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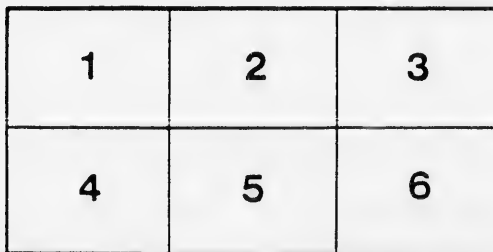
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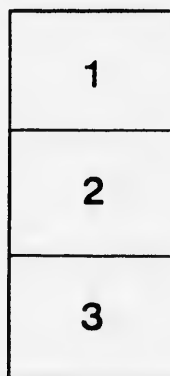
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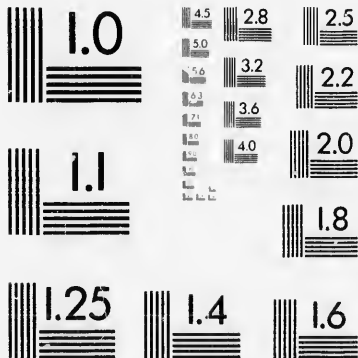
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FARM BALLADS
FARM FESTIVALS
AND
FARM LEGENDS

BY
WILL CARLETON

TORONTO
THE MUSSON BOOK COMPANY, LIMITED
LONDON
SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON, AND COMPANY
LIMITED

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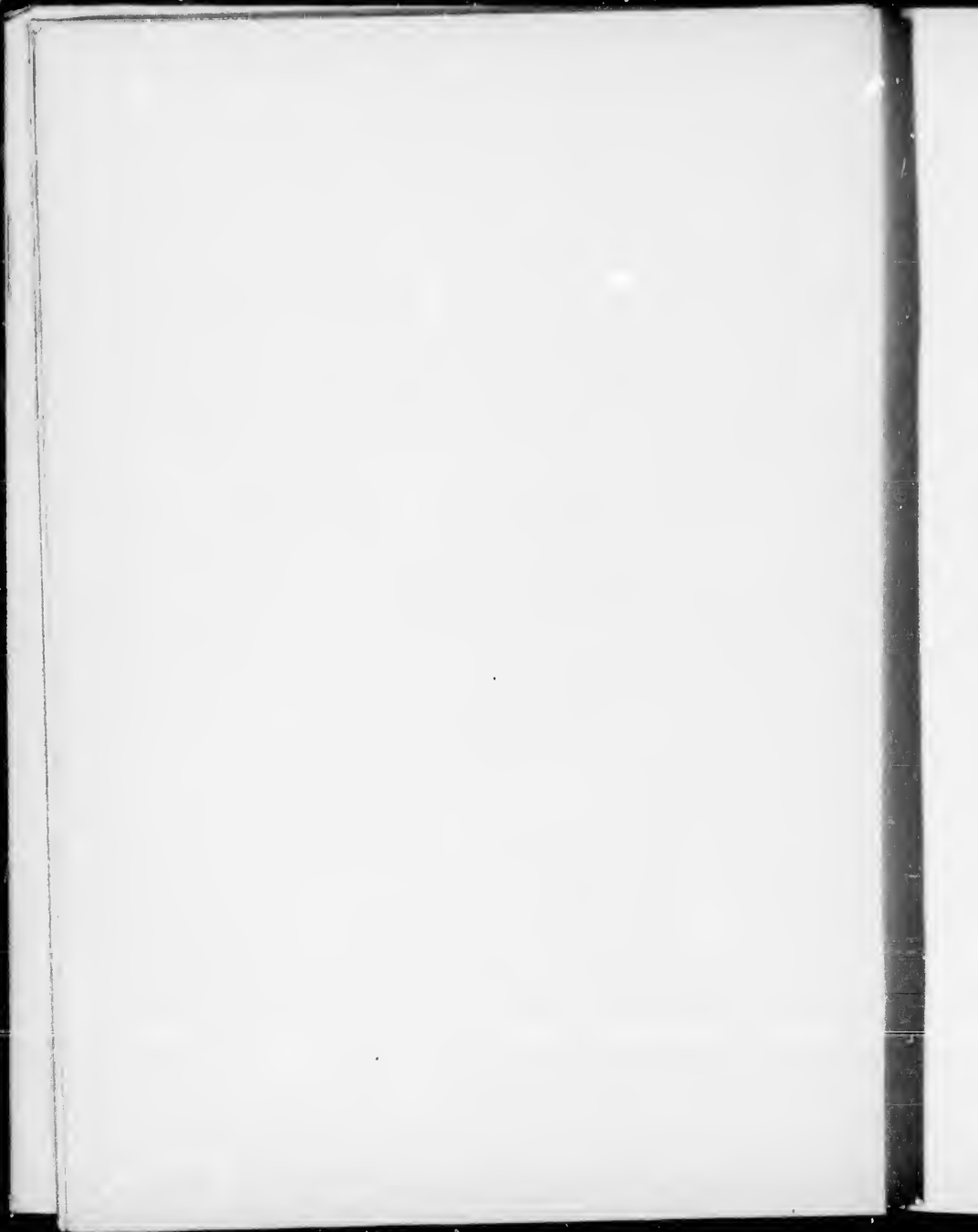
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TO
MY MOTHER.



PREFACE.



THESE poems have been written under various, and, in some cases, difficult, conditions: in the open air "with team afield;" in the student's den, with the ghosts of unfinished lessons hovering gloomily about; amid the rush and roar of railroad travel, which trains of thought are not prone to follow; and in the editor's sanctum, where the dainty feet of the Muses do not often deign to tread.

Crude and unfinished as they are, the author has yet had the assurance to publish them, from time to time, in different periodicals, in which, it is but just to admit, they have been met by the people with unexpected favour. While his judgment has often failed to endorse the kind words spoken for them, he has naturally not felt it in his heart to file any remonstrances.

He has been asked, by friends in all parts of the country, to put his poems into a more durable form

than they have hitherto possessed ; and it is in accordance with these requests that he now presents " Farm Ballads " to the public.

Of course he does not expect to escape, what he needs so greatly, the discipline of severe criticism ; for he is aware that he has often wandered out of the beaten track, and has many times been too regardless of the established rules of rhythm, in his (oftentimes vain) search for the flowers of poesy.

But he believes that The People are, after all, the true critics, and will soon ascertain whether there are more good than poor things in a book ; and whatever may be their verdict in this case, he has made up his mind to be happy.

W. C.

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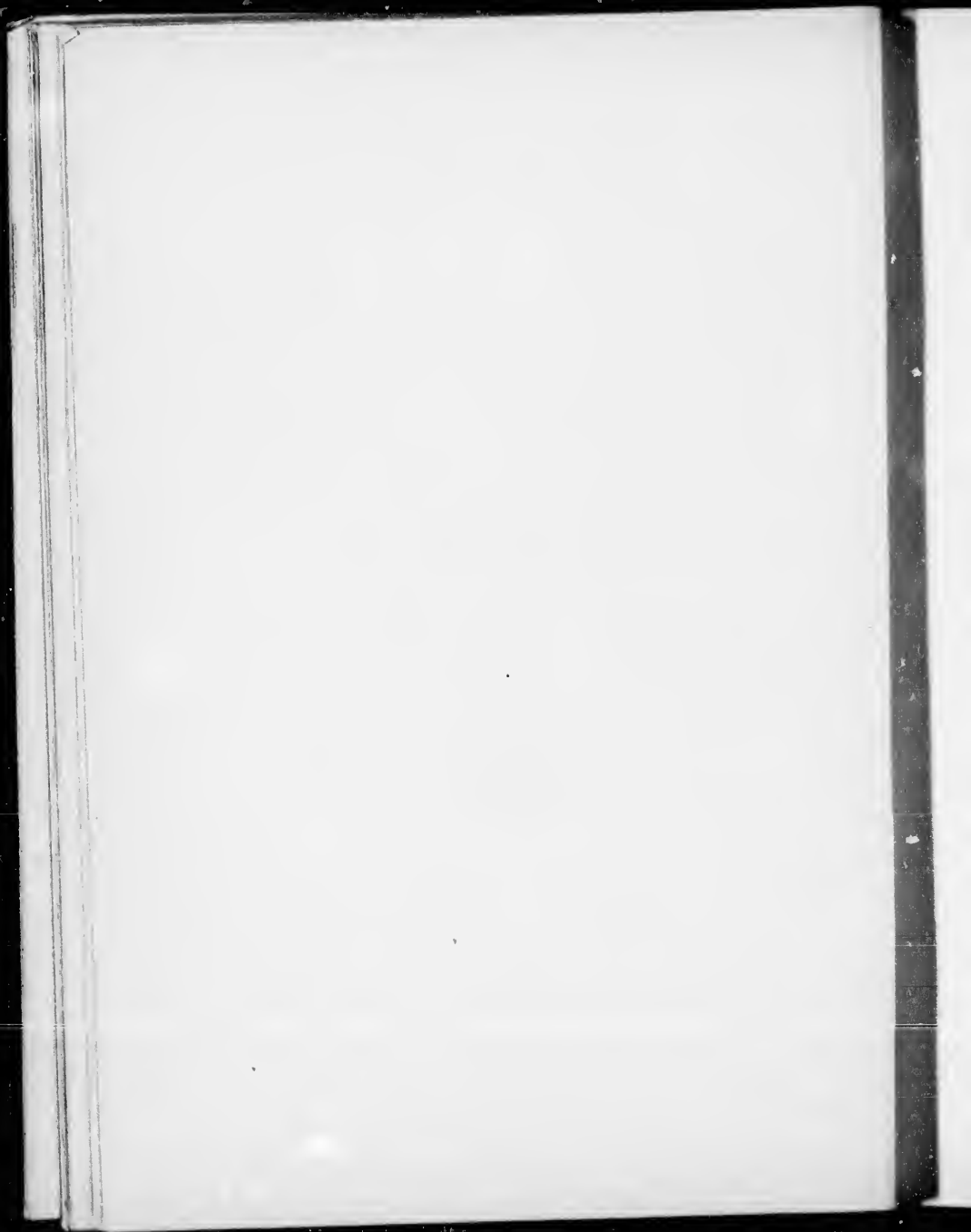
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BETSEY AND I ARE OUT

A.





BETSEY AND I ARE OUT.

DRAW up the papers, lawyer, and
make 'em good and stout ;

For things at home are crossways, and
Betsey and I are out.

We, who have worked together so long as man
and wife,

Must pull in single harness for the rest of our
nat'ral life.

"What is the matter?" say you. I swan it's
hard to tell !

Most of the years behind us we've passed by
very well !

I have no other woman, she has no other
man—

Only we've lived together as long as we ever
can.

So I have talked with Betsey, and Betsey has
talked with me,

And so we've agreed together that we can't
never agree ;

Not that we've caught each other in any
terrible crime ;

We've been a-gathering this for years, a little at
a time.

There was a stock of temper we both had for a
start,

Although we never suspected 'twould take us
two apart ;

I had my various failings, bred in the flesh and
bone ;

And Betsey, like all good women, had a temper
of her own.

The first thing I remember whereon we disagreed
Was something concerning heaven—a difference
in our creed ;

We arg'ed the thing at breakfast, we arg'ed the
thing at tea,

And the more we arg'ed the question, the more
we didn't agree.

And the next that I remember was when we
lost a cow ;

She had kicked the bucket for certain, the
question was only—How ?

I held my own opinion, and Betsey another
had ;

And when we were done a-talkin', we both of
us was mad.

And the next that I remember, it started in a
joke ;

But full for a week it lasted, and neither of us
spoke.

And the next was when I scolded because she
broke a bowl ;

And she said I was mean and stingy, and hadn't
any soul.

And so that bowl kept pourin' dissensions in
our cup ;

And so that blamed cow-creature was always
a-comin' up ;

And so that heaven we arg'ed no nearer to us
got,

But it gave us a taste of something a thousand
times as hot.

And so the thing kept workin', and all the self-
same way ;

Always somethin' to arg'e, and somethin' sharp
to say ;

And down on us came the neighbours, a couple
dozen strong,

And lent their kindest sarvice for to help the
thing along.

And there has been days together—and many a
weary week—

We was both of us cross and spunky, and both
too proud to speak ;

And I have been thinkin' and thinkin', the whole
of the winter and fall,

If I can't live kind with a woman, why, then, I
won't at all.

And so I have talked with Betsey, and Betsey
has talked with me,

And we have agreed together that we can't
never agree ;

And what is hers shall be hers, and what is
mine shall be mine ;

And I'll put it in the agreement, and take it to
her to sign.

Write on the paper, lawyer—the very first
paragraph—

Of all the farm and live-stock that she shall have
her half ;

For she has helped to earn it, through many a
weary day,

And it's nothing more than justice that Betsey
has her pay.

Give her the house and homestead—a man can
thrive and roam ;

But women are skeery critters, unless they have
a home ;

And I have always determined, and never
failed to say,

That Betsey should never want a home if I was
taken away.

There is a little hard money that's drawin'
tol'able pay :

A couple of hundred dollars laid by for a rainy
day ;

Safe in the hands of good men, and easy to get
at ;

Put in another clause there, and give her half of
that.

Yes, I see you smile, sir, at my givin' her so
much ;

Yes, divorce is cheap, sir, but I take no stock in
such !

True and fair I married her, when she was
blithe and young ;

And Betsey was al'ays good to me, exceptin'
with her tongue.

Once, when I was young as you, and not so
smart, perhaps,

For me she mittened a lawyer, and several other
chaps ;

And all of them was flustered, and fairly taken
down,

And I for a time was counted the luckiest man
in town.

Once when I had a fever—I won't forget it
soon—

I was hot as a basted turkey and crazy as a
loon ;

Never an hour went by me when she was out of
sight—

She nursed me true and tender, and stuck to me
day and night.

And if ever a house was tidy, and ever a kitchen
clean,

Her house and kitchen was as tidy as any I
ever seen ;

And I don't complain of Betsey, or any of her
acts,

Excepting when we 've quarrelled, and told each
other facts.

So draw up the paper, lawyer, and I'll go home
to-night,

And read the agreement to her, and see if it's all
right ;

And then, in the mornin', I'll sell to a tradin'
man I know,

And kiss the child that was left to us, and out
in the world I'll go.

And one thing put in the paper, that first to me
didn't occur ;

That when I am dead at last she'll bring me
back to her ;

And lay me under the maples I planted years
ago,

When she and I was happy before we quar-
relled so.

And when she dies I wish that she would be
laid by me,

And, lyin' together in silence, perhaps we will
agree ;

And, if ever we meet in heaven, I wouldn't think
it queer

If we loved each other the better because we
quarrelled here.



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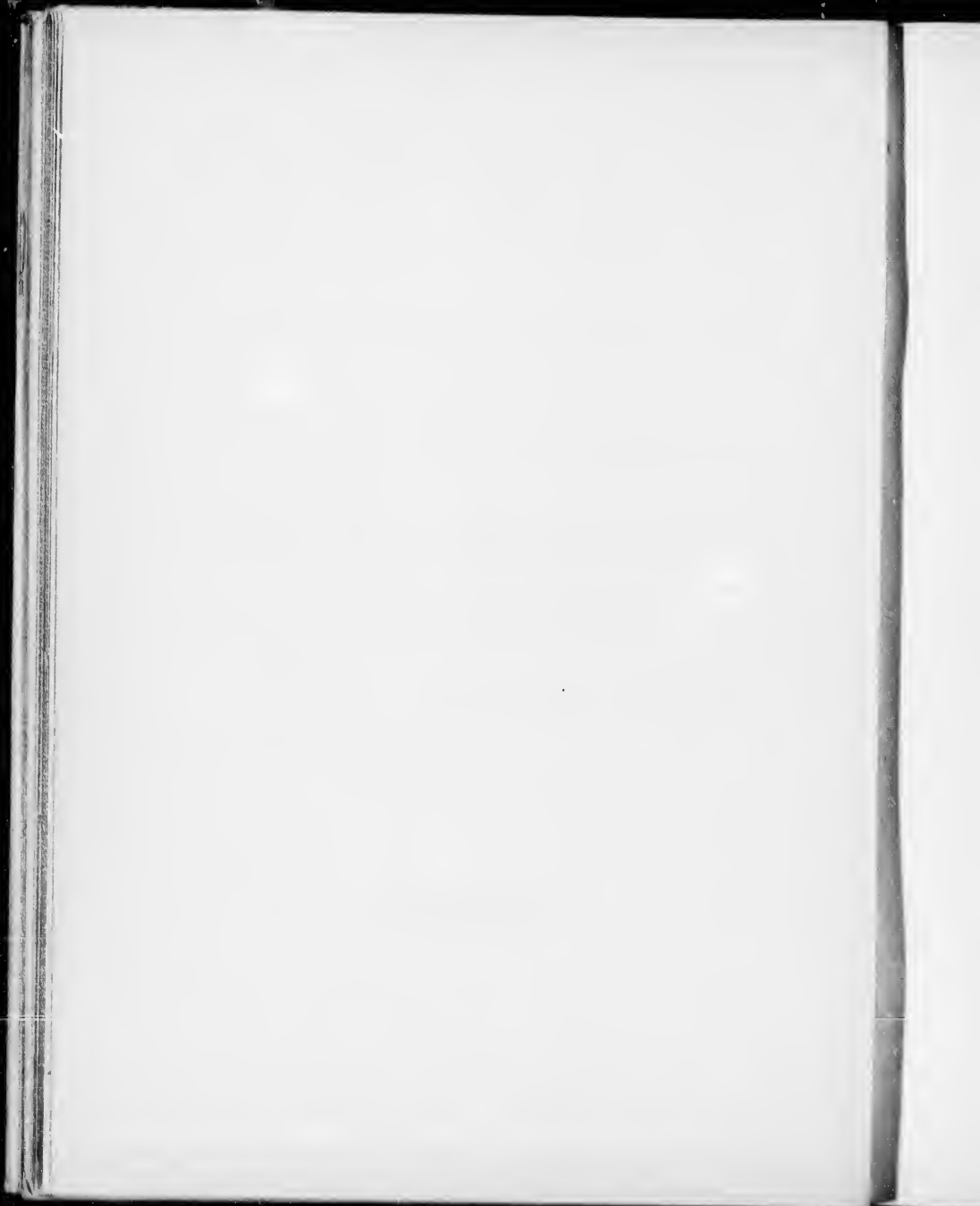
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HOW BETSEY AND I MADE UP.





