

## BALLAD OF THE WORN-OUT SHOE.

This is the tale of the worn-out shoe—  
A tale ever old and a tale ever new.

This shoe belonged to a little girl  
With a sparkling eye and a golden curl,  
And she went with a smile to come  
With this worn-out shoe to John Stevenson.

Stevenson, John, was a cobbler bold,  
And he boarded this shoe like beaten gold;  
And when she came—as she did 'tis true—  
It was "Please wait for a day or two."

Oh, de, John, as you peg and sew,  
To treat a fair young lady so!  
For she went away and she came again  
And the story was ever and always the same.

John worked away with a studious face,  
And pondered much on the handsome grace  
Of the fair little girl, and had no heart  
To mend the shoe, so the two could part.

So John took his time on the worn-out shoe,  
(It ever was mended, 'twixt me and you)  
And counted the moments until she came,  
And softly spoke to himself her name.

And often and often she came, so that  
She used to stay for a while and chat.  
And once a customer swore on a keg  
He'd seen John teaching her how to peg.

Be this as it may I can but tell  
That John into love most deeply fell;  
But he had more courage to take his life  
Than to ask the lady to be his wife.

For she was raised in the finest schools,  
And he was raised to his cobbler's tools;  
But still she came with her beautiful face,  
And made him a man in his leathery place.

And he fixed a store for her sake alone,  
And he fixed himself with a brush and comb,  
And he learned to sell and he learned to buy,  
For the sake of the girl with the laughing eye.

John, the cobbler, was now no more—  
Mr. "John Stevenson" graced the door—  
But the lady never the store came near,  
And John was sad and the place was drear.

"What ails the lady?" thought John at last,  
As he saw her face as it hurried past;  
"Perhaps she has found whom she soon will wed,"  
And then John Stevenson bowed his head.

Long were the days till she came again,  
And when she came she was wet with rain;  
"If you please," she said, "Mr. Stevenson,  
I will take my shoe if you have it done."

He sadly took down the worn little shoe,  
And brushed the dust on his waistcoat new,  
And mumbled it tenderly, and looked down  
On the golden hair just turning brown.

And John, he thought, as he stood there then,  
If they should part and not meet again,  
He would feel worse in his splendid store  
Than when a cobbler two years before.

As he stood there thinking, the worn-out shoe  
Fell on the counter between the two,  
And she took it up in her little hand,  
"Dear me it is almost too poor to mend."

"True," said John, "let me give you a pair  
That are strong and stout and certain to wear."  
"No, no!" she said, in a frightened way,  
"I cannot buy any shoes to-day."

And then, as she lifted her hands he saw  
That her gown was faded, her finger raw;  
That her little lip quivered with fright or fear,  
And in her eye there glistened a tear.

This was too much for John Stevenson,  
And down on the counter the shoes he flung,  
And into his arms he folded the girl  
With the faded gown and the golden curl.

"No! no," she cried, as she struggled wild,  
"I'm poor, Mr. Stevenson, poor as a child."  
We lost all we had—we are rich no more—  
And now I must earn what I scorned before."

Then John, with the grace of a knight of old,  
Asked for the story—the story was told—  
The story of Fortune all over the town,  
Of his going up and of her going down.

And while she spoke, with an absent air  
She covered the shoe with her hand so fair,  
And he, in a manner slow and still,  
Placed his on hers—ah, that magic thrill!

And then, when the story was done and told,  
John, with a manner quite manly and bold,  
Declared he would give her her shoes for life  
In exchange for the shoe, and herself—as wife.

And then John found what he never had lost,  
And bought the shoe at a willing cost,  
And lifted his face with a happy glow,  
From the golden hair on his vest below.

Up on a shelf there is stored away  
An old worn shoe to this very day.  
Amid the stocks that are great and fine,  
It stands like the ghost of an olden time.

Its toes are out and its heels are down,  
The tongues are lost and the leather is brown,  
But often still (between me and you),  
Two hands rest lightly upon that shoe.

## MILLICENT'S DOWER.

The night was gloomy, and filled with wild  
gusts of wind that raved about the turrets of the  
castellated mansion and sang in the wide and  
dreary halls. It could have no better place than  
Berkeley House in which to waken ghostly  
sounds, for it was a rambling and disjointed  
building, full of deep bay-windows and corners  
that seemed made for the delectation of un-  
earthly beings.

The old mansion was a relic from the early  
colonial days, and was said to represent the  
character of its master, who was noted for his  
eccentricities, even in those days of witches and  
goblins grim.

