

Original Poetry.

EIGHT BELLS, OR THE MIDNIGHT WATCH.

BY CHARLOTTE S. GREEN.

O'er a vessel's side I leant and wept,
As I watch'd her course through the tremendous depth;
'T was leaving the land where a child I'd played,
And my fancy now through its dear haunts stray'd.
'T was the "midnight watch;" the moon on high
Moved through her court in the cloudless sky,
As the stars gave forth their pale soft light,
Like fairy lamps, this calm still night.
All looked serene—not a sound was there
Save the sails' heavy flap in the fresh night-air,
With the rough honest tones of the sailors' voice,
As they "spun their yarns" and soon'd to rejoice
O'er the sweet memory of childhood's tales,
The land of their birth: and its flowery dales,
Where in days long fled they sported free,
Ere their young hearts sigh'd for the swelling sea,
I started round—for at my side
A young sailor stood in manhood's pride;
I tried to fly, but a mystic spell
Had bound me there where the moonbeam fell—
The holy charm that stay'd my flight
Was the voice that fell on the breath of night,
With woman's fault, which bid me stay:
I crept in the shade, as I heard him say,
"Oh why! oh why did I ever roam
From the dear ones I've left in my western home;
Shall I never more, but in fancy's dreams,
Behold again those blissful scenes?
Ah! loved ones far off, how my heart seems to bound
O'er the broad ocean's surface to list to the sound
Of your dear voices breathing a fervent prayer
For the truant's return to the vacant chair."
He bow'd his head, oh! who could tell
Where his thoughts took flight when those sad tears fell?
Feelings of awe round my soul soon'd to creep;
'T was the first time I saw strong manhood weep.
An hour after, the ocean lash'd
Like a monster maddened by the lightning's flush
Illuming the heavens in a lurid dye,
While the thunder sprang in the blazing sky.
Oh! who could've thought so peaceful a night,
In an hour would change to this soul-touching sight?
'T was up from the east that dark cloud came,
Engulphing the ship in wind and rain—
A half hour more this ship was gone.
The wind swept it away like a dismal song;
It done its work with a levelling hand,
Yet morning smiled bright o'er sea and land.
Now where was I when the hurricane's breath
Lent all its power to this scene of death?
I was borne away to a distant shore,
To the land of Greece, the pride of yore;
And o'er me leant and quell'd my fears
The same dear form I'd seen in tears.
But oh! what a sweet change bound me now—
'T was a long lost brother that bathed my brow.
As we spoke again of our parents lone,
Invoking the blessing of Him above
To guard them still by his mighty arm
And keep them safe from life's dark storm.
We thought of the souls of those that sleep,
Who had sunk that night in the pitiless deep,
And pray'd that with him they might ever dwell
"Who knoweth and doeth all things well."
Lo time had sped, a year was gone—
Through classic isles we wandered on,
Yes! round the spot where Dido wept
O'er Carthage's fall our vigils kept.
But oh! for all home hold my heart,
A mother's care I could not part;
For all the joys of mighty Rome,
I would not give the ties of home.
O'er a vessel's side I leant again,
But now no storm of wind or rain
Disturbed her course as she onward flew
O'er the moonlit waves like a young seamew,
We thus reach'd home. My mother smiled
As she fondly gaz'd on her youngest child,
Who sought and found her long lost boy.
'T was in truth all bliss without alloy.
From this earthly scene we were borne above
To that sphere of hope, of peace, and love,
Alas! I woke, 'twas all a dream,
A sight of heaven, a holy gleam.
Oh! come thou god once more to me
And set my dreamy spirit free!
I'll never ask to wake again
In this cold world of grief and pain.
'T is always thus from dreamland's bowers
We issue forth 'neath earthly showers;
'T is then we call for death to come,
And hear us on to our Father's home!

Selected Poetry.

A TRIBUTE TO THE LOST.

ON THE FUNERAL OF CAPTAIN PLAYNE OF THE P. O. C. RIFLE BRIGADE.

Gather around our comrade,
Brother officers all,
The head of a gallant Company
Slumbers under the pall;
First of our fearless band
Hero summoned away,
Comrades in arms! a brother
Goeth home to-day.
Lift our brother, our brother,
Solemnly take him
Where none other, none other,
Passing, shall wake him!

Not in the blood-stained combat,
The shock of the battle,
Fell he, 'mid sabre stroke,
Artillery's rattle.
Had Russia—India—no graves
In their bosoms deep,
That Canada opens her arms
To "rock him to sleep?"
Lift our brother, our brother,
Mournfully take him
Where none other, none other,
Passing, shall wake him!