HOW BETSEY AND I MADE UP.

GIVE us your hand, Mr Lawyer: how do
you do to-day?

You drew up that paper—I s'pose you
want your pay.

Don't cut down your figures; make it an X
or a V;

For that 'ere written agreement was just the
makin' of me.

Goin' home that evenin' I tell you I was blue,
Thinkin' of all my troubles, and what I was
goin' to do;

And if my horses hadn't been the steadiest
team alive,
They 'd 've tipped me over, certain, for I couldn't
see where to drive.

No—for I was labourin' under a heavy load ;
No—for I was travellin' an entirely different
road ;
For I was a-tracin' over the path of our lives
ag'in,
And seein' where we missed the way, and where
we might have been.

And many a corner we'd turned that just to a
quarrel led,
When I ought to 've held my temper, and
driven straight ahead ;
And the more I thought it over the more these
memories came,

And the more I struck the opinion that I was
the most to blame.

And things I had long forgotten kept risin' in
my mind,

Of little matters betwixt us, where Betsey was
good and kind ;

And these things flashed all through me, as you
know things sometimes will

When a feller's alone in the darkness, and every-
thing is still.

"But," says I, "we're too far along to take
another track,

And when I put my hand to the plough, I do
not oft turn back ;

And 'tain't an uncommon thing now for couples
to smash in two ;"

And so I set my teeth together, and vowed I'd
see it through.

When I come in sight o' the house, 'twas some'at
in the night,

And just as I turned a hill-top I see the kitchen
light ;

Which often a han'some pictur' to a hungry
person makes,

But it don't interest a feller much that's goin'
to pull up stakes.

And when I went in the house, the table was set
for me—

As good a supper's I ever saw, or ever want to
see ;

And I crammed the agreement down my pocket
as well as I could,

And fell to eatin' my victuals, which somehow
didn't taste good.

And Betsey, she pretended to look about the
house,

But she watched my side coat-pocket like a cat
would watch a mouse ;

And then she went to foolin' a little with her
cup,

And intently readin' a newspaper, a-holdin' it
wrong side up.

And when I'd done my supper, I drew the
agreement out,

And gave it to her without a word, for she
knowed what 'twas about ;

And then I hummed a little tune, but now and
then a note

Was bu'sted by some animal that hopped up in
my throat.

Then Betsey she got her specs from off the
mantel-shelf,

And read the article over quite softly to her-
self ;

Read it by little and little, for her eyes is gettin'
old,

And lawyers' writin' ain't no print, especially
when it 's cold.

And after she 'd read a litle she give my arm a
touch,

And kindly said she was afraid I was 'lowin'
her too much ;

But when she was through, she went for me, her
face a-streamin' with tears,

And kissed me for the first time in over twenty
years !

I don't know what you 'll think, sir—I didn't
come to inquire—

But I picked up that agreement and stuffed it
in the fire ;

And I told her we 'd bury the hatchet alongside
of the cow ;

And we struck an agreement never to have
another row.

And I told her in the future I wouldn't speak
cross or rash

If half the crockery in the house was broken all
to smash ;

And she said, in regards to heaven, we'd try and
learn its worth

By startin' a branch establishment and runnin'
it here on earth.

And so we sat a-talkin' three-quarters of the
night,

And opened our hearts to each other until they
both grew light ;

And the days when I was winnin' her away
from so many men

Was nothin' to that evenin' I courted her over
again.

Next mornin' an ancient virgin took pains to
call on us.

Her lamp all trimmed and a-burnin' to kindle
another fuss ;

But when she went to pryin' and openin' of old
sores,

My Betsey rose politely, and showed her out-of-
doors.

Since then I don't deny but there's been a word
or two ;

But we've got our eyes wide open, and know
just what to do :

When one speaks cross the other just meets it
with a laugh,

And the first one's ready to give up consider-
able more than half.

Maybe you'll think me soft, sir, a-talkin' in
this style,

But somehow it does me lots of good to tell it
once in a while ;

And I do it for a compliment—'tis so that you
can see

That that there written agreement of yours was
just the makin' of me.

So make out your bill, Mr Lawyer : don't stop
short of an X ;

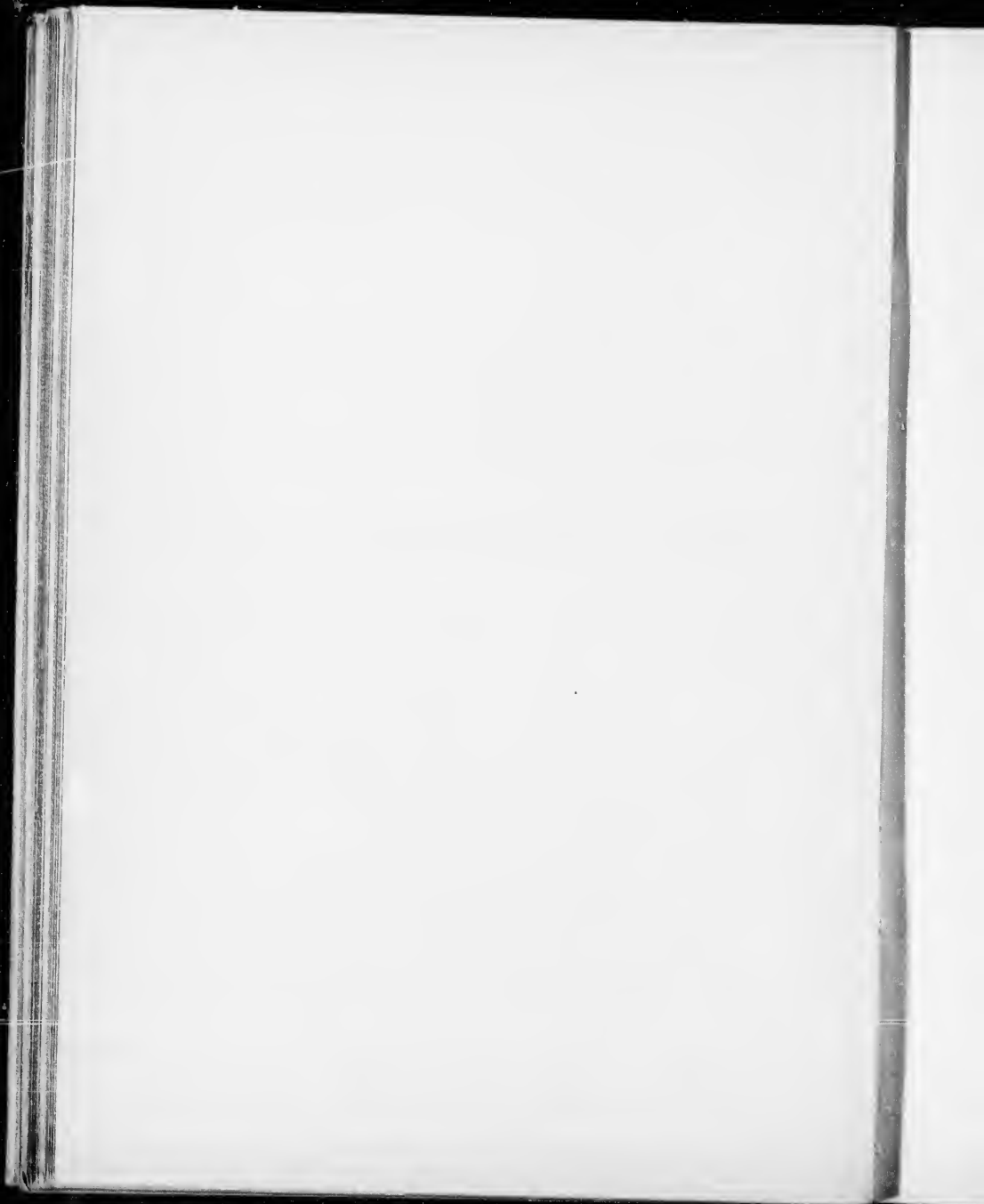
Make it more if you want to, for I have got the
checks.

I'm richer than a National Bank, with all its
treasures told,

For I've got a wife at home now that's worth
her weight in gold.



GONE WITH A HANDSOMER MAN.





GONE WITH A HANDSOMER MAN.

JOHN.

I'VE worked in the field all day,
a-ploughin' the "stony streak ;"
I've scolded my team till I'm hoarse ;
I've tramped till my legs are weak ;
I've choked a dozen swears (so's not to tell
Jane fibs)
When the plough-p'int struck a stone and the
handles punched my ribs.
I've put my team in the barn, and rubbed their
sweaty coats ;

I've fed 'em a heap of hay and half a bushel of
oats;

And to see the way they eat makes me like
eatin' feel,

And Jane won't say to-night that I don't make
out a meal.

Well said! the door is locked! but here she's
left the key,

Under the step, in a place known only to her
and me;

I wonder who's dyin' or dead, that she's
hustled off pell-mell:

But here on the table's a note, and probably
this will tell.

Good God! my wife is gone! my wife is gone
astray!

The letter it says, "Good-bye, for I'm a-going
away;

I've lived with you six months, John, and so far
I've been true ;
But I'm going away to-day with a handsomer
man than you."

A han'somer man than me! Why, that ain't
much to say ;
There's han'somer men than me go past here
every day.
There's han'somer men than me—I ain't of the
han'some kind ;
But a *lovin'er* man than I was I guess she'll
never find.

Curse her ! curse her ! I say, and give my curses
wings !

May the words of love I've spoke be changed to
scorpion stings !

Oh, she filled my heart with joy, she emptied
my heart of doubt,

And now, with a scratch of a pen, she lets my
heart's-blood out !

Curse her ! curse her ! say I ; she 'll some time
rue this day ;

She 'll some time learn that hate is a game that
two can play ;

And long before she dies she 'll grieve she ever
was born ;

And I 'll plough her grave with hate, and seed it
down to scorn !

As sure as the world goes on, there 'll come a
time when she

Will read the devilish heart of that han'somer
man than me ;

And there 'll be a time when he will find, as
others do,

That she who is false to one can be the same
with two

And when her face grows pale, and when her
eyes grow dim,

And when he is tired of her and she is tired of
him,

She'll do what she ought to have done, and
coolly count the cost ;

And then she'll see things clear, and know what
she has lost.

And thoughts that are now asleep will wake up
in her mind,

And she will mourn and cry for what she has
left behind ;

And maybe she'll sometimes long for me—for
me—but no !

I've blotted her out of my heart, and I will not
have it so.

And yet in her girlish heart there was somethin'
or other she had

That fastened a man to her, and wasn't entirely
bad ;

And she loved me a little, I think, although it
didn't last ;

But I mustn't think of these things—I've buried
'em in the past.

I'll take my hard words back, nor make a bad
matter worse ;

She'll have trouble enough ; she shall not have
my curse ;

But I'll live a life so square—and I well know
that I can—

That she always will sorry be that she went
with that han'somer man.

Ah, here is her kitchen dress ! it makes my
poor eyes blur ;

It seems, when I look at that, as if 'twas hold-
ing her.

And here are her week-day shoes, and there is
her week-day hat,
And yonder 's her weddin' gown : I wonder she
didn't take that.

'Twas only this mornin' she came and called me
her "dearest dear,"

And said I was makin' for her a regular paradise
here ;

O God ! if you want a man to sense the pains
of hell,

Before you pitch him in just keep him in heaven
a spell !

Good-bye ! I wish that death had severed us
two apart.

You 've lost a worshipper here—you 've crushed
a loving heart.

I 'll worship no woman again ; but I guess I 'll
learn to pray

And kneel as *you* used to kneel before you run
away.

And if I thought I could bring my words on
heaven to bear,

And if I thought I had some little influence
there,

I would pray that I might be, if it only could be
so,

As happy and gay as I was a half an hour ago.

JANE (*entering*).

Why, John, what a litter here! you've thrown
things all around!

Come, what's the matter now? and what've
you lost or found?

And here's my father here, a-waitin' for supper,
too;

I've been a-riding with him—he's that "hand-
somer man than you."

Ha! ha! Pa, take a seat, while I put the
kettle on,

And get things ready for tea, and kiss my dear
old John.

Why, John, you look so strange! Come, what
has crossed your track?

I was only a-joking, you know; I'm willing to
take it back.

JOHN (*aside*).

Well, now, if this *ain't* a joke, with rather a
bitter cream!

It seems as if I'd woke from a mighty ticklish
dream;

And I think she "smells a rat," for she smiles
at me so queer;

I hope she don't; good Lord! I hope that they
didn't hear i

'Twas one of her practical drives—she thought
I'd understand !

But I'll never break soc' again till I get the lay
of the land.

But one thing's settled with me—to appreciate
heaven well,

'Tis good for a man to have some fifteen
minutes of hell.



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JOHNNY RICH.



JOHNNY RICH.

BAISE the light a little, Jim,
For it's getting rather dim,
And, with such a storm a-howlin', 'twill
not ' to douse the glim.
Hustle down the curtains, Lu ;
Poke the fire a little, Su ;
This is somethin' of a flurry, mother, somethin'
of a—whew !
Goodness gracious, how it pours !
How it beats ag'in the doors !
You will have a hard one, Jimmy, when you go
to do the chores !

Do not overfeed the gray ;
Give a plenty to the bay ;
And be careful with your lantern when you go
among the hay.

See the horses have a bed
When you 've got 'em fairly fed ;
Feed the cows that's in the stable, and the
sheep that's in the shed ;
Give the spotted cow some meal,
Where the brindle cannot steal ;
For she's greedy as a porker, and as slipp'ry as
an eel.

Hang your lantern by the ring,
On a nail, or on a string ;
For the Durham calf'll bunt it, if there's any
such a thing :
He's a handsome one to see,
And a knowin' one is he :

I stooped over t'other morning, and he up and
went for me !

Rover thinks he hears a noise !

Just keep still a minute, boys ;

Nellie, hold your tongue a second, and be silent
with your toys.

Stop that barkin', now, you whelp,

Or I 'll kick you till you yelp !

Yes, I hear it ; 'tis somebody that's callin' out
for help.

Get the lantern, Jim and Tom,

Mother, keep the babies calm,

And we 'll follow up that halloa, and we 'll see
where it is from.

'Tis a hairy sort of night

For a man to face and fight ;

And the wind is blowin'—Hang it, Jimmy,
bring another light !

* * * * *

Ah ! 'twas you, then, Johnny Rich,
Yelling out at such a pitch,
For a decent man to help you, while you fell
into the ditch:
'Tisn't quite the thing to say,
But we ought to 've let you lay,
While your drunken carcass died a-drinkin'
water anyway.

And to see you on my floor,
And to hear the way you snore,
Now we 've lugged you under shelter, and the
danger all is o'er;
And you lie there, quite resigned,
Whisky deaf, and whisky blind,
And it will not hurt your feelin's, so I guess I 'll
free my mind.

Do you mind, you thievin' dunce,
How you robbed my orchard once,

Takin' all the biggest apples, leavin' all the
littlest runts ?

Do you mind my melon-patch—
How you gobbled the whole batch,
Stacked the vines, and sliced the greenest
melons, just to raise the scratch ?

Do you think, you drunken wag,
It was anything to brag,
To be cornered in my hen-roost, with two pul-
lets in a bag ?

You are used to dirty dens ;
You have often slept in pens ;
I've a mind to take you out there now, and
roost you with the hens !

Do you call to mind with me
How, one night, you and your three
Took my waggon all to pieces for to hang it on
a tree ?

How you hung it up, you eels,
Straight and steady, by the wheels ?
I've a mind to take you out there now, and
hang you by your heels !

How, the Fourth of last July,
When you got a little high,
You went back to Wilson's counter when you
thought he wasn't nigh ?
How he heard some specie chink,
And was on you in a wink,
And you promised if he'd hush 'it, that you
never more would drink ?

Do you mind our temperance hall ?
How you're always sure to call,
And recount your reformation with the biggest
speech of all ?
How you talk, and how you sing,
That the pledge is just the thing—

How you sign it every winter, and then smash
it every spring ?

