

GOOD NIGHT.

A SONNET.

Good night, my darling, what have I to say,
That all true lovers have not said before?
Nought but will bear repeating, as each day
Sinks like the last beyond the western shore;
So I can but repeat it o'er and o'er
As thousands have, designing no new way
To tell the tale again, so that I may
Retain thy hand in mine a moment more.
Of full sweet sounds there are but seven to play,
Upon the brilliant artist's richest score,
Then how can I, so poor in lover's lore,
Whisper sweet words to make thee longer stay?
I could not though I lingered till the light;
But from my heart my lips repeat, GOOD NIGHT.

BARRY DANE.

Fenelon Falls, June, 1877.

THE DYING MAN'S STORY.

You have often asked me for my history, doctor, and, now that I am so near my end, you shall have it. Now, don't stop me, my dear friend: I know what you would say—I must not excite myself, or talk much. You see, I am almost as good a doctor as you are; but I feel that I cannot last another day, and as a few hours cannot make much difference, I prefer dying my own way. I may as well keep my mind employed as not: so sit down, and listen to what no one has heard but yourself.

Six-and-twenty years ago I was a clerk in a merchant's office. I can't say I liked the business, but I stuck to it and got on: for I loved my master's daughter, and hoped by hard work one day to be able to make her mine. I was an orphan, with neither kith nor kin to look after me; but the love I bore Milly kept me quiet and industrious. I rose step by step in the office; and Mr. Bruce, the merchant, was never tired of sounding my praise.

All went on happily until he discovered that I loved his daughter, and then his passion knew no bounds. I need not enter into the particulars. I was turned from his house; but not alone, for Milly and I had been secretly married three months before.

We took a quaint little lodging in the suburbs, and I went every day into the city in hopes of getting another situation. I had a little money that I had saved, on which we lived—lived, oh! so happily, that even at this distance it seems a heavenly dream too bright for earth. Milly was always trustful that her father would relent, and I always believed I should soon obtain another appointment; but we were both deceived. Time rolled on; our little capital was nearly gone, our hopes almost exhausted, but our love bloomed fresh as ever. I tried literature, and made a few pounds; but my manuscripts but too often came back without being read. Still I struggled on, and wrote several songs, which had a certain amount of success; and once more hope seemed to beam upon us.

Milly—heaven bless her!—fancied I should soon become famous, that the whole country would ring with my name, and then her father would be glad to forgive us. What might have happened had I not met with such misfortunes, heaven alone knows. I cannot say; but in the midst of this bright happiness my wife was taken ill. It was consumption. I worked day and night to procure the necessary medicines and food for her; I wrote to her father but received no reply; I went from publisher to publisher, hawking my songs about, selling them almost for anything to buy bread. Oh, how they ground me down! Men who had had successful songs from me, now that they saw me in poverty, cut down the prices until starvation was close upon me.

One afternoon—I shall never forget it—I left poor Milly in bed—she could not rise—and went to seek for work. I called at her father's, but was turned away from the door. I wandered about from one place to another; but all my efforts were fruitless—I could not earn a penny. Heartbroken and weary, I turned homeward: I had not money to buy even a loaf of bread. Several times I paused as a well-dressed man approached me, and determined to beg; but the words choked me, and they passed on without noticing my distress. When they passed, I was ashamed at having thought of begging, and yet angry within myself that I had not done so.

I was standing at a corner of a street, thinking what I should do—for I could not go home to Milly, my poor hungry, sick wife, empty-handed—when I received a hearty slap on the shoulder, and, turning round, saw Glidden, the music-publisher.

"Well, Burdon," he cried, "you don't seem happy. You look as if you had lost a sovereign and found a farthing."

"Happy?" I exclaimed—"happy! with a wife dying of consumption and—starvation!"

"Dear me! that's very sad! Why don't you work?"

"Work! I have sought it far and near; I have done everything, but without success."

"The music trade is bad, and no mistake; but still I think something might be done. Your songs have succeeded pretty well. Now, what time would it take you to write me four songs?"

"That all depends upon what sort you want," I replied.

"They must be bacchanalian—full of life—you understand?"

"Yes."

