

NEVER AGAIN.

BY NELLA.

Never again, with lingering carress,
To smooth the sunlit glory of thy hair;
Never again with fervent love to gaze
Into those lustrous eyes undimmed with care.

THE PLANTATION GHOST.
AN INCIDENT OF THE SOUTH.

BY MRS. M. F. M'CAWLEY.

My early days were spent in the "old Dominion," the State noted as the birth-place of Presidents. Here the happiest hours of my life were passed. Its varied scenery, balmy air and winding rivers all have a charm for me no other State can yield.

My mother was a frail, delicate woman, and subject to severe attacks of "heart disease," and at the time of which I am about to speak she had been ailing several days.

All had retired but father and I. We two were watching by her bed unceasingly. About midnight father became uneasy and summoning Jack, a colored boy, dispatched him in haste for our family physician.

Jack was a great favorite with mother. She was a kind mistress, and kept many of his misdemeanors from father, who was not disposed to be so lenient. On being told the critical condition in which his mistress lay, fear for her safety thoroughly awakened the faithful fellow, and he started on his three miles ride with alacrity.

On arriving at his destination, Dr. Lee was absent, but expected every moment; leaving the message father had given him the boy hastened homeward.

Hearing the clatter of Selim's returning feet, I hastened to the gateway to know if the doctor had been found. Judge of my surprise on seeing the horse dash past like something possessed, Jack fairly turning a somersault from the saddle to my feet.

"Fore God I dun see a ghost, Miss; 'fore God I did. Selim got skeer't and run like de debbil was arter him, sartin suah."

Here, casting a sideways, shivering glance through the long row of catalpas, he espied the doctor's grey nag coming towards us. Vaulting over the gate-post, he rushed past me, gasping between his chattering teeth:

"Gor-a-mity, thar it comes, suah." There was consternation at the negro quarters next morning you may depend on it. There was more than one conjectured "Missis" was "goin' ter die," that "that ar ghos was jes a warnin'."

Father would have investigated the matter, but mamma remaining so ill rendered it impossible. The next night after Jack's adventure, screaming was heard in the direction of the cabins between twelve and one o'clock. Upon inquiry it was ascertained to have come from Aunt Chloe, a stout negress usually employed in the fields. She averred she had "seen that ar ghos; it was bigger nor a giant, an its two arms spread outen like ter a sign post."

It was a clear cool night; the full moon was just rising, giving the half leafless trees a desolate and weird appearance. Aunt Chloe's alarm had aroused all the servants on the plantation. As I looked out from the bay window in the second story of the house, I saw them gathered, talking and gesticulating in an excited manner. Some of them were holding lighted torches of pine in their hands which they said would "scare de debbile away." A white cape had been found among the bushes which aunt Chloe insisted was the ghost's mantle, and they had torn it into fragments, distributed among them, and held up before them, believing with superstitious credulity that it possessed a charm over the ghost which would protect them from harm. Father went out and sent them all back to the cabins, and nothing more was heard of the ghost that night.

As a natural consequence, the next day every available moment the blacks were huddled together in groups, discussing "the ghost."

Well, I may as well confess the truth. I too shared the general infection. Sounds that before I would have passed by as trifles made me now unaccountably nervous. Once in particular, I remember, I was passing through the picture gallery. It had always been a specialty of mine, loving to loiter here viewing my be-ruffled and powdered ancestors and recounting to myself their illustrious deeds and high lineage, for be it known the doomed Lady Jane Grey numbered among our ancestry. With hands clasped behind me I walked slowly on, scanning the silent faces before me, each one replete with interest, when suddenly a thrill, an indescribable fear, swept over my whole being, and I rushed precipitately down the long stairway, feeling confident the "ghost" was right behind me. I did not visit the gallery again for some time.

A week had now elapsed, and in that length of time nearly every member of the family had seen the unearthly apparition. But strange to tell, to no two had it appeared alike; one thing only pertaining to it they all agreed upon, that it was white. On Friday morning, as we were breakfasting, the door opened and there stood "uncle Joe," his ebony face shining as the newly varnished, crunching the crown of his old straw hat, his knees shaking and knocking together in a strange, loose manner, while the whites of his eyes appeared to have claimed almost sole territory.