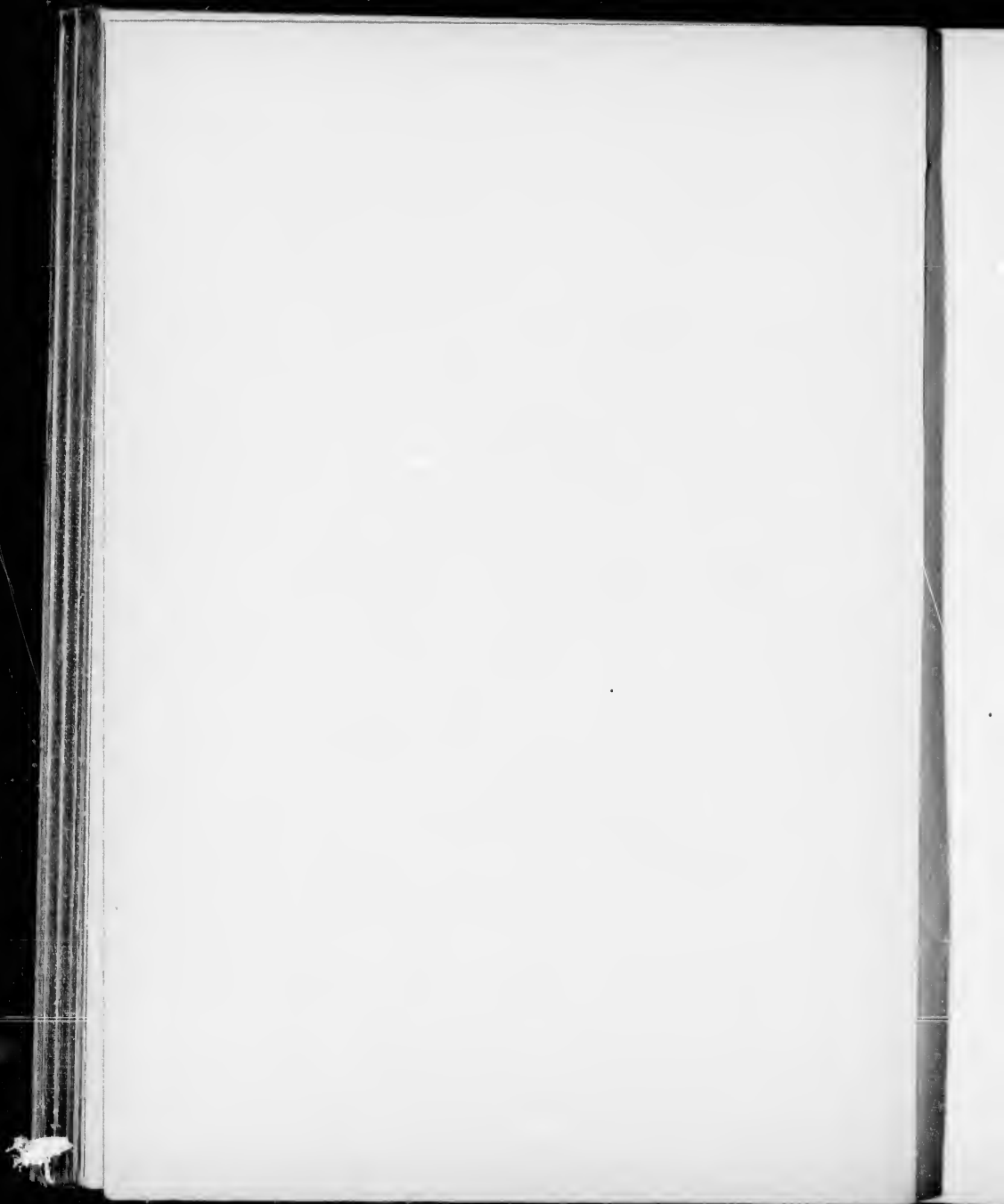
Do you mind how Jennie Green
Was as happy as a queen
When you walked with her on Sunday, looking
sober, straight, and clean ?
How she cried out half her sight,
When you staggered by, next night,
Twice as dirty as a serpent, and a hundred
times as tight ?

How our hearts with pleasure warmed
When your mother, though it stormed,
Run up here one day to tell us that you truly
had reformed ?
How that very self-same day,
When upon her homeward way,
She run on you, where you 'd hidden, full three-
quarters o'er the bay ?

Oh, you little whisky-keg
Oh, your horrid little egg !
You're goin' to destruction with your swiftest
foot and leg !
I've a mind to take you out
Underneath the water-spout,
Just to rinse you up a little, so you'll know
what you're about !

But you've got a handsome eye,
And, although I can't tell why,
Somethin' somewhere in you always lets you
get another try :
So, for all that I have said,
I'll not douse you ; but, instead,
I will strip you, I will rub you. I will put you
into bed !

OUT OF THE OLD HOUSE, NANCY.





OUT OF THE OLD HOUSE, NANCY.

OUT of the old house, Nancy—moved up
into the new ;
All the hurry and worry is just as
good as through.

Only a bounden duty remains for you and I—
And that 's to stand on the door-step, here, and
bid the old house good-bye.

What a shell we 've lived in, these nineteen or
twenty years !

Wonder it hadn't smashed in, and tumbled
about our ears ;

Wonder it's stuck together, and answered till
to-day ;

But every individual log was put up here to stay.

Things looked rather new, though, when this
old house was built ;

And things that blossomed you would 've made
some women wilt ;

And every other day, then, as sure as day would
break,

My neighbour Ager come this way, invitin' me
to "shake."

And you, for want of neighbours, was sometimes
blue and sad,

For wolves and bears and wild-cats was the
nearest ones you had ;

But lookin' ahead to the clearin', we worked
with all our might,

Until we was fairly out of the woods, and things
was goin' right.

Look up there at our new house!—ain't it a
thing to see?

Tall and big and handsome, and new as new
can be;

All in apple-pie order, especially the shelves,
And never a debt to say but what we own it all
ourselves.

Look at our old log-house—how little it now
appears!

But it's never gone back on us for nineteen or
twenty years;

An' I won't go back on it now, or go to pokin'
fun—

There's such a thing as praisin' a thing for the
good that it has done.

Probably you remember how rich we was that
night,

When we was fairly settled, an' had things snug
and tight :

We feel as proud as you please, Nancy, over our
house that's new,

But we felt as proud under this old roof, and a
good deal prouder too.

Never a handsomer house was seen beneath the
sun :

Kitchen and parlour and bedroom—we had 'em
all in one ;

And the fat old wooden clock that we bought
when we come West,

Was tickin' away in the corner there, and doin'
its level best.

Trees was all around us, a-whisperin' cheering
words ;

Loud was the squirrel's chatter, and sweet the
songs of birds ;

And home grew sweeter and brighter—our
courage began to mount—

And things looked hearty and happy then, and
work appeared to count.

And here one night it happened, when things
was goin' bad,

We fell in a deep old quarrel—the first we ever
had ;

And when you give out and cried, then I, like a
fool, give in,

And then we agreed to rub all out, and start the
thing ag'in.

Here it was, you remember, we sat when the
day was done,

And you was a-makin' clothing *that wasn't for
either one ;*

And often a soft word of love I was soft enough
to say,
And the wolves was howlin' in the woods not
twenty rods away.

Then our first-born baby—a regular little joy,
Though I fretted a little because it wasn't a boy:
Wa'n't she a little flirt, though, with all her
pouts and smiles?
Why, settlers come to see that show a half-a-
dozen miles.

Yonder sat the cradle—a homely, home-made
thing,
And many a night I rocked it, providin' you
would sing;
And many a little squatter brought up with us
to stay—
And so that cradle, for many a year, was never
put away.

How they kept a-comin', so cunnin' and fat and
small !

How they grewed ! 'twas a wonder how we
found room for 'em all ;

But though the house was crowded, it empty
seemed that day

When Jennie lay by the fireplace there, and
moaned her life away.

And right in there the preacher, with Bible and
hymn-book, stood,

"'Twixt the dead and the living," and "hoped
'twould do us good ;"

And the little whitewood coffin on the table
there was set,

And now as I rub my eyes it seems as if I could
see it yet.

Then that fit of sickness it brought on you, you
know ;

Just by a thread you hung, and you e'en a'most
let go ;

And here is the spot I tumbled, an' give the
Lord his due,

'When the doctor said the fever'd turned, an' he
could fetch you through.

Yes, a deal has happened to make this old
house dear :

Christenin's, funerals, weddin's—what haven't
we had here ?

Not a log in this buildin' but its memories has got,
And not a nail in this old floor but touches a
tender spot.

Out of the old house, Nancy—moved up into
the new ;

All the hurry and worry is just as good as
through ;

But I tell you a thing right here, that I ain't
ashamed to say,

There's precious things in this old house we
never can take away.

Here the old house will stand, but not as it
stood before:

Winds will whistle through it, and rains will
flood the floor;

And over the hearth, once blazing, the snow-
drifts oft will pile,

And the old thing will seem to be a-mournin'
all the while.

Fare you well, old house! you're naught that
can feel or see,

But you seem like a human being—a dear old
friend to me;

And we never will have a better home, if *my*
opinion stands,

Until we commence a-keepin' house in the house
not made with hands.



*OVER THE HILL TO THE
POOR-HOUSE.*



*OVER THE HILL TO THE
POOR-HOUSE.*

OVER the hill to the poor-house I'm
trudgin' my weary way—
I, a woman of seventy, and only a
trifle gray—
I, who am smart an' chipper, for all the years
I've told,
As many another woman that's only half as old.

Over the hill to the poor-house—I can't quite
make it clear !

Over the hill to the poor-house—it seems so
horrid queer!

Many a step I've taken, a-toilin' to and fro;
But this is a sort of journey I never thought to
go.

What is the use of heapin' on me a pauper's
shame?

Am I lazy or crazy? am I blind or lame?

True, I am not so supple, nor yet so awful
stout;

But charity ain't no favour, if one can live with-
out.

I am willin' and anxious an' ready any day
To work for a decent livin', an' pay my honest
way;

For I can earn my victuals, an' more too, I'll
be bound,

If anybody only is willin' to have me round.

Once I was young an' han'some—I was, upon
my soul—

Once my cheeks was roses, my eyes as black as
coal ;

And I can't remember, in them days, of hearin'
people say,

For any kind of a reason, that I was in their
way.

Tain't no use of boastin', or talkin' over-free,
But many a house an' home was open then to
me ;

Many a han'some offer I had from likely men,
And nobody ever hinted that I was a burden
then.

And when to John I was married, sure he was
good and smart,

But he and all the neighbours would own I done
my part ;

For life was all before me, an' I was young an'
strong,
And I worked the best that I could in tryin' to
get along.

And so we worked together : and life was hard,
but gay,
With now and then a baby for to cheer us on
our way ;
Till we had half-a-dozen, an' all growed clean
and neat,
An' went to school like others, an' had enough
to eat.

So we worked for the childr'n, and raised 'em
every one ;
Worked for 'em summer and winter, just as we
ought to 've done ;
Only perhaps we humoured 'em, which some
good folks condemn.

But every couple's childr'n's a heap the best to
them.

Strange how much we think of our blessed little
ones!—

I'd have died for my daughters, I'd have died
for my sons ;

And God he made that rule of love ; but when
we're old and gray,

I've noticed it sometimes somehow fails to
work the other way.

Strange, another thing : when our boys an' girls
was grown,

And when, exceptin' Charley, they'd left us
there alone ;

When John he nearer an' nearer come, an'
dearer seemed to be.

The Lord of hosts he come one day an' took
him away from me.

Still I was bound to struggle, an' never to cringe
or fall—

Still I worked for Charley, for Charley was now
my all ;

And Charley was pretty good to me, with scarce
a word or frown,

Till at last he went a-courtin', and brought a
wife from town.

She was somewhat dressy, an' hadn't a pleasant
smile—

She was quite conceity, and carried a heap o'
style ;

But if ever I tried to be friends, I did with her,
I know ;

But she was hard and proud, an' I couldn't
make it go.

She had an edication, an' that was good for
her ;

But when she twitted me on mine, 'twas carry-
in' things too fur ;

An' I told her once, 'fore company (an' it
almost made her sick),

That I never swallowed a grammar, or 'et a
'rithmetic.

So 'twas only a few days before the thing was
done—

They was a family of themselves, and I another
one ;

And a very little cottage one family will do,
But I never have seen a house that was big
enough for two.

An' I never could speak to suit her, never could
please her eye,

An' it made me independent, an' then I didn't
try ;

But I was terribly staggered, an' felt it like a
blow,
When Charley turned ag'in me, an' told me I
could go.

I went to live with Susan, but Susan's house
was small,
And she was always a-hintin' how snug it was
for us all ;
And what with her husband's sisters, and what
with childr'n three,
'Twas easy to discover that there wasn't room
for me.

An' then I went to Thomas, the oldest son I've
got,
For Thomas's buildings 'd cover the half of an
acre lot ;
But all the childr'n was on me—I couldn't
stand their sauce—

And Thomas said I needn't think I was comin'
there to boss.

An' then I wrote to Rebecca, my girl who lives
out West,

And to Isaac, not far from her—some twenty
miles at best ;

And one of 'em said 'twas too warm there for
any one so old,

And t'other had an opinion the climate was too
cold.

So they have shirked and slighted me, an' shifted
me about—

So they have wellnigh soured me, and wore
my old heart out ;

But still I've borne up pretty well, an' wasn't
much put down,

Till Charley went to the poor-master, and put
me on the town

Over the hill to the poor-house—my childr'n
dear, good-bye!

Many a night I've watched you when only God
was nigh;

And God 'll judge between us; but I will al'ays
pray

That you shall never suffer the half I do to-day.



*OVER THE HILL FROM THE
POOR-HOUSE.*



OVER THE HILL FROM THE
POOR-HOUSE.

I WHO was always counted, they say,
Rather a bad stick any way,
Splintered all over with dodges and
tricks,

Known as "the worst of the Deacon's six ;"
I, the truant, saucy and bold,
The one black sheep in my father's fold,
"Once on a time," as the stories say,
Went over the hill on a winter's day—
Over the hill to the poor-house.

Tom could save what twenty could earn ;
But *givin'* was somethin' he ne'er would learn ;

Isaac could half o' the Scriptur's speak—
Committed a hundred verses a week ;
Never forgot, an' never slipped ;
But "Honour thy father and mother" he skipped ;
 So over the hill to the poor-house.

As for Susan, her heart was kind
An' good—what there was of it, mind ;
Nothin' too big, an' nothin' too nice,
Nothin' she wouldn't sacrifice
For one she loved ; an' that 'ere one
Was herself, when all was said an' done.
An' Charley an' 'Becca meant well, no doubt,
But any one could pull 'em about ;

An' all o' our folks ranked well, you see,
Save one poor fellow, and that was me ;
An' when, one dark an' rainy night,
A neighbour's horse went out o' sight,

They hitched on me, as the guilty chap
That carried one end o' the halter-strap.
An' I think, myself, that view of the case
Wasn't altogether out o' place ;
My mother denied it, as mothers do,
But I am inclined to believe 'twas true.
Though for me one thing might be said—
That I, as well as the horse, was lead ;
And the worst of whisky spurred me on,
Or else the deed would have never been done.
But the keenest grief I ever felt
Was when my mother beside me knelt,
An' cried an' prayed, till I melted down,
As I wouldn't for half the horses in town.
I kissed her fondly, then an' there,
An' swore henceforth to be honest and square.

I served my sentence—a bitter pill
Some fellows should take who never will ;

And then I decided to go "out West,"
Concludin' 'twould suit my health the best ;
Where, how I prospered, I never could tell,
But Fortune seemed to like me well,
An' somehow every vein I struck
Was always bubblin' over with luck.
An', better than that, I was steady an' true,
An' put my good resolutions through.
But I wrote to a trusty old neighbour, an' said,
" You tell 'em, old fellow, that I am dead,
An' died a Christian ; 'twill please 'em more,
Than if I had lived the same as before."

But when this neighbour he wrote to me,
" Your mother's in the poor-house," says he,
I had a resurrection straightway,
An' started for her that very day.
And when I arrived where I was grown,
I took good care that I shouldn't be known ;

But I bought the old cottage, through and
through,

Of some one Charley had sold it to
And held back neither work nor gold,
To fix it up as it was of old.
The same big fireplace wide an' high,
Flung up its cinders towards the sky;
The old clock ticked on the corner-shelf—
I wound it an' set it agoin' myself;
An' if everything wasn't just the same,
Neither I nor money was to blame;

Then—*over the hill to the poor-house!*

One blowin', blusterin' winter's day,
With a team an' cutter I started away;
My fiery nags was as black as coal
(They some'at resembled the horse I stole);
I hitched, an' entered the poor-house door—
A poor old woman was scrubbin' the floor;

She rose to her feet in great surprise,
And looked, quite startled, into my eyes ;
I saw the whole of her trouble's trace
In the lines that marred her dear old face ;
" Mother ! " I shouted, " your sorrows is done !
You 're adopted along o' your horse-thief son,
Come over the hill from the poor-house ! "

She didn't faint ; she knelt by my side,
An' thanked the Lord, till I fairly cried.
An' maybe our ride wasn't pleasant an' gay,
An' maybe she wasn't wrapped up that day ;
An' maybe our cottage wasn't warm an' bright,
An' maybe it wasn't a pleasant sight,
To see her a-gettin' the evenin's tea,
An' frequently stoppin' and kissin' me ;
An' maybe we didn't live happy for years,
In spite of my brothers' and sisters' sneers,
Who often said, as I have heard,

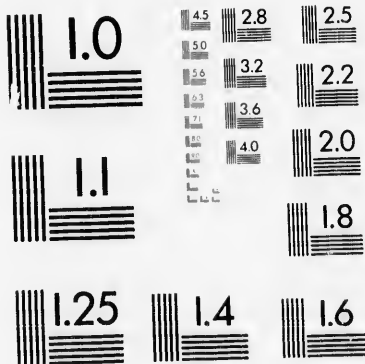
That they wouldn't own a prison bird
(Though they 're gettin' over that, I guess,
For all of 'em owe me more or less) ;

But I've learned one thing; an' it cheers a man
In always doin' the best he can ;
That whether, on the big book, a blot
Gets over a fellow's name or not,
Whenever he does a deed that's white,
It's credited to him fair and right.
An' when you hear the great bugle's notes,
An' the Lord divides His sheep an' goats ;
However they may settle my case,
Wherever they may fix my place,
My good old Christian mother, you 'll see,
Will be sure to stand right up for me,
With over the hill from the poor-house.



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)





UNCLE SAMMY.

SOME men were born for great things,
Some were born for small ;
Some—it is not recorded
Why they were born at all ;
But Uncle Sammy was certain he had a legiti-
mate call.

Some were born with a talent,
Some with scrip and land ;
Some with a spoon of silver,
And some with a different brand ;
But Uncle Sammy came holding an argument
in each hand.

