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Poetry.

A CONNUBIAL ECLOGUE.

BY JOHN G. SAGE.

—Arcades ambo,
Et cantare pares et respondere parati.—VIRG.

Much lately have I thought, my darling wife,
Some simple rules might make our wedded life
As pleasant always as a morn in May;
I meanly name it—what does Molly say?

Agreed; your plan I heartily approve;
Rules would be nice—let who shall make them,
Love?

Nay, do not speak—let this the bargain be,
One shall be made by you, and one by me,
Till all are done—

—Your plan is surely fair,
In such a work 'tis fitting we should share;
And now—although it matters not a pin—
If you have no objection, I'll begin.

—Proceed! In making laws I'm little versed
And as to words, I do not mind the first;
I only claim—and hold the truce fast—
My sex's sacred privilege, the last!

With all my heart. Well—dearest—to begin—
When by our cheerful hearts our friends drop in,
And I am talking in my brilliant style,
(The rest with rapture listening to the while)
About the war—or anything in short,
That you're aware is my especial forte—
Pray, don't get up a circle of your own
And talk of bonnets in an under tone!

That's Number One: I'll mind it well, if you
Will do as much, my dear, by Number Two:
When we attend a party or a ball,
Don't leave your Molly standing by the wall,
The helpless victim of the dearest bore
That ever walked upon a parlor floor,
While you—oblivious of your spouse's doom—
Flirt with the girls—the gayest in the room!

When I (although the busiest man alive)
Have snatched an hour to take a pleasant drive,
And say, "Remember, at precisely four
You'll find the carriage ready at the door,"
Don't keep me waiting half an hour or so,
And then declare, "The clock must be too slow!"

When you (such things have happened now and then)
Go to the Club with, "I'll be back at ten"—
And stay till two o'clock—you needn't say,
"I really was the first to come away;"
'Tis very strange how swift the time has passed;
I'm sure, my dear, the clock must be too fast!

There—that will do; what else remains to say
We may consider at a future day;
I'm getting sleepy—and if you have done—

Not I!—this making rules is precious fun;
Now here's another—When you paint to me
"That charming woman" you are sure to see,
Don't—when you praise the virtues she has got—
Name only those you think your wife has not!
And here's a rule I hope you won't forget,
The most important I have mentioned yet,
Pray mind it well—Whenever you incline
To bring your queer companions home to dine,
Supper, my dear—Good Gracious! he's asleep.
Ah! well—"tis lucky good advice will keep.
And he shall have it, or, upon my life,
I've not the proper spirit of a wife!

Miscellany.

THE CONFESSIONS OF AN ATTORNEY.

BESIDES being the confidential advisers, attorneys are the "confessors" of modern England; and the revelations—delicate, serious, not unfrequently involving life as well as fortune and character—confided to the purchased fidelity and honour of men whom the manners of all ages have stereotyped as the ghouls and vampires of civilised society, are, it is impossible to deny, as rarely divulged as those which the penitents of the Greek and Latin churches impart to their spiritual guides; and this possibly for the somewhat vulgar, but sufficient reason that "a breach of confidence" would as certainly involve the professional ruin of an attorney as the commission of a felony. An able but eccentric jurist, Mr. Jeremiah Bentham, was desirous that attorneys should be obliged to disclose on oath whatever guilty secrets might be confided to them by their clients; the only objection to which ingenious device for the conviction of rogues being, that if such a power existed, there would be no more secrets to disclose; and as a necessary consequence that the imperfectly informed attorney would not be able to render his client the justice to which every person however criminal, is clearly entitled—that of having his or her case presented before the court appointed to decide upon it in the best and most advantageous manner possible. Let it not be forgotten either that the attorney is the only real, practical defender of the humble and needy against the illegal oppressions of the rich and powerful—the shield, indomitable agent who gives prosaic reality to

