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Poetry.

POETRY OF CHILDHOOD.

Oh! fresh as breeze upon a desert wild,
Blessingly flows the spirit of the child:
Bright as a thought the geyelling earth above,
Warm as the sun-burst of first-kissed love,
Its soul a heaven where no dark clouds hurt
Pure in its impulses, tender in its power:
Mighty in mildness, sovereign through fears,
Captivating by smiles and captivated by tears,
When cobwebs armed and warriors mailed fall low,
Unarmed, all hailed, the naked child shall go.

Who looks not back to childhood's elime with eyes
Who fallen Adam's at his loss of Paradise
Doubtless some clouds might pass o'er childhood's sky,
Yet soon the sun with bright beams above me on high,
Doubtless some tears might fall in childhood's cup,
Yet swift the sunshine that those tears dried up,
In tears were April showers of rain-aw hue,
They fell on flowers and glad the garden grew.

Well we remember childhood's trusted tales,
Whose echoes hover yet o'er woodland dale:
When'er we see Ambition's false rise,
"The House that Jack built" is before our eyes;
When'er we see seduced sweet Innocence,
Idle Red Ridinghood's remembrance red thence;
And when we view pride fall and merit meet
In due desert, we mind the story sweet
Of Cinderella and her sisters twain,
And fairy fortunes seen to come again:
A spell is breath'd to raise the humble high,
The silver slipper shines a star in the sky!

GOODWIN BARNET.

SYDNEY SMITH'S RECIPE FOR A WINTER SALAD.

Two large potatoes passed through kitchen sieve,
Unseasoned softness to the salad give,
Of moment mustard add a single spoon,
Lestruis the condiment which bites so keen;
But deem it not, thou man of herbs, a fault
To add a double quantity of salt.
Three trunks the spoon with oil of Lucca crown,
And once with vinegar piced from town.
True flavor needs it, and your poet begs
The powdered yellow of two well-boiled eggs.
Let onion atoms lurk within the bowl,
And, scented suspected, animate the whole,
Altho' usually, on the flavoured compound toss
A magic teaspoon of anchovy sauce,
Then, though green turtle fat, though venison's tough,
And ham and turkey are hot boiled enough,
Serenely still the epicure may say—
Fate cannot harm me—I have dined to-day!

Literature.

THE VACANT CHAIR.

Concluded.

"Oh!" said Mrs. Elliot, wringing her hands,
"I have had the coming o' this about me for
days and days. My head was growing dizzy
with happiness, but thoughts came stealing upon
me like ghosts, and I felt a lonely longing about
my heart, without being able to tell the cause,
but the cause is come at last! And my dear
Thomas—the very pride and staff o' my life—is
lost!—lost to me for ever!"

"I ken Mrs. Elliot," replied the Northumbrian,
"it is an easy matter to say compose yourself,
for them that dinna ken what it is to feel. But,
at the same time, in our plain, country way o'
thinking, we are always ready to believe the
worst. I have often heard my father say, and
I've as often remarked it myself, that, before any-
thing happens to a body, there is a something
comes ower them; like a cloud before the face o'
the sun; a sort o' dumb whispering about the
hearts from the other world. And though I trust
there is naething o' the kind in your case, yet, as

you observe, when I find myself growing dizzy,
as it were, with happiness, it makes good a say-
ing o' my mother's, poor body! 'Bairns, bairns,'
she used to say, 'there is ower muckle singing
in your heads to-night; we will have a shower
before bed-time; and I never, in my born days,
saw it fail.'

At any other period, Mr. Bell's dissertation on
presentiments would have been found a fitting
text on which to hang all the dreams, wraiths,
warnings, and marvellous circumstances, that
had been handed down to the company from the
days of their grandfathers; but, in the present
instance, they were too much occupied in con-
sultation regarding the different routes to be taken
in their search.

Two horse-men, and some half-dozen pedes-
trians, were seen hurrying in diverse directions
from Marchlaw, as the last faint lights of a mol-
ancholy day were yielding to the heavy darkness
which appeared pressing in solid masses down
the sides of the mountains. The wives and
daughters of the party were alone left with the
disconsolate mother, who alternately pressed her
weeping children to her heart, and told them to
weep not, for their brother would soon return;
while the tears stole down her own cheeks, and
the infant in her arms wept because its mother
wept. Her friends strove with each other to in-
spire hope, and poured upon her ear their mingled
and eloquent consolation. But one remained
silent. The daughter of Adam Bell, who sat by
Mrs. Elliot's elbow at table, had shrunk into an
obscure corner of the room. Before her face she
held a handkerchief wet with tears. Her bosom
throbbled convulsively; and, as occasionally her
broken sighs burst from their prison-house, a
significant whisper passed among the younger
part of the company.