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Arguments sprouted within him,
And twinkled in his little eye ;
He lay and calmly debated
When average babies cry,
And seemed to be pondering gravely whether
to live or to die.

But prejudiced on that question
He grew from day to day,
And finally he concluded
'Twas better for him to stay ;
And so into life's discussion he reasoned and
reasoned his way.

Through childhood, through youth, into
manhood
Argued and argued he ;
And he married a simple maiden,
Though scarcely in love was she ;

But he reasoned the matter so clearly she hardly
could help but agree.

And though at first she was blooming,
And the new firm started strong,
And though Uncle Sammy loved her,
And tried to help her along,
She faded away in silence, and 'twas evident
something was wrong.

Now Uncle Sammy was faithful,
And various remedies tried ;
He gave her the doctor's prescriptions,
And plenty of logic beside ;
But logic and medicine failed him, and so one
day she died.

He laid her away in the churchyard,
So haggard and crushed and wan ;
And reared her a costly tombstone

With all of her virtues on ;
And ought to have added, " A victim to argu-
ments pro and con."

For many a year Uncle Sammy
Fired away at his logical forte :
Discussion was his occupation,
And altercation his sport ;
He argued himself out of churches, he argued
himself into court.

But alas for his peace and quiet,
One day, when he went it blind,
And followed his singular fancy,
And slighted his logical mind,
And married a ponderous widow that wasn't of
the arguing kind !

Her sentiments all were settled,
Her habits were planted and grown,

Her heart was a starved little creature
That followed a will of her own ;
And she raised a high hand with Sammy, and
proceeded to play it alone.

Then Sammy he charged down upon her
With ail of his strength and his wit,
And many a dextrous encounter,
And many a fair shoulder-hit ;
But vain were his blows and his blowing : he
never could budge her a bit.

He laid down his premises round her,
He scraped at her with his saws ;
He rained great facts upon her,
And read her the marriage laws ;
But the harder he tried to convince her, the
harder and harder she was.

She brought home all her preachers,
As many as ever she could—

With sentiments terribly settled,
And appetites horribly good—
Who sat with him long at his table, and explained to him where he stood.

And Sammy was not long in learning
To follow the swing of her gown,
And came to be faithful in watching
The phase of her smile and her frown ;
And she, with the heel of assertion, soon tramped
all his arguments down.

And so, with his life-aspirations
Thus suddenly brought to a check—
And so, with the foot of his victor
Unceasingly pressing his neck—
He wrote on his face, "I'm a victim," and
drifted—a logical wreck.

And farmers, whom he had argued

To corners tight and fast,
Would wink at each other and chuckle,
And grin at him as he passed,
As to say, "My ambitious old fellow, your
whiffletree's straightened at last."

Old Uncle Sammy one morning
Lay down on his comfortless bed,
And Death and he had a discussion,
And Death came out ahead ;
And the fact that SHE failed to start him was
only because he was dead.

The neighbours laid out their old neighbour,
With homely but tenderest art ;
And some of the oldest ones faltered,
And tearfully stood apart ;
For the crusty old man had often unguardedly
shown them his heart.

But on his face an expression
Of quizzical study lay,
As if he were sounding the angel
Who travelled with him that day,
And laying the pipes down slyly for an argu-
ment on the way.

And one new-fashioned old lady
Felt called upon to suggest
That the angel might take Uncle Sammy,
And give him a good night's rest,
And then introduce him to Solomon, and tell
him to do his best.



TOM WAS GOIN' FOR A POET.





TOM WAS GOIN' FOR A POET.

THE FARMER DISCOURSES OF HIS SON.



TOM was goin' for a poet, an' said he'd a
poet be ;

One of these long-haired fellers a feller
hates to see ;

One of these chaps for ever fixin' things cute
and clever ;

Makin' the world in gen'ral step 'long to tune
an' time,

An' cuttin' the earth into slices an' saltin' it
down into rhyme.

Poets are good for somethin', so long as they
stand at the head ;

But poetry's worth whatever it fetches in butter
an' bread.

An' many a time I've said it: it don't do a
fellow credit,

To starve with a hole in his elbow, an' be con-
sidered a fool,

So after he's dead, the young ones'll speak his
pieces in school.

An' Tom, he had an opinion that Shakspeare an'
all the rest,

With all their winter clothin', couldn't make
him a decent vest ;

But that didn't ease my labours, or help him
among the neighbours,

Who watched him from a distance, an' held hi
mind in doubt,

An' wondered if Tom wasn't shaky, or knew
what he was about.

Tom he went a-sowin', to sow a field of grain ;
But half of that 'ere sowin' was altogether in
vain.

For he was al'ays a-stoppin', and gems of poetry
droppin' ;

And metaphors, they be pleasant, but much too
thin to eat ;

And germs of thought be handy, but never grow
up to wheat.

Tom he went a-mowin', one broilin' summer's
day,

And spok quite sweet concernin' the smell of
the new-mowed hay.

But all o' his useless chatter didn't go to help
the matter,

Or make the grief less searchin' or the pain less
hard to feel,
When he made a clip too suddent, an' sliced
his brother's heel.

Tom he went a-drivin' the hills an' dales across;
But, scannin' the lines of his poetry, he dropped
the lines of his hoss.

The nag ran fleet and fleeter, in quite irregular
metre ;

An' when we got Tom's leg set, an' had fixed
him so he could speak,
He muttered that that adventur' would keep
him a-writin' a week.

Tom he went a-ploughin', and couldn't have
done it worse ;
He sat down on the handles, an' went to spinnin'
verse.

He wrote it nice and pretty—an agricultural
ditty ;

But all o' his pesky measures didn't measure an
acre more,

Nor his p'int's didn't turn a furrow that wasn't
turned before.

Tom he went a-courtin' ;—she liked him, I
suppose ;

But certain parts of courtin' a feller must do in
prose.

He rhymed her each day a letter, but that didn't
serve to get her ;

He waited so long, she married another man
from spite,

An' sent him word she'd done it, an' not to
forget to write.

Tom at last got married; his wife was smart and
stout,

And she shoved up the window and slung his
poetry out.

An' at each new poem's creation she gave it
circulation;

An' fast as he could write 'em, she seen to their
puttin' forth,

An' sent 'em east an' westward, an' also south
an' north.

Till Tom he struck the opinion that poetry
didn't pay,

An' turned the guns of his genius, an' fired 'em
another way.

He settled himself down steady, an' is quite
well off already;

An' all of his life is verses, with his wife the first
an' best,

An' ten or a dozen childr'n to constitute the
rest.

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GOIN' HOME TO-DAY.



GOIN' HOME TO-DAY.

QY business on the jury's done—the
quibblin' all is through—
I've watched the lawyers right and
left, and give my verdict true ;
I stuck so long unto my chair, I thought I
would grow in ;
And if I do not know myself, they'll get me
there ag'in ;
But now the court's adjourned for good, and I
have got my pay ;
I'm loose at last, and, thank the Lord, I'm
going home to-day.

I've somehow felt uneasy like, since first day I
come down ;

It is an awkward game to play the gentleman
in town ;

And this 'ere Sunday suit of mine on Sunday
rightly sets ;

But when I wear the stuff a week, it somehow
galls and frets.

I'd rather wear my home-spun rig of pepper-
salt and gray—

I'll have it on in half a jiff, when I get home to-
day.

I have no doubt my wife looked out, as well as
any one—

As well as any woman could—to see that things
was done :

For though Melinda, when I'm there, won't set
her foot outdoors.

She 's very careful, when I 'm gone, to tend to
all the chores.

But nothing prospers half so well when I go off
to stay,

And I will put things into shape, when I get
home to-day.

The mornin' that I come away, we had a little
bout ;

I coolly took my hat and left, before the show
was out.

For what I said was naught whereat she ought
to take offence ;

And she was always quick at words and ready
to commence.

But then she 's first one to give up when she has
had her say ;

And she will meet me with a kiss, when I go
home to-day.

My little boy—I 'll give 'em leave to match him,
if they can ;

It's fun to see him strut about, and try to be a
man !

The gamest, cheeriest little chap, you'd ever
want to see !

And then they laugh because I think the child
resembles me.

The little rogue ! he goes for me, like robbers
for their prey ;

He'll turn my pockets inside out, when I get
home to-day.

My little girl—I can't contrive how it should
happen thus—

That God could pick that sweet bouquet, and
fling it down to us !

My wife, she says that han'some face will some
day make a stir ;

And then I laugh, because she thinks the child
resembles her.

She 'll meet me half way down the hill, and kiss
me, any way ;

And light my heart up with her smiles, when I
go home to-day !

If there's a heaven upon the earth, a fellow
knows it when

He's been away from home a week, and then
gets back again.

If there's a heaven above the earth, there often,
I 'll be bound,

Some home-sick fellow meets his folks, and
hugs 'em all around.

But let my creed be right or wrong, or be it as
it may,

My heaven is just ahead of me—I'm going
home to-day.



OUT O' THE FIRE.





OUT O' THE FIRE.

[As told in 1880.]



EAR of '71, children, middle of the
fall,

On one fearful night, children, we
wellnigh lost our all.

True, it wa'n't no great sum we had to lose that
night,

But when a little 's all you 've got, it comes to a
blessed sight.

I was a mighty worker, in them 'ere difficult
days,

For work is a good investment, and almost
always pays ;

But when ten years' hard labour went smokin'
into the air,

I doubted all o' the maxims, an' felt that it
wasn't fair.

Up from the East we had travelled, with all of
our household wares,

Where we had long been workin' a piece of land
on shares ;

But how a fellow's to prosper without the rise
of the land,

For just two-thirds of nothin', I never could un-
derstand.

Up from the East we had travelled, me and my
folks alone,

And quick we went to workin' a piece of land of
our own ;

Small was our backwoods quarters, and things
looked mighty cheap ;

But everything we put in there, we put in there
to keep.

So, with workin' and savin', we managed to get
along ;

Managed to make a livin', and feel consid'able
strong ;

And things went smooth and happy, an' fair as
the average run,

Till everything went back on me, in the fall
of '71.

First thing bothered and worried me, was 'long
o' my daughter Kate ;

Rather a han'some cre'tur', and folks all liked
her gait.

Not so nice as them sham ones in yeller-covered
books ;

But still there wa'n't much discount on Katherine's ways an' looks.

And Katherine's smile was pleasant, and Katherine's temper good,

And how she came to like Tom Smith, I never understood ;

For she was a mornin'-glory, as fair as you ever see,

And Tom was a shag-bark hickory, as green as green could be.

"Like takes to like," is a proverb that's nothin' more than trash ;

And many a time I've seen it all pulverised to smash.

For folks in no way sim'lar, I've noticed ag'in and ag'in,

Will often take to each other, and stick together like sin.

Next thing bothered and worried me, was 'long
of a terrible drouth ;

And me an' all o' my neighbours was some'at
down in the mouth.

And week after week the rain held off, and
things all pined an' dried,

And we drove the cattle miles to drink, and
many of 'em died.

And day after day went by us, so han'some and
so bright,

And never a drop of water came near us, day
or night ;

And what with the neighbours' grumblin', and
what with my daily loss,

I must own that somehow or other I was gettin'
mighty cross.

And on one Sunday evenin' I was comin' down
the lane

From meetin', where our preacher had stuck and
hung for rain,
And various slants on heaven kept workin' in
my mind,
And the smoke from Sanders' fallow was makin'
me almost blind ;

I opened the door kind o' sudden, an' there my
Katherine sat,
As cosy as any kitten along with a friendly
cat ;
An' Tom was dreadful near her—his arm on
the back of her chair—
And lookin' as happy and cheerful as if there
was rain to spare.

"Get out of this house in a minute!" I cried,
with all my might :
"Get out, while I'm a-talkin'!"—Tom's eyes
showed a bit of fight ;

But he rose up, stiff and surly, and made me a
civil bow,

And mugged along to the doorway, with never
a word of row.

And I snapped up my wife quite surly when she
asked me what I'd said,

And I scolded Kate for cryin', and sent her up-
stairs to bed ;

And then I laid down, for the purpose of gettin'
a little sleep,

An' the wind outside was a-howlin', and puttin'
it in to keep.

'Twas half-past three next mornin', or maybe
'twas nearer four—

The neighbours they came a-yellin' and pound-
in' at my door ;

"Get up! get up!" they shouted : "get up!
there's danger near !

The woods are all a-burnin' ! the wind is blowin'
it here ! ”

If ever it happens, children, that you get caught,
some time,
With fire a-blowin' toward you, as fast as fire
can climb,
You 'll get up and get in a hurry, as fast as you
can budge ;
It's a lively season of the year, or else I ain't no
judge !

Out o' the dear old cabin we tumbled fast as
we could—
Smashed two-thirds of our dishes, and saved
some four-foot wood ;
With smoke a-settlin' round us and gettin' into
our eyes,
And fire a-roarin' an' roarin' an' drowndin' all of
our cries.

And just as the roof was smokin', and we hadn't
long to wait,

I says to my wife, "Now get out, and hustle,
you and Kate!"

And just as the roof was fallin', my wife she
come to me,

With a face as white as a corpse's face, and
"Where *is* Kate?" says she.

An' the neighbours come runnin' to me, with
faces black as the ground,

And shouted, "Where is Katherine? she's no-
where to be found!"

* * * * *

An' this is all I remember, till I 'ound myself
next day

A-lyin' in Sanders' cabin, a mile an' a half
away.

If ever you wake up, children, with somethin'
into your head,
Concernin' a han'some daughter, that's lyin'
still an' dead,
All scorched into coal-black cinders--*perhaps*
you may not weep,
But I rather think it'll happen you'll wish
you 'd a-kept asleep.

And all I could say was, "Kath'rine, O Kath-
'rine, come to me!"

And all I could think was "Kath'rine!" and
all that I could see

Was Sanders a-standin' near to me, his finger
into his eye,

And my wife a-bendin' over me, and tellin' me
not to cry ;

When, lo! Tom Smith he entered—his face lit
up with grins—

And Kate a-hangin' on his arm, as neat as a row
of pins !

And Tom looked glad, but sheepish ; and said

“ Excuse me, Squire,

But I 'loped with Kate, and married her an
hour before the fire.”

Well, children, I was shattered ; 'twas more
than I could bear—

And I up and went for Kate an' Tom, and
hugged 'em then and there !

And since that time, the times have changed,
an' now they ain't so bad ;

And—Katherine, she's your mother now, and—
Thomas Smith's your dad.





OTHER POEMS.



OTHER POEMS.

THE NEW CHURCH ORGAN.



HEY 'VE got a brand-new organ, Sue,
For all their fuss and search ;
They've done just as they said they'd do,
And fetched it into church.
They're bound the critter shall be seen,
And on the preacher's right
They've hoisted up their new machine,
In everybody's sight.

They've got a chorister and choir,
Ag'in' *my* voice and vote ;
For it was never *my* desire,
To praise the Lord by note !

I've been a sister good an' true
For five-an'-thirty year ;
I've done what seemed my part to do,
An' prayed my duty clear ;
I've sung the hymns both slow and quick,
Just as the preacher read,
And twice, when Deacon Tubbs was sick,
I took the fork an' led !
And now, their bold, new-fangled ways
Is comin' all about ;
And I, right in my latter days,
Am fairly crowded out !
To-day the preacher, good old dear,
With tears all in his eyes,

Read, "I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies."
I al'ays liked that blessed hymn—
I s'pose I al'ays will ;
It somehow gratifies *my* whim,
In good old Ortonville ;
But when that choir got up to sing,
I couldn't catch a word ;
They sung the most dog-gondest thing
A body ever heard !

Some worldly chaps was standin' near ;
An' when I see them grin,
I bid farewell to every fear,
And boldly waded in.
I thought I'd chase their tune along,
An' tried with all my might ;
But though my voice is good an' strong,
I couldn't steer it right ;

When they was high, then I was low,
An' also contrawise ;
An' I too fast, or they too slow,
To "mansions in the skies."

An' after every verse, you know,
They play a little tune ;
I didn't understand, an' so
I started in too soon.
I pitched it pretty middlin' high,
I fetched a lusty tone,
But oh, alas ! I found that I
Was singin' there alone !
They laughed a little, I am told ;
But I had done my best ;
And not a wave of trouble rolled
Across my peaceful breast.

And Sister Brown—I could but look—
She sits right front of me ;

She never was no singin'-book,
An' never went to be ;
But then she al'ays tried to do
The best she could, she said ;
She understood the time right through,
An' kep' it with her head ;
But when she tried this mornin', oh,
I had to laugh, or cough !
It kep' her head a-bobbin' so,
It e'en a'most came off !

An' Deacon Tubbs—he all broke down,
As one might well suppose ;
He took one look at Sister Brown.
And meekly scratched his nose.
He looked his hymn-book through and
through,
And laid it on the seat,
And then a pensive sigh he drew,
And looked completely beat

An' when they took another bout,
He didn't even rise ;
But drew his red bandanner out,
An' wiped his weepin' eyes.

I've been a sister, good an' true,
For five-an'-thirty year ;
I've done what seemed my part to do,
An' prayed my duty clear ;
But Death will stop my voice, I know,
For he is on my track ;
And some day I to church will go,
And never more come back ;
And when the folks gets up to sing—
Whene'er that time shall be—
I do not want no *patent* thing
A-squealin' over me!



THE EDITOR'S GUESTS.

THE Editor sat in his sanctum, his countenance furrowed with care,
His mind at the bottom of business, his feet at the top of a chair,
His chair-arm an elbow supporting, his right hand upholding his head,
His eyes on his dusty old table, with different documents spread :
There were thirty long pages from Howler, with underlined capitals topped,

And a short disquisition from Growler, request-
ing his newspaper stopped ;
There were lyrics from Gusher, the poet, con-
cerning sweet flow'rets and zephyrs,
And a stray gem from Plodder, the farmer,
describing a couple of heifers ;
There were billets from beautiful maidens, and
bills from a grocer or two,
And his best leader hitched to a letter, which
inquired if he wrote it, or who ?