the figurative eloquence of old Chancellor Fortescue, when he says "the lightning may flash thro', the thunder shake, the tempest beat upon, the English peasant's hut, but the King of England, with all his army, cannot lift the latch to enter in." The change of course meant that in this country overbearing violence cannot defy, or put itself in the face of the law. This is quite true; and why? Chiefly because the attorney is ready in all cases of *provable* illegality, with his potent strip of parchment summoning the great man before "our Sovereign Lady the Queen" there to answer for his acts; and the richer offender, the more keen and eager Mr. Attorney to prosecute the suit, however needy his own client; for he is then sure of his costs, if he succeed! Again, I cheerfully admit the extreme vulgarity of the motive; but its effects in protecting the legal rights of the humble is not, I contend, lessened because the reward of exertion and success is noted out in good honest sovereigns or notes of the Governor and Company of the Bank of England.

Thus much by way of conciliatory prologue to the narrative of a few incidents revealed to the attorney's privileged confession; throughout which I have, of course, in order to avoid any possible recognition of those events or incidents, changed the name of every person concerned.

Our old city firm, then, which I am happy to say still flourishes under the able direction of our active successors, I will call, adopting the nomenclature appropriated to us by imaginative ladies and gentlemen who favor the world with fancy pen-and-ink portraits of the lawyer tribe—that of Flint and Sharp; Sharp being myself, and Flint the silver-haired old bachelor we buried a few weeks since in Kensal Green Cemetery.

"Mr. Andrews," said a clerk as he threw open the door of the inner office one afternoon. "Mr. Jesse Andrews."

"Good-day, Mr. Andrews," was my prompt and civil greeting; "I have good news for you. Take a chair."

The good-humoured, rather intelligent, and somewhat clouded countenance of the new comer brightened up at these words. "News from my Cousin Archibald?" he asked as he seated himself.

"Yes," he lamented your late failure, and commiserates the changed position and prospects of your wife and boy, little Archibald, his godson. You have not much compensation for, inasmuch as he attributes your misfortunes entirely to mismanagement and the want of common prudence."

"Candid, certainly," grumbled out Mr. Jesse Andrews; but an odd sort of good news!

"His deeds are kinder than his words. He will allow, till Archibald attains his majority—Let me see; how old is that boy of yours now?"

"Ten. He was two years old when his godfather went to India."

"Well, then, you will receive two hundred pounds per annum, payable half-yearly, in advance for the next ten years—that is of course if your son lives—in order to enable you to bring him up and educate him properly. After that period has elapsed, your cousin intimates that he will place the young man advantageously; and I do not doubt will do something for you, should you not by that time have contrived a position for yourself."

"Is that all?" said Mr. Andrews.

"All! Why, what did you expect?"

"Two or three thousand pounds to set me afloat again. I know of a safe speculation, that with say three thousand pounds capital, would realize a handsome fortune in no time."

Mr. Jesse Andrews, I may observe, was one of that numerous class of persons who are always on the threshold of realising millions—the only and constant obstacle being the want of a "capital."

I condescended with him upon his disappointment: but as words, however civil, avail little in the way of "capital," Mr. Jesse Andrews, having pocketed the first half yearly instalment of the annuity, made his exit in by no means a gracious or grateful frame of mind.

Two other half yearly payments were duly paid him. When he handed me the receipt on the last occasion, he said, in a sort of off-hand, careless way, "I suppose if Archibald were to die, these payments would cease?"

"Perhaps not," I replied unthinkingly.

"At all events, not I should say, till you and your wife were in some way provided for. But your son is not ill?" I added.

"No; not at present," replied Andrews, colouring, and with a confusion of manner which surprised me not a little. It flashed across my mind that the boy was dead, and that Andrews, in order not to risk the withdrawal or suspension of the annuity, had concealed the fact from us.

"Let me see," I resumed, we have your present address—Norton Folgate, I think?"

"Yes, certainly you have."

"I shall very likely call in a day or two to see Mrs. Andrews and your son."

