

Poetry.

A MAN WITH AN AIM.

Give me a man with an aim,
Whatever that aim may be,
Whether it's wealth or whether it's fame,
It matters not to me.
Let him walk in the path of right,
And keep his aim in sight,
And work and pray in faith away,
With his eye on the glittering height.

Give me a man who says,
"I will do something well,
And make the fleeting days
A story of labor tell."
Though the aim he has be small,
It is better than none at all;
With something to do the whole year through,
He will not stumble or fall.

But Satan weaves a snare,
For the feet of those who stray,
With never a thought or care
Where the path may lead away.
The man who hath no aim,
Not only leaves no name
When this life's done, but ten to one
He leaves a record of shame.

Give me a man whose heart
Is filled with ambition's fire;
Who sets his mark in the start,
And moves it higher and higher.
Better to die in the strife,
The hands with labor rife,
Than to glide with the stream in an idle dream,
And live a purposeless life.

FILL NO GLASS FOR ME.

BY S. G. FOSTER.

Oh, comrades, fill no glass for me,
To drown my soul in liquid flame;
For if I drink, the toast shall be—
To blighted fortune, health and fame;
Yet, though I long to quell the strife
That passion holds against my life,
Still boon companions you may be,
But, comrades, fill no glass for me!

I know a breast that once was light,
Whose patient sufferings need my care,
I know a heart that once was bright,
But drooping hopes have nestled there.
Then while the tear-drops nightly steal
From wounded hearts that I should heal,
Though boon companions you may be,
—Oh, comrades, fill no glass for me!

When I was young I felt the tide
Of aspirations undefiled;
But manhood's years is still the pride,
My parents centered in their child.
Then by a mother's sacred tear,
By all that memory should revere,
Though boon companions you may be,
Oh, comrades, fill no glass for me.

Tales and Sketches.

QUEEN SEMIRAMIS.

"Of all my wives," said King Ninus to Semiramis, "it is you I love best. None have charms and graces like you, and for you I would willingly resign them all."

"Let the king consider well what he says," replied Semiramis. "What if I were to take him at his word?"

"Do so," returned the monarch; "while beloved by you I am indifferent to others."

"So, then, if I asked it," said Semiramis, "you would banish all your other wives, and love me alone? I alone should be your consort, the partaker of your power, and Queen of Assyria?"

"Queen of Assyria! Are you not so already," said Ninus, "since you reign by your beauty over its king?"

"No—no," answered his lovely mistress; "I am at present only a slave whom you love. I reign not—I merely charm. When I give an order, you are consulted before I am obeyed."

"And to reign, then, you think so great a pleasure?"

"Yes, to one who has never experienced it."

"And do you wish then to experience it? Would you like to reign a few days in my place?"

"Take care, O king! do not offer too much."

"No, I repeat, it," said the captivated monarch. "Would you like, for one whole day, to be sovereign mistress of Assyria? If you would, I consent to it."

"And shall all which I command be executed?"

"Yes, I will resign to you, for one entire day, my power and my golden sceptre."

"And when shall this be?"

"To-morrow, if you like."

"I do," said Semiramis; and she let her head fall on the shoulder of the king, like a beautiful woman asking pardon for some caprice which has been yielded to.

The next morning Semiramis called her women, and commanded them to dress her magnificently. On her head she wore a crown of precious stones, and appeared thus before Ninus, who enchanted with her beauty, ordered all the officers of the palace to assemble in the state-chamber, and his golden sceptre to be brought from the treasury. He then entered the chamber, leading Semiramis by the hand. All prostrated themselves before the aspect of the king, who conducted Semiramis to the throne, and seated her upon it. Then ordering the whole assembly to rise, he

announced to the court that they were to obey, during the whole day, Semiramis as himself. So saying, he took up the golden sceptre, and placing it in the hands of Semiramis, "Queen," said he, "I commit to you the emblem of sacred power; take it, and command with sovereign authority. All here are your slaves, and I myself am nothing more than your servant for the whole of this day. Whoever shall be remiss in executing your orders, let him be punished as if he had disobeyed the commands of the king."