There were raptures of praises from writers of
the weekly mellifluous school,
And one of his rival's last papers, informing him
he was a fool ;
There were several long resolutions, with names
telling whom they were by,
Canonising some harmless old brother who had
done nothing worse than to die ;

There were traps on that table to catch him, and
serpents to sting and to smite him ;
There were gift enterprises to sell him, and
bitters attempting to bite him ;
There were long staring "ads" from the city,
and money with never a one,
Which added, "Please give this insertion, and
send in your bill when you're *done* ;"
There were letters from organisations—their
meetings, their wants, and their laws—
Which said, "Can you print this announcement
for the good of our glorious cause ?"
There were tickets inviting his presence to
festivals, parties, and shows,
Wrapped in notes with "Please give us a notice"
demurely slipped in at the close.

In short, as his eye took the table, and ran o'er
its ink-spattered trash,

There was nothing it did not encounter, excepting
perhaps it was cash.

The Editor dreamily pondered on several ponderous things,
On different lines of action, and the pulling of different strings;
Upon some equivocal doings, and some unequivocal duns;
On how few of his numerous patrons were quietly prompt-paying ones;
On friends who subscribed "just to help him," and wordy encouragement lent,
And had given him plenty of counsel, but never had paid him a cent;
On vinegar, kind-hearted people were feeding him every hour,
Who saw not the work they were doing, but wondered that "printers are sour:"

On several intelligent townsmen, whose kindness
was so without stint
That they kept an eye on his business, and told
him just what he should print ;
On men who had rendered him favours, and never
pushed forward their claims,
So long as the paper was crowded with "locals"
containing their names ;
On various other small matters, sufficient his
temper to roil,
And finely contrived to be making the blood of
an editor boil ;
And so one may see that his feelings could hardly
be said to be smooth,
And he needed some pleasant occurrence his
ruffled emotions to soothe :

He had it ; for lo ! on the threshold, a slow and
reliable tread,

And a farmer invaded the sanctum, and these
are the words that he said :

“Good-mornin’, sir, Mr Printer ; how is your
body to-day ?

I ’m glad you ’re to home ; for you fellers is al’ays
a runnin’ away.

Your paper last week wa’n’t so spicy nor sharp
as the one week before :

But I s’pose when the campaign is opened, you’ll
be whoopin’ it up to ’em more.

That feller that ’s printin’ *The Smasher* is goin’
for you perty smart ;

And our folks said this mornin’ at breakfast, they
thought he was gettin’ the start.

But I hushed ’em right up in a minute, and said
a good word for you ;

I told ’em I b’lieved you was tryin’ to do just
as well as you knew ;

And I told 'em that some one was sayin', and
whoever 'twas it is so,

That you can't expect much of no one man, nor
blame him for what he don't know.

But, layin' aside *pleasure* for business, I've
brought you my little boy Jim;

And I thought I would see if you couldn't make
an editor outen of him.

"My family stock is increasin', while other folks'
seems to run short,

I've got a right smart of a family—it's one of the
old-fashioned sort:

There's Ichabod, Isaac, and Israel, a-workin'
away on the farm—

They do 'bout as much as one good boy, and
make things go off like a charm.

There's Moses and Aaron are sly ones, and slip
like a couple of eels;

But they're tol'able steady in one thing—they
al'ays git round to their meals.

There's Peter is busy inventin' (though *what* he
invents I can't see),

And Joseph is studyin' medicine—and both of
'em boardin' with me.

There's Abram and Albert is married, each
workin' my farm for myself,

And Sam smashed his nose at a shootin', and so
he is laid on the shelf.

The rest of the boys are all growin', 'cept this
little runt, which is Jim,

And I thought that perhaps I'd be makin' an
editor outen o' him.

"He ain't no great shakes for to labour, though
I've laboured with him a good deal,

And give him some strappin' good arguments I
know he couldn't help but to feel:

But he's built out of second-growth timber, and
nothin' about him is big
Exceptin' his appetite only, and there he's as
good as a pig.

I keep him a-carryin' luncheons, and fillin' and
bringin' the jugs,
And take him among the pertatoes, and set him
to pickin' the bugs ;
And then there is things to be doin' a-helpin the
women indoors ;
There 's churnin' and washin' of dishes, and other
descriptions of chores ;
But he don't take to nothin' but victuals, and
he'll never be much, I 'm afraid,
So I thought it would be a good notion to larn
him the editor's trade.
His body's too small for a farmer, his judgment
is rather too slim,

But I thought we perhaps could be makin' an
editor outen o' him !

" It ain't much to get up a paper—it wouldn't
take him long for to learn ;

He could feed the machine, I'm thinkin', with
a good strappin' fellow to turn.

And things that was once hard in doin', is easy
enough now to do ;

Just keep your eye on your machinery, and crack
your arrangements right through.

I used for to wonder at readin', and where it was
got up, and how ;

But 'tis most of it made by machinery—I can
see it all plain enough now.

And poetry, too, is constructed by machines of
different designs,

Each one with a gauge and a chopper to see to
the length of the lines ;

And I hear a New York clairvoyant is runnin'
one sleeker than grease,
And *a-rentin'* her heaven-born productions at a
couple of dollars a-piece ;
An' since the whole trade has growed easy,
'twould be easy enough, I've a whim,
If you was agreed, to be makin' an editor outen
of Jim ! ”

The Editor sat in his sanctum, and looked the
old man in the eye,
Then glanced at the grinning young hopeful, and
mournfully made his reply :
“ Is your son a small unbound edition of Moses
and Solomon both ?
Can he compass his spirit with meekness, and
strangle a natural oath ?
Can he leave all his wrongs to the future, and
carry his heart in his cheek ?

Can he do an hour's work in a minute, and live
on a sixpence a week ?

Can he courteously talk to an equal, and brow-
beat an impudent dunce ?

Can he keep things in apple-pie order, and do
half a dozen at once ?

Can he press all the springs of knowledge, with
quick and reliable touch,

And be sure that he knows how much *to* know,
and knows how to not know too much ?

Does he know how to spur up his virtue, and
put a check-rein on his pride ?

Can he carry a gentleman's manners within a
rhinoceros' hide ?

Can he know all, and do all, and be all, with
cheerfulness, courage, and vim ?

If so, we perhaps can be makin' an editor 'outen
of him.'"

The farmer stood curiously listening, while wonder his visage o'erspread ;
And he said, " Jim, I guess we'll be goin' ; he's probably out of his head."

But lo ! on the rickety stair-case, another reliable tread,
And entered another old farmer, and these are the words that *he* said :

" Good-morning, sir, Mr Editor, how is the folks to-day ?

I owe you for next year's paper ; I thought I'd come in and pay.

And Jones is agoin' to take it, and this is his money here ;

I shut down on lendin' it to him, and coaxed him to try it a year.

And here is a few little items that happened last week in our town :

I thought they'd look good for the paper, and so
I just jotted 'em down.

And here is a basket of cherries my wife picked
expressly for you ;

And a small bunch of flowers from Jennie—she
thought she must send somethin' too.

You're doin' the politics bully, as all of our
family agree ;

Just keep your old goose-quill a-floppin', and
give 'em a good one for me.

And now you are chuck full of business, and I
won't be takin' your time ;

I've things of my own I must 'tend to—good-
day, sir, I b'lieve I will climb."

The Editor sat in his sanctum and brought down
his fist with a thump :

"God bless that old farmer," he muttered, "he's
a regular Editor's trump."

And 'tis thus with our noble profession, and thus
it will ever be ; still

There are some who appreciate its labours, and
some who perhaps never will.

But in the great time that is coming, when loudly
the trumpet shall sound,

And they who have laboured and rested shall
come from the quivering ground ;

When they who have striven and suffered to
teach and ennoble the race,

Shall march at the front of the column, each one
in his God-given place,

As they pass through the gates of The City with
proud and victorious tread,

The editor, printer, and "devil," will travel not
far from the head.





THE HOUSE WHERE WE WERE WED



I'VE been to the old farm-house, good-
wife,
Where you and I were wed ;
Where the love was born to our two
hearts
That now lies cold and dead.
Where a long-kept secret to you I told,
In the yellow beams of the moon,
And we forged our vows out of love's own gold,
To be broken so soon, so soon

I passed through all the old rooms, good-wife ;

I wandered on and on ;

I followed the steps of a flitting ghost,

The ghost of a love that is gone.

And he led me out to the harbour, wife,

Where with myrtles I twined your hair ;

And he seated me down on the old stone step,

And left me musing there.

The sun went down as it used to do,

And sunk in the sea of night ;

The two bright stars that we called ours

Came slowly into my sight ;

But the one that was mine went under a cloud—

Went under a cloud, alone ;

And a tear that I wouldn't have shed for the
world,

Fell down on the old gray stone.

But there be words can ne'er be unsaid,

And deeds can ne'er be undone.

Except perhaps in another world,
Where life's once more begun.
And maybe some time in the time to come,
When a few more years are sped,
We'll love again as we used to love,
In the house where we were wed.





OUR ARMY OF THE DEAD.

BY the edge of the Atlantic, where the
waves of Freedom roar,
And the breezes of the ocean chant a
requiem to the shore,
On the Nation's eastern hill-tops, where its
corner-stone was laid,
On the mountains of New England, where our
fathers toiled and prayed,
Mid old Key-stone's rugged riches, which the
miner's hand await,

Mid the never-ceasing commerce of the busy
 Empire State,
With the country's love and honour on each brave,
 devoted head,
Is a band of noble heroes—is our Army of the
 Dead.

On the lake-encircled homestead of the thriving
 Wolverine,
On the beauteous Western prairies, with their
 carpeting of green;
By the sweeping Mississippi, long our country's
 pride and boast,
On the rugged Rocky Mountains, and the weird
 Pacific coast,
In the listless, sunny Southland, with its blossoms
 and its vines,
On the bracing Northern hill-tops, and amid their
 murmuring pines,

Over all our happy country—over all our Nation
spread,
Is a band of noble heroes—is our Army of the
Dead.

Not with musket, and with sabre, and with glad
heart beating fast ;
Not with cannon that hath thundered till the
bloody war was past ;
Not with voices that are shouting with the vim
of victory's note ;
Not with armour gaily glistening, and with flags
that proudly float ;
Not with air of martial vigour, nor with steady,
soldier tramp,
Come they grandly marching to us—for the boys
are all in camp.
With forgetfulness upon it—each within his earthy
bed,

Waiting for his marching orders—is our Army
of the Dead.

Fast asleep the boys are lying, in their low and
narrow tents,
And no battle-cry can wake them, and no orders
call them hence ;
And the yearnings of the mother, and the anguish
of the wife,
Can not with their magic presence call the sol-
dier back to life ;
And the brother's manly sorrow, and the father's
mournful pride,
Can not give back to his country him who for
his country died.
They who for the trembling Nation in its hour
of trial bled,
Lie, in these its years of triumph, with our
Army of the Dead.

When the years of Earth are over, and the cares
of Earth are done,
When the reign of Time is ended, and Eternity
begun,
When the thunders of Omniscience on our
wakened senses roll,
And the sky above shall wither, and be gathered
like a scroll;
When, among the lofty mountains, and across
the mighty sea,
The sublime celestial bugler shall ring out the
reveille,
Then shall march with brightest laurels, and
with proud, victorious tread,
To their station up in heaven, our Grand Army
of the Dead!





APPLE-BLOSSOMS.

UNDERNEATH an apple tree
Sat a maiden and her lover ;
And the thoughts within her he
Yearned, in silence, to discover.
Round them danced the sunbeams bright,
Green the grass-lawn stretched before them ;
While the apple-blossoms white
Hung in rich profusion o'er them.
Naught within her eyes he read
That would tell her mind unto him ;

Though their light, he after said,
Quivered swiftly through and through him;
Till at last his heart burst free
From the prayer with which 'twas laden,
And he said, "When wilt thou be
Mine for evermore, fair maiden?"

"When," said she, "the breeze of May
With white flakes our head shall cover,
I will be thy bridling gay—
Thou shalt be my husband-lover."
"How," said he, in sorrow bowed,
"Can I hope such hopeful weather?
Breeze of May and Winter's cloud
Do not often fly together."

Quickly as the words he said,
From the west a wind came sighing,
And on each uncovered head
Sent the apple-blossoms flying;

“ ‘Flakes of white!’ thou ’rt mine,” said he,
“ Sooner than thy wish or knowing !”
“ Nay, I heard the breeze,” quoth she,
“ When in yonder forest blowing.”





APPLES GROWING.



NDERNEATH an apple-tree

Sat a dame of comely seeming,

With her work upon her knee,

And her great eyes idly dreaming.

O'er the harvest-acres bright,

Came her husband's din of reaping ;

Near to her, an infant wight

Through the tangled grass was creeping.

On the branches long and high,

And the great green apples growing,

Rested she her wandering eye,

With a retrospective knowing.

"This," she said, "the shelter is,
Where, when gay and raven-headed,
I consented to be his,
And our willing hearts were wedded.

"Laughing words and peals of mirth,
Long are changed to grave endeavour;
Sorrow's winds have swept to earth
Many a blossomed hope for ever.
Thunder-heads have hovered o'er—
Storms my path have chilled and shaded
Of the bloom my gay youth bore,
Some has fruited—more has faded."

Quickly, and amid her sighs,
Through the grass her baby wrestled,
Smiled on her its father's eyes,
And unto her bosom nestled.

And with sudden, joyous glee,
Half the wife's and half the mother's,
"Still the best is left," said she :
"I have learned to live for others."





ONE AND TWO.

I.

IF you to me be cold,
Or I be false to you,
The world will go on, I think,
Just as it used to do ;
The clouds will flirt with the moon,
The sun will kiss the sea,
The wind to the trees will whisper,
And laugh at you and me ;
But the sun will not shine so bright,
The clouds will not seem so white,

To one, as they will to two ;
So I think you had better be kind,
And I had best be true,
And let the old love go on,
Just as it used to do.

II.

If the whole of a page be read,
If a book be finished through,
Still the world may read on, I think,
Just as it used to do;
For other lovers will con
The pages that we have passed,
And the treacherous gold of the binding
Will glitter unto the last.
But lids have a lonely look,
And one may not read the book—
It opens only to two ;
So I think you had better be kind,

And I had best be true,
And let the reading go on,
Just as it used to do.

III.

If we who have sailed together
Flit out of each other's view,
The world will sail on, I think,
Just as it used to do ,
And we may reckon by stars
That flash from different skies,
And another of love's pirates
May capture my lost prize ;
But ships long time together
Can better the tempest weather
Than any other two ;
So I think you had better be kind,
And I had best be true,
That we together may sail
Just as we used to do.



THE FADING FLOWERS.



HERE is a chillness in the air—

A coldness in the smile of day ;
And e'en the sunbeam's crimson glare
Seems shaded with a tinge of gray.

Weary of journeys to and fro,
The sun low creeps adown the sky ;
And on the shivering earth below,
The long, cold shadows grimly lie

But there will fall a deeper shade,
More chilling than the Autumn's breath:
There is a flower that yet must fade,
And yield its sweetness up to death.

She sits upon the window-seat,
Musing in mournful silence there,
While on her brow the sunbeams meet,
And dally with her golden hair.

She gazes on the sea of light
That overflows the western skies,
Till her great soul seems plumed for flight
From out the window of her eyes.

Hopes unfulfilled have vexed her breast,
Sad smiles have checked the rising sigh;
Until her weary heart confessed,
Reluctantly, that she must die.

And she has thought of all the ties—
The golden ties—that bind her here ;
Of all that she has learned to prize,
Of all that she has counted dear ;

The joys of body, heart, and mind,
The pleasures that she loves so well ;
The grasp of friendship, warm and kind,
And love's delicious, hallowed spell.

And she has wept, that she must lie
Beneath the snow-wreaths, drifted deep,
With no fond mother standing nigh,
To watch her in her silent sleep.

And she has prayed, if it might be
Within the reach of human skill,
And not averse to Heaven, that she
Might live a little longer still.

But earthly hope is gone ; and now
Comes in its place a brighter beam,
Leaving upon her snowy brow
The impress of a heavenly dream :

That she, when her frail body yields,
And fades away to mortal eyes,
Shall burst through Heaven's eternal fields,
And bloom again—in Paradise.





AUTUMN DAYS.



ELLOW, mellow, ripened days,
Sheltered in a golden coating ;
O'er the dreamy, listless haze,
White and dainty cloudlets floating ;
Winking at the blushing trees,
And the sombre, furrowed fallow ;
Smiling at the airy ease
Of the southward-flying swallow.
Sweet and smiling are thy ways,
Beauteous, golden, Autumn days !

Shivering, quivering, tearful days,
Fretfully and sadly weeping ;
Dreading still, with anxious gaze,
Icy fetters round thee creeping ;
O'er the cheerless, withered plain,
Woefully and hoarsely calling ;
Pelting hail and drenching rain
On thy scanty vestments falling.
Sad and mournful are thy ways,
Grieving, wailing, Autumn days !





DEATH-DOOMED.

THEY'RE taking me to the gallows,
mother—they mean to hang me high;
They're going to gather round me there,
and watch me till I die;
All earthly joy has vanished now, and gone each
mortal hope,—
They'll draw a cap across my eyes, and round
my neck a rope;
The crazy mob will shout and groan—the priest
will read a prayer,
The drop will fall beneath my feet and leave me
in the air.

They think I murdered Allen Bayne ; for so the
Judge has said,
And they'll hang me to the gallows, mother—
hang me till I'm dead !

