hissing in the wind;
You toilsome mountain lies before,
A dreary treeless waste behind."

"My eyes are dim and weak with age;
No road, no path can I desire;
And these poor rags ill stand the rare
Of such a keen inclement sky."

"So faint I am, these tottering feet
No more my palsied frame can bear;
My freezing heart forgets to beat,
And drifting snows my tomb prepare."

"Open your hospitable door,
And shield me from the biting blast;
Cold, cold it blows across the moor,
The weary moor that I have passed."

With hasty steps the farmer ran,
And drew beside the fire the place
The poor half-frozen beggar-man,
With shaking limbs and pale-blue face.

The little children flocking came,
And chafed his frozen hands in theirs;
And busy the good old dame
A comfortable mess prepares.

Their kindness cheered his drooping soul,
And slowly down his wrinkled cheek
The big round tear was seen to roll,
And told the thanks he could not speak.

The children then began to sigh,
And all their merry chat was o'er;
And yet they felt, they knew not why,
More glad than they had been before.

A MIXED MESS.

It all happened through a boy's blunder,
Because of four people were watching for
A sixth-month, and came near making fools
Of themselves for a while. It takes so little to make
A fool of a young person in love, you know.

Janushek was playing in a matinee at the
Academy of Music, Milwaukee. She was just
finishing her comedy of "Come Here," when
my heroine—who sat in the upper row of the
parquette circle, not far from the door, and
whom I shall call Jessica Gray, because it is not
her name—turned a pair of liquid eyes toward
him for the fortieth time, and gave a little
start. Not that she was very much surprised
to see Jack Wilson (which is not his name
either, mind you), standing just inside the door
looking over the audience searching, with his
big, e. e.—for she had expected he would come,
and had been watching for him. And there he
was, looking for her. But just the moment
their eyes met, they both looked off in the most
indifferent manner imaginable, and tried to
make it seem accidental, that they had seen
each other at all.

The fact was, Jessica and Jack had been lovers
—not engaged, you know, but drifting to
that point, when they quarrelled. The quarrel
was a foolish one, as such quarrels generally
are, yet lovers' quarrels have made whole
lives miserable.

Jack called one day and asked Jessica to at-
tend the theatre with him that evening, and
Jessica, who had been going to parties and rides
at plays all the week, said: "Oh, Jack, I
would like to go, but really I must stay home
to night and finish some work I began ages
ago! If I don't stay at home once and awhile
I'll never accomplish anything. So excuse me
this once, and I'll go some other time gladly;
besides I have a cold and ought not to go out."

She smiled very sweetly, and Jack excused
her, and went his way not at all unhappy over
Jessica's refusal. But a few hours later, when
he saw Bob Brisbow driving his bay nag up
Spring street at a break neck pace, with Jessica
at his side, he felt like breaking a few com-
mandments and both their necks. "Work to
do, a cold indeed!" he repeated. "Very fine
excuses for the miserable lot to palm off on
me." And he never went near her for two
weeks. Then one day he called, but by this
time Jessica was so angry she would not see
him, and said "Not at home" to the servant, in
a voice loud enough for him to hear, and lest
he had not heard, sat by the window where he
could see her, when he shut the gate. "If he
chooses to suspect me of meanness, and deceit,
and never come near me for two weeks, he can
wait for his explanation till I choose to make
it," thought our indignant lady.

The first was Carrie Somers, a dear friend of

Jessica's, had received a telegram calling her
to Chicago to the bedside of a sister; and sent
Bob Brisbow, who boomed there, and who had
just come home to tea, to bring Jessica to assist
her in getting ready and say good-bye, and that
was how she came to be riding with him. But
Bob was good-looking and a favorite with the
fair ones, and Jack saw a good opening for
jealousy.

