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Poetry.

HUMBLE LIFE

Tell me not that he's a poor man,
That his dress is coarse and bare;
Tell me not his daily pittance
Is a workman's scanty fare.
Tell me not his birth is humble,
That his parentage is low;
I, the honest in my action,
That is all I want to know.

Is his word to be relied on?
Has his character no blame?
Then I care not of his low birth—
Then I care not of his name.
Would he from an unjust action
Turn away from sinful eyes?
Would he then defend another,
Smother on the scaffold die?

Would he spend his hard-gained earnings
On a brother in distress?
Would he seek the afflicted,
And the weak one's wrong redress?
Then he is a man deserving
Of my love and my esteem,
And I care not of his birth place,
In the eyes of man may seem.

Let it be a low thatched roof—
Let it be a clay built cot—
Let it be the parish work-house—
In my eyes matters not.
And if others will disdain him,
As inferior to their caste,
Let them do it—I'll befriend him
As a brother to the last.

Your, personally, relatively and professionally,
I remain, yours very truly, W.

Interesting Tale.

THE SOLDIER'S WIFE.

A Thrilling Skotch.

One of the most striking cases of prescience of mind and self-possession of which we have any recollection, came to light on a trial which took place some years since in Ireland. The story looks like a fiction, but it is said to be strictly true. A woman travelling alone a road to join her husband, who was a soldier quartered at Athlone, was joined by a pedlar, who was going the same way. They entered into conversation during a walk of some hours, and as the day began to wane, they agreed that they should stop for the night at a house of entertainment, and pursue their pedestrian journey the next day.

They reached a humble inn, situated in a lonely spot by the road, and fatigued by a long day's walk, they were glad to find themselves under a roof. Having refreshed themselves with the substantial supper set before them, they expressed a wish to retire. They were shown into the travellers' room and went to rest in their respective beds. The pedlar, before retiring, had called the landlord aside and given into his keeping the pack which he had unstrapped from his back till the morning, telling him that it contained a considerable sum of money and much valuable property. They were not long in bed before the pedlar fell into a sound sleep; but the poor woman, perhaps from nervousness, or from thoughts of meeting her husband next day, lay awake. A couple of hours might have passed, when she saw the door slowly open, and a person entering holding a light, which she screened with his hand. She instantly recognized in him one of the young men she had seen blow-saw to the landlord.

He advanced with stealthy steps to the bedside of the pedlar, and watched him for a few seconds. He then went out, and entered again with his brother and father, who held in his hand a large paper bag. They went up stairs to the bedchamber, or the pedlar lay in a deep sleep. One of the young men drew out a knife, and while the father held the lamp so as to catch the wood, he cut the poor victim's throat from ear to ear. A slight half-awake groan, and all was still, save the cautious movements of the party engaged in the deed. They had brought with them a large sack, into which they quickly thrust the unresisting body. The poor woman lay silent in her bed, fearing that her turn would come next. She heard low mutterings among the men, from which she gleaned that they were debating whether they should murder her, too, as they feared that she might give it in her power to betray them.

One of them said he was sure she was asleep, and that there was no occasion to sleep themselves more; but to make sure of this being the case one of them came to the bedside with the candle in his hand, and the other with a knife. She kept her eyes closed as if in sleep, and had such complete command over herself as not to betray in her countenance any sign that she was conscious of what was going on. The candle was placed close to her eyes; the knife drawn across close to her throat; she never wincled, or showed any movement of face or limb that she apprehended danger. So the men whispered that she was sound asleep—that nothing was to be feared from her, and they went out of the room, removing the sack which contained the body of the murdered man.

How long must that night of horror have seemed to the poor lone woman—how frightful was its stillness and darkness! The presence of mind which had so astonishingly enabled her to act a part to which she owed her life, sustained her through all the trying scenes which she had yet to pass. She did not hurry from her room at an unreasonable hour, but waited until she heard all the family stir for some time; she then went down and said she believed she had overslept herself in consequence of being greatly tired. She asked where the pedlar was, and was told that he was in too great a hurry to wait for her, but that he had left a sixpence to pay for her breakfast. She sat down composedly to that meal, and forced herself to partake with apparent appetite of the food set before her. When the meal was over, she took leave of the family, and went on her way without the least appearance of discomposure or mistrust. She had proceeded but a short way when she was joined by two grapping-looking women. One look was sufficient to convince her that they were the two young men, and one thought to assure her that she was yet in their power, and on the very verge of destruction. They walked side by side, entered into conversation, asked her where she was going, and told her that their road lay the same way; they questioned her as to where she had lodged the night before, and made most in-

ute inquiries about the family inhabiting the house of entertainment. Her answers quite unembarrassed, and she said the people of the house had appeared to be decent and civil, and had treated her very well.

