

THE LIVERPOOL TIMES.

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Poetry.

Death at Sea.

Tender mother, thou art weeping,
And thy heart is sad to-day,
Thou art thinking of thy loved one—
He that perished far away.

Thou art thinking how he languished
Beneath the hot and sultry sky,
When no mother's hand could soothe him,
And no tender sister sigh.

Nurse to bathe his feverish temples,
Nurse to cool his burning brow,
Tender mother we are weeping,
For we feel thy anguish now.

But there is one that knew thy sorrows,
He was near thy loved one's bed,
Listening to his fainting sighs,
While by others all unheard.

He was standing by the river,
Saw his life-boat gliding o'er,
He was there first one to welcome,
On that bright and shining shore.

Cease thy weeping, tender mother,
Though thy heart be sore,
'Twas the Saviour claimed thy darling,
'Twas for him he bled and died.

And His mother saw Him languish—
She a woman just like thee,
Know her Saviour's dying anguish,
On the cursed Calvary.

Now He stands as Meliorator,
Clothed with life and crowned with light,
And He'll welcome those that love Him,
On the shore so pure and bright.

Brooklyn, N. S.

A Mail Depredation.

It is now some two or three years since a young gentleman entered the office of a special agent of the post-office department in a large city on the other side of the Atlantic, and had a serious case of mail depredation to report, which he would like to have investigated immediately. Being requested to give the particulars of the matter, he produced from his pocket a letter addressed to him, and post marked with the name of a small town in the State of Pennsylvania. The envelope bore unmistakable evidences of having been opened and rescaled, and the address was in a lady's handwriting.

"There, sir," said he, carefully removing the letter, and holding the envelope to the agent for inspection, "that envelope has been robbed by some post-office thief of twenty-six dollars. Now I want you to catch him, and put the screws to him—give him ten years at least. I don't care for the loss of the money," (it is singular by the way, how sublimely indifferent to pecuniary considerations most people are, who prefer these complaints) "but I'd like to see the rascal caught."

Now the agent, having had considerable experience in the investigation of cases of riding, was quite sensible that a very necessary preliminary to such investigation was a thorough knowledge of all the circumstances connected with the affair, and, after attentively examining the envelope, which was liberally bedaubed with muckage, he observed:

"Well, sir, I will take a memorandum of your statement, and, if it proves to be a post-office thief, as you say—"

"If it does, sir? Why, who else can it be? Isn't there the envelope to speak for itself—hasn't it evidently been torn open and gummed up again? Of course, it's a post-office thief—any one can see that."

"Probably, sir; but I don't see it just yet. Be good enough to give me the name of the writer of this letter."

The young man hesitated, and at once his manner became confused and nervous.

"I'd rather not, if it is all the same, sir. It's a young lady, and there are peculiar circumstances about the case—and in short, I don't want her name mixed up in it."

"But it will be absolutely necessary, in order to make a proper investigation, that I should know her name. Without it I cannot undertake to do anything in the matter."

The gentleman still sought for some time to avoid giving the name of his fair friend, but at last announced it as Miss Emily Melville. Other questions followed as to the circumstances, which led to the inclosure of the money, etc., to which the complainant answered in an evasive, shuffling way—evidently striving to conceal something of which he was secretly ashamed. Perceiving that the investigation was likely to make but slow progress while conducted in this fashion, the agent finally observed:

"My friend, my time is too precious to waste in drawing information from you with a cork-screw; and you may as well make up your mind either to give me a clear and unreserved account of this transaction, or go elsewhere with your grievance. Now, please to tell me why Miss Melville sent you (or tried to send you) this money?"

"To pay for some broadcloth for a cloak."

"Which you were to purchase for her?"

"Yes—that is, which I had purchased for her."

"Oh, I see—the young lady was probably visiting here, and being temporarily out of funds, you gallantly forced her to accept a loan—eh?"

"Well, no not exactly. The fact is, I sent the goods to her by express, at her request."

"And, of course, she being an old friend—"

"No, not a friend precisely."

"A relative, then?"

"No, sir, I think I have."

"Ah, I see—something nearer and dearer?"

"Well, yes," said the youth, with a sheepish simper, and nervously swinging his hat by the rim, as he gazed modestly on the floor, "we're loved—engaged, I mean."

"Perhaps she forgot to inclose the money?"

"No, sir; I've had a letter from her since, and she swears—I mean she is certain—she put the money in."