Well, a week, ten days rolled by, and those
two absurd creatures met on the street and
loved coolly, and went their separate ways, as
wretched as need be, when one word would
have set all right. Jessica bore it as long as
she could, and then she sensibly made up her
mind to explain all to Jack, and at least clear
herself in his eyes. So after a moment's hesi-
tation—she saw Jack enter the Academy that
afternoon—she took her programme and with
her lead pencil from her portmanteau, heavily
marked the heading of the comedy—rendering
the two words "Come Here" particularly no-
ticeable. Then she motioned an usher, a boy
of fourteen years or thereabouts, who stood
near, and handing him the programme said,
"Please give this to that medium-sized, rather
tall gentleman, with the light hat and black
mustache who is standing by the door. Say
Miss Gray sent it." Now what should a malici-
ous fate do, while she was whispering this
message to the usher, but cause Jack Wilson to
go over to the nearest seat, and speak to a gen-
tleman friend; and to put it into Bob Bris-
bow's hand to enter and stand exactly where
Jack stood. And he had a dark mustache,
and wore a light hat and was medium-sized. So
the boy delivered Jessica's message to him. And
just then Jack came back to his station by the
door and saw him read a slip of paper, and
then walk directly over to Miss Gray's side and
take the vacant seat beside her. "Done for my
benefit—to snub me," thought Jack bitterly,
and walked out. Jessica looked around in sur-
prise when Bob sat down beside her, and saw
Jack just vanishing through the door, and the
usher had disappeared. Nothing to do but
make the best of it. So she asked after her
friend Carrie, who had not yet returned, and
did not explain the mistake to Mr. Brisbow,
who sat till the play was finished, and then
walked home with her, as he could not well do
otherwise. Three young ladies passed out
near them, and Bob bowed low to them. Two
were friends of Jessica's, the other, a fair, styl-
ish girl, was a stranger. She had bowed very
haughtily, Jessica thought, to Bob. "Who was
she?" she queried, and Bob answered, "A Miss
Smith, of Chicago, visiting here at Jones'."

Now the truth was, Bob was in love with Miss
Dora Smith, and she knew it and encouraged
him. That evening he was intending to call, but
an old friend dropped in and detained him
until it was too late. What was his surprise
the next evening, on calling, to find Miss Dora
had returned to Chicago that afternoon. "We
tried to keep her till to-morrow, as she first in-
tended, but she would go," his friend said.
"Desired to have her farewell and good wishes
given you."

"Cool, by Jove!" thought Bob; "nice way to
drop a fellow," never dreaming Miss Dora had
taken offence at his "playing the devoted" to
Miss Jessica Gray, as she chose to term it, right
before her eyes, and walking home with her;
and not knowing how her friends remarked as
they went down the street, that "Mr. Brisbow
has been quite attentive to Miss Gray of late—
wondered if there was anything in it" which
observation did not soothe her troubled feel-
ings. Jack left Milwaukee that night for St.
Paul, where a brother resided. Jessica heard
of it and felt desperate. Bob Brisbow, chafing
at the treatment he had received from the
fair Dora, threw himself into excitement, and
rushed into all sorts of gayety for forgetfulness,
He must devote himself to somebody; why not
to Jessica? Jessica was quite willing to do
anything which would keep her from thinking,
so she flirted horribly with Bob. Jack came
back in a week, and the first thing he saw was
Bob and Jessica riding on Spring street. That
day he threw up his situation in Milwaukee,
and the next went to St. Paul to remain. Miss
Smith heard how Bob was Miss Gray's most de-
voted slave—her attendant everywhere, and
she went east with a party of friends to spend
the season, and never sent Bob a good-bye,
even.

A delightful state of affairs, wasn't it, take it
all around! One would have said nothing less
than a miracle could ever bring matters straight
for these four inmates. There was Jack off in
St. Paul, hating everybody. Miss Smith in New
York, where a match-making friend was trying
to marry her to an old monied widower, and
Bob and Jessica making love to each other in
Milwaukee in spite. So it went along till May,
1874, when Bob heard of Miss Smith's return
to Chicago, and that some one said she was en-
gaged to somebody, for she wore a new ring,

and he went straight that evening and asked
Jessica to marry him. And Jessica, realizing
that she had given Bob all the encouragement
in the world for several months, said yes, and
being exceedingly miserable, did not stop to
observe that Bob's manner was not as lover-like
or tender as it might be when he made the pro-
posal.