"And I must have them the first thing in the morning."

"That is a short time."

"It is; but ready money, you know," he replied.

"On these terms, I agree."

"Very well, then. Now about the price. You know the music trade is very bad at present; I can't give you much—so we will say three guineas for the lot."

"What?" I exclaimed; "three guineas for the four songs? Why you gave me more for one!"

"Things were different then. Three guineas for four songs, and one guinea in advance. I can't give you a penny more."

As he spoke he drew a sovereign from his pocket, and held it invitingly between his finger and thumb. The sight of the money was too tempting; so, without demur, I agreed to write the songs.

"Mind I have them early to-morrow," he said, "if you do not bring them to me by ten, I shall send for them."

I hurried away to purchase some food for my wife, and also to procure her some medicine. I bought a roll and ate it, so that I could tell her I had dined out; for I needed all the money for her. Amongst the things I bought was some brandy, the doctor having ordered Milly to drink it. Laden with these poor things, which to me looked like heaps of riches, I hurried homeward.

Poor Milly, when I reached her bedside, and showed her what I had bought, met me with a smile of patient love that nearly broke my heart. She tasted a little food, and drank a small glass of weak brandy and water, and then fell into a light of sleep. Illness, at the best of times is terrible; but when we sit alone, and see all we love fading fast—the disease aided by want; to see the thin, pale face, so like death in life; to know that before long even the sad pleasure of tending on it will be lost, and that before we can give it proper comfort—this, indeed is awful.

As I sat watching and thinking, I became desperate; my brain seemed on fire, and my mouth parched. Seizing the brandy bottle, I poured out a large glass of spirits, and drank it off. It steadied my nerves, and I sat down to commence my songs.

For some time I could gain no thoughts. The dull silence of the night, broken only by the heavy breathing of my wife, and a low, purring sound that rattled at her chest palled upon me; the dull, glimmering light of the candle, that threw a melancholy light over our wretched room; the thin, wedge-like face, half in shade, that reposed on the pillow; the ghost-like hand that lay so still, stretched out on the coverlet—all seemed to crush me. How, with such things around me, could I write of mirth, drink, and jollity?

I pressed my fingers over my eyes, and the hot tears forced themselves through my fingers. I grew hysterical; I felt as if I could have screamed with laughter. I could not write; but the songs must be done, or I should not get the money. In hopes of gaining more calmness, I drank more brandy. Glass after glass of the burning fluid I poured down my throat. I felt mad; I was not tipsy, but delirious. I could hear the rattle of glasses, the merry shouts of laughter; strange tunes, such as would have suited orgies held in praise of Bacchus, rang in my head. I seized my pen and wrote rapidly. Some fiend seemed whispering the words to me; they were so full of recklessness and abandonment.

My candle burned out, but I continued writing by the grey cold light of daybreak that came shanting over the housetops. At last my task was done, and springing up, I hastened to my wife to tell her my success, and to cheer her with the assurance that these wild songs would make my name. I felt my blood rushing through my veins as I fondly leaned over to kiss her. Our lips met; but I started back with a cry of terror—she was dead!

I do not remember anything after that for some weeks. I had had brain fever. When I recovered, she was gone. I had never again kissed her dear, dead lips. It was some time before I was able to crawl out; but orders for songs came in thick and fast. My last songs had been a success; their wild dissolute tone had suited the young fools with money, and had become a small mine of wealth to the publisher.

Years have passed since then, but from that time I have never written a song of that kind, although large sums have been offered me. I hate them. Day and night I hear them buzzing in my ears. Scarcely a week passes but I hear one of them shouted out by some drunkard as he staggers home, and then the whole of that terrible night comes back to me.

They are evil spirits that have haunted me night and day; they have made me shun my fellowmen; they have made me live in utter seclusion. Day and night, day and night, I live in terror of hearing them. Sometimes in dreams I hear Milly singing the first song I gave her; and in the midst of this happiness some fiend seems to chant those dreadful songs in praise of wine.

Hush! I hear her voice: she sings the songs I gave her in those happy, happy days. She is going away. I must follow her. Hush! she is singing me to sleep. Milly! my own dear Milly!

