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Poetry.

BEACON LIGHTS.

As lights down the midnight river,
That glisten, and flicker, and quiver,
Till the blush of the dawning sweet;
So Hope's fairy beacon glances
Down life's dreary pathway afar,
And gleeful, wittily dances
The beam of her twinkling star.

I looked on the waste before me,
Enrobed in the mantle of night,
And a feeling of joy stole o'er me,
As I saw Hope's beautiful light.
She shines where the earth-lights shine,
Where life and twilight are met,
Above that dark, rolling river,
Where the end of our path is set.

Interesting Tale.

A LITTLE MISTAKE.

Miss Minerva Blair, spinster, on the shady side of forty, and her niece, Miss Marion Alexander, also single, but on the sunny side of twenty, sat in the pleasant sitting room of a pleasant country house, listening to the rumble of the afternoon railway train, which was just arriving at the station.

Mr. Harvey will be here in a few minutes, Marion, said the aunt; and you must be cordial with him, unless you desire to offend me.

I wish the train had a collision! was the rather vindictive reply, though a half-smile showed that the words were hardly meant.

Marion, cried the mother, somewhat sternly. You are positively sinful to be so malicious. Why should you hate a gentleman you have never seen?

I might in turn ask you why should I love this gentleman I have never seen?

Nobody asks you to love him.

No. But you wish me to marry him.

Well, apologized the aunt. I would like to see you as well settled as you certainly would be with Walter Harvey. The love can come, afterwards.

I know you will like him.

Why, Aunt Minerva, you have never met him yet yourself!

Not since he was a little boy. But I have always known his parents, and they are worthy people.

So were Marian Alexander's, I think, pointing to the younger lady. And yet you see what a perverse scapegrace you have for a niece.

Even Miss Minerva's grim features had to relax a little. But any further conversation was cut off by a ring at the front door.

He has come, said Miss Blair. You must try and at least treat him civilly, Marion.

Indeed I will, auntie, for your sake, said the girl with a sigh of good feeling.

Miss Minerva went herself to the visitor in the hall.

Mr. Harvey, she said to the dark-bearded hand-some young man whom the servant admitted, it gives me a genuine pleasure to welcome you to this house. I have known your family so many years that you almost seem a friend.

Indeed I hope to be one, was the frank reply.

You must let me send my niece to you, said Miss Minerva, as soon as the new-comer was fairly seated.

I am a housekeeper, you know, and cannot neglect my duties, but you will have a substitute whom you must learn to like.

You would hardly say that if you knew all the gentleman remarked in an under tone.

I am afraid I have humored her into being a little wilful, but she is kind-hearted and good.

And with these pleasant words the well-meaning old maiden lady left the room. She was gone scarcely long enough to allow the young man to collect his thoughts as she again stood in the doorway, saying, Mr. Harvey, I present my niece, Miss Marian Alexander.

And a slender, rustling figure was half pushed into the room, where it stood bowing with a semi-haughty air. Something like a smile was upon the young gentleman's countenance, and he kept his eyes fastened upon the young girl's face; but she did not look up, waiting in silence for him to speak. But he, too, seemed wordless, and only gave vent to an embarrassed Ahem.

Miss Blair wondered a little, and frowned a little, at her niece's perverse behaviour. But she wisely resolved to leave them together.

As soon as she was fairly gone, Marion cried the young man. The girl raised her eyes at once.

Arthur, is it you? I—I did not expect you. I thought it was your cousin Walter who was coming.

It will require a long discourse to explain all, my Marion, he answered. And I almost fear your aunt may overhear us.

His arm went about her waist. Sly Miss Marion, not to have told her aunt the secret this action implied! Wicked Miss Marion, to deceive so good a relative! At present she was only charming Miss Marion, to the only eyes that looked upon her; and in sooth she was flushed and very pretty.

We will stroll into the garden, Arthur. There we can talk without danger of being overheard.

So they walked out into the pleasant grounds, and over the green sward, to the roots of a great oak-tree, where they found cozy seats.

Have you ever told your aunt about me, Marion?

I could not, Arthur. She has been so wedded to the idea of uniting myself to the son of her early friend, General Harvey, that any opposition would have made her unhappy. So I have left the matter to time. But you have not yet told me how you come to be here.

It is not so wondrous strange. My cousin Walter and myself are excellent good friends; and as he happens to have an attachment of his own, he is just as adverse to be forced into a marriage with a stranger as yourself. I discovered all this in the course of a conversation with him; and then I told him the story of our meeting and our present relations. The revelation came just in time. His father was even then urging a visit here upon him. Nothing was easier than for me to take his place, and let Walter undertake a more welcome jaunt.

