

SOMETIME, SOMEWHERE.

Unanswered yet? The prayer your lips have pleaded
 In agony of heart these many years?
 Does faith begin to fail; is hope departing,
 And think you all in vain those falling tears?
 Say not the Father hath not heard your prayer:
 You shall have your desire sometime, somewhere

Unanswered yet? though when you first presented
 This one petition at the Father's throne,
 It seemed you could not wait the time of asking,
 So urgent was your heart to make it known.
 Though years have passed since then, do not despair:
 The Lord will answer you sometime, somewhere.

Unanswered yet? Nay, do not say ungranted;
 Perhaps your part is not yet wholly done.
 The work began when first your prayer was uttered,
 And God will finish what He has begun.
 If you will keep the incense burning there,
 His glory you shall see, sometime, somewhere.

Unanswered yet? Faith cannot be unanswered,
 Her feet were firmly planted on the Rock;
 Amid the wildest storms she stands undaunted,
 Nor quails before the loudest thunder shock.
 She knows Omnipotence has heard her prayer,
 And cries, "It shall be done," sometime, somewhere.

—Robert Browning.

APPLE BLOSSOMS.

One Monday morning in May, when Mr. Castor, of the law firm of Castor & Brush, entered his office, he found on his desk a branch of fragrant white flowers with that delicate flush at the heart that makes apple blossoms so irresistible.

"Apple blossoms, sir," his clerk explained. "I spent Sunday in the country, and brought them down, thinking you might like to see some."

Mr. Castor's preoccupied face lighted up with pleasure. "Thank you, Mr. Clark," he said. "Get some water, will you, John? We must keep them as fresh as we can. I shall want to take some home to my wife to-night. There; that looks quite country-like, doesn't it, Clark?" arranging the blossoms to advantage against the law-books, and falling back a little to look at the effect.

Clark smiled, and Mr. Castor went to work at the law cases. But something was the matter with him. His thoughts would go wandering off to the green meadow by the side of the river, where Clark told him he had broken the fragrant branch.

"I wonder," he soliloquised, "whether it is anything like that meadow where—pshaw! what am I thinking of!"—just as the door was thrown violently open, and John Edson, the most quarrelsome man in New York, as his friends and enemies both agreed, burst in.

"What's the matter now, Mr. Edson?" asked Mr. Castor, rising to offer his client a seat.

"Matter! Matter enough, sir! But if he thinks I'm going to submit to be robbed by his knavery he'll find himself very much mistaken! My brother, sir, yes, my own brother—think of that, sir—is trying to cheat me out of my share of our paternal property. I want you to take steps immediately to stop his proceedings. He threatens to bring in a bill against the estate that will swallow up every cent. But what's that? Apple blossoms! Where did you get these?"

"Mr. Clark brought them down this morning. Sweet, though rather out of place in a lawyer's office, don't you think?"

"I don't know," said Mr. Edson, thoughtfully, taking up the tumbler and

smelling the fragrant things. "Where did these grow?"

"Up in a little country village in Connecticut. Clark is from the country, you know, and I think from his description it is quite a pretty place, with green meadows and river. But what do you want me to do?"

"Wait a minute, can't you?" said Mr. Edson impatiently. "You lawyers are always in such a tearing hurry."

Mr. Castor raised his eyebrows, but made no verbal answer to his rather inconsistent remark, while Mr. Edson leaned back in his chair and looked at the apple blossoms. In a minute he started up and brushed his hand across his eyes.

"It makes me think of old times," he said. "I nearly broke my neck once climbing an old apple tree for blossoms like that. I fell from the top branch, and my brother—I never had but one, so picked me up and carried me home. He was good to me all the long time I was sick, too. I think he'd have died for me then, and just to think that now we should be quarreling over a few hundred dollars! Castor, you needn't do anything about this matter—just yet, at least. I guess I'll go and see him. And say—rather shyly—"you couldn't spare me a little twig with a few of those blossoms on it, could you?"

