

Poetry.

AN ODDFELLOW'S APPEAL.

Written for the Ontario Workman.

As in this world we walk about,
How many things we talk about,
And strive to find in pleasure what we cannot
find in pain;
So ponder well these lines you read,
And lay by for a time of need,
Your wives and children, you will find, will
bless you for the same.
Yes, while you free from pain do feel,
Come, place your shoulder to the wheel,
And help to build an ark in which to stem the
running tide

Of troubles, ills, and sickness, too;
And other perils, not a few,
That man is born to undergo and cannot lay
aside.

A happy sight it is to all,
To see men come unto the call,
To join a hand in brotherhood to help the
sickly on;

For when sickness attacks the poor,
A friend is welcome at the door—
Ah! as welcome as the wind that comes to
blow the ship along;

Yes, welcome is the friend who comes
To visit you, while at your homes,
With a smile upon his countenance, to pay
the legal claim;

Oh, then, I'm sure, you will rejoice,
And give thanks both with heart and voice,
And bless the very hour you an Oddfellow
became.

The widows and the orphans, too,
Have never yet had cause to rue
The time when husbands, fathers, too, em-
braced the noble cause;

Its name, you'll find, will ever stand
A bright example in the land,
For Friendship, Love and Truth, are all
embodied in its law.

And since this Unity begun,
It has a race of honor run,
The number of its members is increasing more
and more;

And should you join and wish to roam,
You'll find, as well as those at home,
We've those of our fraternity on every distant
shore.

So come, young men, while yet you may,
Don't leave it till another day,
But join at once our Unity—you'll find that
in the end,

You better off will be by far,
Should sickness once your prospects mar,
For what is greater pleasure than to know
you have a friend?

Yes, if you think us worthy, come,
And add to the number—one;
If you do not, should sickness come, yourself
you much will blame;

But should you join, then to the end,
With pride, you'll say unto a friend—
"I'm an Independent Oddfellow! will you be
the same?"

G. PURROTT,
I.O.O.F., M.U.F.S.Great Western Depot,
Hamilton, Ont., April 14, 1873.

Tales and Sketches.

"MY FIRST PATIENT."

I had listened to my last lecture, my last hours in the repulsive atmosphere of the ghostly carving shop, technically styled the dissecting-room, had been spent, the last of a very long list of interrogations propounded by grey-haired and "mysteriously wise" old professors, had been answered, and with the hearty congratulations and best wishes of my instructor, with my license, elegantly denominated diploma, to bleed, blister, haggie and phlebotomy, my heart's content, was launched out upon the world to make my mark, or, like thousands of other young men who commenced life with cheering prospects, to sink into utter oblivion.

When I thought of the great good I was destined to perform for suffering humanity, my heart thrilled with joy and rapture.

I had intended to start an office at my native town, but was advised by one of my old gray-haired professors not to do so.

"For you know," said he, "a prophet is not without honor except in his own country," and those who played at bull and leap frog with you in your boyhood, or for whom you used to run errands, would unwillingly consent to allow your feeling their pulse, or to blister or physic them."

I saw the correctness of his reasoning, and resolved to "go West." I did so; and there in that busy little western town, in front of a little room of a little frame building, hung my unpretentious sign, which was wafted to and fro by the gentle midsummer breeze which blew from off the crest of a not far distant mountain, bearing on it this simple inscription—"James Holland, M.D."

From early morn to dewy eve I kept close in my office, fearing such an unheard of and unlooked for phenomenon as a patient might make its appearance should I dare to for one moment leave.

But none came. The hardy inhabitants of that town were too busy to think even of getting sick, and no day after day came and went, but with them no patients. In my eagerness for patients I almost lost my pati-

ence: At last the great desideratum of my ambition was realized.

One evening, just as I was closing the office for the night, there came a gentle, timid rap at my door. Immediately throwing myself into a professional attitude, and snatching up a ponderous medical work, I nonchalantly bade the visitor come in. The door opened, and a young lady, pale as death, came in, and hurriedly inquired if Dr. Holland was in. I very politely informed her that I was the prodigious personage mentioned.