"Perhaps, then," said the agent, striving to express his suggestion in the least offensive language, "perhaps she omitted to inclose it?"

"Sir!" exclaimed the fond lover, roused by this insinuation, "what do you mean? There is no doubt whatever, sir, that the young lady sent the money. I would stake my life, sir on her honor."

"Oh, very well, sir—excuse me—no offense intended I'm sure. But you know I understand the pleasure of the young lady's acquaintance. By the way, how long have you known her—a long time, I presume?"

"The young gentleman's embarrassment was visibly increased, as he replied: "About six months."

"Met her in Pennsylvania, I suppose?"

"Yes—that is—no—I can't say I did."

"Where did you meet her, exactly?"

"Why, I can't say where, exactly—don't know as I've met her at all, to tell the truth."

"Telling the truth seems to be a work of time with you, remarked the agent dryly."

"Now, if you'll be good enough to give me a little light upon what you do know of this young lady whom you have never met, but whom you profess to marry, and on whose honor you are willing to stake your life, perhaps there may be some prospect of getting at the facts of this mysterious robbery—otherwise, you need waste no more time in this neighborhood."

"Well, if you must have it here it is: You see about six months ago, I (just for fun, you know) advertised for a wife and this young lady happened to advertise for a husband, about the same time, and we answered each other's advertisements. But, then, she was in earnest—all on the square. Oh, yes, continued he, observing, perhaps, an incredulous smile on the countenance of the agent, she was all right—wanted a husband in earnest—wanted one bad. She was situated in this way: She hadn't got no father nor mother, and was under the charge of a guardian—an old fellow about fifty—and, as she's worth about twenty thousand dollars (here his eyes glistened covetously), in her own right, this guardian he takes and puts her into a boarding school and intends to force her into marrying him. She'd rather have some younger fellow, of course—natural, isn't it?—and so she takes and advertises for a husband. So, as I was saying, I answered her advertisement, and she replied to my letter, and so we got up in correspondence. Now, there ain't no humbug about her—I can tell when a gal's in earnest—and I know she's all right by the way she writes. So, about two weeks ago, she says in the postscript to one of my letters, I wish you would go to Stewart's and get me five yards of black broad-cloth, and send it to me by express. I want it for a cloak, and I'll send you the money just as soon as it comes, and don't fail to let me know just how much it is, for I don't want you to be at any expense for me. So I went to Stewart's and got the cloth, and sent it by express, and wrote to her it was twenty-six dollars, and then she put the money into this letter, and some darned thief in a post-office has gone and stole it—that's all there is about it."

"Oh, that's all is it?" said the agent, with difficulty restraining his laughter, which this pitiful tale of true love was calculated to provoke.

"Well, sir, there's no doubt that you're a very much abused individual and, if you call again in about a fortnight, I think I shall then be able to give you some definite information in regard to the matter."

"Thank you, sir—only put that post-office fellow in State's prison, and I'll be satisfied. I don't care about the money—that is, I don't care so much about it—but if you could get it back—"

"I shall do everything possible, sir. Good-morning."

"Good-morning, sir."

Punctually at the expiration of the fortnight, the victim of this heartless post-office robbery made his investigation. The agent, by writing one or two letters, and availing himself of certain other means at his command, had, in the mean time, entirely satisfied himself as to the author of the outrage, and was quite prepared for the visit.

"Good morning, sir. Have you found out yet who stole my money?"

"Yes, sir, I think I have."

"I am glad to hear it. Did you get any of it back?"

"Not a cent."

"Well, I suppose he's in State's prison by this time?"

"Not that I know of, but it is not impossible that he may reach that institution one of these days. Here's a letter which will perhaps explain the matter better than I can. I received a few days since from Pennsylvania."

"The anxious young gentleman recognized at once his Emily's handwriting, and hastened to read the following:

"PENN. JAN. 10, 1879.
"MR. ———, P. O. Agent.

"DEAR SIR,—I find you have been making some inquiries about me. Here's a letter which I sent to Mr. George N. X. Well, you may tell him from me that that broad-headed fellow, I don't go to boarding-school as much as I used to. I think I do. You might mention, while you are about it, that when I get that \$20,000, I will send him half of it—in the same way I send the other. Also tell him, 'Ever of these.'"

"Yours truly,
EMILY MELVILLE,
(or any other name.)"