"Well, what is wanting, Joe?" "Seen the ghos, Mars'r." "Ghost fiddlesticks!" Father spoke irreverently, a shade of impatience in his voice. "Did, Mars'r, 'deed I did." "Well, allowing that you did, Joe, what did it look like?"

"Golly, Mars'r, it look a sight. It was bigger nor you and had a white thing kibbered all ober it, nor it didn't walk nudder, jes kinder floated ober de ground."

Here father lost his patience entirely. "It is every word false, you black scoundrel. Now get back to your work, and if I hear another word of this ghost business from you I will sell you to the first trader that comes along."

After Joe's departure, father turned laughing to me.

"Milly, you are a brave little soul; let's you and I personate 'Hamlet' to-night in watching this restless ghost, preferring night walking to sleep. By the Saints! if it makes its appearance I will find out what it is, or there will be a ghost disrobed."

I thought about the picture gallery, but acquiesced with as good a grace as I could command to the proposition.

All day long I was restless and uneasy, wishing, yet dreading for the night to come. But the longest day must have an ending, so it proved in this case.

About eleven o'clock, leaving mamma sleeping and in the care of the housekeeper, father and I left the house silently, by a side entrance, wending our way beneath the locusts on down to the end of the stone wall. There secreting ourselves in a clump of alders, we awaited its coming.

Slowly an hour passed away, and I was beginning to grow tired and nervous. The rustling of a leaf or crackling of a limb would cause me to start, and my very blood run cold. Suddenly, a mocking-bird in the nearest locust began to pour forth a flood of melody. (The mocking-bird sings at intervals all through the night.) Such wonderful trills, such perfect intonations, I never heard before. Just as its song was at its height, and I so wrapt in listening, papa's voice recalled my senses.

"By Jove, Milly, there it comes. Don't get frightened now, Puss, for I'm going to make its acquaintance. Keep perfectly still."

Sure enough, there was a white object coming slowly towards us. Not a word was spoken as nearer and nearer came the moving mass, whatever it might be, so closely I could have touched it with my hand as it glided by.

"Milly," papa whispered, "it is the young mulatto girl I bought a short time ago. She is evidently walking in her sleep. You can go to the house, child, and I will follow and see where she goes."

But my interest was awakened, and I insisted on going too. Slowly we followed a short distance behind the strange creature, speaking not a word for fear of rousing her from the weird spell that enchanted her. On up through the locust row, then taking the main road and keeping for near a half a mile; then turning off to the left in a footpath leading to "Sleepy Glen," never turning her head to the right nor the left, till she came to the margin of the "Dismal Pool." Pausing there she sat down by the sullen black waters, crossing her arms, and rocking her body to and fro, moaning sad, heart-rending moans, which the night winds, taking up, echoed and re-echoed in piteous sighs through the dreary pines.

"Poor Hepsy," said father, "it was here she parted with her husband. To-morrow Jones has got to do one of two things; either sell him to me or buy Hepsy. I can't bear to know she is grieving this way."

Silently she glided by us, walking wearily with her head drooped upon her bosom, taking the same road she had come almost track for track.

Father made immediate arrangements for buying her husband; and they both lived on the plantation till the war broke out, which gave them their freedom. After that I lost sight of them entirely; but I often think of poor faithful Hepsy, the night-walking ghost of the plantation.

For the Favorite.

THE LAND BY MOONLIGHT.

BY ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD.

What time Diana thro' her azure field
Moves in her fullest state, and in her mood
Of Royal playfulness lays diamond bow
Against her virgin shoulder, and flings down
The quick succession of her silver shafts, and strikes
A crisp brightness on each quivering blade
That bears a dew-drop. Fills each perfum'd chalice
With diamond-drope distilled, and drests the pines
With lucid brightness on their lordly crowns;
Makes targets of the frowning mountain tops,
Which thrust their granite baldness to the skies,
Until they mock the aspect of a smile, and cast
Th' reflex of her plumes to the vales
That lie between, all mass'd with tangling woods,
Lying like ebon lakes between high shores,
And inly moon an I toss their surly boughs
Beneath the passing of a silent wind.