DURING an examination, a medical student being asked, "When does mortification ensue?" he replied, "When you pop the question, and are answered, 'No.'"

HEARTH AND HOME.

DON'T BE IDLE.—Time is precious, life short, and consequently one must not lose a single moment. A man of sense knows how to make the most of time, and puts out his whole sum either to interest or to pleasure; he is never idle, but constantly employed either in amusements or in study. Idleness is the mother of all vices. At least, it is certain that laziness is the inheritance of fools; and nothing is so despicable as a sluggard.

PROGRESS.—There is nothing so revolutionary, because there is nothing so unnatural and so convulsive to society, as the strain to keep things fixed, when all the world is, by the very law of its creation, in eternal progress; and the cause of all the evils in the world may be traced to that natural, but most deadly error of human indolence and corruption—that our business is to preserve, and not to improve. It is the ruin of us all alike, individuals, schools, and nations.

FEMALE ACCOMPLISHMENTS.—Female education is more detrimental to health and happiness than that of the male. Its grasp, its aim, is at accomplishments rather than acquirements, at gilding rather than gold—at such ornaments as may dazzle by the lustre, and consume themselves in a few years by the intensity of their own brightness, rather than those which radiate a steady light till the lamp is extinguished. They are most properly termed accomplishments, because they are designed to accomplish a certain object—matrimony. That end, or rather beginning, obtained, they are about as useful to their owner as the lease of a house after the term has expired.

HABITS.—Have habits no influence? Does not the orderly and methodical housewife, who makes a religion of her duties, which she fulfils with zeal and conscience, influence her children, her servants, her friends? Surely—just as the wasteful and extravagant woman influences hers the other way—the one for good, the other for evil. The mistress of a house and the mother of a family, who is not afraid of trouble, and understands the importance of responsibility—who knows how to lit the golden mean between generous management and thriftless waste, kindness and lax discipline—who is orderly but not formal, methodical and not automatic—has an influence on her circle the extent of which she herself cannot calculate.

FORGETFULNESS.—A great deal of harm is done through forgetfulness. A little thoughtfulness and care with respect to others would often save them from a great deal of suffering, and aid them in their work. A man is discouraged in consequence of the difficulties he meets with. An encouraging word may be all that is necessary to revive his energies, and to cause him to persevere. That word was easily spoken. There are those who are perfectly willing to speak it, but they do not think of it. They are busy with their own work. The discouraged one sinks into deeper despondency, not through their heartlessness, but their want of thoughtfulness. A young man is exposed to temptation. He is about to take a step from which a little influence of the right kind will save him. There are numbers among his acquaintances who could exert that influence. But they do not see his danger, or are so busy that they must leave him to the care of his other friends. He takes the step, and it leads to his ruin. A little effort rightly put forth would have saved him.

BEAR WITH THE LITTLE ONES.—Children are undoubtedly very troublesome at times in asking questions, and should, without doubt, be taught not to interrupt conversation in company. But, this resolution made, we question the policy of withholding an answer at any time from the active mind which must find so many unexplained daily and hourly mysteries. They who have either learned to solve these mysteries, or have become indifferent as to an explanation, are not apt to look compassionately enough upon this eager restlessness on the part of children to penetrate causes and trace effects. By giving due attention to those troublesome questions, a child's trust education may be carried on. Have a little patience, then, and sometimes think how welcome to you would be a translator, if you were suddenly dropped into some foreign country, where the language was for the most part unintelligible to you, and you were bursting with curiosity about every strange object that met your eye.

LIFE-AIMS.—Every one should try to better his condition if he can. The poor man should try to increase his means; the sick man to improve his health; the ignorant man to acquire knowledge; and the foolish man to get understanding. In such matters the great question is whether the desired improvement is within our reach. To long for what we cannot attain, or to grieve because it is unattainable, is simply to play the part of the child that cries for the moon. Let us know ourselves and our position. Let us know what we have and what we want; and let us next inquire whether what we want can be got by striving for it. If it cannot be got, let us think of it no more, or endeavour to compensate for the want in some other way. A short man may wish to be tall, but he cannot add an inch, any more than a cubit, to his stature. He may however be a very worthy and respectable man for all that, if he conducts himself with propriety and simplicity, and does not, as short men sometimes do, render his diminutive size more conspicuous by conceit and affectation.