In a tremulous, breathless manner she informed me her father had been taken suddenly ill, and as their family physician lived in a town several miles distant, they dared not wait to send for him, and hence had summoned me.

On our way to her father's, which was only a very short distance from my office, I discovered that my fair companion, besides being decidedly beautiful, was also a lady of intellect and rare culture. I inquired of her the nature of her father's illness, but she gave me no direct answer, in fact she evinced a desire to evade the subject altogether.

When I arrived at the abode of my patient, and saw him, I saw at a glance his was no bodily ailment. The pulse beat regularly, the heart was active and strong, and the respiration excellent; and yet there was something about him that puzzled me.

I examined him carefully, and of course gave him some medicine, which was nothing more than a soothing powder.

All his other doctors had laughed at the idea of his being sick, had called it "mental folly," and I saw their error and steered clear of making the same. I knew the wonderful influence of the mind upon the body, and resolved to humor him.

There was an expression about his eyes that I did not like; it was not the bright lurid glare of hopeless insanity, but the cold, settled stare of the monomaniac. He had accepted the visits of his physicians as an evil that could not be dispensed with, and had seemed glad at their departure.

The fault was because they could not discern it was to a mind and not a body diseased, to which they should have ministered.

I passed my hand upon his brow, felt his pulse, and sat awhile beside him, and chatted to him as merrily as I could. The conversation soon became almost flippant and cheerful; his spirits rose like mercury in the thermometer when held in a warm hand. The effect was almost magical, and when I departed he grasped my hand warmly, and seemed eager for my next visit.

I went back to my office, and for a long time pondered over my singular patient.

Here was a case worth investigating for several reasons. He was rich, powerful and influential, and his case had baffled all who had attempted to treat it; and could I succeed in effecting a cure, my road to fame and wealth would be comparatively easy. I was satisfied it was some mental trouble that was causing all this harm.

He had confided nothing to me, and yet before I left him, I was sure I had detected a desire to communicate something to me.

I called to see him the next day, and spent several hours in his room; and little by little learned his singular story.

It was the most curious case of mental hallucination that in years of diligent practice I have come across. I had heard and read of a great many singular cases, but this was more singular than them all.

This is what he revealed to me:—

"Doctor," said he, "you are a young man, but you are one, I believe, of kindness, judgment and truth, and should you be unable to do anything for me, you will not betray my trust in you."

I told him he could rely upon my honor as a man, not to divulge anything he deemed proper to trust me with.

"A good many years ago," continued he, "just before the birth of my daughter Jennie, I was one day down in one of my back meadows, and becoming very thirsty, I laid down and drank freely out of a little stream that ran bubbling and dancing through it. I drank very rapidly, and in my haste swallowed something that for a moment or two choked me considerably. It soon passed away and I paid no more attention to it."

"Several weeks after, this was after the birth of Jennie and the death of her mother, I felt a peculiar sensation in my left side, and with all I could do, I could not alleviate it."

"Day after day I grew worse, until at last it broke upon my mind that the day I had stopped to drink out of the little brook in my meadow I had swallowed a living snake, and, sir," continued he, lowering his voice to a tragic whisper, "that snake is there still, every day becoming larger and larger, and that is not all, it is twined and twisted and coiled around my heart, and is slowly but surely dragging me down to the grave. I have been told I was wrong, foolish and insane, and I have tried, oh, how hard! to make myself believe the same, but it's no use. There the snake is, and I can feel it as it winds and unwinds itself, and often I am afraid to stir for fear it will strike my heart with its poisonous fangs! Help me, doctor, if you can," he pleaded, "for I can endure this no longer! Life for years has been clouded and a burden to me, and had it not been for my poor, worthless daughter I would have long since ridden myself of this bitter pang."

This was said in such a weary, heart-broken manner, that from the bottom of my heart I

pitied this truly desolate and miserable man. And yet I could do nothing and could say scarcely anything, for it was such a curious, singular case that I was unprepared for any action.

I gave him all the encouragement I could, and started for my office. As I was leaving the house his daughter came to me, and in a tremulous voice said,—

"Doctor, my father has told you all, has he not?"