For two hours the young men continued by her side, watching with the most scrutinizing glance any change in her countenance, and asking questions which had she not been fully self-possessed, might have put her off her guard. It was not till her dreaded companions had left her, and till she saw her husband coming along the road to meet her, that she let her self-command which she had so successfully exercised, and throwing herself into his arms fainted away.

A NIGHT OF ALARM.

AN OLD LADY'S STORY.

My sister Julia was always very courageous. In our youth the country was wider than now but it might truly be said of her that she was not brought up in the woods to be scared by an owl. She would traverse the most unfrequented paths, wooding at my timidity. There was nothing masculine, however, in Julia's appearance; she was simply a sweet, joyous child, with an absence of fear in her character, and a consequent clearness of perception in all cases of supposed or real danger.

When I was sixteen, and Julia eighteen, my father hired a laborer named Hans Schmidt, a Hessian, who had been in the British service, and who at the close of the war, had deserted from his regiment. He was a powerful man, with a heavy, furrowed countenance, and both Julia and myself were struck at the very first with an instinctive dread of him. The feeling in Julia hardly to be called the character of fear, but was one rather of loathing; yet, she could have feared anything I think it would have been that men, for she had an intuitive perception that he was demon-like, even before she saw what he looked like. One evening, she read of a horrible murder that thrilled her blood; and upon turning her eyes from the paper, they encountered those of Hans Schmidt. There was something terrible in his glance; and from that moment, she resolved that the villain should be turned away. As her wishes were always of much weight with my father, the latter gave the Hessian his discharge.

Soon after this, Julia and I were left alone in the house both our parents being absent on a visit to the following day, and we happened to be without a female servant at the moment (for we only kept one). So Julia and I had been remarkably busy, since early morning, making various household arrangements with which we intended to surprise and please the old people upon their return, and being unusually weary, proceeded to our chamber at an early hour of the evening. We had partially dressed ourselves, when Julia turned hastily to the window.

I declared, she said, the evening is so pleasant that it is a pity to remain indoors. I don't feel a bit sleepy; let's go down upon the lawn. We descended the stairs. How little I imagined what was in Julia's heart! Harry Irving came up just as we reached the lawn. He was only casually passing the house. Julia engaged him in conversation, and he came and joined us. My sister was more than usually lively and engaging.

Where are Tom and Edgar, and Will? she asked, alluding to his brothers.

Oh, replied Harry, they are over at uncle's. They will be coming back soon.

The uncle's farm was a mile off, and the own house was about half that distance. The three young men soon appeared upon the road, and to my surprise, Julia arose at their approach, and proceeded to meet them. Then she returned to Harry and me, and called us aside from the door.

Now, Harry, you not be nervous, she said. Keep quiet, and do not speak above your breath. There is a man under our bed—there he is, and she clapped her hand over my mouth—a man under our bed and the young girls are going up to secure him!

They all provided themselves with heavy sticks; and then, guided by Julia, ascended the stairs.

As to myself, I could not follow them, but remained trembling and motionless upon the doorstep. Never did I experience a greater sense of relief than when the assaulting party descended, looking partly amused and partly amused, having found nothing to justify their sudden alarm. Julia was in an agony of mortification, and wept piteously, for although but half convinced that her apprehension was groundless, the idea that she, who had never felt so low as to be in the eyes of those young men, was inopportune. The man she said must have taken the alarm and fled out of the back door, for she could not have been so deceived. Our young friends, more in pity for her mortification than from any belief in the reality of the night intruder, offered to remain in the vicinity till morning; but she would not listen to the proposal, and they thus took their departure.

I was very sorry to see them go, and watched their forms till they were out of sight, for the affair of the evening had almost frightened me into hysterics. Julia however, at once rushed to the chamber, and flinging herself on the bed, continued "stupidly weeping." She had placed herself in a character she despised, and her men would be the trib of the night-berd. I followed her, but neither of us could compose ourselves sufficiently to sleep. The clock on the mantle piece struck eleven and then "tick, tick, tick," it went for the next dreary hour. Julia at length ceased weeping, and lay in thought, only an occasional sigh betraying her wretchedness. Again the clock struck, "tick, tick, tick," but it had not reached the final stroke, when Julia, leaping lightly from the bed flung herself upon an immense chest at the further end of the room.

Oh, Mary! she cried, "quick! quick! He is here! He is here! I cannot hold the lid—he will get out! Quick! quick!

There was indeed some living thing inside the chest; for in spite of Julia's weight, the lid was lifted, and then, as the instinct of self-preservation overcame my terror, I sprang to her assistance. Whom or what had caught, imagine yourself holding down the lid of a showman's box, with a box-constrictor writhing beneath; or keeping a cage top in its place by your weight alone, with a lioness struggling to tear his way out and devour you—

But we were not long in suspense. Horrid execrations, half-German, half-English, filled our very hearts, and we knew that there, in the midnight hour of an old chest, was both our ourselves and Hans Schmidt.