The man smiled in a re-assured, half-sardonic manner. "Do," he answered, "Archibald is alive, and very well, thank God!"

This confidence dispelled the suspicion I had momentarily entertained, and five or six weeks passed away, during which Andrews and his affairs were almost as entirely absent from my thoughts as if no such man existed.

About the expiration of that time, Mr. Jesse Andrews unexpectedly revisited the office, and as soon as I was disengaged, was ushered into my private room. He was habited in the deepest mourning, and it naturally occurred to me that either his wife or son was dead—an impression, however, which a closer examination of his countenance, did not confirm, knowing as I did how affectionate a husband and father, he was with all his faults and follies reputed to be. He looked flurried, nervous certainly; but there was no sorrow, no grief in the restless, disturbed glances which he directed to the floor, the ceiling, the window, the fireplace, the chairs, the table—everywhere in fact, except towards my face.

"What is the matter Mr. Andrews?" I gravely inquired, seeing that he did not appear disposed to open the conversation.

"A great calamity, sir—a great calamity!" he hurriedly and confusedly answered, his face still persistently averted from me—"has happened. Archibald is dead!"

"Dead! God bless me when did this happen?" I exclaimed considerably shocked.

"Three weeks ago. He died of cholera," was the reply.

"Of cholera?" This occurred I should state in 1830.

"Yes; he was very assiduously attended throughout his sufferings, which were protracted and severe, by the eminent Dr. Parkinson, a highly respectable and skilled practitioner as you doubtless, sir, are aware."

I could not comprehend the man. This dry, uncommunicative, business sort of gable was not the language of a suddenly bereaved parent, and one too who had lost a considerable annuity by his son's death. What could it mean? I was in truth fairly puzzled.

After a considerable interval of silence which Mr. Andrews, whose eyes continued to wander in every direction except that of mine, showed no inclination to break, I said—"It will be necessary for me to write immediately to your cousin, Mr. Archibald Andrews. I trust for your sake, the annuity will be continued, but of course till I hear from him the half yearly payments must be suspended."

"Certainly, certainly; I naturally expected that would be the case," said Andrews, still in the same quick, hurried tone.

"You have nothing further to say, I suppose?" I remarked after another dead pause, during which it was very apparent that he was labouring with something to which he nervously hesitated to give utterance.

"No—yes—that is, I wished to consult you upon a matter of business—connected with a life assurance office."

"A life assurance office?"

"Yes." The man's pale face flushed crimson, and his speech became more and more hurried as he went on. "Yes; tearing Mr. Sharp that should Archibald, we might be left without resource, I resolved, after mature deliberation, to effect an insurance on his life for four thousand pounds."

"Four thousand pounds?"

"Yes. All necessary preliminaries were gone through; the medical gentleman—since dead of the cholera by the way—examined the boy of course and the insurance was legally effected for four thousand pounds, payable at his death."

I did not speak, a suspicion too horrible to be hinted at held me dumb.

"Unfortunately," Andrews continued, "this insurance was only effected about a fortnight before poor Archibald's death, and the office refuses payment, although, as I have told you, the lad was attended to the very hour of his death by Dr. Parkinson, a highly respectable, most unexceptionable gentleman. Very much so, indeed."

"I quite agree in that," I answered after a while. "Dr. Parkinson is a highly respectable and eminent man. What reason do the company assign for non-payment?"

"The very recent completion of the policy."

"Nonsense! How can that fact standing alone affect your claim?"

"I do not know, but they do refuse; and I am anxious that your firm should take the matter in hand and sue them for the amount."

Andrews replied; and all this time I had not been able to look fairly in his face.

"I must first see Dr. Parkinson, and convince myself that there is no *legitimate* reason for repudiating the policy," I answered.

"Certainly, certainly," he replied.

"I will write to you to-morrow," I said, rising to terminate the conference, "after I have seen Dr. Parkinson, and state whether we will or not take legal proceedings against

the insurance company on your behalf."

He thanked me and hurried off.