Having thus spoken, the king knelt down before Semiramis, who gave him, with a smile, her hand to kiss. The courtiers then passed in succession, each making oath to execute blindly the orders of Semiramis. When the ceremony was finished, the king made her his compliments, and asked her how she had managed to go through it with so grave and majestic an air.

"While they were promising to obey me," said Semiramis, "I was thinking what I should command each of them to do. I have but one day of power, and I will employ it well."

The king laughed at this reply. Semiramis appeared more piquante and amiable than ever.

"Let us see," said Ninus, "how you will continue your part. By what orders will you begin?"

"Let the secretary of the king approach my throne," said Semiramis, in a loud voice.

The secretary approached, and two slaves placed a little table before him.

"Write," said Semiramis; "under penalty of death, the governor of the citadel of Babylon is ordered to yield up the command of the citadel to him who shall bear this order. Fold it, seal it with the king's seal, and deliver to me this decree. Write, now, under penalty of death, the governor of the slaves of the palace is ordered to resign the command of the slaves into the hands of the person who presents this decree. Write again, under penalty of death, the general of the army encamped under the walls of Babylon is ordered to resign the command of the army to him who shall be the bearer of this order. Fold, seal, and deliver this decree to me."

She took the three orders thus dictated, and put them in her bosom. The whole court was struck with consternation; the king himself was surprised.

"Listen," said Semiramis. "In two hours hence all the officers of the State come and offer me presents, as is the custom on the accession of new princes, and let a festival be prepared for this evening. Now, let all depart. Let my faithful servant Ninus alone remain. I have to consult him upon affairs of State."

When all the rest had gone out—"You see," said Semiramis, "that I know how to play the queen."

Ninus laughed. "My beautiful queen," said he, "you play your part wonderfully well; but if your servant may dare to question you, what would you do with the orders you have dictated?"

"I should be no longer queen, were I obliged to give account of my actions. Nevertheless, this was my motive. I have a vengeance to execute against the three officers whom these orders menace."

"Vengeance! and wherefore?"

"The first, the governor of the citadel, is one-eyed, and frightens me every time I meet him; the second, the chief of the slaves, I hate, because he threatens me with rivals; the third, the general of the army, deprives me too often of your company; you are constantly in the camp."

This reply, in which caprice and flattery were mingled, enchanted Ninus. "Good," said he, laughing. "Here are the three first officers dismissed for very sufficient reasons."

The gentlemen of the court now came to present their gifts to the queen. Some gave precious stones, others of a lower rank, flowers and fruits, and the slaves having nothing to give, could give nothing. Among these last were three young brothers, who had come from the Caucasus with Semiramis, and had rescued the caravan in which the women were from an enormous tiger.

"And you," said she to the three brothers, as they passed the throne, "have you no present to make your queen?"

"No other," replied the first, Zopire, than my life to defend her."

"None other," replied the second, Artaban, "than my sabre against her enemies."

"None other," replied the third, Ascar, "than the respect and admiration which her presence inspires."

"Slaves," said Semiramis, "it is you who have made me the most valuable presents of the whole court, and I will not be ungrateful. You who have offered me your sword against my enemies, take this order, carry it to the general of the army encamped under the walls of Babylon, give it to him, and see what he will do for you. You who have offered me your life for my defence, take this order to the governor of the citadel, and see what he will do for you. And you, who offer me the respect and admiration which my presence inspires, take this order to the commandant of the palace, and see what will be the result."

Never had Semiramis displayed so much gaiety, so much folly, and never was Ninus so captivated. Nor were her charms lessened in his eyes, when a slave, not having executed properly an insignificant order, she commanded his head to be struck off, which was immediately done.

Without bestowing a thought on this trivial matter, Ninus still continued to converse with Semiramis till the evening and the *fete* arrived. When she entered the saloon which had been prepared for the occasion, a slave brought her a plate in which was the head of the decapitated eunuch.

"This well," said she, after having examined it. "Place it on a stake in the court of the palace, that all may see it, and be you there on the spot to proclaim to every one, that the man to whom this head belonged, lived three hours ago, but that having disobeyed my will, his head was separated from his body."