Mrs. Elliot approached her, and taking her
hand tenderly within both of hers, "Oh hunny!
hunny!" said she, "your sighs go through my
heart like a knife! And what can I do to com-
fort ye? Come, Elizabeth, my bonny love, let
us hope for the best. Ye see before you a sor-
rowing mother!—a mother that fondly hoped to
see you and—I canna say it!—and am ill qual-
ified to give comfort, when my own heart is like
a furnace! But oh, let us try and remember the
blessed portion, 'Whom the Lord loveth He
chasteneth,' and inwardly pray for strength to say
'His will be done!'"

Time stole on towards midnight, and one by
one the unsuccessful party returned. As foot
after foot approached, every breath was held to
listen. "No, no, no!" cried the mother again
and again, with increasing anguish, "it is not
the foot o' my own bairn," while her keen gaze
still remained riveted upon the door, and was
not withdrawn, nor the hope of despair relin-
quished, till the individual entered, and, with a
silent and ominous shake of his head, betokened
his fruitless efforts. The clock had struck twelve;
all were returned save the father. The wind
howled more wildly; the rain poured upon the
windows in ceaseless torrents; and the roaring
of the mountain rivers gave a character of deeper
ghostliness to their sepulchral silence; for they
sat, each rapt in forebodings, listening to the
storm; and no sounds were heard, save the groans

of the mother, the weeping of her children, and
the bitter and broken sobs of the bereaved maiden,
who leaned her head upon her father's bosom,
refusing to be comforted.

At length the barking of the farm-dog an-
nounced footsteps at a distance. Every ear was
raised to listen, every eye turned to the door; but
before the tread was yet audible to the listeners,
"Oh, it is only Peter's foot!" said the miserable
mother, and, weeping, arose to meet him.

"Janet! Janet!" he exclaimed, as he entered,
and throw his arms around her neck, "what is
this come upon us at last!"

He cast an inquisitive glance around his dwell-
ing, and a convulsive shiver passed over his
manly frame, as his eye again fell on the vacant
chair, which no one had ventured to occupy.—
Hour succeeded hour, but the company separated
not; and low, sorrowful whispers mingled with
the lamentations of the parents.

"Neighbours," said Adam Bell, "the morn is
a new day, and we will wait to see what it may
bring forth; but, in the meantime, let us read a
portion o' the Divine word, and kneel together in
prayer, that, whether or not the daydawn cause
light to shine upon this singular bereavement, the
Sun of Righteousness may arise with healing on
his wings, upon the hearts o' this afflicted family,
and upon the hearts o' all present."

"Amen!" responded Peter, wringing his
hands; and his friend taking down the Bible,
read the chapter wherein it is written—"It is
better to be in the house of mourning than in the
house of feasting;" and again the portion which
sayeth—"It is well for me that I have been
afflicted, for, before I was afflicted, I went astray."

The morning came, but brought no tidings of
the lost son. After a solemn farewell, all the
visitants, save Adam Bell and his daughter, re-
turned every one to their own house; and the
disconsolate father with his servants, again re-
newed their search among the hills and surround-
ing villages.

Days, weeks, months, and years, rolled on.—
Time had subdued the anguish of the parents into
a holy calm; but their lost first-born was not
forgotten, although no trace of his fate had been
discovered. The general belief was, that he had
perished on the breaking up of the snow; and
the few in whose remembrance he still lived
merely spoke of his death as a "very extra-
ordinary circumstance," remarking that "he was
a wild, venturesome sort o' lad."

Christmas had succeeded Christmas, and Peter
Elliot still kept it in commemoration of the birth-
day of him who was not. For the first few years
after the loss of their son, sadness and silence
characterized the party who sat down to dinner
at Marchlaw, and still at Peter's right hand was
placed the vacant chair. But, as the younger
branches of the family advanced in years, the
remembrance of their brother became less poi-
gnant. Christmas was, with all around them, a
day of rejoicing, and they began to make merry
with their friends; while their parents partook in
their enjoyment, with a smile, half of approval
and half of sorrow.

Twelve years had passed away; Christmas
had again come; it was the counterpart of its