There was a deep silence during the reading of this epistle in the office of the agent, who had considerably turned his back while the unhappy victim was learning of his wasted affection and cash. The silence continued so long, that at length the agent turned to offer what little consolation was in his power. But he was spared the task. The hapless young man had noiselessly departed, possibly to take the train for Pennsylvania, possibly to meditate in solitude over the comparative advantages of "love at first sight" and love before sight. Wherever he went he has not returned.

Our Passenger.

THE CAPTAIN'S STORY.

"It was a lovely autumn afternoon toward the close of September, when we weighed anchor, and sailed out of the River Mersey, bound for Melbourne. We had a good ship—Janet's Pride—loaded with miscellaneous articles. On board were fourteen passengers, and take them in all, a pleasant lot. I never steered across the stormy seas."

There were three old gentlemen, who were going out to share their fortunes, come what might, and which would soon be theirs, seemed to think fashioned in the brightest colors, long before the English coast was out of sight.

Then there was a solitary old gentleman, who, judging from the general tone of his conversation, was seeking the new world for the ostensible purpose of finding fault with it.

There were two young married couples, all full of hope and activity, bent upon making a new home far away from their native land.

There were also a very jolly elderly brother and sister, neither of whom had ever entered into the bonds of matrimony, but instead, had stuck by each other through life.

There were three old Australian settlers who had been over to have a peep at the old country, and who were now returning to the land which to them, through long communion, had become the dearest of all others—Home, sweet home!"

Lastly, though not least, there was a solitary passenger, who soon became the pet of all on board. He was a man of about eight and twenty years of age, possessing a very clear complexion, a very handsome, long-flowing beard, and a very silky moustache. His name was Reginald Moore.

His given reason for taking this sea voyage was the delicate state of his health. There was not the least doubt that the poor fellow's chest was considerably affected, for by his voice, though charmingly sweet, was that of the weakest. I ever remember hearing, and it had a certain hollowiness in its sound that in my mind is invariably associated with that terrible disease commonly termed consumption. He always wore a thick muffler round his neck to protect his throat and chest.

In all my experience—and it has been pretty wide—I never knew any one with so many friends, and such undivided esteem, in so short a space of time, as Reginald Moore. There was not, I believe, a sailor on board who did not entertain the warmest possible liking for him.

As for the passengers, they never seemed so happy as when listening to his amusing anecdotes, of which he seemed to possess an inexhaustible store. And this delicate young English paragon of passengers had made this conquest over all our hearts before we had been three weeks at sea.

He was, too, such a clever fellow about his hands. He could out of shape you anything out of a piece of wood, from an oyster to a piece of brass, and taking models of ships, I never met his equal. He was, besides, such a kind and considerate fellow toward his fellow-passengers.

When the three elderly gentlemen, who imagined their fortunes made, were afflicted with sea-sickness, he was the first to come forward and help them about while they slowly recovered. He would insist upon their taking his arm, weak as he was himself, and he would lead them to the deck with the firmness that spoke volumes in favor of his sea-legs.

I do not remember any voyage passing so quickly as the one when the pleasant passenger was on board. I could, with infinite pleasure, make a long pause at this juncture in the thread of my story, to dwell upon the pleasant memories I still retain of Reginald Moore.

We were within a week's sail of Melbourne. Reginald Moore had all but completed a model of the Janet's Pride, which he purposed presenting to me the night before we landed.

Now he worked at this model principally on deck, and strangely enough, he had chosen for a work-table one of the empty water-casks that stood on deck, and under the shelter of the bulwarks.

While he worked through the day, you were sure to see him surrounded by some of the passengers or sailors. The amount of industry he displayed was truly wonderful, for he was invariably at work in the early morning long before any of the other passengers dreamt of turning out of their snug berths.

As I have already stated, we were but six days' sail from Melbourne. For the first time in our experience of him, the pleasant passenger appeared at the dinner-table with a solemn, almost an expression of face and a silent tongue. Before we were over I asked him what troubled him, and caused this unhappy change in his wonted cheerful manner.

At first he tried to evade my question, saying that it was "nothing, nothing particular," but I pressed him persistently until I won from him an explanation.

"Perhaps, after all," he said, "it is only fair that I should explain matters. The fact of the matter is, my watch has been stolen."

"Stolen!" we all exclaimed in a breath.