When from the shores of England,
O'er the ocean wild,
The mother in sorrow asks,
"How buried they my child?"
We will send an answer back,
That her son was led,
As the warriors of Britain go,
To the quiet dead.
Lift our brother, our brother,
Lovingly take him
Where none other, none other,
Passing, shall wake him!

A soldier—the heavy tramp
Of armed men that come,
The thrill of the requiem march,
The horn, the muffled drum,
And the sword that bore no mark
Of dishonor's stains.
Lies still o'er the fearless heart
And the bloodless veins.
Lift our brother, our brother,
Martially take him
Where none other, none other,
Passing, shall wake him!

A Briton—though far from home,
The rush of Sovereign's tide
Leaves not the foreign shore
Where our loved hath died:
The flag of his country droops
As our soldier's pall—
Of the good, the beautiful,
Oh say, is this all?
Lift our brother, our brother,
Loyally take him
Where none other, none other,
Passing, shall wake him!

A Christian—the words of faith
Have over him been said;
The hopes of a joyful morn
Gleams round our dead;
A light that no darkness dims,
'Mid the sad gloom shines;
A branch of the Tree of Life
With the cypress twines.
Lift our brother, our brother,
Hopefully take him
Where the voice of his Saviour,
Passing, shall wake him!

Dec. 23, 1863.

HARRIET ANNIE.

The above lines, (which appeared first in the *Spectator* of December 25th,) are from the pen of the well known poetess, Harriet Annie. Captain Playne leaves behind him a widow and one child. He was married in September 1862, to the eldest daughter of W. P. MacLaren, Esq., of this city. He died on Friday the 18th of December, and was buried on Tuesday the 22nd.

The following paragraph, from the sermon preached by the Chaplain of Hamilton on the occasion of the funeral, gives a few facts in connection with the gallant officer's brief, yet highly honourable career:—

"Devoted to his profession, of which, no doubt, he would have been an ornament had it been the will of God to spare him, our deceased brother, though young in years (for his age was only 26) had done good service to his Queen and country in "war's hoarse rage." Entering the Rifle Brigade in 1855, Captain Playne served at the siege of Sebastopol, and was wounded at the attack on the Redan on the 8th of September of that year, and for these valuable and distinguished services, he was decorated with a medal and clasp, and he also had a Turkish medal. Proceeding with the Battalion to which he belonged to India, on the outbreak of the Sepoy mutiny there, he served throughout all that trying campaign, including the actions of Cawnpore, the capture of Lucknow, and in numerous minor affairs, for which good the gallant deeds he received another medal and clasp. Returning to the United Kingdom from India, he exchanged into the 1st Battalion just previous to its embarkation for Canada, and he accompanied it to Hamilton where, during the Autumn of 1862, he was married to a lady of this city, whom he now leaves a widow with a young daughter to mourn his early death. Yet God's dealing with him was benign and merciful—surrounded by ministering friends, and nursed by the wife of his youth, blessed with every

comfort, and attended by the Regimental and other eminent physicians, but whose skill was, alas! exerted in vain to arrest the rapid progress of the disease, for death was not on this occasion to be balked of his prey, our departed friend fell asleep in Jesus, and his soul returned to God who gave it."

Captain Playne was buried according to the rites of the Established Church of England and Ireland, and, we need scarcely add, with full military honours. The funeral was certainly one of the most imposing spectacles ever seen in this city; and appeared to have a very impressive effect indeed upon all who witnessed it.

ECONOMY.

Economy is as much a gift of birth as the poetic gift, or any other element of genius. Some men are naturally managers. It is scarcely a matter of thought, but rather of instinct. From their childhood we see traces of the disposition with many happy persons. It only takes a larger field of action as they grow up. But the quality itself begins with their life and ends only with their death. Where one is blessed with good sense and fair opportunities, the spirit of economy is one of the most beneficial of all secular gifts, and takes high rank among the minor virtues. It is by this mysterious power (to us always and every where profoundly mysterious) that the loaf is multiplied, that using does not waste, that little becomes much, that scattered fragments grow to unity, and that out of nothing, or next to nothing, comes the miracle of something.

Economy is not merely saving, still less, parsimony. It is insight, and combination. It is a subtle philosophy of things by which new uses, new compositions are discovered. It causes inert things to labor, useless things to serve necessities, perishing things to renew their vigor, and all things to exert themselves for human comfort. Economy is generalship in little things.