And now that you are here, sir, what can you do?

Upon my word, said the young man, somewhat ruefully, I hardly know! I must try and ingratiate myself with your aunt, and leave the rest to luck.

A long talk was followed by a long stroll, and thus nearly two hours elapsed before they returned to the house. Aunt Minerva beamed upon them a most approving glance at what she deemed the success of her plans; but she started them the next moment by saying, I have just had a note from the General, your father, Mr. Harvey. He will be with us himself to-morrow morning.

Poor Arthur tried hard to conceal the consternation which this intelligence threw him into. Fortunately his informant was in too complaisant a mood to be very observant.

Come, Marion, you shall read the note. It might make Mr. Harvey too vain, or I would give him a peep also.

The young lady, in another room, read the billet from General Harvey, which ran as follows:

"If my son Walter, usually so dutiful, should disappoint me in our plan, I shall feel inclined to adopt my nephew, Arthur Harvey, who is a splendid young fellow, and would, probably, do me more to oblige me, as he has not been spoiled by indulgence. I suppose my gentleman will have arrived before you get this. I have taken a sudden notion that he may require looking after; and, as I have long owed you a visit, I will pay my debt by following this note to-morrow morning."

Sincerely your friend,
JOHN HARVEY.

I suppose, said Marion, slyly, though she felt in no humorous mood, if you could not get the son, auntie, you would not object to the nephew, as it would be all in the family.

Well replied the aunt, after a moment's thought, I don't know how that might have been if I hadn't met Walter Harvey. But I feel now that no other young man could replace him. Besides, and here she gave voice a mischievous pucker, I think he would be so unwilling.

Poor Marion could only harg her head and blush like a guilty thing.

What shall I do? cried Arthur, when she tripped back into the parlor. I feel half inclined to run away instantly.

That would be brave was the rather sarcastic rejoinder.

Please, then, advise, or, rather—command me.

Well, then, sir, hear your orders. This deceit makes me feel mean and guilty in spite of myself, and we must have an explanation at all hazards.

Now?

Marion reflected a moment.

No, not now—tomorrow. You must face your uncle, and then let the truth come out.

And then went there a storm! the young man said.

Well, we have raised it, and must meet it, she replied. And now let us dismiss the subject for to day.

But although they did their best to be happy, a nervousness about the coming exposure overhung them, and they were much too restless for comfort the whole of that evening and the next morning.

It was ten o'clock before the train from town arrived; and two weary hours passed before breakfast before the expected visitor reached the house.

He was received at the door by the aunt, while the niece and lover remained in the sitting room.

Arthur made a virtue of necessity, and advanced to greet his uncle with as much heartiness and innocence as he could possibly throw into his manner.

Why, Arthur! cried the General, this is rather a surprise. How is it that you are here?

But he gave his nephew a warm shake of the hand.

Arthur! cried the aunt—Arthur! I thought your son's name was Walter, General Harvey?

So it is, said the General; but this young man is my nephew.

Good gracious! gasped Miss Blair, sinking back into a chair.

General Harvey began to comprehend that something was wrong.

See here, Arthur, he cried, sternly. Have you been playing a trick? Why are you here, instead of my son, whom I sent?

Dear uncle, Walter would not come, for he is not heart free; and he and I both know that you wanted Miss Marion in the family; and as Walter was not eligible, we thought—that is, I—

Here he broke down ignominiously. There was a blank, ominous silence. Marion stole to her aunt's side.

Dear auntie, she said, you must forgive Arthur and me. We are such old friends. Besides, she added, demurely, you said if you couldn't get General Harvey's son, you would prefer his nephew.

General Harvey and Miss Blair's glance met, and something like a smile, passed over their faces.

I see how it is, said he. We have been fighting nature, which is a bit of a mistake. I fancy we had better rectify it, Miss Blair.

And they did so. Everybody knows how, if not, learn of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Harvey.

The Supports of Religion.