Mr. Castor willingly broke off a branch and handed to him, but he watched Mr. Edson's departure with a comical smile on his countenance.

"Those apple blossoms are doing sad work in this office," he said laughingly to Clark. "I've lost one promising case through them already, and as for keeping my mind on anything legal, it's an utter impossibility. It's quite evident to my mind that law and flowers were never meant to go together. I think I'll take them home to my wife before they do any more mischief."

But as he turned to go out of the office door, he saw the office boy eyeing his bunch wistfully.

"Here, John, would you like a spray?" he asked kindly, and without waiting for the eager answer he saw on the boy's lips he tossed him one. Then he ran down the office steps humming again the tune that had haunted him that morning. He looked so pleasant as he stood on the street corner waiting for his car that a ragged little girl who saw him ventured to ask:

"Please, mister, what is them posies?"

"Apple blossoms."

"Do they grow on the trees that have apples on?"

"Yes."

"Oh, my! wouldn't I like to see 'em once! Say, mister, would you give me a little?"

"Yes. Here, child," breaking off another little branch and giving it to her. He watched her from the car window take off her old hat and stow away her treasure in that, and then clasping it close to her breast, set off on a run down toward the lower part of the city.

When he reached his home and gave the branch to his wife, her faded, peevish face relaxed into a smile that was almost sweet as she took them from his hand.

"Apple blossoms!" she said. "How beautiful they are! Do you remember, Daniel, the apple blossoms that we gathered thirty years ago?" And in another minute he and she together were recalling old times and associations, until the years that lay between their apple blossom times and now had dropped away, and the light and glory of past days once more shed itself upon the grey hairs of the husband and the faded cheek of the wife.

The ragged little girl meanwhile ran on quite a little way till she came to one of those narrow, filthy courts crowded with tenement houses and steaming with horrible odours in the warm May sunshine. She entered one of these tenement houses.

and ran lightly up the steps to her especial domain, a little room where, besides herself only Biddy MacCarthy with her husband and baby lived. Biddy was sitting near the window and rocking the baby in her arms when the child entered.

"Whisht, Meg! The boy's awful sick!"

"Don't he get any better, Biddy?" asked Meg, creeping softly to her side.

"No, he don't. Oh, if I only had him home in the green fields of old Ireland, he'd be well entirely; but how can he breathe in this stifling room?"

"Look here, Biddy. See what I've got." And Meg took off her hat and showed the precious spray of apple blossoms. "Do you think that came from the green fields you spoke about?"

Biddy gazed at it in wonder and delight. "Oh, the pretty things!" she exclaimed. "It's just the picture of those I've seen many's the time growing in the orchards in the old country. Let me take it, Meg."

She held it close to her face, and drank in the fresh sweet perfume eagerly. Then she put it down to the baby, and he feebly smiled.

"See!" cried Biddy, "he knows the swate things! He'll get better now. Take it away and put it into water, Meg, and set it where he can see it."

Meg ran off and soon returned with an old blacking bottle full of water, into which she stuck the precious twig. Then she sat down to look at it and listen to Biddy's tales of the "ould country," till night came, and she had to go to bed, but she slept with one hand on the bottle in which her treasure was.

Mr. Edson, for his part, went down to his brother's office and entered with a little hesitation. The brother, a man older than Edson, with one of those stern self-repressed faces which say as plainly as words could, "I've had a hard life, and I don't care a cent about you; I'll have what I can get, whether you suffer or not," started as Edson came in. His eyes rested an instant longingly on the apple blossoms; but the next moment he drew back, asking coldly, "Do you wish to see me?"

"Yes, George," answered Edson, fingering the flowers awkwardly; "I came to see about the matter—that—property. It's a pity we should quarrel about it, and—well, I don't care. You're the oldest, and had the hardest row to hoe always, and I guess likely there was fully my share spent on me when I was in college; and see here, old fellow, I'll do what you say if you speak to your lawyer and send him up to my office."