When Carrie Somers saw Jessica's hand at
their next meeting she said "Oh!" and then
stopped short, and then went on, "So you've
both been in earnest, have you? Queer! I
used to think Bob and Dora Smith would make
a match; and I always fancied you'd marry
Jack Wilson, Jessica? How came Bob to cut
him out?" And Jessica looked her straight in
the eyes and said: "I want you to tell me how
you put that tramping on your brown poplin.
I want my new suit trimmed the same way,
and came over to comfort with you."

In July, a little party of six left Milwau-
kee to visit the Devils and Devil's lake, and
scenery thereabouts. Carrie Somers, Bob
Brisbow and Jessica Gray comprised the
three with which our story is connected.
They had a very nice time of it, for
two or three days, and the fourth day out
felt like taking a rest. So they stopped
over at the Cliff House, Devil's lake, to stay
for a week or thereabouts. They had been
there just two days, when two gentlemen
came from the north, and registered their
names as James and Jack Wilson, at the
Cliff House. Bob and Carrie greeted their
old friend cordially, and there was nothing
for Jessica to do but treat him well, or to
make their affair public. They were all
out on the veranda in the evening, Jack and
his brother at some distance from Jessica,
when Carrie spoke up: "Oh, Jessica, do you
know my sister-in-law is up here this summer?
I only wish she could have come with us,
but she had to travel yet. I never
dreamed she could recover, last winter.
Do you remember the time I sent Bob over
to bring you, when she telegraphed for me?
I never got such a fright in my life as that
nightmare. She was so low all those weeks,
I did not suppose she would ever recover.
But the day before she started, she wrote,
saying her physicians thought her almost
strong enough to travel."

Jessica expressed her pleasure, and Bob
said, "And by the way, Jessica, that was
the first time you ever took with me. I
have Carrie to thank for that, haven't I?
I remember my little nag made good time
that day, going up Spring street." And
then Bob fell to thinking of how bright his
hopes were that day in another direction,
and his face clouded.

But Jack Wilson, sitting near, heard, every-
word, and remembered. Surely that
was the very ride that had made all the
trouble. Had he been such a fool after all?
He tried to speak to Jessica that evening
and the next morning, but she avoided him.
That afternoon Carrie and Jessica
announced their de-matinee to climb to
the top of the highest cliff—a feat they had
three times tried to attempt before. Two or
three others went along, and Jessica being
feet of foot and light, outstripped them all.
But Jack was not far behind her. She turned
quickly to descend, as soon as he reached
her side, but slipped and wrenched her
foot. Jack's outstretched arms saved her
from falling. She turned white. "Lean
on me," he said. "I will help you down.
You are hurt, I know."

"Only a little," she said. "I think I can
go down alone, or Mr. Brisbow will assist
me."

"Mr. Brisbow will not assist you. He
is helping that elderly lady up the cliff.
It would be unkind to call upon him. I am
here at your service, and I think it will be
kind and mean if you refuse my arm."

"It will not be the first time you have
thought me mean," Jessica said quickly
and then bit her lips.

"I have been a fool, I am afraid," Jack
answered, and then, "Oh, Jessica! I have
been so miserable and wretched all these
months! I love you more madly than ever.
For God sake let us go back to the old re-
lationship, and forget this miserable misunder-
standing."

"It is too late," Jessica answered. "Mr.
Wilson, I feel faint, and my foot pains me.
I must go back to the hotel."

Jack helped her back, and little was said
on the way. The hotel parlor was deserted,
and he assisted her to the sofa, and he sat
down by her. "I will stay here," she said
as Carrie comes back. My foot is not
much hurt, and only pains me when I stand
on it. You can go now, Mr. Wilson. Thank
you for your assistance."

"But I'd not go!" cried Jack. "I love
you, and know you love me, and I want
you to say you will be wife."

"I can't," she said firmly; "I am engaged
to Mr. Brisbow."