The *fete* was magnificent; a sumptuous banquet was prepared in the gardens, and Semiramis received the homage of all with a grace and majesty perfectly regal; she continually turned to and conversed with Ninus, rendering him the most distinguished honor. "You are," said she, "a foreign king come to visit me in my palace; I must make your visit agreeable to you."

Shortly after the banquet was served. Semiramis confounded and reversed all ranks. Nina was placed at the bottom of the table. He was the first to laugh at this caprice; and the court, following his example, allowed themselves to be placed, without murmuring, according to the will of the queen. She seated near herself she three brothers of Caucasus.

"Are my orders executed?" she demanded of them.

"Yes," they replied.

The *fete* was very gay. A slave having, by force of habit, served the king first, Semiramis had him beaten with rods. His cries mingled with the laughter of the guests. Every one was inclined to merriment. It was a comedy, in which each played his part. Toward the end of the repast, when wine had added to the general gaiety, Semiramis rose from her elevated seat, and said—"My lords, the treasurer of the empire has read me a list of those who this morning have brought me their gifts of congratulation on my joyful accession to the throne. One grandee alone of the court has failed to bring his gift."

"Who is it?" cried Ninus. "He must be punished severely."

"It is you, yourself, my lord—you who speak. What have you given to the queen this morning?"

Ninus rose, and came with a smiling countenance to whisper something in the ear of the queen. "The queen is insulted by her servant," exclaimed Semiramis.

"I embrace your knees to obtain my pardon. Pardon me, beautiful queen," said he, "pardon me." And he added, in a lower tone, "I would that this *fete* were finished."

"You wish, then, that I should abdicate?" said Semiramis. "But no—I have still two hours to reign;" and at the same time she withdrew her hand, which the king was covering with kisses. "I pardon not," said she, in a loud voice, "such an insult on the part of a slave. Slave, prepare thyself to die!"

"Silly child that thou art," said Ninus, still on his knees, "yet I give way to thy folly; but patience, thy reign will soon be over."

"You will not then be angry," said she, in a whisper, "at something I am going to order at this moment?"

"No?" said he.

"Slaves," said she aloud, "seize this man—that Ninus!"

Ninus smiled, and put himself into the hands of the slaves.

"Take him out of the saloon, lead him into the court of the seraglio, prepare everything for his death, and wait my orders."

The slaves obeyed, and Ninus followed them, laughing, into the court of the seraglio. They passed by the head of the disobedient eunuch. Then Semiramis placed herself on a balcony. Ninus had suffered his hands to be tied.

"Hasten to the fortress, Zopire; Assar, do you secure all the gates in the palace."

These orders were given in a whisper, and executed immediately.

"Beautiful Queen," said Ninus, laughing, "this comedy only wants its denouement; pray let it be a prompt one."

"I will," said Semiramis. "Slaves, recollect the eunuch—strike!"

They struck. Ninus had hardly time to utter a cry when his head fell upon the pavement, the smile still upon his lips.

"Now I am Queen of Assyria!" exclaimed Semiramis, "and perish every one, like the eunuch and like Ninus, who dare disobey my orders!"

THE CHAINED HOST.

The potato famine in Ireland was no where felt more severely than in that part of the country where the following story is told as a true tale:

In a small village on the most barren districts of the west of Ireland, there lived a very poor widow, whose sole inheritance from her husband were two healthy children, girls, of the respective ages of three and five. Painfully and by the utmost effort she had contrived to pass two years of her sorrowful widowhood. Bad and scanty food, obtained only by labor too great for her delicate frame, had at last thrown her upon a sick bed, and death, in pity, removed her in a few days and without great suffering from her earthly troubles. The poverty of the whole parish was so great that nothing could be done for the poor orphans. All the neighbors, with the utmost desire to help were too famine

stricken, and heard their own children too often cry in vain for bread, to assist others.

"If the children could only be got to Kilburn, a village some few miles distant," said one of the neighbors, after the poor mother had been buried, "a brother of their father lives there, and he could not possibly refuse to take care of them."