"Undoubtedly," he answered; "but I pray you captain—here he turned to me—I pray you say not one word about it. The only thing that renders the loss of consequence to me is the fact that it once belonged to my poor mother. On that account alone, I would not have lost it for any amount of money. However, it cannot be helped, and therefore it is useless to cry over spilt milk, as the old adage has it. My only request in the matter is, my dear captain, that you will leave the matter entirely in my hands, and I think it very probable that I may recover it. This request I am sure you will oblige me by granting."

"Certainly, my dear sir, I replied, 'but still—'

"Exactly," he interrupted, with one of his pleasant smiles, you would like to take the matter in hand and investigate it to the utmost of your power. I know that, my dear captain, full well, but I can trust you to keep your promise, and leave the case entirely in my hands."

How could I deny him his request. You will readily imagine what consternation this event gave rise to among the other passengers. The three old gentlemen instantly proceeded to explain that they possessed jewelry to the value of at least three hundred pounds, which they usually kept locked up in a brown leather writing-case; but unfortunately, at the present time, the lock was out of order.

Reginald Moore suggested a safer deposit of their valuables. The young married couples announced the fact of their owning at least two hundred and fifty pounds' worth of jewelry; and they, too, consulted Mr. Moore as to the safest plan for securing it.

The kind-hearted brother and sister had, it appeared, more valuables in the way of jewelry than any one on board, since fifteen hundred pounds had never purchased what they possessed.

The whole of that evening was occupied in specializing as to the probable perpetrator of the theft, and in conferring with Mr. Reginald Moore on his great loss.

Every one turned in, that night, in an uneasy state of mind; and it was with astonishment that they found themselves in the morning still in possession of all their worldly goods.

This improved condition of affairs seemed to reassure our passengers, who once again began to look cheerful and at ease.

Reginald Moore's pleasant face wore its wonted smile, and, as heretofore, he enlivened and charmed us with his vivacity and anecdote. All day through he worked at the model of the Janet's Pride, still using the top of the empty water-cask for a work-table.

That night we retired to rest with minds far more at ease than on the previous one. Alas! what a scene of anger and distress came with the morning! Every passenger on board discovered jewelry had been robbed during the night.

The three old gentlemen, the young married couple, and the kind-hearted brother and sister, found themselves minus every article of jewelry that they had possessed. Even the grumbling old gentleman had lost his gold stud-brooch.

There was no keeping matters quiet this time. The thief must be traced and brought to justice. What was the wisest method of procedure? What would Mr. Moore suggest?

"I would suggest, though most reluctantly," said Mr. Moore, "that every sailor and every sailor's luggage be carefully searched."

To this proposition we unanimously agreed.

"This," he continued, "must be most humiliating to the feelings of your crew, captain, and therefore, in common fairness to them as our fellow-passengers, let me also suggest that every passenger and every passenger's luggage also be thoroughly searched."

A little hesitation on the part of one or two of the passengers was demonstrated before agreeing to this last proposal, but our pleasant passenger soon contrived to bring those who at first demurred to his side of thinking.

"Of course," he said, "there is not a passenger on board who is not above suspicion, yet, in justice to the feelings of the crew, it is, in my humble opinion, the least we can do."

This delicacy of feeling and this thoughtfulness on the part of Reginald Moore, rendered him, if possible, more admired and praiseworthy in our eyes than ever.

Many of the crew objected strongly to this mode of proceeding, but they were compelled to submit. The old boatswain was furious with indignation, and roared that if it cost him his life he would trace the thief who had caused him to be searched like a common pick-pocket. Even the pleasant passenger failed to soothe his sense of injury.

"Well, a thorough search was made by myself in company with the kind-hearted old gentleman and his sister. Every one's traps were ransacked from top to bottom, but without success.

Further search was useless. What was to be done?"

That night, all having been made snug, and the passengers having turned in, none of them, as you may imagine, in very brilliant spirits. I went on deck, it being what we call at sea the captain's watch."

I turned in about four A. M., the second officer then coming on duty. My cabin was amidships and on deck, and from a window therein I could command a view of the after-deck of the ship.

Somehow or other, I could not rest one atom, so dressing myself, I determined upon sitting up and smoking. I drew aside the blind of the window I have mentioned, and looked out.

It was just the gray light of early morning, and there was a stiffish breeze blowing. To my surprise, I beheld Mr. Reginald Moore on deck.