I replied that he had told me of his singular belief.

"Do you think, doctor, it is really as he suspects?" she eagerly inquired. "Can such a thing be as a living snake twined around the heart?"

I told her it was a physical impossibility for such a thing to exist; that the human heart was such a delicate and intricate organ, that the pressure which must follow from such a cause would retard circulation, and result in almost instantaneous death.

"But," she inquired, "what has induced my father to hold this belief for so long a time? What first induced him to hold it at all?"

I told her it was, perhaps, one of those phenomenal freaks of the imagination which occasionally seize upon even the most well-balanced minds. It was probably first induced by the gloom and melancholy attending the premature and sorrowful death of her mother, and as he in his despondency allowed it to dwell from day to day upon his mind, it at last became fixed, his mind upon this one point became diseased, insane—for persons may be perfectly sound upon some subjects, and hopeless maniacs upon others—and at last he has begun to look upon it as a dead certainty, and it will require some novel operation to remove from his darkened brain this gloomy pall.

"O doctor!" exclaimed she, "can you, will you remove from my dear father's mind this fatal hallucination that has darkened half his lifetime and all mine? I know life to him has been for years a burden, and only tolerated for my sake, but now even I am losing my control over him, and I am sure if he is not soon made aware of his error he will destroy his own life."

I gave her all the consolation I could, and promised to do all in my power to save her father's life, and left her. On the way to my office, I got the heart of the father and of the daughter mixed.

I just began to think what a bright, intelligent girl she was, and so kind and affectionate to her poor deluded father! And the more I thought of her the faster and louder beat my heart against its prison bars, until I began to think I too had the heart disease. And I also remembered how very lonely I was amid all these strange people, and in glowing colors pictured to myself the pleasures and joys of a neat, cosy little home, with a loving, cheerful wife, until I fairly danced with anticipated bliss.

I also remembered that I was just about at the proper age (twenty-eight) to assume successfully the responsibilities of matrimonial felicity, and with a firm determination to do something decidedly rash at some not very far distant day, I left off things matrimonial and gave my mind to my singular patient. That night I slept not a wink, and when morning came I had a plan which I was certain would be a sure cure for him.

Early the next forenoon I went over to Mr. Hamilton's, and sent for Miss Jennie to meet me in the parlor.

"Miss Hamilton," said I, as soon as she had come, "that nothing except aberration of mind ails your father, we are both convinced and satisfied. But all Christendom could not make him believe this. So to effect our end we must humor him and make him think we not only believe as he does, but that we are positive of it." And then I informed her of my plan for his cure.

She both cried and laughed, and by the commingling of the sunshine and the shower appeared more beautiful than ever. "Ah, woman, you cunning creature, how well do you know the weakness of the masculine heart."

As soon as I had revealed to her my plan, I called upon her father; he looked careworn and disheartened, more so than I had before seen him. I immediately saw something must be done, and that, too, quickly, or it would be forever too late.

"Mr. Hamilton," said I, as soon as I was seated, "I have given your case long and careful reflection, and I am well convinced your own ideas concerning yourself are entirely correct."

"What!" exclaimed he, suddenly, and with fire, "do you believe that?"

"Yes, sir," I replied, solemnly. "I not only believe it—I know it."

"And knowing it to truth, can you help, can you cure me?"

With an assumption of wisdom which all young M.D.'s—and sometimes those of older growth—know so well how to assume, and which is often taken for the article counterfeited, I told him if he would implicitly obey my every instruction, I could restore him once again to sound health; "but," said I "you must undergo a dangerous and painful operation, and whether it is successful or not depends very much upon yourself."

"The serpent," I continued, "is firmly entwined around your heart—and main arteries; and the only manner in which it can be removed is to make an orifice in your left side,

carefully lay bare the heart, remove his snake-ship and trust to Providence."

He turned deadly pale, but for his daughter's sake he would submit.

"But when will you perform the operation?" he timidly inquired.

"This afternoon," I replied.

"Will you need any assistance?"

"I will need none but your daughters," I answered, "besides it is better to keep it as secret as possible, for when out, such things are ever a source of annoyance."