At times it started up, and once or twice his fingers were caught in the opening. Then finding our combined weight too much for his strength, it would become evident that he was endeavoring to force out an end of the chest, but he could not work to advantage. Camped within such limits, his giant power of muscle was not wholly available; he could neither kick nor strike with full force; and hence his chief hope rested upon his ability to lift us up and fall and all. Even then, in the absolute horror that might have been supposed to possess her a queer feeling of exultation sprang up in Julia's heart.

I was right, Mary, she cried. They went think the a fool now, will they? I ain't to be astounded to see Harry Irving?

Poor Julia! under the circumstances, the idea was really ludicrous; but nature was everywhere as-ert herself but Julia hated a crowd. Thump! thump! thump! Lid, lid, and side alternately felt the cramped but powerful blows. Then came the lid—the steady, straining and desperate lift, and Julia cheered no when the cover shook, and rose, and trembled.

It can't get out Mary! We are safe; only keep your full weight on the lid; and do not be nervous either; it is almost morning! She knew it was not one o'clock.

But one o'clock came. How I wished it was five! And two o'clock came, and three, and we hoped our prisoner had finally yielded to a fate which must now appear to him inevitable. A small aperture at end of the chest, where there was a fracture in the wood, supplied him with air; and hence we could not hope that he would become weak through suffocation. He was evidently resting from the very necessity of the case, for his exertions had been prodigious. There was a faint streak of morning in the sky; and there, upon the chest, we sat and watched for the gleam to broaden.

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SELLING THE STATE OF MAINE.—A very singular scene occurred at the State House in Augusta, Me., last Wednesday. A Mrs. Thornton, of Portland, had caused a notice of a sale of the State of Maine to be posted on the doors of the State House, and at ten o'clock she proceeded to satisfy her claim by selling the Commonwealth. Several bids were made by the Senators and Representatives at fabulous prices, but finally the lady struck it off to herself and took her seat in the Speaker's chair. As far as this went all well; but the time for the opening of the session had not yet arrived, and Mrs. Thornton was politely requested to come down from her position, but she declined to do so, saying that she had bought in the State and must stay and keep her position. Upon the clerk ordering the messenger to remove her, a scene of profane confusion ensued. She utterly refused to be ejected by force. The men began to threaten to go out quietly, but she was deaf to their entreaties; she resisted fiercely, and was finally persuaded to retire and was just seen in the State Library looking up legal authorities to sustain her claim. The lady in question is regarded as deranged upon this subject, although perfectly sane on all others.

This is the latest for brides: A plain gold bracelet which fastens with a lock and gold key, and which the husband places on her arm at the altar, locking it and placing the key on his watch chain. The bracelet "cannot be removed without the husband's assistance, and thus both are constantly reminded of each other."

Some Irish young men altered a sign in Leeds, England, one night recently, and made it read thus: "The gold hairdresser." They had painted out the O of the barber's name, which was Theobald.

How can you take 45 from 45, and let the remainder be 45? Thus:
987654321—45
123456789—45
864197532—45

A clergyman offered consolation to a dying New Orleans merchant, telling him that it was nature's decree that men should die; that resurrection was a Christian virtue, and that it was best to die. "What screened the alderman, sweet to die? Yes, my dear friend, it is sweet to die! Don't you think so? Yes, sir, but I ain't fond of sweet things."

Here is what a physician is reported to have said when asked by his mother what was the matter with her little boy:—Why, it's only a confirmed exogamic antisepsis-medically denominated from the germ of the animal refrigerator, producing a gradual source of irritability in the person's epiglottis of the mental profundity. Ah? returned the mother, what's what I told Betsey; but she "lowed it was wurrin'."

Why is blind man's-buff like sympathy? Because it's a fellow feeling for another.

Why is a spider a good correspondent? Because he drops a line by every post.

Why is the Isthmus of Suez like the first in a staircase. Because it's between two seas.

What is the key-note to good manners? Be natural.

Why is the letter "w" like Schmidt? Because it makes ill will.

So long as a woman loves, she loves right on, steadily. A man has to do something between whiles.

If a spider were late for dinner, what would he do? Take a fly.

Correspondence.

DEAR SPANBARD.—Many events of much importance have occurred since I wrote you last—events which will not soon be forgotten by the inhabitants of this Province. The great storm, the Earthquake, the Munro tragedy, and others of lesser importance, have all tended to keep the public mind in a state of extreme agitation, and one horror has succeeded another with such startling rapidity, that we hesitatingly ask "What next?"