I was about to open my cabin-door and invite him in to join me in my restlessness, when the peculiar nature of his proceedings riveted my attention. He looked around on all sides, as if afraid of attracting observation.

Then, suddenly, as if assured the coast was clear, he made rapidly toward the empty water-cask, on which he was accustomed to manufacture his model of the Janet's Pride. Once more glancing cautiously about him, he then applied his hands to the top of the cask, and with a rapid movement lifted half of the top bodily off.

My astonishment and my excitement were intense. Another hasty glance round, and he plucked his hat down into the cask, then quickly withdrew it, and with a rapid movement lifted half of the top bodily off.

Again he took a hasty survey, and was about making another dive into this strange receptacle for hidden goods, when he suddenly withdrew, placed the lid astonishingly rapidly, replaced the hat on his head, and in another moment the cause of his alarm was made apparent, as a couple of sailors passed him on their way to relieve the wheel.

When all was again quiet, for an

instant he seemed determined to at once return to the cask, and no doubt withdrew something that the interruption had prevented him withdrawing in the first instance. But suddenly changing his mind, he went down the stairs that led from the deck to the saloon and sleeping cabins.

Scarcely had he disappeared, when another figure stealthily crossing the deck, met my anxious observation. It was the boatswain.

I saw him glance toward the stairs, down which Mr. Reginald Moore had taken his departure. He then made direct for the water-cask. It was now obvious to me that the old boatswain had been watching the pleasant passenger.

Just as he reached the water-cask, a heavy green sea struck the ship to windward, necessitating the boatswain to hold on by a rope so as to keep his footing, and precisely at the same moment Reginald Moore appeared at the top of the cabin stairs. I shall never forget the scene.

The instant the ship had steadied herself, the boatswain commenced his examination of the water-cask. For a moment only, Moore stood looking at him with an evil expression on his face as I ever beheld.

With one bound he was upon the boatswain, before he could turn to protect himself. I waited no longer, but flung open the door of my cabin in an instant, and in another was to the rescue, and in a few moments we had our pleasant passenger in irons. So, you see, he was the thief, after all, hiding his knavery under the pleasant exterior. I ever knew a man to possess. The manner in which he had manufactured the top of that water-cask was the most finished and ingenious piece of carpentry I ever beheld.

In the interior of the side of the cask he had driven several nails, about two feet from the top, on which he had suspended in wash-leather bags, the jewelry he had stolen.

You may easily imagine the surprise evinced by our passengers on discovering that the thief was the man for whom each and every one of them entertained such regard and even affection.

At the expiration of three days from the date of the pleasant passenger's detection, we landed in Melbourne, where duty compelled me to hand him over to the police, but as no one cared to remain in that town for the purpose of prosecuting him, he was summarily dealt with. The presiding magistrate sentenced him to six months' imprisonment with hard labor.

A Parrot's Piety.

Captain James Eulberger voyaged for the following bird story:

About thirty years ago when in Honduras in command of the *Marque Eldorado*, his wife then accompanying him he was presented with a parrot, a sprightly bird, and a fluent discerner in the Spanish language. The bird was brought to this city, where after being domiciled in the house of the captain's family it soon acquired a knowledge of the English tongue. The next door neighbor of the captain was a garrulous woman—an incessant scold forever quarreling with somebody or something.

Polly being allowed full liberty was pleased to take an airing on the yard fence, and in a short time had learned to mimic the scolding neighbor to perfection and finally became aggressive. Polly not untruly retorted her impertinence by being knocked off the fence with the broom stick.

This brought forth a torrent of abuse from her injured feeling upon the head of her assailant. Finally the bird's language became so abusive that the captain was obliged to send it away, and Polly was transferred to a good Christian family in the country where in the course of time she reformed and became to some extent a bird of edifying piety. Some time ago, while she was sunning herself in the garden, a large hawk swooped down and bore the distressed parrot off a prize. Her recent religious training came to her assistance, and at the top of her voice she shrieked, "Oh, Lord, save me! Oh, Lord save me!"

The hawk became so terrified at the unexpected cry that he dropped his intended dinner and soared away in the distance.

Polly still survives her attempted abduction.—*Baltimore News.*

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BEEF ROOT SUGAR.—Experiments made by Messrs. Corenwinder indicate that the amount of sugar in beet roots is in proportion to the leaf surface of the plants. This is the more and the larger the leaves, the more sugar there will be in the roots, and of all parts of the leaf the mid rib contains most sugar.