There was a moment's silence, and the younger Edson, looking down, saw his brother put his hand to his throat as if he were choking. The next moment the elder spoke almost as awkwardly as his brother had done.

"It wasn't the money I cared for, but—but I wanted the old place. I—well, I had some associations with it."

The younger brother started. Associations? What associations of pleasure could George have with the old place? There were none except those with Lucy Baird, who had been for one short year his own wife, now laid away in Greenwood. He sprang forward. "George, did you care for her? You could have won her if you had tried, and you knew it. She cared for me first because I was your brother. Did—do you mean to say you gave up the chance of winning her for me?"

For a minute or two the Edsons might as well have been a couple of Frenchmen meeting after a long separation. The elder was the first to recover himself.

"There, there, John," he said, in exactly the same way as he used to speak when they were boys together, "I've been hard; but you see I never had a wife to soften me, and I intended to pay

you for your share in the property at first, but—well, it's no use talking it over. Of course you didn't know, but I kept thinking you might have known if you wanted to. But there, never mind that now. Did you know that Midland bonds are going up? I'll make a good thing out of them yet."

"I can't stay," answered Edson, opening the door, "but I'll see you again. Come up to dinner with me, won't you?"

"I will, answered the brother, heartily, and with a cordial hand shake they parted.

The younger brother went straight home and put the precious bunch of apple blossoms, which had been a divining rod to him, showing him where the richest treasure of a brother's love lay hidden, into a glass, and set it where he could see it often. The elder, as he turned to his desk again, saw three petals lying on the floor. He hesitated a moment, then stooped and quickly gathering them up, laid them reverently in his pocket book.

AN INFIDEL NON-PLUSED.

Some time ago a certain infidel lecturer was lecturing against the Christian religion. He said it was calculated to make men melancholy and unfit for business. The Bible he called a bad book. Very particularly did he caution the young men present not to read it, stating that its doctrines had a tendency to fill their minds with superstitions and to embitter their lives. At the close of the lecture he gave opportunity for remarks or questions, bearing on the subject he had presented. At this a hard-headed, clear-headed, common-sense working-man, respectably clad, sitting at the farther end of the hall, immediately arose and said in a loud clear voice, "Mr. Lecturer, I should like to ask you a question?" In a moment all eyes were turned on the workingman, and many shouted, "To the platform! to the platform!" In responding to their request, he elbowed his way to the platform, saying as he went, in rather a loud whisper to some of his acquaintances, "I'll floor him." Some of the timid who heard this remark, thought he meant a literal knock-down, trembled at the expectation of seeing a pugilistic encounter on the platform. Their fears however soon subsided when the honest mechanic mounted the platform and after a moment's pause, looking around upon the congregation, he said, with a tremulous voice, "Dear friends, some of you know me!" "Aye, aye," said a number of his work-fellows, "we know thee." "Yes, some of you knew me when I was a drunkard." "Aye, we did," said several voices. "But now I am a sober man and a member of the temperance society." "That's true," shouted the teetotalers. "Some of you knew me when I was over head and heels in debt, but where is the man I owe a penny now!" No reply. "Some of you knew me when I hadn't a coat on my back, or if I had it was such as would have disgraced a scare-crow, but you see I've a pretty good one to-night, and I've a better one at home. Some of you knew me when I hadn't a penny in my pocket, for as soon as I got one I ran to the saloon and spent it, but Mr. Lecturer, look here," holding up his purse, "there's a few yellow boys in there, as we call 'em, and they are all my own." "Some of you," he said, turning again to the audience, "knew me when I'd scarce a stick of furniture in my house, but it is furnished tolerably comfortable now. My poor wife knew me when I beat, bruised and half starved her. There she sits over there," pointing to her, "let her speak and say if I ever ill-treat her now. There is my dear little boy sit-