When the pulse beats high, and we are flushed with youth, and health, and vigor when all goes on prosperously, and success seems almost to anticipate our wishes, then we feel not the want of the consolations of religion; but when fortune frowns, or friends forsake us; when sorrow, or sickness, or old age comes upon us, then it is that the superiority of the pleasures of religion is established over those of dissipation and vanity, which are very apt to fly from us when we are most in want of their aid. There is scarcely a more melancholy sight to a considerate mind than that of an old man who is a stranger to those only true sources of satisfaction. How affecting, and at the same time how disgusting, is it to see such an one awkwardly catching at the pleasures of his younger years, which are now beyond his reach; or feebly attempting to retain them, while they mock his endeavors and elude his grasp! To such a one gloomily, indeed, does the evening of life set in! All is sour and cheerless. He can neither look backward with complacency, nor forward with hope; while the aged Christian, relying on the assured mercy of his Redeemer, can calmly reflect that his dismission is at hand; that his redemption draweth nigh. While his strength declines, and his faculties decay, he can quietly repose himself on the fidelity of God; and at the very entrance of the valley of the shadow of death, he can lift up an eye, dim perhaps and feeble, yet occasionally sparkling with joy, and confidently looking forward to the near possession of his heavenly inheritance, "to those joys which eyes hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man." What striking lessons have we had of the precarious tenure of all sublimity possessions! Wealth, and power, and property, how peculiarly transitory and uncertain! But religion dispenses her choicest cordials in the seasons of exigence, in poverty, in exile, in sickness, and in death. The essential superiority of that support which is derived from religion is less than felt, at least it is less apparent, when the Christian is in full possession of riches, and splendor, and rank, and all the gifts of nature and fortune. But when all these are swept away by the rude hand of time or the rough blast of adversity, the true Christian stands, like the glory of the forest, erect and vigorous; stripped, indeed, of his summer foliage, but more than ever discovering to the observing eye the solid strength of his substantial texture.—WILBERFORCE.

The Triumphs of Old Age.

Physiologists tell us that with a greater prevalence of a knowledge of the laws of health, the world may expect an increase of the average duration of human life. Perhaps this time is already dawning. At any rate, here are a few "health considerations" for those above sixty. Von Moltke, comparatively juvenile at seventy, plans and executes such a campaign as modern ages never witnessed; Emperor William, tough as oak at seventy-four, roughs it on the field as jauntily as a young lieutenant. Von Roon, the Prussian War Minister, older than either general or emperor, directs from Berlin the marshalling of hosts

and gathering of supplies. Nor are these wonders of longevity by any means confined to the German side of the contest. Thiers, at seventy-five, sits with the vivacity of a boy from one camp to the other, is a negotiator of peace, and the executive head of the French government. Of his associates, Dufaure, the Minister of Justice, is seventy-three, and Guizot, King Louis Philippe's ex-Minister, though past eighty, writes books with as much force as when he occupied a professor's chair.

In England, where men are reckoned young till they are past fifty, splendid examples of vigorous old age are plentiful. Palmerston, Lyndhurst, and Brougham, octogenarians all of them, led public opinion in Great Britain to the end of their days, and died in the harness. It is said of the first three, that after a field night in the House, they would be seen at daylight walking home at a pace which a young man might envy. (Thomas Carlyle, over seventy, abates nothing of his intellectual vigor; while Lord John Russell, though creeping towards eighty, still attends the Upper House of Parliament. Our own country, too, furnishes many striking instances of hearty old age. Stewart, Drew, and Vanderbilt, the money-kings of this city, are old men, as the years are counted; but still retain firmly in their grasp the great interests which they control. Bryant, editor and poet, at seventy-six, translates Homer, and judging by his numerous public addresses, must be as busy as ever. James Gordon Bennett, passed the allotted time of life, still edits the Herald; and the grave has just closed over Dr. Skinner, who, nearly half a century ago, was famous as a preacher, and of whom it may be said that, to the last, "his eye waxed not dim, nor did his strength abate."—(Home Journal).

COMMENCEMENT OF THE KWED-DECH WAR.

On the opposite banks of the Restigouche River, near its mouth, were two towns—one inhabited by Micmacs and the other by Kwed-deches. They were at peace with each other, and frequently attended each other's festivals.

On one of these occasions while the Micmacs were feasting with the other tribe, and the children of both parties were mingling in the sports and petty quarrels of the day, a Micmac boy was killed by the other party.

Nothing was said of it however at the time. It was passed over as an accident; but the circumstances were remembered.

Some time afterwards a feast was celebrated on the other side of the river by the Micmacs, to which, as usual, the other party were invited. The women and children attended. The Micmac boys had been instructed before hand how to manage the matter, and so they contrived accidentally to kill in a quarrel two of their comrades of the Kwed-dech party.

It was now evident that the accident happened for purpose, and while nothing was said openly, the Kwed-deches resolved on a revenge on a large scale.

Time passed. Spring came, and the season for catching salmon arrived. The regulation between the two tribes was this: they took their turns annually for the first and best part of the fishery. This year it was the Micmacs turn to fish in the fishing ground, which was at some distance up the river.

About fifty of the younger men went up with their canoes, and it took them several days to reach the place.