"But matters are as bad there as here," replied another, "and I fear they will be no better off there."

"It cannot be possibly worse than here, for nothing but starvation stares them in the face. If we send them to their relations we have done our duty. We cannot possibly keep them here."

So a carrier, who was going near to Kilburn, as an act of charity took the two girls—Lizzie was seven now and Mary was five—in his cart with him. The timid children kept very quiet and close together, and the carrier hardly looked at them. Towards noon they reached the spot where the cart would turn off. The man lifted them out, showing them the road to the left, and bade them go straight forward, and if they did not turn from the high road they would in about two hours come to the place. He then drove off. The children sobbed as long as they could see the least speck of the cart, and then they both began to cry.

Lizzie ceased her crying first; she took hold of her little sister's hand, who had seated herself on the grass, and said, "Get up, Mary! we must not stay here, if we wish to get to Kilburn. We cannot stop here on the road."

"I am so hungry," sobbed Mary. "We have had nothing to eat all day." And again they both began to cry; for Lizzie was equally hungry.

The children were very weak, and could only drag themselves slowly along. Hand in hand they tottered on. At last Lizzie fancied she saw a house, and pointed towards the spot. But it took them more than a quarter of an hour before they reached the farmhouse, for such it proved to be. With hesitating steps they entered the yard, for they had never begged before in spite of their former misery. But at this moment they could think of nothing else but their terrible hunger. When a few steps from the house they heard the farmer violently scolding one of his men. Then he went into the house, fiercely closed the door after him, so as to make the windows rattle, continuing his abuse all the time. The children, terrified, stood still at the door until the voice ceased. Then Lizzie opened the door and both children entered. The farmer sat in an arm chair by the fire.

"Well, what do you want?" he harshly asked the children, who were too frightened to utter a word and to tell their errand. "Can't you speak?" he asked more roughly.

Lizzie at last took courage, and said gently: "Oh, if you would be soon good as to give us the least little bit to eat—a small piece of bread or a few potatoes."

"I thought so," shouted the farmer; "I was sure you were nothing but beggars, although you don't seem to belong to this neighborhood. We have plenty of those here, and do not want them to come from other parts. We have not bread for ourselves in these hard times. You will get nothing here. Be off, this moment."

The children, both dreadfully frightened, began to cry bitterly.

"That will not do you any good," continued the man; "that kind of whining is nothing new to me, and won't move me. Let your parents feed you; but they, no doubt, prefer idling rather than getting their living by honest labor."

"Our parents are both dead," said Lizzie.

"I thought so," replied the farmer. "Whenever children are sent out to beg, their father and mother are always dead, or at least their father. This is a mere excuse for begging. Be off this minute."

"We have not eaten a morsel the whole day," pleaded Lizzie. "We are so tired we cannot move a step. If you would but give us the least little bit to eat, we are so hungry."

"I have told you I would not. Beggars get nothing here."

The farmer got up with a threatening look. Lizzie quickly opened the door and drew her sister with her. The children again stood in the farm yard, but knew not what to do. Suddenly little Mary drew her hand from her sister's clasp, and went to the other side of the yard; there was a fierce dog chained; his dinner stood before him in a wooden basin. Mary put her hand into the basin and began to eat with the dog. Lizzie went nearer and saw that in the basin there was some liquor, in which a few pieces of bread and some boiled potatoes were floating. She, likewise, could not resist; she had but one feeling—that of the most gnawing hunger; she took some of the bread and potatoes, and eat them greedily.

The dog, not accustomed to such guests, looked at the children; all in astonishment he drew back, then sat down and left them his dinner, of which he had eaten but very little. At this moment the man thought nothing but the fearful danger in which the children were, and walking quickly towards them, he exclaimed:

"Don't you see the dog? He will tear you to pieces."

But suddenly he stopped, as if rooted to the ground. The dog had got up again and gone near the children; then he looked at his master and wagged his tail. It seemed as if he wished to say:

"Don't drive my guests away."

At that sight a great change came over the man; the spectacle before him acted like an electric shock, and feelings such as he never had before seemed to stir within him.