Disappointed in some cherished ambition or  
love affair, Simon Berkeley came to America  
when great forests still shadowed the shores of  
New England, and, travelling along the sea-  
coast, found a hill that looked southward and  
overlooked broad sweeps of sea, and there built  
him a home.

Huge elms rose close to the massive stone  
walls, and where time and disuse had crum-  
bled the casements the branches of these had  
forced their way into the silent rooms, and, when  
the wind shook them, shivered as though fear  
held them in a firm grasp.

Below there were old orchards, wherein the  
warm sunlight made golden-edged shadows in  
the long summer days, but which were now full  
of storm-songs that came ringing up the hill  
with a strange weirdness borne from the sea, for  
this was just below them, and its foamy waves  
came in on the rocky ledge that held them in  
check, beating them with a fierce fury that sent  
the spray high in air.

The building had a great hall that ran through  
its main part, and from this two wings ran away  
to the east and west, these containing the apart-  
ments that were intended for family use. They  
were solid and of a peculiar construction, those  
in the west wing having broad, deep windows,  
while narrow and strongly-barred casements  
gave the east wing a dungeon look, that carried  
one back to the dark ages.

Simon Berkeley married shortly after his  
house was finished, his bride being a woman as  
strange and eccentric as himself. The result of  
this marriage was a daughter, who, in direct con-  
tradiction to received tenets, was as beautiful  
and bright as a June morning, and possessed a  
soul as lovely as her body.

The mother died shortly after the birth of this  
child, and, with two old servants to supply their  
needs, the stern and pitiless man shut himself  
and his daughter up on the estate he had pur-  
chased, and their manner of existence became a  
mystery.

There were many stories told concerning Old  
Simon, as he was called. People said that he  
was so hard and cold that if he stood near a  
blooming plant, the flowers would shiver and  
close as though a storm was beating them. There  
were rumours concerning harsh words  
spoken to the woman he had married, and more  
than one whisper said that her death was caused  
by cruel blows from his hands.

But she passed away and was forgotten, and  
old Simon lived on in the great house, with his  
daughter and the two servants for company.

The girl was named Millicent, and was very  
beautiful. This was all the few neighbours  
knew. They caught occasional glimpses of her  
golden hair, as she played in the garden lying  
south of the building, and sometimes heard a  
merry voice rippling into song among the great  
elms that rose about the mossy stone walls.

Years passed, and the girl grew to woman-  
hood. Then a young man came to the place, a  
stranger to all living there. Some said he was a  
lawyer, some thought him an artist; but where  
his home was no one knew, nor did he tell. It  
was soon noticed that he frequented the vicinity  
of Berkeley House, and once he was seen talk-  
ing to Millicent Berkeley in the wood that lay  
back of her home.

Then he suddenly disappeared, and no one  
ever saw him again; but the next autumn some  
boys, seeking nuts, found the skeleton of a man  
deep in the silence of the woods back of the great  
stone mansion, and there were some shreds of  
mouldering garments lying near, which were  
recognized as being familiar in colour to those he  
had worn.

How he had come to his death no one knew,  
though Simon Berkeley's name became strangely  
linked with the affair, and many said that he  
knew more of it than he cared to tell.

With the disappearance of this stranger Mil-  
licent Berkeley ceased to be seen, and whither she  
had gone no one knew.

A few years after this a young child was seen  
playing in the garden where Millicent had  
played when young, and this new comer had  
golden hair and a musical voice that were  
strangely like hers.

Ten years after the disappearance of Millicent  
Simon Berkeley was found dead, sitting at his  
writing-desk, his gray hair falling about the  
lifeless hands on which his head rested.

His will gave the estate to the boy who had  
been seen about the grounds, and whom he called  
Wardour Berkeley.

From Simon Berkeley's death to the time of  
which this story tells the building had remained  
in the possession of the Berkeleys, son succeed-  
ing father as generation followed generation.

The estate, however, had dwindled from its  
once grand proportions, though a large tract of  
land still remained, heavily encumbered by a  
mortgage, the result of the second Wardour Ber-  
keley's profligacy. The old house and the or-  
chards and gardens about it were free, the will  
of old Simon having made them heirlooms in the  
family; but the house, though originally strong  
and massive, was growing ruined from want of  
care—the care that money alone can give.

There were stories that it was haunted, several  
people affirming that they had seen unearthly  
forms pacing the terrace in front of its broad  
hall, or moving before its ruined windows.

The general description made these a stern old  
man, and a beautiful, golden-haired woman;  
but, strangely as it may seem, though many  
people residing in the neighbourhood testified to  
having seen these, they were never visible to the  
inhabitants of the house.