Jack said some hard words, and started

out of the room. He heard a little sob,
and came back. Jessica was sitting with
her face buried in her hands. Jack called
her name, but she only said, "Go away."
He looked at her a moment, started to go,
came back and caught her in his arms, and
laid her tear-wet face upon his shoulder.
Just at this juncture Bob Brisbow burst
into the room. He had come back for
Carrie's parcel, which she left in the par-
lor, to find his promised wife sobbing in
Jack's arms. "Hallo!" he said, and stared
at them. If he had been more in love, he
might have said something more emphatic.
As it was he only said, "Hallo!" to express
his surprise. Then Jessica sprang up and
Jack rose and said, "I beg your pardon, but
I loved her first. We were separated thro'
a foolish mistake, but we love each other
yet. She refuses however, to make me
happy, because she has promised to marry
you."

"Well, she's your old fellow, with my
blessing," cried Bob, and hurried away
with a mist in his eyes, which Jessica
fondly imagined was occasioned by her
loss, but which was, on the contrary, con-
nected by the thought of Dora Smith.
Then Jessica told Jack all about the mat-
inee occurrence, and they were both in
Pool's Paradise the rest of the day. Jack
went back with the Milwaukee party, and
Carrie Somers was on the *qui vive* to know
what had occurred. Something, she knew,
but could not tell what. When she got
home Bob told her of the scene at the Cliff
House. "And you gave her up, you dear
old fellow!" cried sympathetic Carrie,
"How noble of you."

"Got a bit of it," growled Bob. "I never
loved her. I only engaged myself to her
out of spite, and I find she took me for the
same old joke on both of us, wasn't it?"

Then Carrie questioned about, and wormed
out the whole story out of him.

A few days later she said she must run
down to Chicago to see her sister, before
she went away. The very afternoon of her
arrival, though she called on Dora Smith.
Found her trunks all packed, ready to go
to Waukesha or Oconomowoc—I'm not sure
which place—for a few weeks. Carrie
made a chatty call, and told her all the cur-
rent society news in Milwaukee. "And
I've the very latest tit bit to give you," she
said sweetly. "Jessica Gray and Jack Wil-
son are engaged to be married in the fall—
and I'm to be first bridesmaid."

"Why, I supposed she was to marry that
Mr. Brisbow who was looking out of the win-
dow," Dora said, looking over at Jessica.
Carrie laughed. "Oh dear, no!" she said
"I know all about that—he bores us with
you know. Poor fellow, he was in love
with some girl who did not live in the city
—now where did he say she lived Neshota
—Evanson—somewhere south, or west of
us anyway; and she snubbed him, he said,
and he only went with Jessica out of spite.
Perhaps he might have married her though
to make the spite complete, if she and Jack
had not met and made up some old quarrel."

And then Carrie, in the most innocent man-
ner imaginable, told about the blunder at
the matinee, which had so effectually separ-
ated Jack and Jessica, and which Jessica
had told her about only the day before.

"That shows how little it takes to es-
trange people," Carrie said as she closed
the recital. "But really, dear, I must not
sit here and gossip all day. I go back to
Milwaukee to-morrow; only run down to
see my sister off, and thought I'd drop in
and see you a moment." And off she went
chuckling to herself—the little diplomat-
ist. Miss Dora Smith took Milwaukee in
on her way to her summer resort, and Bob
Brisbow was thunder struck to receive a
little note one day, saying, "Miss Dora
Smith would be at the Miss Jones' that
evening, and would be pleased to see her
old friend Mr. Brisbow." And Bob went
and—oh, dear, you know how it all came
out. And that's about the only time I ever
knew of good occasioned by a "matinee
friend." But perhaps we'd better wait and
see if they appear in the divorce courts
next year before we call it good. I've told
you the story, any way, and now find out
who they are if you can. The conditions
on which I was permitted to write them up
were, that I'd disguise their names and
never tell.

The Newport (R. I.) *Daily News* says
that the impression prevails, that "because
Newport is popular as a summer resort,
that in the Autumn it ends up like a bear
in its den, and snuggles its claws without any
appearance of vitality till it is waked up
in the latter part of the Spring by the first
arrival from New York," and it takes the
Post-office Department to task for neglect-
ing to provide it with adequate mail facil-
ities during the winter. It goes some-
times in the expense of the Do. and
only in which the revenue—that fact
places as Newport and Providence at last.

should have equal advantages with towns
of the same size in other States.