"Has the heart of any human being," he asked, "ever been submitted to such a test?"

"Never but once," said I, in reply, "and then it was safely and satisfactorily performed."

This was a professional subterfuge, but the importance of my case warranted me in employing it.

That noon I went to a butcher's and procured the heart of a steer just slaughtered, and going along the little brook in the meadow, I succeeded in capturing a large water snake alive. I took it to my office, and putting it through a regular course of dentistry, I placed it in a box until needed for it part in the afternoon's operation.

Just before three o'clock I went over to Mr. Hamilton's, taking particular pains to stun the snake so he would not be too lively for one that had been nearly eighteen years cooped up in the narrow confines of a man's chest. The snake and heart I had in a box which Mr. Hamilton supposed contained my instruments of torture.

The daughter was of course rather loth to practice this deception upon her father, but I reassured her by telling her it could do no possible harm, and would surely be attended with the happiest results.

I placed Mr. Hamilton upon a narrow table, and, to avoid his detecting the deception, strapped him down upon it. When I loosened his shirt he turned deadly pale, but otherwise showed no sign of fear. I made a great display of my terrible looking instruments and commenced.

Of course I was forced to cut him considerably, enough to leave scars after they were healed, and yet not enough to produce very great pain, still he groaned and writhed as though undergoing the most agonizing torment. He reminded me of the man who was led to believe a great weight was to be allowed to fall upon him, and when a drop of water was dropped upon his bared head he was so thoroughly frightened that he died almost instantly.

Carefully did I uncover the heart of the slaughtered animal, and still more carefully did I entwine the dying serpent around it.

"Mr. Hamilton," said I, in a terribly solemn voice, "your heart with all its intricate organs is now being viewed by me; now use all your self-possession, for I must take it in my hands; the idea you have entertained for years is correct, for coiled around your heart is a serpent of monstrous size."

Slowly I uncoiled it. "Now unclothe your eyes, look, see—the snake is removed from your heart and you will live."

Faintly he opened his eyes, and with one glance at the hideous monster which had twisted itself around my arm, he fainted. I hastily removed the snake and heart, and by dint of great exertions restored him to consciousness, for the pain to him through the activity of his imagination was almost as great as though he had actually undergone the dreaded and unheard-of operation. I remained with him the balance of the day and through the entire night.

At the end of one week I allowed him to sit up a little while at a time.

He improved very rapidly; his mind cleared of the incubus that had lain upon it for years, grew bright and active, and I found him possessed of rare intellectual culture. He never mentioned the snake but once, and that was when the bandages were removed and he saw the scars—traces of the knife's trail.

From that time my path to fame and fortune was easy; for from far and near people came to consult me, and I soon became that most enviable of all personages—the popular young doctor of the place.

I presume my little story will be hardly complete if I do not add that in the course of time I proposed to Mr. Hamilton's daughter, and that in less than one year from that time my idea of a cosy little home and a loving little wife were fully realized, and from that time to the present I have ever had cause to thank Providence for getting me the best and most loving wife in the world, through the medium of "my first patient."

PLOT AND COUNTER-PLOT.

"O Millie! I am in such a dilemma, if you don't help me out, the powers only know who will," and Kate Somers threw herself imploringly at her cousin's feet.

"What is the trouble now!" quietly asked the person addressed, with a hearty laugh at the serious face of her cousin.

"Millie, you mustn't laugh, it's serious, awfully serious, and the bright young countenance wore, or attempted to wear a very solemn aspect."

Kate Somers was a bright, sparkling brunette, whose small, graceful form, sparkling black eyes, and black, glossy curls, rendered her very attractive to many of her sterner sex.

Millie Winthrop, her cousin, was on the contrary a tall stately blonde, with lovely blue eyes, and light, sunny ringlets.

These two bright young girls, in such contrast made a pretty picture in the warm sunlight that shone in through the richly curtained windows.

"Sit down on the ottoman, and tell me what it is that disturbs usually gay self in this manner," and Millie pushed a richly embroidered ottoman towards the prostrated form of her cousin.