BRELOQUES POUR DAMES.

WHEN is a young lady like a poacher?—When she has her hair in a net.

A CHICAGO woman kindly offers to teach a single man the Art of Marriage in Six Easy Lessons, and only two dollars a lesson.

At a picnic where two fellows are flirting around the same girl she shows her preference by sending the other fellow to the spring for water.

"MA, go down on your hands and knees a minute, please." "Why, what on earth shall I do that for, pet?" "Cause I want to draw an elephant."

You can always tell when a woman is learning to drive a horse, because she sits on the extreme end of the seat, and leans forward as though she feared a disastrous pitching out behind.

AN American poet says, "Until the young heart of woman is capable of setting firmly and exclusively on one object, her love is like a May shower, which makes rainbows, but fills no cisterns."

A PRETTY GIRL was complaining to a Quaker friend that she had a cold, and was sadly plagued in her lips by chaps. "Friend," said Obadiah, "these should never suffer the chaps to come near thy lips."

"WHAT would our wives say if they knew where we were?" said the captain of a schooner, when they were beating about in a thick fog, fearful of going on shore. "Humph! I should not mind that," replied the mate, "if we only knew where we were ourselves."

"WIFE," said a wag to his letter half, one day, who was holding a squalling kicking youngster, "that child is bound to make a noise in the world." "Yes, and his mark, too," said the wife, who had just received a deep scratch upon the face from the juvenile's digits.

A GLASGOW registrar says: "While filling up a marriage schedule for a Highlander, I received some very ludicrous answers. Two of them are specially worthy of notice. Q. 'Are you related to each other?' Ans. 'Yes; we live up the same close.' Q. 'Is her father still living?' Ans. 'No, she stays in the Hie-lan's.'"

A WOMAN had a man taken before a magistrate for coming into her house and putting her in fear of an assault. "Besides," said she, "he called me out of my name." "But that's a civil action, ma'am," said the counsel for the defendant. "No, it's not a civil action," cried the indignant lady, "and nobody but a lawyer would say so!"

"MOTHER, where's Bill?" "My son, do not let me hear you say Bill again. You should say William." "Well, mother, where's William?" "In the yard, feeding the ducks." "Oh, yes, I see him now. But, mother, what makes the ducks have such broad williams?" "Go out to your brother directly, you little scamp, or I'll box your ears."

SCENE at the sea-side: Youth with sad, love-struck air—"Oh wilt thou not be mine—my own dear bride! I love you deeply, fondly, passionately, wildly! I cannot live without you! Say, oh say, thou wilt be mine." Maiden, with down-cast eyes—"Adolphus, is there anything the matter with my dress? I saw the Smith girls just now look at me curiously. Does my hair set all right?" Adolphus discontinues his love-making.

"SUPPOSE, Belle," said a poor but honest youth to his girl, "suppose that a young man loved you dearly—very dearly—but was afraid to ask you to marry him, because he was very timid or felt too poor, or something—what would you think of such a case?" "Think," answered the girl immediately, "why, if he was poor, I would say that he was doing just right in keeping quite still about it." The question was dropped right there.

DR. CHARLES MACKAY writes:—There are two respects in which the beauty of American women is seldom equalled, never excelled—the classical chasteness and delicacy of the features, and the smallness and exquisite symmetry of the extremities. In the latter respect particularly, the American ladies are singularly fortunate. I have seldom seen one, delicately brought up, who had not a fine hand. The feet are also generally small and exquisitely moulded, particularly those of a Maryland girl. That which the American women are most deficient in is roundness of figure. But it is a mistake to suppose that well-rounded forms are not to be found in America.

NOTICE TO LADIES.

The undersigned begs respectfully to inform the Ladies of the city and country that they will find at his retail Store, 196 St. Lawrence Main Street, the choicest assortment of Ostrich and Vulture Feathers, of all shades; also, Feathers of all descriptions repaired with the greatest care. Feathers dyed as per sample on shortest delay. Gloves cleaned and dyed black only.

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