The grass that grows in yonder meadow, the
lamb that skip and play,
The pebbled brook behind the orchard, that
laughs upon its way,
The flowers that bloom in the dear old garden,
the birds that sing and fly,
Are clear and pure of human blood, and, mother,
so am I !
By father's grave on yonder hill—his name with-
out a stain—
I ne'er had malice in my heart, or murdered
Allen Bayne !
But twelve good men have found me guilty, for
so the Judge has said,

And they'll hang me to the gallows, mother—
hang me till I'm dead !

The air is fresh and bracing, mother ; the sun
shines bright and high ;

It is a pleasant day to live—a gloomy one to
die !

It is a bright and glorious day the joys of earth
to grasp—

It is a sad and wretched one to strangle, choke
and gasp !

But let them damp my lofty spirit, or cow me if
they can !

They send me like a rogue to death—I'll meet
it like a man ;

For I never murdered Allen Bayne ! but so the
Judge has said,

And they'll hang me to the gallows, mother—
hang me till I'm dead !

Poor little sister 'Bell will weep, and kiss me as
I lie ;

But kiss her twice and thrice for me, and tell her
not to cry ;

Tell her to weave a bright, gay garland, and
crown me as of yore,

Then plant a lily upon my grave, and think of
me no more.

And tell that maiden whose love I sought, that
I was faithful yet ;

But I must lie in a felon's grave, and she had
best forget.

My memory is stained forever ; for so the Judge
has said,

And they 'll hang me to the gallows, mother—
hang me till I'm dead !

Lay me not down by my father's side ; for once,
I mind, he said

No child that stained his spotless name should
share his mortal bed.

Old friends would look beyond his grave, to my
dishonoured one,

And hide the virtues of the sire behind the
recreant son.

And I can fancy, if there my corse its fettered
limbs should lay,

His frowning skull and crumbling bones would
shrink from me away;

But I swear to God I'm innocent, and never
blood have shed!

And they'll hang me to the gallows, mother—
hang me till I'm dead!

Lay me in my coffin, mother, as you've some-
times seen me rest:

One of my arms beneath my head, the other on
my breast.

Place my Bible upon my heart—nay, mother, do
not weep—
And kiss me as in happier days you kissed me
when asleep.
And for the rest—for form or rite—but little do
I reckon;
But cover up that cursèd stain—*the black mark*
on my neck!
And pray to God for His great mercy on my
devoted head;
For they'll hang me to the gallows, mother—
hang me till I'm dead!

* * * * *

But hark! I hear a mighty murmur among the
jostling crowd!
A cry!—a shout!—a roar of voices!—it echoes
long and loud!

There dashes a horseman with foaming steed
and tightly-gathered rein !
He sits erect !—he waves his hand !—good
Heaven ! 'tis Allen Bayne !
The lost is found, the dead alive, my safety is
achieved !
For he waves his hand again, and shouts, " The
prisoner is reprieved ! "
Now, mother, praise the God you love, and raise
your drooping head ;
For the murderous gallows, black and grim, is
cheated of its dead !





UP THE LINE.

THROUGH blinding storm and clouds of
night,
We swiftly pushed our restless flight ;
With thundering hoof and warning
neigh,

We urged our steed upon his way
Up the line.

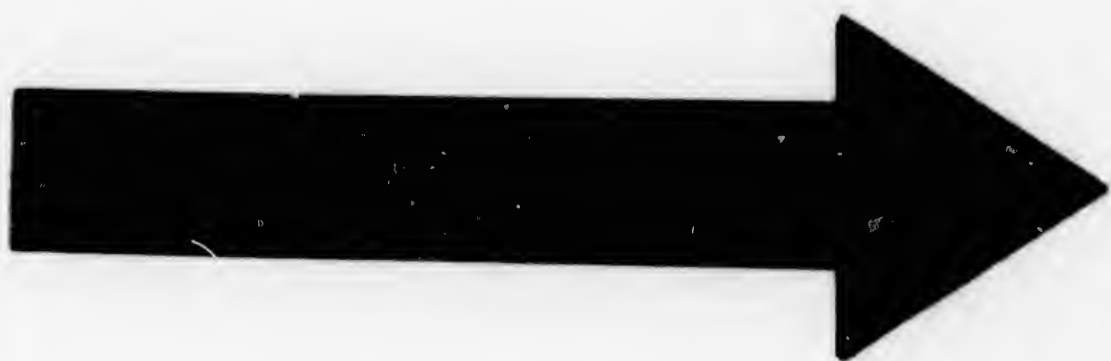
Afar the lofty head-light gleamed ;
Afar the whistle shrieked and screamed ;
And glistening bright, and rising high,
Our flakes of fire bestrewed the sky,
Up the line.

Adown the long, complaining track,
Our wheels a message hurried back ;
And quivering through the rails ahead,
Went news of our resistless tread,
Up the line.

The trees gave back our din and shout,
And flung their shadow arms about ;
And shivering in their coats of gray,
They heard us roaring far away,
Up the line.

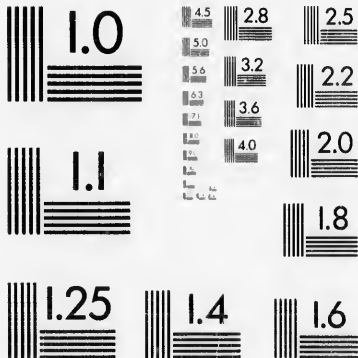
The wailing storm came on apace,
And dashed its tears into our face ;
But steadily still we pierced it through,
And cut the sweeping wind in two,
Up the line.

A rattling rush across the ridge,
A thunder-peal beneath the bridge ;



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And valley and hill and sober plain
Re-echoed our triumphant strain,
Up the line.

And when the Eastern streaks of gray
Bespoke the dawn of coming day,
We halted our steed, his journey o'er,
And urged his giant form no more,
Up the line.





HOW WE KEPT THE DAY.

I.

THE great procession came up the street,
With clatter of hoofs and tramp of feet ;
There was General Jones to guide the
van,

And Corporal Jinks, his right-hand man ;
And each was riding his high horse,
And each had epaulettes, of course ;
And each had a sash of the bloodiest red,
And each had a shako on his head ;
And each had a sword by his left side,
And each had his moustache newly dyed :

And that was the way
We kept the day,
The great, the grand, the glorious day,
That gave us—

Hurray! Hurray! Hurray!
(With a battle or two, the histories say,)
Our National Independence!

II.

The great procession came up the street,
With loud da capo, and brazen repeat;
There was Hans, the leader, a Teuton born,
A sharp who worried the E flat horn;
And Baritone Jake and Alto Mike,
Who never played anything twice alike;
And Tenor Tom, of conservative mind,
Who always came out a note behind;
And Dick, whose tuba was seldom dumb;
And Bob, who punished the big brass drum.

And when they stopped a minute to rest,
The martial band discoursed its best ;
The ponderous drum and the pointed fife
Proceeded to roll and shriek for life ;
And Bonaparte Crossed the Rhine, anon,
And The Girl I Left Behind Me came on ;
 And that was the way
 The bands did play
On the loud, high-toned, harmonious day,
That gave us—

Hurray ! Hurray ! Hurray !

(With some music of bullets, our sires would
say,)

Our glorious Independence !

III.

The great procession came up the street,
With a waggon of virgins, sour and sweet ;
Each bearing the bloom of recent date,
Each misrepresenting a single State.

There was California, pious and prim,
And Louisiana, humming a hymn ;
The Texas lass was the smallest one—
Rhode Island weighed the tenth of a ton ;
The Empire State was pure as a pearl,
And Massachusetts a modest girl ;
Vermont was red as the blush of the rose—
And the goddess sported a turn-up nose ;
And looked, free sylph, where she painfully
sat,

The worlds she would give to be out of that.

And in this way

The maidens gay

Flashed up the street on the beautiful day,

That gave us—

Hurray ! Hurray ! Hurray !

(With some sacrifices, our mothers would say,)

Our glorious Independence !

IV.

The great procession came up the street,
With firemen uniformed flashily neat ;
There was Tubbs, the foreman, with voice like
The happiest, proudest man alive ; [five,
With a trumpet half as long as a gun,
Which he used for the glory of " Number 1 ;"
There was Nubbs, who had climbed a ladder
 high,
And saved a dog that was left to die ;
There was Cubbs, who had dressed in black and
 blue
The eye of the foreman of Number 2,
And each marched on with steady stride,
And each had a look of fiery pride ;
And each glanced slyly round, with a whim
That all of the girls were looking at him ;
 And that was the way,
 With grand display,

They marched through the blaze of the glowing
That gave us— [day,

Hurray ! Hurray ! Hurray !

(With some hot fighting, our father's would
say,)

Our glorious Independence !

V.

The eager orator took the stand,
In the cause of our great and happy land ;
He aired his own political views,
He told us all of the latest news :
How the Boston folks one night took tea—
Their grounds for steeping it in the sea ;
What a heap of Britons our fathers did kill,
At the little skirmish of Bunker Hill ;
He put us all in anxious doubt
As to how that matter was coming out ;
And when at last he had fought us through
To the bloodless year of '82,

'Twas the fervent hope of every one
That he, as well as the war, was done.
But he continued to painfully soar
For something less than a century more ;
Until at last he had fairly begun
The wars of eighteen-sixty-one ;
And never rested till 'neath the tree
That shadowed the glory of Robert Lee.
And then he inquired, with martial frown,
" Americans, must we go down ? "
And as an answer from Heaven were sent,
The stand gave way, and down he went.
A singer or two beneath him did drop—
A big fat alderman fell atop ;
And that was the way
Our orator lay,
Till we fished him out, on the eloquent day,
That gave us—

Hurray ! Hurray ! Hurray !

(With a clash of arms, Pat. Henry would say,)
Our wordy Independence !

VI.

The marshal his hungry compatriots led,
Where Freedom's viands were thickly spread,
With all that man or woman could eat,
From crisp to sticky—from sour to sweet.
There were chickens that scarce had learned to
crow,
And veteran roosters of long ago ;
There was one old turkey, huge and fierce,
That was hatched in the days of President Pierce ;
Of which, at last, with an ominous groan,
The parson essayed to swallow a bone ;
And it took three sinners, plucky and stout,
To grapple the evil and bring it out.
And still the dinner went merrily on,
And James and Lucy and Hannah and John

Kept winking their eyes and smacking their lips,
And passing the eatables into eclipse.

And that was the way
The grand array
Of victuals vanished on that day,
That gave us—

Hurray! Hurray! Hurray!
(With some starvation, the records say,)
Our well-fed Independence!

VII.

The people went home through the sultry night,
In a murky mood and a pitiful plight;
Not more had the rockets' sticks gone down,
Than the spirits of them who had "been to
town;"

Not more did the fire-balloon collapse,
Than the pride of them who had known mishaps.
There were feathers ruffled, and tempers roiled,
And several brand-new dresses spoiled;

There were hearts that ached from envy's thorns,
And feet that twinged with tran.pled corns ;
There were joys proved empty, through and
through,
And several purses empty, too ;
And some reeled homeward, muddled and late,
Who hadn't taken their glory straight ;
And some were fated to lodge, that night,
In the city lock-up, snug and tight ;
And that was the way
The deuce was to pay,
As it always is, at the close of the day,
That gave us—

Hurray ! Hurray ! Hurray !

(With some restrictions, the fault-finders say,
That which, please God, we will keep for aye—
Our National Independence !

—
orns,

;

and

late,

FARM FESTIVALS.

y,)

re—

TO
SISTERS AND BROTHER,
ALL GONE ON
THROUGH SAD, MYSTERIOUS MISTS
INTO
THE GREAT BRIGHTNESS.





PREFACE.



NOT all the festivals of the farm have been attempted in these pages ; there are still more in the author's heart than in his book.

Such only have been selected as might best help to express the thoughts, fancies, and memories which were uppermost in his mind, and (in a few cases) to garner certain poems already written.

Some of the characters were drawn from people the author has known—some of the incidents from scenes in which he has participated ; but the names used are, of course, all fictitious, though taken at random from such

as are liable to be found in any farming community.

With these few words of introduction, he respectfully presents to the public this third number of THE FARM SERIES, and will be more than pleased, should it gain as kind and generous a greeting as have its predecessors.

W. C.



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FARM FESTIVALS.



THE FESTIVAL OF REMINISCENCE;

OR,

THE PIONEER MEETING.

I.



WITHIN a grove, where maples strove
To keep their sweet-tongued goods,
Met, worn with years, some pioneers—
The Old Guard of the woods ;
Who came once more to linger o'er
The grim work of their primes,
Renewing here the grief and cheer
Of happy, hard old times.
Rough clad were they—unkempt and gray—
With lack of studied ease—

Yet beauty-strown with charms their own,
Like brave old forest trees.
Their eyes seemed still to flash the will
Of spirits sent to win;
Their hands were marred; their cheeks
were scarred
By deep wounds from within.

With awkward grace and earnest face
Of effort-bought repose,
With troubled ease and shaking knees,
Their president arose.
The crowd in view from him first drew
That flustered word "Ahem!"
He who when found on equal ground,
Could talk so free with them.
('Tis strange how one who well has known
His friends, from day to day,
Those same ones fears, when he appears
On higher ground than they !)
But he arose, and his snub nose
Twanged with a sound immense ;
Which bugle-blast about him cast,
Gave him self-confidence.
And while a look of reverence took
His anxious-wrinkled face,
He begged the good old elder would
Invoke the throne of grace.

A sweet old man, of clean-cut plan
And undissembling air,
Rose in his place, with fervent face,
And made a business prayer.
He never threw his voice into
A sad uncalled-for wail;
He ne'er aspired to make Heaven tired,
With gossip weak and stale;
He did not ask a toilless task,
Or claim undue reward,
He did not shout opinions out,
Or "dance before The Lord";
He did not prate of town or state,
Suggesting them by name;
With his calm voice, no precepts choice,
Or general orders, came.—
Thanks—many a one—for favours done,
Hopes—modest-clothed—for more,
Praise, love, and fear, and all sincere,
And then his words were o'er.
So old was he, it seemed to me,
In this strong, feeble prayer,
He knocked once more at Heaven's front
door,
And left his message there.

With side-turned head, the chairman said,
"To help this meetin' 'long,

My eldest son, George Washington,
Will perpetrate a song."
Uncouth of view, George W.
Rose in his ample tracks,
And gave, in voice not over choice,
The loud

SONG OF THE AXE.

They called me off of the hard couch of my
rest—
“Wake up! wake up! for the morning
breaks!” they said.
To the bath of the white-hot fire they bared my
breast—
The lash of the iron sledge fell on my head.
Far and near
My pain-cries bounded ;
Shrill and clear
The anvils sounded ;
“Work!” they cried :
“The day has broke !
The forests wide
Await the stroke
Of the serpent-spring of the woodman’s cordy
arm,
As it flings the white-toothed axe against the
tree ;

The noon shall gleam on many a prosperous
farm,
And the growing grain the forest's child shall
be."

I went to the streetless city of the wood—
I carried there destruction's surest pang;
The tree that many a hundred years had
stood,
Now fell at the touch of my silver-gleaming
fang.
Far and wide
My voice was calling
Every side
The trees were falling;
"Cease," I said,
"Your barbarous cheer,
And bow the head,
For death is near!"
And the oak-tree gazed at its steadily gaping
wound,
And nursed the stinging pain that it could
not tell;
Then grandly drooped, with an agony-moaning
sound,
And dashed and crashed through the brush,
and, thundering, fell.

Wherever are heard my voice's ominous sounds,
The half-clad feet of the homeless millions
run ;

They pitch their tents of wood on my battle
grounds—

They eat the fruits of the work that I have
done.

Toil that dares

Is tenfold glorious ;

All earth shares

Its march victorious ;

"Haste !" it cries :

"Your venturous deeds

Will win a prize

For human needs !"

So I strike the keynote of the national song
Of empires that shall star through future
years ;

And the artist-tribes do but my strains prolong,
For I am the pioneer of pioneers.

II.

Came speeches, then, by withered men,
In language brusque and plain ;
And, as it happ'd, most of them tapped
The reminiscence vein.

Age loves through ways of olden days
With Memory's lamp to grope ;
As proud Youth peers at future years,
Lit by the torch of Hope.
How far between are Memory's scene
And Hope's unclouded view !
False is each one, and overdone—
Yet both are very true.
And toward the close, there calmly rose
A sad-eyed veteran hoary,
And with a fair and modest air,
Told

THE FIRST SETTLER'S STORY.

It ain't the funniest thing a man can do—
Existing in a country when it's new ;
Nature—who moved in first—a good long
while—
Has things already somewhat her own style,
And she don't want her woodland splendours
battered,
Her rustic furniture broke up and scattered,
Her paintings, which long years ago were done
By that old splendid artist-king, the Sun,
Torn down and dragged in Civilisation's gutter,
Or sold to purchase settlers' bread-and-butter.

She don't want things exposed, from porch to closet—

And so she kind o' nags the man who does it.
She carries in her pockets bags of seeds,
As general agent of the thriftiest weeds;
She sends her blackbirds, in the early morn,
To superintend his fields of planted corn;
She gives him rain past any duck's desire—
Then maybe several weeks of quiet fire;
She sails mosquitoes — leeches perched on wings—

To poison him with blood-devouring stings;
She loves her ague-muscle to display,
And shake him up—say every other day;
With careful, conscientious care, she makes
Those travellin' poison-bottles, rattlesnakes;
She finds time, 'mongst her other family cares,
To keep in stock good wild-cats, wolves, and bears;

She spurns his offered hand, with silent gibes,
And compromises with the Indian tribes
(For they who've wrestled with his bloody art

Say Nature always takes an Indian's part).
In short, her toil is every day increased,
To scare him out, and hustle him back East;
Till fin'ly, it appears to her some day,
That he has made arrangements for to stay;

Then she turns 'round, as sweet as anything,
And takes her new-made friend into the ring,
And changes from a snarl into a purr :
From mother-in-law to mother, as it were.

