

THE GOLDEN GRAIN.

THE grain! the grain! the beautiful grain!  
How it laughs to the breeze with a glad refrain,  
Blessing the famishing earth in her pain,  
Making her smile with glee.

Lifting in praise each bright, golden crown,  
As it drinks the dew the father sends down,  
Courting the sun's warm, lover-like frown,  
Returning it smilingly.

The grain! the grain! the beautiful sheaves!  
A song of joy their rustling weaves,  
For the gracious gift that the earth receives,  
Given most royally.

From every hill-side, every plain,  
Comes the father's song as he reaps the grain;  
And the gentle breeze wafts on the strain,  
In wildest harmony.

He pours o'er the earth his brimming horn,  
That the valleys may laugh and sing with corn,  
While hope, with her death-trance, rises now-born,  
The brighter days to see.

FORTY DOLLARS FOR FOUR TEETH.

A REAL INCIDENT.

**ELSIE!**  
"Yes, papa," and the child dashed away her tears and sprang to the bed where her father lay bandaged and helpless.

That day an explosion had happened in the mill where he worked, and he was badly hurt.

"Water," he said feebly. She gave it to him and he went on speaking.

"Where's the money, Elsie?" "Here, papa," putting her hand on the bosom of her dress.

"That's right. Take good care of it. God only knows when we shall have any more. Poor child!" he added fondly.

"Not a bit of it," she answered gaily, "You'll be at home all the time now and we'll have such a good time together."

Her father gave her a loving smile, and closed his eyes wearily. Elsie began to stroke his hand, and he soon fell into an uneasy slumber.

The two were all in all to each other. They came from England and had been in America but a few months. Elsie was a plain, delicate girl of thirteen, but her father called her his dove of comfort, and now she was proving her right to the name. She tended him every day and night, with a cheery, skillful patience that made everybody love her.

But the weeks went by, the money was spent, and still he lay on the bed. The wolf was at the door. How could they keep him out?

Then it was her father said: "Elsie, where are the silver spoons?"

"In mamma's little trunk, with the ring and locket," she answered.

"You must get them out and carry them to Mr. Black."

"Oh, papa, no! It's all the silver we have, and mamma thought over everything of them," she cried impulsively.

The sick man made no answer, but he put his hands over his eyes, and soon Elsie saw the tears steal slowly through his fingers.

"Papa, dear papa! I didn't mean it. How cruel of me!" she exclaimed, throwing her arms about him. "I'll take them this minute, and when you get well and earn money we'll have them back again."

"When I get well! I wonder when that will be," he said despairingly.

"Before long—slow and sure, you know," she answered brightly, and in a few minutes set out on her first visit to the pawnbroker. But it was not her last. Time and again she went, till every possible thing had been carried; and meantime she was learning cheerfully to bear hunger and cold for "papa's sake."

He, too, poor man, must see his darling grow hollow-cheeked and big-eyed, with no power to save her. What could they do but lie down together and die!

As Elsie went home from her last visit to the pawnbroker, she stopped at a grocery to buy a little coal, and, while she waited for other customers, she looked listlessly at the morning paper lying on the counter. As she did so, these words caught her eye:

Wanted—Four perfect front teeth, for which I will give forty dollars.  
CHAS. DOW, Dentist,  
No. 5 K street.

The poor little face flushed scarlet with a sudden hope. "Perhaps he would take mine," she thought; "Mother Savage said yesterday she wondered how such a homely child came to have such handsome teeth."

"Forty dollars," "Forty dollars," kept saying itself over in her brain, and when the shopman turned to wait on her she was gone. A few minutes after, she stood in the dentist's office.

Please, will you see if my teeth are good enough to buy?" she asked timidly.

The doctor was engaged in a delicate operation, but he stopped to give the teeth a hurried examination.

"How beautiful! They are just what I want. Come to-morrow," he said, going back to his work.

The rest of the day Elsie's father thought her wonderfully gay, but he could not think why, for she said nothing of her plan, about which she began to lose courage when the first excitement of it subsided. Hard things look easier in the morning than they do at night; and as she sat in the twilight, studying herself in a bit of looking-glass, she thought sorrowfully; "I shall be homelier than ever when they are gone; but then how silly of me to care about that. Papa will love me just the same. But it will hurt so to have them out," she went on thinking, and every nerve in her body quivered at the prospect. "If it wasn't for the rent, and the medicine for papa, and ever so many other things—I never could beg, never. Yes, Elsie Benson, it's got to be done, if it kills you."

The next morning she entered the dentist's office by the mere force of will. Her courage was all gone. Dr. Dow was alone, and said "Good morning" very kindly; but when he saw how she trembled, he put her on the lounge, and made her drink something that quieted her. Then he sat down by her, and said: "Now tell me what your name is, and why you want to sell your teeth."

He spoke so gently that at first Elsie could only answer him with tears, but at last he contrived to get all her sad story, and his eyes were wet and his voice husky several times while she was telling it.

"You are a dear, brave child," he said when she finished. "Now I am going with you to see your father."