Here is my worthy friend Plutus, who has amassed much money, who lives in no inconsiderable state, is ostentatious in his furnishings, hospitable as good-natured vanity prompts, and profuse upon occasion. And yet, no man enters his dwelling without a sense of furniture-suffocation. There is everywhere an impression of superfluity. The whole appearance of his house is not of that affluence but of needlessness and wastefulness. His table is overloaded. One feels in his dining-room as if in a parlor-market, and in his saloons as if in a museum.

Close by him lives a neighbor, who rents his house, the whole of which might be swallowed up in one story of the ambitious one alluded to, who is not rich, but lives upon a moderate salary. But all the wealth in the city would not furnish his house so admirably as he did by one single act when he married the woman, now his wife, whose taste, exquisite economy and sweet decorum, spread out before him every day that fairest domestic panorama—household economy! Her single loaf is almost luminous. She buys where others buy. And yet on her table, butter is no longer vulgar butter, but must have come from fairy herds, pastured on fragrant grasses of celestial pastures. The simple teatray outshines all the gold and silver tea-service of her neighbor. And there is no credit due to her. It costs her neither pains nor thought. It happens so. Everything she touches happens right. Even the babe in the cradle is exquisitely economical; there is just enough of it, not a whit superfluous. It is her gift to evoke beauty, fitness symmetry, and order from all things? A single flower lights up her room more than a wall full of pictures in some other houses. Is it strange that her husband thinks that old bachelors must be fools? why should he not? What is his but joy? Only in joyfulness is there no economy in this household. Of all that there is legal abundance and lavish profusion. His mornings come glorious. His evenings only soften the morning's joy to a little sober tranquility. The whole day is but as a cylinder in a music box, every hour a strain of music, and every minute, one point on the barrel, lifting and striking a musical bar.

But this is a fancy picture! We don't know anybody of this kind, except in day-dreams. We have a little kingdom up in the air, not a great way up either, in which live the most notable people, the noblest dames, the most perfect artists, the rarest managers, the truest friends and friendships; and sometimes we forget and describe these people of Air-dream as if they lived down here!

But we certainly do know men who live better upon a thousand dollars a year than others upon five thousand. We do know of very poor persons, who bear about with them in everything a sense of fitness and nice arrangement which makes their life artistic. There are day-laborers who go home to more real comfort of neatness, arrangement and propriety in their snug little room than is to be found in the lordly dwellings of many millionaires. And blessings be on their good angel of economy, which wastes nothing, and yet is sordid in saving; that lavishes nothing, and yet is not parsimonious in giving; that spreads out a little with the blessings of taste upon it, which, if it does not multiply the provision, more than makes it up in the pleasure given. Then let no man despise economy.

THE BEST PAYMASTER.—An eminent minister in Wales hearing of a neighbor who followed his calling on the Lord's day, went and asked him why he broke the Sabbath. The man replied that he was driven to it, by finding it hard work to maintain his family. "Will you attend public worship," said the minister; if I pay you a week-day's wages?—"Yes, most gladly," replied the poor man. He attended constantly, and received his pay. After some time, the minister forgot to send the money, and recollecting it, called upon the man and said, "I am in your debt."—"No, sir," he replied, "you are not."—"How so?" asked the minister; "I have not paid you of late."—"True," said the man; "but I can now trust God, for I have found that he can bless the work of six days for the support of my family just the same as seven." Ever afterward he kept the Sabbath, and found that in doing so, there was not only no loss, but great reward.

FATALITY OF DIPHTHERIA. Within the past six weeks, in a circuit of one and a half miles, in and around Bass River, Burlington county, eighteen deaths have occurred from diphtheria, generally among robust children, ranging from one to eight years of age.

WEATHER PROPHECIES FOR NEXT YEAR. Mr. Plant, the well known English meteorologist, writes:—"Severe winters invariably follow the class of weather which has characterized the present autumn. High winds have prevailed with excess of rain, and the temperature is above the average-Parallel seasons to the present occurred in 1857-8, 1844-5, 1854-5, and 1860-1." He proceeds to show that the winters he names were remarkably severe, more especially those of 1838 and 1855, when the Thames and Severn were partially frozen over. He continues:—"The prevailing weather throughout the autumn periods of the above years partook of similar description to the present autumn—warm, rainy, and boisterous. I am of opinion, therefore, that we shall have a winter of most intense frost. Whether its advent will be in December or deferred till after Christmas cannot now be stated, but the longer the inclement season which I anticipate is delayed the greater will be, I apprehend, its unremitting severity."

Passion is a fever, that leaves us weaker than it finds us.