Well, when I first infested this retreat,
Things to my view looked frightful incomplete ;
But Nature seemed quite cheerful, all about me,
A-carrying on her different trades without me.
These words the forest seemed at me to throw :
" Sit down and rest awhile before you go ;"
From bees to trees the whole woods seemed to
say,

" You're welcome here till you can get away,
But not for time of any large amount ;
So don't be hanging round on our account."
But I had come with heart-thrift in my song,
And brought my wife and plunder right along ;
I hadn't a round-trip ticket to go back,
And if I had, there wasn't no railroad track ;
And drivin' east was what I couldn't endure :
I hadn't started on a circular tour.

My girl-wife was as brave as she was good,
And helped me every blessed way she could ;
She seemed to take to every rough old tree,
As sing'lar as when first she took to me.

She kep' our little log-house neat as wax ;
And once I caught her fooling with my axe.
She learned a hundred masculine things to do :
She aimed a shot-gun pretty middlin' true,
Although, in spite of my express desire,
She always shut her eyes before she'd fire.
She hadn't the muscle (though she *had* the
heart)

In out-door work to take an active part ;
Though in our firm of Duty & Endeavour,
She wasn't no silent partner whatsoever.
When I was logging, burning, choppin' wood—
She'd linger 'round, and help me all she could,
And kept me fresh-ambitious all the while,
And lifted tons, just with her voice and smile.
With no desire my glory for to rob,
She used to stan' around and boss the job ;
And when first-class success my hands befell,
Would proudly say, "*We* did that pretty well !"
She *was* delicious, both to hear and see—
That pretty wife-girl that kep' house for me !

Sundays, we didn't propose, for lack o'
church,
To have our souls left wholly in the lurch ;
And so I shaved and dressed up, well's I
could,
And did a day's work tryin' to be good.

My wife was always bandbox-sleek ; and when
Our fat old bull's-eye watch said half-past ten
('Twas always varying from the narrow way,
And lied on Sundays, same as any day),
The family Bible from its high perch started
(The one her mother gave her when they parted,)
The hymn-book, full of music-balm and fire—
The one she used to sing in in the choir—
One I sang with her from—I've got it yet—
The very first time that we *really* met ;
(I recollect, when first our voices gibed,
A feeling that declines to be described !
And when our eyes met—near the second
verse—
A kind of old-acquaintance look in hers,
And something went from mine, which, I
declare,
I never even knew before was there—
And when our hands touched—slight as slight
could be—
A streak o' sweetened lightnin' thrilled through
me !
But that's enough of that ; perhaps, even now,
You'll think I'm softer than the law 'll allow ;
But you'll protect an old man with his age,
For yesterday I turned my eightieth page ;
Besides, there'd be less couples falling out
If such things were more freely talked about.)

Well, we would take these books, sit down
alone,
And have a two-horse meeting, all our own;
And read our verses, sing our sacred rhymes,
And make it seem a good deal like old times.
But finally across her face there'd glide
A sort of sorry shadow from inside;
And once she dropped her head, like a tired
flower,
Upon my arm, and cried a half an hour.
I humoured her until she had it out,
And didn't ask her what it was about.
I knew right well: our reading, song, and prayer
Had brought the old times back, too true and
square.
The large attended meetings morn and night;
The spiritual and mental warmth and light;
Her father, in his pew, next to the aisle;
Her mother, with the mother of her smile;
Her brothers' sly, forbidden Sunday glee;
Her sisters, e'en a'most as sweet as she;
Her girl and boy friends, not too warm or cool;
Her little scrub class in the Sunday-school;
The social, and the singings and the ball;
And happy home-cheer waiting for them all—
These marched in close procession through her
mind,
And didn't forget to leave their tracks behind.

You married men—there's many in my view—
 Don't think your wife can all wrap up in you,
 Don't deem, though close her life to yours may
 grow,
 That you are all the folks she wants to know;
 Or think your stitches form the only part
 Of the crochet-work of a woman's heart.
 Though married souls each other's lives may
 burnish,
 Each needs some help the other cannot furnish.

Well, neighbourhoods meant counties, in those
 days;
 The roads didn't have accommodating ways;
 And maybe weeks would pass before she'd see—
 And much less talk with—any one but me.
 The Indians sometimes showed their sun-baked
 faces,
 But they didn't teem with conversational graces;
 Some ideas from the birds and trees she stole,
 But 'twasn't like talking with a human soul;
 And finally I thought that I could trace
 A half heart-hunger peering from her face.
 Then she would drive it back, and shut the
 door;
 Of course that only made me see it more.
 'Twas hard to see her give her life to mine,
 Making a steady effort not to pine;

'Twas hard to hear that laugh bloom out each
minute,
And recognise the seeds of sorrow in it.
No misery makes a close observer mourn,
Like hopeless grief with hopeful courage borne;
There's nothing sets the sympathies to paining,
Like a complaining woman, uncomplaining !
It always draws my breath out into sighs,
To see a brave look in a woman's eyes.

Well, she went on, as plucky as could be,
Fighting the foe she thought I did not see,
And using her heart-horticultural powers
To turn that forest to a bed of flowers.
You cannot check an unadmitted sigh,
And so I had to soothe her on the sly,
And secretly to help her draw her load ;
And soon it came to be an up-hill road.
Hard work bears hard upon the average pulse,
Even with satisfactory results ;
But when effects are scarce, the heavy strain
Falls dead and solid on the heart and brain.
And when we're bothered, it will oft occur
We seek blame-timber ; and I lit on her ;
And looked at her with daily lessening favour,
For what I knew she couldn't help, to save
her.

(We often—what our minds should blush with
shame for—

Blame people most for what they're least to
blame for.)

Then there'd a misty, jealous thought occur,
Because I wasn't earth and heaven to her,
And all the planets that about us hovered,
And several more that hadn't been discovered ;
And my hard muscle-labour, day by day,
Deprived good-nature of the right of way ;
And 'tain't no use—this trying to conceal
From hearts that love us—what our own heart:
feel ;

They can't escape close observation's mesh—
And thoughts have tongues that are not made
of flesh.

And so ere long she caught the half-grown fact :
Commenced observing how I didn't act ;
And silently began to grieve and doubt
O'er old attentions now sometimes left out—
Some kind caress—some little petting ways—
Commenced a-staying in on rainy days
(I did not see 't so clear then, I'll allow ;
But I can trace it rather acc'rate now) ;
And Discord, when he once had called and seen

us,

Came round quite often, and edged in between
us.

One night, I came from work unusual late,
Too hungry and too tired to feel first-rate—
Her supper struck me wrong (though I'll allow
She hadn't much to strike with, anyhow);
And when I went to milk the cows, and found
They'd wandered from their usual feeding
ground,
And may'be 'd left a few long miles behind 'em,
Which I must copy, if I meant to find 'em,
Flash-quick the stay-chains of my temper
broke,
And in a trice these hot words I had spoke :
"You ought to 've kept the animals in view,
And drove 'em in ; you'd nothing else to do.
The heft of all our life on me must fall ;
You just lie round, and let me do it all."

That speech—it hadn't been gone a half a
minute,
Before I saw the cold black poison in it ;
And I'd have given all I had, and more,
To 've only safely got it back in-door.
I'm now what most folks "well-to-do" would
call :
I feel to-day as if I'd give it all,
Provided I through fifty years might reach,
And kill and bury that half-minute speech.

Boys flying kites haul in their white-winged
birds;
You can't do that way when you're flying words.
Things that we think may sometimes fall back
dead;
But God Himself can't kill them when they're
said.

She handed back no words, as I could hear;
She didn't frown—she didn't shed a tear;
Half proud, half crushed, she stood and looked
me o'er,
Like some one she had never seen before!
But such a sudden anguish-lit surprise
I never viewed before in human eyes.
(I've seen it oft enough since, in a dream;
It sometimes wakes me, like a midnight scream!)

That night, while theoretically sleeping,
I half heard and half felt that she was weeping;
And my heart then projected a design
To softly draw her face up close to mine,
And beg of her forgiveness to bestow,
For saying what we both knew wasn't so.
I've got enough of this world's goods to do me,
And make my nephews painfully civil to me:
I'd give it all to know she only knew
How near I came to what was square and true.

But somehow, every single time I'd try,
Pride would appear, and kind o' catch my eye,
And hold me, on the edge of my advance,
With the cold steel of one sly, scornful glance.

Next morning, when, stone-faced, but heavy-
hearted,
With dinner pail and sharpened axe I started
Away for my day's work—she watched the door,
And followed me half-way to it or more ;
And I was just a-turning round at this,
And asking for my usual good-bye kiss ;
But on her lip I saw a proudish curve,
And in her eye a shadow of reserve ;
And she had shown—perhaps half unawares—
Some little independent breakfast airs—
And so the usual parting didn't occur,
Although her eyes invited me to her,
Or rather half-invited me ; for she
Didn't advertise to furnish kisses free :
You always had—that is, I had—to pay
Full market price, and go more 'n half the way.
So, with a short "Good-bye," I shut the door,
And left her as I never had before.

Now, when a man works with his muscle
smartly,
It makes him up into machinery, partly ;

And any trouble he may have on hand
Gets deadened like, and easier to stand.
And though the memory of last night's mistake
Bothered me with a dull and heavy ache,
I all the forenoon gave my strength full rein,
And made the wounded trees bear half the pain.
But when at noon my lunch I came to eat,
Put up by her so delicately neat—
Choicer, somewhat, than yesterday's had been,
And some fresh, sweet-eyed pansies she'd put in—
"Tender and pleasant thoughts," I knew they
meant—
It seemed as if her kiss with me she'd sent;
Then I became once more her humble lover,
And said, "To-night I'll ask forgiveness of her."

I went home over-early on that eve,
Having contrived to make myself believe,
By various signs I kind o' knew and guessed,
A thunder-storm was coming from the west.
(Tis strange, when one sly reason fills the heart,
How many honest ones will take its part;
A dozen first-class reasons said 'twas right
That I should strike home early on that night.)

Half out of breath, the cabin door I swung,
With tender heart-words trembling on my
tongue;

But all within looked desolate and bare ;
My house had lost its soul—she was not there !
A pencilled note was on the table spread,
And these are something like the words it said :
“ The cows have strayed away again, I fear ;
I watched them pretty close ; don’t scold me,
 dear.

And where they are, I think I *nearly* know :
I heard the bell not very long ago—

* * * * * *

I’ve hunted for them all the afternoon ;
I’ll try once more—I think I’ll find them soon.
Dear, if a burden I have been to you,
And haven’t helped you as I ought to do,
Let old-time memories my forgiveness plead ;
I’ve tried to do my best—I have, indeed.
Darling, piece out with love the strength I
 lack,
And have kind words for me when I get back.”

Scarce did I give this letter sight and
 tongue—
Some swift-blown rain-drops to the window
 clung,
And from the clouds a rough, deep growl pro
 ceeded ;
My thunder-storm had come, now ’twasn’t
 needed.

I rushed out-door; the air was stained with
black;

Night had come early, on the storm-cloud's back.
And everything kept dimming to the sight,
Save when the clouds threw their electric light;
When, for a flash, so clean-cut was the view,
I'd think I saw her—knowing 'twas not true.
Through my small clearing dashed wide sheets
of spray,

As if the ocean waves had lost their way;
Scarcely a pause the thunder-battle made,
In the bold clamour of its cannonade.
And she, while I was sheltered, dry and warm,
Was somewhere in the clutches of the storm!
She who, when storm-frights found her at her
best,
Had always hid her white face on my breast!

My dog, who'd skirmished 'round me all the
day,
Now, crouched and whimpering, in a corner lay;
I dragged him by the collar to the wall—
I pressed his quivering muzzle to a shawl—
"Track her, old boy!" I shouted: and he
whined,
Matched eyes with me, as if to read my mind—
Then with a yell went tearing through the wood.
I followed him, as faithful as I could.

No pleasure-trip was that, through flood and
flame!

We raced with death;—we hunted noble game.
All night we dragged the woods without avail;
The ground got drenched—we could not keep
the trail.

Three times again my cabin home I found,
Half hoping she might be there, safe and sound;
But each time 'twas an unavailing care:
My house had lost its soul; she was not there!

When, climbing the wet trees, next morning-
sun

Laughed at the ruin that the night had done,
Bleeding and drenched—by toil and sorrow
bent—

Back to what used to be my home I went.
But, as I neared our little clearing-ground—
Listen!—I heard the cow-bell's tinkling sound;
The cabin door was just a bit ajar;
It gleamed upon my glad eyes like a star!
"Brave heart," I said, "for such a fragile form!
She made them guide her homeward through
the storm!"

Such pangs of joy I never felt before:
"You've come!" I shouted, and rushed through
the door.

Yes, she had come—and gone again.—She
lay
With all her young life crushed and wrenched
away—
Lay—the heart ruins of our home among—
Not far from where I killed her with my tongue.
The rain drops glittered 'mid her hair's long
strands,
The forest-thorns had torn her feet and hands,
And 'midst the tears—brave tears—that one
could trace
Upon the pale but sweetly resolute face,
I once again the mournful words could read—
“I've tried to do my best—I have, indeed.”

And now I'm mostly done; my story s o'er;
Part of it never breathed the air before.
'Tisn't over-usual, it must be allowed.
To volunteer heart-history to a crowd,
And scatter 'mongst them confidential tears,
But you'll protect an old man with his years;
And wheresoe'er this story's voice can reach,
This is the sermon I would have it preach:

Boys flying kites haul in their white-winged
birds;
You can't do that way when you're flying words.

"Careful with fire," is good advice, we know:
"Careful with words," is ten times doubly so.
Thoughts unexpressed may sometimes fall back
dead ;
But God Himself can't kill them when they're
said !
You have my life-grief: do not think a minute
'Twas told to take up time. There's business
in it.
It sheds advice ; whoe'er will take and live it,
Is welcome to the pain it costs to give it.

III.

With added calm, untangling from
The twists of bench repose,
When silence called, serene and bald,
The President arose ;
And with bowed head he humbly said,
"To help this meetin' 'long,
My second one, James Madison,
Will now submit a song."
James M. appeared, his infant beard
Hopes for the future shedding,
And sung in strains of anxious pains

ELIPHALET CHAPIN'S WEDDING.

'Twas when the leaves of Autumn were by
tempest-fingers picked,
Eliphalet Chapin started to become a benedict;
With an ancient two-ox waggon to bring back
his new-found goods,
He hawed and gee'd and floundered through
some twenty miles o' woods;
With prematrimonial ardour he his hornèd
steeds did press,
But Eliphalet's wedding journey didn't bristle
with success.

Oh no,

Woe, woe!

With candour to digress,

Eliphalet's wedding journey didn't tremble with
success.

He had not carried five miles his mouth-disputed
face,

When his wedding garments parted in some
inconvenient place;

He'd have given both his oxen to a wife that
now was dead,

For her company two minutes with a needle
and a thread.

But he pinned them up, with twinges of occasional distress,
Feeling that his wedding wouldn't be a carnival of dress:

“Haw, Buck!
Gee, Bright!
Derned pretty mess!”

No; Eliphalet was not strictly a spectacular success.

He had not gone a ten-mile when a wheel demurely broke,
A disunited family of fellow, hub, and spoke;
It joined, with flattering prospects, the Society of Wrecks;
And he had to cut a sapling, and insert it 'neath the “ex.”

So he ploughed the hills and valleys with that Doric wheel and tire,
Feeling that his wedding journey was not all he could desire.

“Gee, Bright!
G'long, Buck!”

He shouted, hoarse with ire!
No; Eliphalet's wedding journey none in candour could admire!

He had not gone fifteen miles with extended face forlorn,

When Night lay down upon him hard, and kept
him there till morn;
And when the daylight chuckled at the gloom
within his mind,
One ox was "Strayed or Stolen," and the other
hard to find.
So yoking Buck as usual, he assumed the part
of Bright
(Constituting a menagerie diverting to the sight);
With "Haw, Buck!
Gee, Buck!
Sha'n't get there till night!"
No; Eliphalet's wedding journey was not one
intense delight.

Now, when he drove his equipage up to his
sweetheart's door,
The wedding guests had tired and gone, just
half an hour before;
The preacher had from sickness an unprofitable
call,
And had sent a voice proclaiming that he
couldn't come at all;
The parents had been prejudiced by some one,
more or less,
And the sire the bridegroom greeted with a
different word from "bless."

“Blank your head,
You blank!” he said;
“We’ll break this off, I guess!”
No; Eliphalet’s wedding was not an unqualified
success.

Now, when the bride saw him arrive, she shook
her crimson locks,
And vowed to goodness gracious she would
never wed an ox;
And with a vim deserving rather better social
luck,
She eloped that day by daylight with a swarthy
Indian “buck,”
With the presents in the pockets of her woollen
wedding-dress;
And “Things ain’t mostly with me,” quoth
Eliphalet, “I confess.”
No—no;
As things go,
No fair mind ’twould impress,
That Eliphalet Chapin’s wedding was an un-
alloyed success.

Eliphalet Chapin started home——

IV.

Once more unbent the President,
With face grown sadly long,
And said, "How many more, if any,
Such verses has that song?"
With smile unchanged, the minstrel ranged
Four fingers and a thumb,
And said, "There'll be just ninety-three
More stanzas yet to come."
With look of dread, the father said,
"You need not sing 'em here,
But get your man home, if you can,
Some time this coming year."
Without a frown, James M. sat down,
Stripped of his vocal glory;
And then an old rough patriarch told

THE SECOND SETTLER'S STORY.