At this time the owner of the old house was  
named Millicent Berkeley, a girl as beautiful

and bright as the one whose strange disappear-  
ance, two centuries or more before, was still a  
mystery. She was the daughter of the last  
Wardour Berkeley, a man who had let his pas-  
sions rule till they sank a noble genius in the  
ruin of a drivelling drunkard, and the great  
cause of wonder was how one so pure and so sweet  
and womanly could come from such a father.

His wastefulness had left the lands belonging  
to the old estate burdened with heavy claims,  
so that when he died the half-ruined house was  
all that the daughter could call her own.

His funeral drew together many of the distant  
connections of the family—off-shoots that had  
carried the name to far-away places—and among  
these came one Simon Berkeley, a young man  
just graduated from college, proud, handsome,  
courageous, talented, generous, ambitious and  
warm-hearted, but poor.

He had used up what little money he inher-  
ited in obtaining an education, and now stood  
ready to enter life's fight and bravely battle up  
to victory.

He had never mingled much with women, for  
he had lost his mother when a babe, and no sis-  
ters had been given him; and knowing that his  
success in the future depended on himself alone,  
he had kept steadily at his studies, and carried  
off the highest honours of his class.

Then came the funeral of Wardour Berkeley,  
and Simon met Millicent.

She was like a revelation to him, so lovely  
and so lovable that his soul went out to her in  
a great cry for love; and when the obsequies  
were over and the other members of the family  
were gone, he lingered on at the old house,  
striving by all the many powers he possessed to  
make Millicent happy.

That he succeeded can easily be imagined,  
for Millicent had led a lonely life, and her sun-  
lit days had been very few.

The days of his stay grew into weeks, and  
these lengthened out to months. But he was  
not idle all this time; he could not afford to  
be. He read law for hours, filling his mind  
with a store of knowledge to help him in the  
future.

Autumn came and with it the settlement of  
the estate, this showing Millicent that she was  
almost penniless, for she could not sell the  
house or land near it, and neither were produc-  
tive of an income.

At this time of trial her cousin was of great  
service, and they were drawn closer together.

They were walking in the orchard one bright  
October afternoon, when the beauty of nature,  
clad in her varied splendor and rich with warm  
floods of sunlight, filled their souls with that  
subtle sympathy that awakens love.

It would have been impossible for any man  
of a generous nature to refrain from doing what  
Simon Berkeley then did.

In their walk they came to a terrace that  
overlooked the sunlit sea-reaches, where the  
white sails shone and glittered as they filled and  
swayed in the wind. They had been talking  
of Millicent's business, and she was troubled  
when they reached this point.

They stood silent a little time, and then the  
fair girl suddenly stretching out her hands im-  
plorely to the ocean, said:

"Oh, that we might have the power to fly  
from trouble as easily as those ships glide  
through the sea!"

How could any soul stand unmoved at such a  
time! It would have taken a hard and storm-  
tossed man to withstand the pleading in her  
voice, and Simon Berkeley was not a person of  
this kind. He took the outstretched hands re-  
verently in his, and looking into the clear,  
sweet eyes, said: "My darling, will you not  
let me try to keep this trouble away, my love?  
—for I love you."

She could not doubt this, there was such a  
great light in the deep, gray eyes looking into  
hers; and as she saw this, a sweet rest came to  
her soul, and, with a low, glad cry, she nestled  
in the clasp of the arms so willing to take her.  
So they stood for a long time, holding that holy  
converse that love brings, and then again  
walked slowly through the orchard aisles.

"I should like to keep the old acres," said  
Millicent; "so many of our family have called  
them theirs, and lived and loved among them,  
that it seems like a sacrilege to let them go."

"They shall not go," answered Simon; "we  
will save them; for I can work now, and to him  
who works with a brave soul all things are  
easy."

He was hopeful and strong, for love and sun-  
shine are the great powers that give the soul  
hope and gladness.

"Yes, I feel that we can and will keep  
them," she said, "for we can help each other."

"And I must not stay here much longer,  
dear, for when the work is ready and the hands  
willing there should be no lingering by the  
way."

"I know, and yet it is hard to let you go,  
just as I seem to have gained you," and her  
little hands clung close to his arm.

Love's sweet words are said in lonely places,  
and to those that love rule, the world is full of  
light and glory.

"You must not go before my birthday," Mil-  
licent said at last, after an hour of rich plea-  
sure spent in talking over the plans that were  
to be perfected and performed in the future.

"I can wait till then," he answered, and so  
it was settled.

Millicent's birthday came—a dark day, full  
of great masses of sober gray clouds. The  
wind rose when the sun set, and its notes  
sang loudly in the old elms, and went sweeping  
inland, laden with the wind melodies of the sea.