"I will unburden my soul of its dark and bloody secret," and Kate seated herself with a tragic air, "and perhaps your fertile brain can decide some means of escape. You know that in spite of your warnings, some time ago I answered a newspaper advertisement of a young man who wished to correspond with a young lady for mutual improvement and a view to matrimony," so the advertisement ran. "Why I did it, I am sure I can't unless some demon took possession of my angelic self at that time. Well, his answer came, and it was perfectly splendid. He told me how charmed he was with the modest manner I had replied to his bold advertisement, and a great deal more in the same strain. Of course, I replied to it, and our correspondence continued at a brisk rate. Every letter grew more charming, softer and more affectionate, until at last he proposed, and I, for fun, accepted. I supposed I should never hear of, or see him in this life after he had made such a fool of himself, but there comes a letter to say that I may expect him at Bloomingdale on Friday, when he shall honor me with a call. How fortunate it is papa is absent from home, for if he should discover this little affair of mine I should be confined to my room, and doomed to eke out my existence on bread and water. I know this fellow is a great awkward greenhorn, who has hired some one to compose his letters, or some widower, old enough to be my father, hunting for a house-keeper; he has probably heard I am to have papa's money sometime. How dare he intrude himself on me in my own house! He must have the conceit of a peacock, and the stupidity of a mule, I am sure he will insist on my marrying him, according to agreement which I shan't do, and then he'll sue me for breach of promise, and it will all come to papa's ears and, O, dear!" by this time Kate had worked herself into a perfect fever of anxiety.

"By what name does this personification of everything bad call himself?" laughingly enquired Millie.

"O, his name is well enough; there's nothing in a name, you know. I presume it's fictitious, assumed for the occasion. He calls himself James Cameron," and Kate tossed her head spitefully.

Millie sat for a few moments in thoughtful silence, then clapping her hands, and bursting into a merry laugh, she exclaimed:

"I have it, Kate? I am admirable at padding, and you are a born actress. Your slight figure can be made to assume the proportions of a Dutch cheese, by a skillful use of cotton. You must wear a red wig, a patch on your cheek, spectacles, talk sentimentally, be troubled with the heart disease, be very anxious for the wedding day, speak of the loss of property. He will desire to be immediately released from his engagement; this you mustn't do. Threaten him with a breach of promise suit in a savage manner, and I venture he won't trouble you with any more attendance."

Kate hugged her cousin in an appreciative manner, as she said:

"You old treasure! won't it be jolly fun. You shall secret yourself in the closet with the door slightly ajar, and have the full benefit of our interview."

And the girls sat down to mature their plans in great glee.

Meanwhile a similar scene was taking place in a young men's boarding house in a neighboring town.

"Fred, I am a fool," despondingly remarked a young man.

"I couldn't conscientiously deny the statement," replied the young man addressed as Fred, in a provoking manner.

The first speaker was a tall, finely built man, with light curly hair, large grey eyes, with a light beard, which he was stroking in a very savage manner at the time, and bore the honest name of James Cameron, (the cause as we have seen) of Kate Somers' uneasiness. The second speaker, Fred Morton, was a little below the medium height in stature, with a pair of black eyes that certainly looked in a very rough manner up into his companion's face as he spoke.

"Well, Jim, what has led you to regard yourself in so truthful a light?"

"Enough, I should think. You know that young lady with whom I have been corresponding so briskly? well, she has beguiled me into making a consummate ass of myself. After proposing to marry her, and being accepted, I couldn't be content, but must write to her to expect a visit from me on Friday afternoon. Of course, after my ardor began to cool, I saw what I had been doing; had offered to marry a woman I had never seen or heard of, except through her own letters, any more than all, had been accepted. How do I know but she's some superannuated old maid, with red hair, a glass eye, and all the other falsities that go with such husband-hunting old hags, tall, slim, and lank as a broomstick, I've no doubt. Fred, if you can get me out of this duced scrape, I'll make you heir to all my property, both real and personal, when I 'shuffle off this mortal coil,' which I am sure won't be long, if I don't escape this woman's clutches."

Fred raised his boots about two feet higher.