The children had risen, terrified at the call of the man, fearful of punishment for having eaten, with downcast eyes. At last, after several minutes' silence, the farmer said:

"Are you really so fearfully hungry that you do not even despise the dog's food? Come in, then, you shall have something to eat, and as much as you like." And then taking them by the hand he led them into the house, calling out to the servant, "Biddy, get some bread and milk, and be quick, for these children."

The dog had shamed his master—the brute had shamed the man. Touched by what he had seen, the farmer was anxious to make amends for what his conscience showed him to be a great sin. He seated the children at the table, sat down by them, and kindly asked their names.

"My name is Lizzie," said the eldest, "and my sister is called Mary."

"Have your parents been dead long?"

"Our father has been dead two years, but our mother only died last week."

At the thought of their recent loss both children began to weep.

"Don't cry, children," said the farmer kindly. "God will in one way or another take care of you. But tell me now, where do you come from?"

"From Loughrea," replied the child.

"From Loughrea?" asked the man, "from Loughrea? That is strange!"

He began to suspect the truth, and asked hesitatingly,

"What was your father's name?"

"Martin Sullivan," replied Lizzie.

"What—Martin—Martin Sullivan?" he exclaimed, jumping up at the same time, and casting a piercing look at the children, thoroughly frightening them.

His face grew red—then tears came into his eyes—at last he sobbed aloud. He took the youngest child in his arms, pressed her to his heart and kissed her. The child struggled and called to her sister for help; she could not think what the man meant. Then he put down the little one, and did the same to Lizzie, who took it more quietly, as she had seen that the man did not hurt her sister. At last becoming more composed, he dried his tears.

"Do you know my name, children?"

"No," replied Lizzie.

"How happened it then, that you came to me?" he asked. "Has any one sent you to me?"

"Nobody has sent us," replied Lizzie. "We were going to Kilburn, where a brother of our father lives, and they say he would gladly receive us. But I do not believe it, for our mother always said that he is a hard-hearted man, who does not care for his relations."

"Your mother was quite right when she said so," said the farmer. "But what will you do if this hard-hearted man will not receive you?"

"Then we shall have to starve," answered Lizzie.

"No, no!" exclaimed the man quickly. "It shall never come to that—never. Dry your tears. The merciful God has had pity on your helplessness, and has made use of a fierce brute to soften the heart of your uncle, and therefore he will never forsake you—never."

The children looked at the man in utter bewilderment; they did not understand what he said—his words and his behavior were alike strange to them. This he soon perceived for he added: "You are going to Kilburn to Patrick Sullivan; you are already there. I am your uncle and now that I know you are the children of my brother Martin, I make you welcome."

The children's tears quickly changed into smiles, and the meal which Biddy just then put on the table for them made them forget their grief. Patrick Sullivan had taken this farm about a year before. A kind providence had directed the children's steps to him; but if the dog had not taught him a lesson of kindness who knows what might after all have become of the poor orphans. But he who is the Father of the fatherless would surely not have forsaken them.

CURIOUS ANTI-PATHIES.

It seems certain that, in some cases, the dislike to particular objects, and even sounds, which we are wont to ascribe to affection, are very genuine and deep-seated. A certain clergyman, we are soberly informed, always fainted when he heard a particular verse in Jeremiah read; and another case was even still more unfortunate, being that of an officer who could not stand the beating of a drum, and eventually died from it; one man would fall down at the smell of mutton as though deprived of life; another could not eat a single strawberry, and another's head became frightfully swollen if he touched the smallest particle of hare. Orfila speaks of a painter, named Vincent, who was seized with vertigo whenever there were roses in the room. Hippocrates instances one Nicanor, who swooned whenever he heard the flute. Boyle himself, in spite of his philosophy, fell into a syncope whenever he heard the splashing of water. The Duke d'Epemay swooned at seeing a leveret, though a hare took no effect upon him, which is as much as to say, that he was frightened at a pony, but not at a horse. Tycho Brahe fainted at the sight of a fox, Henry III, at a cat, and Marshal d'Albret at a pig.—*Chambers' Journal.*