They had not been there many days before a son of the Kwed-dech chief planned and nature a scheme for revenge on the death of the boys. Collecting a company, they marched up the river by land—neither the old chief nor any of the old men of the tribe knowing anything of the matter—intending to surprise, and cut off the whole hunting party, so that none might be left to tell the tale. They came within a short distance of the place, and there hid themselves till night, when they cautiously approached the camp to reconnoitre.

The Micmacs were all out in the river spearing salmon by torchlight. The Kwed-deches waited till they returned. After they came ashore, the Micmacs prepared their evening meal. Fires were kindled out doors, the fish were split open, and attached to suitable sticks and placed before the fire to roast, the lower end of the stick being fastened in the ground. While the roasting process was proceeding, the men were talking, jesting and laughing—all unconscious of the storm that was ready to burst upon them. The Kwed-deches crept quietly up to them in the darkness and asisted by the crackling of the fire, and the noise of their laughter and loud talk, got so near that each one could select his man and take deadly aim, when they let fly a shower of arrows that killed every Micmac save one. This one was wounded, but not mortally, and he made a rush for the river, and, before he could be seized, plunged in and crawled under the shelving rock. There he was discovered by his enemies but being a great pow-wow, and withal a skilful warrior, he managed to evade all their attempts to reach him, and ultimately made his escape down the river and baffled his pursuers. Next day he was

discovered on the shore wounded and unable to walk and was conveyed back to his village by a man and his wife, who were on their way in a canoe up to the fishing ground, but who returned home on hearing of the fate of their companions and spread the news.

The wounded man recovered after a few days, and went over to the other village and entered a complaint against the men who had perpetrated the foul deed. He was able to identify the parties, and the chief blame was thrown upon the young chief.

The whole village of the Kwed-deches were required to depart, and to remove to a great distance. Three days were given them to comply with this decision, and they were told that unless they were gone by that time, they would add their days where they were—every one of them would be destroyed.

As the Micmacs greatly outnumbered the Kwed-deches, the latter thought it prudent to comply, and immediately began to make preparations for their removal. In three days they were ready and started, the young chief being severely reprimanded by his father for the trouble he had occasioned; but he was not punished.

Before they left, the Micmac chief visited his brother chief of the other party. He says to him:—

We will remember each other, and when there comes over me a longing to see you, I will go up, and when you desire to see me, you can come down.

Such was the smooth address; but the meaning was:—This affair is not yet settled. When I am ready I shall go up after you and wreak my vengeance upon you; and if, at any time, you think you are able for us, why come on as soon as you like, and you'll find us prepared to receive you.

The Kwed-deches now depart, and halting from time to time during the summer, get far up into Canada by the next winter, where they pitch their tents on the borders of a large lake.

From "Legends of the Micmacs" in New Dominion Monthly for May.

Peculiarities of Reporters.

In the following one would suppose that the reporter fully appreciated the comfort of beds, from his having been deprived of them. The writer was describing a new organ:—

The swell died away in a delicious suffocation, like one singing a sweet song under the bedclothes.

Sometimes a reporter will be chiefly interested in the artistic consideration of the horrible, as, for instance, in reporting an execution, one of them says:—

Much credit is due to our sheriff, and Mr. Marden, the executioner, for the neat and dexterous manner in which their unpleasant duties were performed.

And here is one in which the reporters feeling for what must have been execrating torture, runs into apocryphal ridiculousness:—

A Norwich man took a drink of whiskey from the family medicine bottle the other night, and in about an hour two able bodied laborers were stirring up his alimentary canal with a stomach pump. The pump had a pretty good suction, and for some time it was a question whether the seat of his pants was going to give or the handle break. But he's all right now.

This one has certainly no sort of sympathy for the lady he is telling about:

Mrs. Collins of Chicago, toothless yet frisky, is jailed for inebriety. In ten days—for whiskey.

Here is a "local" which is very brief considering its contents:

In Louisville, on Monday last, two men were killed by a rock, two were murdered, an editor committed suicide, a printer was found dead in his bed, and two cases of Jew hiding by women occurred.

Reporters are so peculiar that one cannot always tell whether they really intend a joke or make a mistake. Here is a sample in which a funeral is described:

The procession was very fine, and nearly two miles in length; as was also the prayer of Dr. Perry, the chaplain.

One of them in giving the state of the weather says: The north, Monday, knocked the weather into a cocked hat.

But his rival "beats him hollow" with:—

The music of the wind to day sounds like the nervous writhing of an old whitewash brush against the side of the rough plastered wall.

And here is a railway accident:

The Old South Railroad Bridge got discouraged, and lay right down with a train car it.

The following gives the cause and natural result of a street accident:

A wagon wheel was knocked off yesterday near State and Water streets, by getting in front of a big truck wheel.