Dr. Parkinson confirmed Mr. Jesse Andrews in every particular. He had attended the boy, a fine, light-haired lad of eleven or twelve years of age, and from not long after his seizure till his death. He suffered dreadfully and died unmistakably of Asiatic cholera, and of nothing else; of which same disease a servant and a female lodger in the same house had died just previously. "It is of course as unfortunate for the company as it is strangely lucky for Andrews; but there is no valid reason for refusing payment," Dr. Parkinson remarked in conclusion.

Upon this representation we wrote next day to the assurance people, threatening proceedings on behalf of Mr. Jesse Andrews.

Early on the morrow one of the managing directors called on us, to state the reasons which induced the company to hesitate at recognising the plaintiff's claim. In addition to the doubts suggested by the brief time which had elapsed from the date of the policy to the death of the child, there were several other slight circumstances of corroborative suspicion. The chief of these was that a neighbor had heard the father indulging in obstreperous mirth in a room adjoining that in which the corpse lay only about two hours after his son had expired. This unseemly, scandalous hilarity of the husband the wife seemed to faintly remonstrate against. The directors had consequently resolved *non obstante* Dr. Parkinson's declaration, which might they added have been deceived, to have the body exhumed in order to a post mortem examination as to the true cause of death. If the parents voluntarily agreed to this course, a judicial application to enforce it would be unnecessary, and all doubts on the matter could be quietly set at rest. I thought the proposal under the circumstances reasonable, and called on Mr. and Mrs. Andrews to obtain their concurrence. Mrs. Andrews was, I found, absent in the country, but her husband was at home; and he, on hearing the proposal was I thought a good deal startled—shocked—rather a natural emotion perhaps.

"Who—who is to conduct this painful, revolting inquiry?" he said after a few moments' silent reflection.

"Dr. Parkinson will be present, with Mr. Humphrey the surgeon, and Dr. Curtis, the newly appointed physician to the assurance office, in place of Dr. Morgan, who died as you are aware a short time since of cholera."

"True. As well then, be it as they wish, Dr. Parkinson will see fair play," he answered almost with alacrity.

The examination was effected, and the result was a confirmation beyond doubt or quibble, that death, as Dr. Parkinson had declared, had been solely occasioned by cholera. The assurance company still hesitated; but as this could only be looked upon as perverse obstinacy, we served them with a writ at once.

(Conclusion next week.)

(From "More Anon" in the Eastport Sentinel.)

DIPHTHERIA.

The medical history of the present century is remarkable for the reappearance, in this country and Europe, of two very definite forms of epidemic disease described by the physicians of former centuries, but unknown to our immediate predecessors, viz: *Asiatic Cholera* and *Diphtheria*.

The kind of epidemic sore throat, now called diphtheria, which has prevailed so extensively during the last few years, though unknown to the last two or three generations of physicians, was familiar to the medical practitioners of Europe and America about the middle of the 18th century under the name of *malignant sore throat*, *epidemic croup*, &c.

Isolated cases of both cholera and diphtheria have been observed from time to time, but in an epidemic form they had been long unknown when they reappeared in our own time.

The terms cholera and diphtheria, are, generally speaking, only applied to the malignant forms of the epidemic diseases to the exclusion of the milder and commonly more numerous cases of illness induced by the epidemic influence. These milder cases lack the more striking features of cholera and diphtheria. The mucus or lining membrane of the stomach and intestines is alike the seat of the principal phenomena, both in cholera and the diarrhoea which commonly prevails so extensively during a visitation of cholera. The mucus or lining membrane of the throat, especially of the tonsils, is not only the seat of the simple form of sore throat which has prevailed so extensively during the last few years, but is likewise the situation in which the first symptoms of the more severe cases, properly termed diphtheria, manifest themselves.