From the "Standard," which I regularly receive, and carefully read, I find that St. Andrews, too, has had its excitement, and no wonder. The idea of chasing a Rail-road, from such an interior to such a seaport, is such an incredible thing, that no one can believe that the assigned reason is the real one. Of course, a poor excuse is better than none, but disinterested observers are not deceived. I think it will be remembered that, at a certain public meeting held in your Town about a year ago, a certain Railway man, to fill the fears of certain suspicious individuals who were bold enough to doubt the sincerity of certain proposals that were made, distinctly stated on the authority of Lord Chalmers that railroads were public property and could not be closed out by Act of Parliament. And yet, wonderful to tell, in a very short months, the track became so terribly unsafe, and the trade of the town has so rapidly diminished, that the second seaport of the country must be cut off from all communication with the interior, and her legitimate trade carried up to a narrow and frozen stream. A story is told of a Yankee who burned gas all day in his store, because it was cheaper than sunlight, and may as it is cheaper to ship from St. Andrews, after all, I am much gratified to know that you are resolved to stand up for your rights, and notwithstanding the odds against you now, justice will assuredly triumph.

Of the weather I need not speak. Such a mild open winter we have had for some years—indeed it is a little too much so for the comfort of those who have much to do to do. And although we have weather here that can have upon the seaboard, yet we have had nothing like an old-fashioned snow storm up to date.

I regret to see that your highly esteemed townsman, J. H. Whitlock, Esq., has passed away. May his many virtues be imitated by survivors.

I am glad to see that a Branch of the Young Men's Christian Association has been formed in St. Andrews, and have no doubt but that it will be a means of doing much good to the rising race.

You will be pleased to learn, taking as you do such an interest in the educational elevation of our people, that Thomas Harrison, Esq., Head Master of the Sheffield Academy, has had conferred upon him the Degree of L. L. D., by the University of Dublin at the winter commencement on Dec. 15, 1869. If, as I believe, he is the only New Brunswick who has won this degree, Dr. Harrison may well consider it a laurel worth wearing. The School continues to prosper, and has now a larger number of pupils than at any previous period.

Wishing you a happy and prosperous New

Year, personally, relatively and professionally, I remain, yours very truly, W.

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DEAR SPANBARD.—Many events of much importance have occurred since I wrote you last—events which will not soon be forgotten by the inhabitants of this Province. The great storm, the Earthquake, the Munro tragedy, and others of lesser importance, have all tended to keep the public mind in a state of extreme agitation, and one horror has succeeded another with such startling rapidity, that we hesitatingly ask "What next?"

From the "Standard," which I regularly receive, and carefully read, I find that St. Andrews, too, has had its excitement, and no wonder. The idea of chasing a Rail-road, from such an interior to such a seaport, is such an incredible thing, that no one can believe that the assigned reason is the real one. Of course, a poor excuse is better than none, but disinterested observers are not deceived. I think it will be remembered that, at a certain public meeting held in your Town about a year ago, a certain Railway man, to fill the fears of certain suspicious individuals who were bold enough to doubt the sincerity of certain proposals that were made, distinctly stated on the authority of Lord Chalmers that railroads were public property and could not be closed out by Act of Parliament. And yet, wonderful to tell, in a very short months, the track became so terribly unsafe, and the trade of the town has so rapidly diminished, that the second seaport of the country must be cut off from all communication with the interior, and her legitimate trade carried up to a narrow and frozen stream. A story is told of a Yankee who burned gas all day in his store, because it was cheaper than sunlight, and may as it is cheaper to ship from St. Andrews, after all, I am much gratified to know that you are resolved to stand up for your rights, and notwithstanding the odds against you now, justice will assuredly triumph.

Of the weather I need not speak. Such a mild open winter we have had for some years—indeed it is a little too much so for the comfort of those who have much to do to do. And although we have weather here that can have upon the seaboard, yet we have had nothing like an old-fashioned snow storm up to date.

I regret to see that your highly esteemed townsman, J. H. Whitlock, Esq., has passed away. May his many virtues be imitated by survivors.

I am glad to see that a Branch of the Young Men's Christian Association has been formed in St. Andrews, and have no doubt but that it will be a means of doing much good to the rising race.

You will be pleased to learn, taking as you do such an interest in the educational elevation of our people, that Thomas Harrison, Esq., Head Master of the Sheffield Academy, has had conferred upon him the Degree of L. L. D., by the University of Dublin at the winter commencement on Dec. 15, 1869. If, as I believe, he is the only New Brunswick who has won this degree, Dr. Harrison may well consider it a laurel worth wearing. The School continues to prosper, and has now a larger number of pupils than at any previous period.

Wishing you a happy and prosperous New