What time her starry maids come wing'd with
flame
From those vast halls of space that stretch beyond,
And yet beyond the motion of our mind;
And curious part the fleecy clouds and peer
With golden eyes upon the inland seas
And silver bands that weave their brightness thro'
Great tracts of forest darkness, while the floods
Erstwhile all summer calmness shimmer o'er,
Trembling with sudden joy, and so content
Each separate brightness to a spreading plain
Of vibrant silver; and the stars no more,
Each her peculiar brilliancy can trace
But all is mingl'd glory; as great deeds
May find no separate chronicle, and yet
Make of some Age a torch to other Times!

What time there paces from their ferny bowers
The deer, all wakeful, pausing by the brink
Of lonely streams, deep bosom'd in the land;
And while the antler'd sentinel darts his eyes
Of fear and fire about the wooded banks,
And sniff the dewy air, the herd bend down
And lap secure the way that scarcely stirs,
Th' Indian rice that lifts its emerald spear
Above the lucid crystal or serene moves
Th' summer avarice ho of nearly bloom,
Fair water-lilies anch'rd in the shade.
They shake their thirst, half-starting as they see,
Between the leaves, great eyes that meet their own,
And tremble, knowing not their pictur'd selves!

What time the cities, villages and towns,
Th' rustic homesteads nesting in th' wilds;
Or by the busy haunts of busy men,
Like golden fingers to a lordly robe,
Or gems far scatter'd by a sea-rob hand,
Lie silent and at rest. Then is the time
To set the face towards some high mountain top,
Rising from out the forests, and to look
Thro' the great stillness out across the land
That is our own, and feel its vastness, as
By dazzling day we cannot, and to walk
In soul along the starry ways which lead
To that High Throne that aways the Universe;
And in the censor of the silent heart
In prayerful incense of still trance to yield
Thanks to the Godhead who hath dower'd the land
With Peace and Plenty, vast as her domain!

PETERBORO', O.

JACK AND GILL.

BY ROBERT BRYDON,
OF HESPELER.

"Jack and Gill went up a hill,
To fetch a pail of water—
Jack fell down and broke his crown,
And Gill came tumbling after!"

We believe this well-known and popular stanza was once made the subject of a learned and elaborate critique, demonstrating its artistic completeness as a literary production. This critique we have not seen; but it occurs to us that we have never heard anyone, either young or old, green or gray, who, in quoting the lines, seemed conscious of the pith and marrow that are in them,—or aware of the sage lessons they contain. Of the literary merit of the production, we at present say nothing. Freely according to the anonymous author all the credit it is fitted as a literary production to yield him,—we humbly submit that it is not in this that its greatest merit lies. To our apprehension, the "recondite sense," enshrined in it, leads to the conviction that it must have been the production of some sly Sage, who meant a good deal more than he said. Let us consider:—1st. The object sought to be accomplished by the two heroes of the piece—"To fetch a pail of water." No large supply—no unreasonable quantity of the necessary fluid is sought. Their attempt is not characterized by any undue aspiration after an object in itself unattainable, so that in pursuing their object they might have been ridiculed as following "a wild goose chase." Theirs is a perfectly laudable endeavor,—even a necessary duty; and their unity of purpose, and ready co-operation in its performance manifest a commendable spirit—a spirit essential to the harmony and happiness of our social existence. Had Jack's object been illegitimate, or the means employed for its attainment improper,—he ought never to have set out on the expedition,—and Gill would have been justified, yea, honored in refusing his assistance. Or, had Gill been less willing and hearty, in his co-operation, it might have argued a state of social connection not at all commendable. It might have argued a disposition, on his part, to study his own ease, and to roll the burden of a necessary duty on the shoulders of his companion. But the reverse is the case, and our two heroes thus afford a worthy example of the voluntary combination of effort, in the performance of a common duty. Their example strikingly reprobates the too prevalent selfishness of human conduct, and puts

to shame the meanness of the man, who would share without scruple the advantages of toil, but who refuses to share the toil which procures them. We notice:

2nd. The direction in which they went to fetch the water—"They went up a hill." Springs or reservoirs of water, though sometimes, are not generally met with on the tops of hills. Their existence in such situations is the exception, not the rule. The short narrative does not inform us that they were in the habit of going up the hill for a supply, nor does it even hint that they were certain a supply was to be found there. We may be allowed, then, to suppose that this was their first exploratory tour in that direction. And here their lack of judgment manifests itself. Guided by the teachings of common observation and experience, they ought to have sought their object in a contrary direction,—not up the hill, but down. In the latter direction, if no crystal spring should catch their eye, there was at least the prospect of striking in its course, some "babbling brook," and drawing thence enough for present need. But no! Mistaken men! They feel their need, and rouse themselves to action to supply the want, but turn their efforts in a wrong direction.—How many men, in this respect, are Jacks and Gills! How many toiling, hard-worn men we might discover, whose lot is rendered hard through misdirected effort! This blindness of our two heroes, to the common teachings of observation and experience, reveals to us the fact, that they were uneducated men; for it is the part of education to guard against the commission of mistakes like this. It is the part of education to rouse the faculty of observation, to expand the powers of reflection, and to lessen the difficulties in acquiring the common comforts and conveniences of life. In lacking education, Jack and Gill might be comparatively blameless. Parental neglect might be the cause of their deficient knowledge, or it might be owing to circumstances over which they themselves had no control. But no matter to what cause the neglect of education be assigned,—if it be neglected, the necessary consequences must follow. The subjects of this neglect are doomed to suffer its consequences in the form of unskillful planning—unnecessary expenditure of labor—or improper management of affairs; and these involve an incalculable discount on temporal comfort and prosperity. But in an especial manner, is the result of misdirected effort seen in the pursuit of happiness. All seek the attainment of happiness in one way or another,—but how few have judgment to seek it, where alone it is to be found. How few attain, by seeking in the right direction, that happiness which is true and lasting! In the pursuit of real happiness we are mostly Jacks and Gills! Notice:

3rd. The consequences of attempting to carry out an undertaking in a way inconsistent with the operation of natural law—"Jack fell down and broke his crown."—It matters not whether this inconsistency originates in ignorance or presumption,—the consequences are the same. It is in vain we strive against the laws and principles which God has established in the natural world. We must weigh the possibilities and probabilities of things, according to the common operations of these laws, and direct our energies in accordance with them,—not in opposition to them. The objects of our pursuit must be such as are, in the nature of things, attainable, and the pursuit itself must be conducted in a rational way. Disregarding this—the attempt to find water on the top of a hill, may be made, but it will certainly prove a failure, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred. But more than this! There is danger and damage to be apprehended by such, as ignorantly or otherwise, put forth their energies in opposition to the laws of the material world. The transgression of natural laws is followed as certainly by punishment as is that of moral laws; and the disastrous consequences of this ignoring of natural laws on the part of Jack and Gill, might have been avoided, had they, instead of seeking water among crags and precipices on the top of the hill,—betaken themselves to the pleasant valley below. From the fate of our heroes, let us read a lesson of warning against engaging in chimerical undertakings,—such as the discovery of perpetual motion,—and against prosecuting any undertaking in a way inconsistent with the natural laws by which the Creator rules the world. We notice:

4th and lastly. The risk and danger attending a co-partnership with ignorance or inexperience—"Gill came tumbling after." Association with ignorant or inexperienced assistants, especially in works in which the forces of nature, or the mechanical powers are called into operation, must always be attended with risk and danger. To guard against accidents or casualties, knowledge is necessary,—and education as a means of acquiring knowledge is therefore indispensable, even in the most common walks of life. How often in the world has Gill received a "tumble" from his association with the ignorance of Jack!

This GREAT POEM thus read, yields important lessons; and reading it thus, we exemplify the theory of that other poet who found "sermons in stones, and good in everything."

The Paris Journals announce the death of M. Plon, the celebrated publisher. In the literary world few names were more widely known than that of the publisher of the "Vie de César." M. Plon was sixty-seven years of age, and succumbed to an illness of only a few days' duration.