The diarrhoea of cholera times does not present the excessive prostration, the blue color, clammy surface, pulseless extremities, and whispering voice, &c., of fully developed cholera. And the simple sore throats which

have prevailed simultaneously with diphtheria have been unattended by the characteristic formation of false membrane or by the prostration of strength and its sequel, a paralysis of the muscles of deglutition and locomotion, impairment of vision, &c., but the diarrhoea and sore throat are respectively of the same nature of cholera and diphtheria, from which they differ less in character than degree.

The cause of diphtheria is an interesting theme for speculation, into which it is not my province to enter. There need not be a material agency, a specific poison in the atmosphere, as is generally thought, which, received into the blood, acts like a ferment, and thus contaminates the whole system. A feebly state of the atmosphere would scarcely be felt by the strong and robust, but would tell with the greatest effect on the debilitated and those of little vital power.

The subjects of diphtheria are almost universally children, and when it attacks adults, those of little stamina are singled out. Children inheriting a scrofulous constitution, or any other vicious state of the system, are the ones, as a rule, that are seized. The child has not only to maintain the body in *statu quo* like the adult, by a constant renewal of the worn out materials, but also to provide for its growth.

We have no evidence that diphtheria is contagious or that an attack affords any immunity from the disease in future. Tho' more than one of a family may be attacked at the same time, or within a few days of each other, the disease is not communicated to visitors. It might be expected that of a number of children, of like constitutional habits, breathing the same air and eating the same table, and having identical surroundings, more than one would be attacked at or about the same time.

The following description will be found sufficiently comprehensive to include every variety of the disease, from that of mild epidemic sore throat, to the severest form of malignant diphtheria.

Diphtheria is sometimes preceded, and usually accompanied by fever which, in certain epidemics and in severe cases, is only transient, speedily giving place to depression and prostration of the system. There is often a stiffness of the neck at the commencement of an attack, and usually more or less swelling at the angles of the lower jaw. The tonsils are usually swollen, and together with the neighboring parts of the mucus or lining membrane, more or less inflamed. Sometimes the swelling and inflammation subside without further local mischief, at others, the inflamed surface presents, from an early stage of the disease whitish specks, or patches, or a continuous covering in the form of a membrane which may appear as a thin, almost transparent web, but usually soon becomes opaque, and in some cases assumes the appearance of wet parchment, or chamois leather. This membrane varies in color, from being slightly opaque to a white, ash color, buff or brownish, and in rare instances to a black tint. This false membrane is thrown out upon and coagulated on the mucus or lining surface of the throat, from which it can be readily separated, leaving the surface beneath moist, unbroken, or merely excoriated, though reddened, tender, and dotted with small bloody specks, but sometimes ulcerated, and more rarely in a sloughing condition. When this membrane is artificially removed by a swab or other means it is apt to be renewed, and when not meddled with to become thicker. The severity of the disease is commonly in proportion to the continuity and density of this membrane, but sometimes cases occur in which this membrane is slight and yet the symptoms are of a very alarming kind. If the patches of membrane are small and remain distinct, the case ordinary runs a favorable course, but if they rapidly spread and run together, and if it becomes thicker, and especially if it assumes a dark color, danger is imminent.

The disease commonly confines itself to the throat, but the inflammation is apt to spread downwards into the trachea and bronchial tubes, or upwards into the nares and even the eyes, or forwards upon the cheeks, gums, and lips. Wounds upon the skin in persons suffering from Diphtheria of the throat, are liable to take on the same false membrane, similar to that upon the tonsils.

Stuart, the New York sugar refiner, has a peculiar passion for boots. In one room of his house, he keeps within a fraction of four hundred pairs, of all thickness and styles. The whole four hundred are kept scrupulously polished and ready for occupation. Each morning the proprietor passes up to this chamber of boots, selects the pair which seems to his educated eye the most appropriate for the occasion, and marches off in triumph.

The latest style of hoop skirt is the self-adjusting, double back action, bustle truss-can, face expansion, Picoconomi attachment, gossamer, indestructible polioctomomom.

It is said to be a very charming thing.