"But you'll take the teeth first, won't you?" she asked imploringly.

"I shall never have courage to come again."

"Never mind that. We'll see if there isn't some better way out of this trouble," he answered.

So, hand in hand, they went back to the sick man; but I can not tell you how happy and proud he was when the doctor told him about Elsie, or how gratefully he fell in with the plan of going to a nice hospital, where he soon got well enough to work in the doctor's handsome grounds; while Elsie, in her place as nurse to the doctor's baby, rolled it over the gravel walks.

So though Elsie kept her teeth, they saved both her and her father from poverty and distress. —N. Y. Observer.

THE HANDLE OF THE CIDER-PRESS THAT WOULD NOT TURN.

I stood in the corner of Jerry Mullin's provision-store, that little cider hand-press; and at the end of the handle of the crank, operating the press, stood Hannibal Jones. Day after day, Jerry poured apples, pickle-sour, into the hopper of the press; day after day, Hannibal kept the handle turning; and day after day, the cider gurgled down into the pail catching it. How many pails Jerry did sell!

Every day, though, that the cider was kept, it grew more and more sour. And it was just so with Hannibal's face; the longer he turned the handle, the more sour he looked. As for Jerry's face, that grew sweeter and sweeter the larger grew the stream of money flowing back into his drawer, all for cider. The difference was that Jerry's conscience was tough as the outside bark of an old oak; it did not feel. Hannibal's conscience was tender. He was a temperance boy, and he had to grind those old apples. One day he stood motionless as a handsome statue of black marble by the side of the cider-press, and the handle was motionless also.

"What's the matter?" asked Jerry Mullins, who loved to hear the sound of the cider gurgling from the press into the pail below.

Hannibal was silent as a mummy.

"What's the matter?" shouted Jerry.

"It won't turn," answered Hannibal with a glum look.

"Won't turn?"

"No, sah."

"Stone got anywhere about the wheel and catches it?"

"No, sah."

"Rusty?"

"No, sah."

"Does it need 'iling'?"

"No, no! dis won't turn," and Hannibal pointed at his arm very emphatically. "My arm ain't rusty. It don't need 'iling, and no stone dar."

"Why, what is the matter? Your arm turned away at the grindstone just now first-rate."

"Something 'bout dat old cider-press dat par'lyzes my arm, and it won't turn."

"Paralyzes it?"

"Yes, sah. People come here, boss, and buy your cider, and say, 'no tang to it.' Dey go home wid it, and

keep it till it hab a tang. Dis bery day, I heard a case ob a child—dunno its name—who got his hands on a mug ob cider that had been a-working some time, and he drunk it, and when he begun fur to be uneasy, he was standin' in a char near de winder, and he gab an unlucky kick out ob de winder. And, boss, dis arm won't turn any longer."

The hitherto sweet Jerry now looked sour as the sour, wormy apples he had thrown into the press. He was mad, mad clear down into his boots,—and as Jerry's legs were long, he was mad a good deal,—and he raised his foot to kick Hannibal.

"Home with yo! And here's something to help take you home," said Jerry, raising his boot.

Hannibal was nimble as a coon in a corn-field, and he was out of the store in a minute.

"I had rader hab a good consens dan all de cider-presses in de world," he shouted.

Looking out of the door, Jerry saw Hannibal standing on his head, to express his satisfaction at the stand he had taken on his feet when by the cider-press.

"Dar! my granny told me not to stand on my head. Dunno what fur I can do, now I dun lost my pluce," he said, inverting himself. Then he went to talk the situation over with his beloved granny, who was an authority in all neighborhood matters. He was hardly out of sight when a boy came running into Jerry's store. Jerry hoped that it was a customer, and one who had a favorable interest in the cider question. He had an interest, but not a favorable one.

"Won't you—won't you—" said the boy, all out of breath, "please come—up—to your daughter's?"

"Why so? What—what is the matter?"

"Her little Jerry has fallen out of the window."

"Out of the window!" said Jerry, grabbing his hat and running after the boy.

Little Jerry was his pet. The house of his daughter was reached.

"O father. Jerry went out of the window, and there he is in bed. The doctor says it will be some time before he is well."

"How did it happen?"

"He—he—drank some cider, and it made him uneasy."

"Where did he get it?"

"Some you sent up here, and it got too strong for the little fellow," she said, hesitatingly.

"Humph!" mumbled Jerry.

He did what he could for the child's comfort, and returned to his store. Then he pitched the cider-press into the yard back of the store.

"Last of the stuff I will sell, and Hannibal shall come back to-night," declared Jerry.

Back came Hannibal, to look as sweet as once he had looked sour.

Jerry did not tell his customers why he stopped the making of cider,—whether a stone had trigged the wheel, or the wheel was rusty, and needed "iling." It is a fact, however, that the wheel never turned again.

— "In pursuing my theme I should like to cover more ground, but—" "Buy shoes big enough for your feet, and you'll do it." was the impudent suggestion from the crowd.