Newspaper By-Laws.

1. Be brief. This is the age of telegraphs
and stenography.
2. Be pointed. Don't write all around
a subject without hitting it.
3. State facts, but don't stop to moralize.
It's a drowsy subject. Let the reader do
his own dreaming.
4. Eschew preface. Plunge at once in-
to your subject, like a swimmer into cold
water.
5. If you have written a sentence that
you think particularly fine, draw your pen
through it. A pet child is always the
worst in the family.
6. Conclude. Make sure that you really
have an idea; and then record it in the
shortest possible terms. We want thoughts
in their thirteenth.
7. When your article is completed,
strike out nine-tenths of the adjectives.

BELLS AND AGE.—A fiddle improves by
age and use; a piano does not, neither does
a bell. There is, perhaps, a slight improve-
ment for the first few years, but afterwards
the quality deteriorates. Metal, we know
is altered, by repeated and long continued
hammering. Thump a piece of iron, and
you change the quality of its magnetism;
the shock of the waves modifies the mag-
netism of an iron ship; and some of the
music is knocked out of a bell by long con-
tinued use of the clapper. A peculiar ef-
fect is noticed in the bell of Cripplegate
Church when it strikes twelve. The first
two or three strokes are distinct and clear,
then a discord begins, which "accumulates
with every stroke, until with the eleventh
and twelfth a complete double sound is
produced.—Chamber's Journal.

DANIEL O'CONNOR, a "Lutter" to the peo-
ple of Ireland, offered the following wag-
gon, which, it seems, nobody would take: "I
play (said the great 'repealer') very little
attention to anything Lord Brougham
says. He makes a greater number of fool-
speeches than any other man of the present
generation. There may be more nonsense
in some one speech of another person; but
in the number the multitude of foolish speech-
es, Lord Brougham has it hollow. I would
start him ten to one—ay, fifty to one—in
talking nonsense and flatly contradicting
himself, against any prattler now living."

A Sacramento lawyer remarked to the
court: "It is my candid opinion, Judge,
you are an old fool." The Judge allowed
his mildly-beaming eye to fall upon the
lawyer's brief moment, then in a voice has-
ky with suppressed emotion, said: "It is
my candid opinion that you are fined \$100."

The St. Louis *Globe* notices that the west-
ward-bound trains are crowded with mis-
erably young men, who part their hair in the
middle and carry Russia leather travelling bags.
They have heard that Mr. Sharon, who gave
his daughter a million-dollar wedding pre-
sent, has another daughter in reserve, and
they are going West to grow up with the
country.

A Western journal says that in Chicago
library a book on "self-culture" never got a
reader. The librarian had it rebound, and
christened it "A Young Man on his Mus-
cle," and anxious readers had to wait for
weeks before they could get it.

A Missionary who attended prayer meet-
ing with his daughter felt compelled to
rise up and remark: "I want to be good
and try to live better, but if these fellows
don't stop winking at Mary there will be a
good deal of prancing around here the fast
thing they know!"

Texas would have been a splendid place
for Mowbray. When he sat down, waiting
for something to turn up, the playful nibble
of a tarantula would have turned up what
he sat down on in a very lively manner.

New York boarders object to the pudding
being mixed in a coal-cuttle, on the ground
that in those hard times the waste of fuel
consequent upon the pieces being cooked
with the pudding is a flagrant neglect to the
poor.

A Chicago boy of ten says that when his pa-
rents get into a fight, and his mother calls for
a flat-iron and his father yells for the stove-
hand, he is placed in a most embarrassing po-
sition, as he is sure to get kicked, no matter
who he minds.

Twenty miners were killed by an explo-
sion in the Bignall Hill Colliery, North-East
Lancashire, England, Thursday.

An express train on a branch of the Great
Western Railway in England, was thrown from
the track into a canal, Thursday, and thirty of
the passengers were killed.