The old house seemed full of strange sounds,  
and the two young people soon became aware  
of a weird power that pervaded the building.  
They could see nothing, and no sounds reached  
them save those made by the wind.

They were sitting near a ruddy and crack-  
ling wood fire, which blazed on the hearth,  
and sent its rose-coloured light out into the  
gathering shadows.

As the darkness increased, the feeling that  
affected them grew more intense, and made  
their conversation sink to lowly murmured  
words.

They had wandered through the deserted  
rooms talking of the old house and the people  
who had lived in it. Millicent said they had  
left no room unvisited, and after this survey  
they ate their supper, and then settled them-  
selves by the fire for a long chat, as Simon was  
to leave for Boston the next day, there to try  
his strength in the battle and turmoil of life.

As they sat thus, Millicent's low voice  
making sweet echoes for the fierce storm-songs  
of the wind, this strange feeling came and  
grew so intense that they thought some one  
was with them.

Millicent was first to speak of it.

"Do you not feel oddly?" said she. "There  
seem to be others besides ourselves in the  
room, and yet I can see no one."

"I have the same impression, and yet, as  
you say, can see nothing. The house must  
be haunted."

"There are stories to that effect current  
among the neighbours, and I surely believe we  
have some one in the room with us, though  
I have no faith in either ghosts or spirits."

"Nor have I; so we will talk of other  
things, and perhaps this feeling will then  
pass away," and he changed their conversation  
to their approaching separation, and the condi-  
tion of the old house.

"Oh, I do so wish that we had money  
enough to redeem the land and restore the  
building, for it is the home of the Berkeleys,"  
said Millicent; "then we could come here  
every summer, and make it a haven of rest,  
and you know the railroad brings it very near  
the city."

"I know that it does," and, stooping abrupt-  
ly, Simon Berkeley sprang to his feet.

"Do you know there is some one in this  
room?" he said; "I felt their garments brush-  
ing past me."

Millicent rose and came to him.

"I feel the same presence, what can it mean?"  
she cried.

"I do not know; I can see no one; but this  
feeling grows stronger all the while, and it  
seems to be like one beckoning me to follow."

"I have the same impression. What shall  
we do?"

"Let us see where it will lead us," and he  
took up the lamp that stood on the table.

She clung to his arm, and together they  
went slowly to the door, and out into the  
passage leading to the great hall.

The wind was raging fiercely outside, and  
sent wild sounds echoing through the old house.  
The elms swayed about the stone walls, and  
circling gusts of air came from the passages by  
which they walked, and made the lamp's flame  
flicker, and made weird shadows in the gloom  
that circled close about their way.

Slowly but steadily they went on across the  
great hall and along a passage leading to the  
eastern wing. They had traversed the same  
route during the day, and the way was familiar.  
Through the musty apartments they went, the  
mouldering tapestries of colonial days flutter-  
ing in the storm-filled air that came rushing  
through the broken casements.

Slowly onward they went, led by the strange  
power whose influence they felt, but which  
they could not see, and at last came to the  
great room that finished the suite. The door  
leading to this they had left closed when they  
visited it in the morning, but now it was  
thrown wide open. They distinctly remem-  
bered closing it, and looked at each other in  
astonishment.

"The servants never come here, and we  
fastened this door," said Millicent.

"Yes, but we are being led, you know."

"I know it, and will go on to the end."

They passed through the open doorway, and  
Simon held the lamp high aloft.

As the light flashed along the walls, a cry of  
surprise escaped them.

The wind had torn away the faded hangings  
with which the room was decorated, and its  
force seemed to have opened a heavy, narrow  
panel door, whose fastening-bolt had rusted  
loose. This door was fitted to match the wall,  
and opened on a flight of steps leading up. So  
closely had it been set that no one unacquainted  
with its locality would have thought that it  
existed.

Simon led the way up the steps, and soon  
they came to a small chamber with a thin slit  
in the wall to admit light and air. A cur-  
tained recess was at one end, and as Simon  
Berkeley drew the tattered damask aside a  
shudder of horror thrilled them.

There, amid the mouldering fragments of rich  
cloth and linen, lay a skeleton, the fleshless skull  
enveloped in a mass of shining, golden hair.

"My God! who can this be?" gasped Simon.

"I do not know; but see, here is writing on  
the wall," said Millicent, whose glance had  
turned from the ghastly picture.

Simon followed her look, and saw, cut by  
some sharp-pointed instrument, several long  
lines of writing. The letters were the quaint  
characters of the olden times, and dampness