A han'some night, with the trees snow-white,
And the time say ten or more,
Saw wife and me, with a well-fed glee,
Drive home from Jackson's store.
There was wife and I, and some things folks
buy,
And our horses and our sleigh;

And the moon went along with its lantern
strong,
And lit us as light as day.
We'd made roads good, drawin' logs and wood,
For thirty years ago ;
And the wear and tear had sustained repair
From Road Commissioner Snow.
As we trotted along, our two-thread song
Wove in with the sleigh-bells' chimes ;
Our laugh run free, and it seemed to me
We was havin' first-rate times.

I said "first-rate," but I do not say't
On a thoroughly thorough plan ;
I had won my wife, in legitimate strife,
Away from her first young man.
'Twas a perfect rout, and a fair cut-out,
With nothing sneaky or wrong ;
But I wondered so as to whether or no
She had brought her *heart* along !
A woman half-won is worse than none,
With another man keepin' part ;
It's nothin' to gain her body and brain,
If she can't throw in her heart.
And I felt and thought that I sometimes
caught
A chillness out o' her mind ;

She was too much prone to thinkin' alone,
And rather too coldly kind.

But things seemed right this partic'lar night,
And better than average folks;
And we filled the air with music to spare,
And complimentary jokes.
Till, as I reckoned, about a second
All happened to be still—
A cry like the yell of hounds from hell
Came over a neighbouring hill.
It cut like a blade through the leafless shade;
It chilled us stiff with dread;
We looked loud cries in each other's eyes—
And—" *Wolves!*" was all we said.
The wolf! grim scamp and forest-tramp—
Why made, I never could see;
Beneath brute level—half dog, half devil—
The Indian animal, he!
And this was a year with a winter more drear
Than any we'd ever known;
It was '43; and the wolves, you see,
Had a famine of their own.
That season, at least, of man and beast
They captured many a one;
And we knew, by the bite of their voice that
night,
That they hadn't come out for fun.

My horses felt need of all their speed,
And every muscle strained ;
But, with all they could do, I felt and knew
That the hungry devils gained.
'Twas but two miles more to our own house
door,
Where shelter we would find,
When I saw the pack close on to our track,
Not a hundred yards behind.
Then I silent prayed : " O God ! for aid—
Just a trifle—I request !
Just give us, You know, an even show,
And I'll undertake the rest."
Then I says to my wife, " Now drive for life !
They're a-comin' over-nigh !
And I will stand, gun and axe in hand,
And be the first to die."
As the ribbons she took, she gave me a look
Sweet memory makes long-lived :
I thought, " I'll allow she loves me now ;
The rest of her heart has arrived."
I felt I could fight the whole o' the night,
And never flinch or tire !
In danger, mind you, a woman behind you
Can turn your blood to fire.

When they reached the right spot. I left 'em a
shot,

But it wasn't a steady aim—
'Twasn't really mine—and they tipped me a
whine,

And came on all the same.
Their leader sped a little ahead,
Like a gray knife from its sheath;
With a resolute eye, and a hungry cry,
And an excellent set of teeth.

A moment I gazed—my axe I raised—
It hissed above my head—
Crunching low and dull, it split his skull,
And the villain fell back dead!

It checked them there, and a minute to spare
We had, and a second besides:

With rites unsaid they buried their dead.
In the graves of their own lank hides.

They made for him a funeral grim—

Himself the unbaked meat;
And when they were through with their bar-
becue,

They started for more to eat!

With voices aflame, once more they came;

But faster still we sped,

And we and our traps dashed home perhaps

A half a minute ahead.

My wife I bore through the open door,

Then turned to the hearth clean swept,

Where a log-fire glowed in its brick abode—
By my mother faithfully kept ;
From its depths raising two faggots blazing,
I leaped like lightning back ;
I dashed the brands, with my blistering hands,
In the teeth of the howling pack.
“Come on!” I said, “with your fierce lips red,
Flecked white with poison foam !
Waltz to me now, and just notice how
A man fights for his home !”
They shrunk with fright from the feel and sight
O’ this sudden volley of flame ;
With a yell of dread, they sneaked and fled,
As fast as ever they came.

As I turned around, my wife I found
Not the eighth of an inch away :
She looked so true and tender, I knew
That her heart had come—to stay.
She nestled more nigh, with love-lit eye,
And passionate-quivering lip ;
And I saw that the lout that I cut out
Had probably lost his grip.
Doubt moved away, for a permanent stay,
And never was heard of more !
My soul must own that it had not known
The soul of my wife before.

As I stanch'd the steam on my foaming team,
These thoughts hitched to my mind:
Below or above some woman's love,
How little in life we find!
A man'll go far to plant a star
Where fame's wide sky is thrown,
But a longer way, for some woman to say,
"I love you for my own."
And oft as I've worked, this thought has lurked
'Round me, with substantial aid:
Of the best and worst men have done since first
This twofold world was made:
Of the farms they've cleared—of the buildin's
reared—
The city splendours wrought—
Of the battle field, where, loth to yield,
The right 'gainst the right has fought;
Of the measured strains of the lightning-trains,
The clack of the quick-spoke wire—
Of the factory's clash and the forge's flash,
An' the furnace's plumes of fire;
Be't great or small—nine-tenths of all
Of every trade and art,
Be't right or wrong—is merely a song
To win some woman's heart.

V

With haste well meant, the President
Laboriously arose,
And said, "'Tis near the time, I fear,
This meetin' ought to close.
But ere we grieve this spot to leave,
To help the meetin' 'long,
My youngest one, T. Jefferson,
Will *contribute* a song."
Like sheep that fly, when lingers nigh
Some foe their leader fears ;
Like boys at play, when far away
Parental wrath appears ;
Like any thing that fright can bring
Into the average throng,
The crowd withdrew from casual view,
To dodge the threatened song.
With better pluck than vocal luck,
And face of hardy cheer,
Young Thomas J. closed out the day
With

SLEEP, OLD PIONEER !

When the Spring-time touch is lightest,
When the Summer-eyes are brightest,

Or the Autumn sings most drear ;
When the Winter's hair is whitest,
Sleep, old pioneer !
Safe beneath the sheltering soil,
Late enough you crept ;
You were weary of the toil
Long before you slept.
Well you paid for every blessing,
Bought with grief each day of cheer :
Nature's arms around you pressing,
Nature's lips your brow caressing,
Sleep, old pioneer !

When the hill of toil was steepest,
When the forest-frown was deepest,
Poor, but young, you hastened here ;
Came where solid hope was cheapest—
Came—a pioneer.
Made the western jungles view
Civilisation's charms ;
Grasped a home for yours and you,
From the lean tree-arms.
Toil had never cause to doubt you—
Progress' path you helped to clear ;
But To-day forgets about you,
And the world rides on without you—
Sleep, old pioneer !

Careless crowds go daily past you,
Where *their* future fate has cast you,
Leaving not a sigh or tear ;
And your wonder-works outlast you—
Brave old pioneer !
Little care the selfish throng
Where your heart is hid,
Though they thrive upon the strong,
Resolute work it did.
But *our* memory-eyes have found you,
And we hold you grandly dear :
With no work-day woes to wound you—
With the peace of GOD around you—
Sleep, old pioneer !





THE FESTIVAL OF PRAISE;

OR,

THANKSGIVING-DAY.

TIS in the thrifeful Autumn days,
When earth is overdone,
And forest trees have caught the blaze
Thrown at them by the sun,
When up the gray smoke puffs and curls
From cottage chimney-lips,
And oft the driving storm unfurls
The black sails of his ships,
Or Indian Summer, dimly fair,
May walk the valleys through,
And paint the glass walls of the air
In tints of dreamy blue,
When Summer is mislaid and lost
Among the leaflets dead,

And Winter, in white words of frost,
Has telegraphed ahead,
When far afield the farmer blows
His fingers numbed with cold,
And robs from stately corn-hill rows,
Their pocket-books of gold,
When, with a weird and horn-like note,
The cloud-geese southward fly,
In branches leafed with wings, that float
Along the liquid sky,
When to their meals the gobblers strut,
In gastronomic mood,
And little dream that they are but
A food-devouring food,
When chains adorn the chimney-vests,
Of apples hung to dry,
And in his barrel-coffin rests
The porker, doomed to die,
Or, still the recent cruel sport
Of knife-engendered pangs,
His blushing corpse, with lessened port,
Upon the gallows hangs ;
'Tis then good prosperous folks display
A reverential cheer,
And thank their Maker one whole day
For all the rest the year.

The President proclaims that thus
His duty does direct;
The Governor has written us
Unto the same effect;
Now let the housewife's nets be cast,
And all the poultry kind
Begin to realise, at last,
For what they were designed;
Now rob your fowl-yards of their game,
Till tables groan, anon,
That they who eat may do the same
A little farther on;
Now let your clans of cousins meet,
And talk their blessings o'er,
And thank The Lord for what they eat,
By eating all the more;
Now let your industry's reward
Achieve a fair display,
And hearts and stomachs thank The Lord,
Alternately all day!

The patriarch-farmer, worn and tanned,
Has all his heart alive
To sight his married children, and
Assist them to arrive.
The open gate he rushes through,
With step surprising fast,

And hails the first that drives in view,
 "Ho! ho! you've come at last!"
He helps his daughter-in-law alight,
 With elephantine grace,
And kisses hard each toddling wight,
 All o'er its tender face;
And soon as "Mother" comes and throws
 The woman-greeting scream,
Together with his son he goes,
 To help him stall his team.
So constantly new-comers gain
 Old greeting from the sire,
And soon they form a sparkling chain,
 Around a blazing fire.
And Reminiscence deftly trips
 Them and "old times" between,
And tempts their conversation-lips
 With memories sweet and keen.
Old happenings are handled o'er,
 In stories somewhat true;
The family all is raised once more,
 Here in an hour or two.
There is no speech too dull to quote—
 The last tale is the best;
Biography and anecdote
 Are each an honoured guest.
The family-liar may be here;
 And is not greatly grieved,

To know his tales, unduly queer,
Are kindly disbelieved;
A-many words are gaily spoke,
Illiterately bright;
And every crippled, veteran joke,
Is stirred up to the sight;
And tales are told of childhoods tipped
With follies wisely hid,
And how the good boy oft was whipped
For what the bad one did;
Of many a brain and muscle bout,
By plastic memory fed,
In which the one who tells comes out
Invariably ahead
(For people's lives, you know full well,
Two sets of things recall:
The one of which they often tell,
The other not at all);
The children romping rush and lurk,
And demonstrate their lungs;
The women ply their knitting-work
With unimpeded tongues.
Live fast, you selfish, thankful throng,
For life to-day is fair,
And when the dinner comes along,
Take in a goodly share!
The future keeps just out of view,
And sorrow waits ahead;

There may be days when some of you
Will beg a bit of bread.
The blessings of this day do not
Secure a future one ;
This is to thank The Lord for what
He has already done.
And every laugh, however gay,
By grief shall yet be quelled ;
O'er each heart that is here to-day
A funeral must be held.
Laugh on again, with careless voice,
As soon as grace is said !
God loves to see His folks rejoice,
No matter what's ahead.
You're sure of this Thanksgiving-day,
Whose blessings on you fall ;
A million thanks you should display
For having lived at all.
Grief should be checked, with crafty plan,
But ne'er by dreading nursed ;
Care for the future all you can,
Then let it do its worst !

The remnants of the poultry tribes
Lugubriously confer ;
Each selfish-sad the loss describes
That worries him or her,

They who survive man's greedy choice—
The thinnest of the clans—
With half-raised foot and trembling voice,
Discuss their future plans.
The turkey-orphan now and then
Around her wildly looks ;
Her sire is in yon tyrant's den ;
She smells him as he cooks.
The mother of the crowing wights
Whose necks were lately wrung,
Leaves her spasmodic appetites.
And plies her mournful tongue
Or scratches absently about,
Her luckless prey to view,
Forgetting, as she picks them out,
That worms have mothers, too.
Her helpmeet, whose defiant crow
Struck morning's earliest chimes,
Has left her side not long ago,
And gone to warmer climes ;
Her dearest friend of heart and kith,
Her gossip and her aid,
The one that she changed cackles with
Whenever either laid,
Has very suddenly moved on—
With close-tied yellow legs—
To where, in days for ever gone,
She shipped so many eggs.

The hateful Now each moment mocks
The over-happy Then ;
Through sorrow's vale she sadly stalks,
A crushed and broken hen.
Cheer up, old girl, and do not mind
Fate's death-venomed gibes !
God's bird-regards are not confined
Unto the sparrow tribes.
By Him your shrill, queer mercy-prayer
Was never once unheard ;
He built you with as curious care
As any other bird.
Fling off the grief that round you crept,
Your cherished loves to lose ;
Contact with friends is nought except
A list of interviews ;
And each and all must have an end—
Stars rise, when others set—
If you live right, old speckled friend,
You have a future yet.
Brush by the care that blocks your way !
Strike a progressive mood !
Fly round, and make a nest, and lay,
And hatch another brood !

The pauper will, as like as not,
This festive day abhor,

And try to find what he has got
To thank his Maker for.
With grim suspense of gratitude
He views his last disease,
His ragged bed and broken food,
And says, "It isn't these!"
He brushes, with his mournful eye,
An ancient coat or hat,
And, standing back, with rueful sigh,
Reflects, "It isn't that!"
He thinks of various friends he had,
Who do not stand him true;
And, with a frown indignant sad,
Remarks, "It isn't you!"
And still, he knows his meal to-day
May show unusual cheer,
For Charity, when people pray,
Creeps softly up to hear;
And when their eye she slyly brings
To their abundant shelves,
They send the paupers various things
They do not want themselves.
But food bestowed is apt to be
Unshapely to the eye,
And something of a parody
On food that people buy.
Though may be given with good grace,
And motive quite sincere,

The poor of the provision race
Comes often also here :
The fowl, unclogged with fleshly pelf ;
The bread-loaf underdone ;
The hash, a dinner of itself—
Ten courses merged in one ;
The steak, once stoutly clinging nigh
Some over-aged bull ;
The meek and lowly veteran pie,
Of reminiscence full.
But emptiness must ever yet
Deem any filling rare ;
And stomachs love to work which get
Much leisure time to spare.
With hearts that thanks can well afford,
They gather, hungry clan,
Around the mildly-festal board,
And do the best they can.
Here two old men, of meek intent,
The past are dwelling on :
How they might have done different,
If they had different done ;
They look back, and discern the cause
Of each misfortune past,
And whose rascality it was
That ruined them at last ;
Ah me ! they might be wealthy men,
With honours on their brow,

If they had calculated then
As well as they do now!
The idiot in a corner lurks,
And eats in bland disgrace;
Perhaps because his good mind works
In an unhandy place.
You idiot boy, I like you much!
Relationship I find;
Perhaps, indeed, we all are such
To the celestial mind.
Perchance the charter angels haul
Us under laughter's ban,
Because we've fallen, since The Fall,
A good deal lower than
Themselves, whose sails have had a chance
At Heaven's progressive breeze,
While we 'gainst headwinds must advance,
And toss on passion-seas.
You idiot boy, be vaguely glad;
Your puzzled griefs discharge!
You have some rich relations, lad;
Your family is large.
I rather think, that through some trade
Not understood below,
Arrangements some time will be made
To give your mind a show.
The old wife feebly gnaws a bone—
Her wits are half awl; ;

To-day she is a withered crone :
She was a handsome girl.
Here is a drudge who's never shirked
Her duty, it appears ;
And for herself has only worked
In these her feebler years.
Here is—but let us turn away
From life's pain-printed leaf !
I have known comely hair turn gray
With other people's grief.
Good-bye, dear ones ! for you are dear
To souls that yearn above ;
If graves could open, you would hear
Some genuine words of love.
The smiles that once your brows caressed
Are still upon you thrown ;
Your lips are yet by love-lips pressed ;
'Tis but the types are gone.
Good-bye, dear ones ! for you are dear
To One most high of place ;
And He, with research long and clear,
Has studied up your case !
He knows your mind and body pains,
And when to soothe them out ;
He knows what yet for you remains ;
He knows what He's about.
Your humble path is not a gleam
At this praise-spangled date ;

Your thank-material none can deem
Bewilderingly great ;
But some day, when the time is fit—
On some joy-lighted morn—
You'll thank Him for the whole of it,
As sure as you are born !

The God above ! what can we say
Or do, with eyes so dim,
To make this Thursday-Sabbath day
Thanksgiving-day to Him ?
What love, though grace and beauty clad,
Can thrills to Him impart,
Who all the love has always had
Of every brain-fed heart ?
What can we sing to one whose verse
Eternal song unbars ?
What give to Him whose cloud-fringed purse
Is crammed with gleaming stars ?
A doubly pious way consists,
When we our thanks would bring,
In recollecting He exists
In every living thing ;
That when or beast or man we touch
With pity-helping care,
'Tis known in heaven just as much
As if we did it there ;

That when our voice in kind behal'
Of any grief is heard,
Heaven's wondrous gold-foiled phonograph
Is taking every word ;
That when a heart the earth-heart serves,
Of diamond or clod,
It thrills the universe's nerves,
And glads the soul of God.





THE FESTIVAL OF GOOD CHEER;

OR,

CHRISTMAS MONOLOGUES.

[FARMER.]

BLOW—blow—bushels o' snow—
As if you had lost your senses!
Rake with your might long winrows
white,
Along o' my walls an' fences!
Hover and crowd, ye black-faced cloud!
Your looks with comfort mingled;
The more o' ye falls on these strong walls,
The better my house is shingled.
Swarm, swarm, pale bees o' the storm!
You bid the world look whiter;
Your very ire but pokes my fire,
And makes the blaze burn brighter!

I ha' worked away more 'n one hot day,
With the harvest-forgè a-glowing,
To kindle the cheer of Summer here,
When cold winds should be blowing.
I ha' braced my form 'gainst many a storm,
When the gale blew helter-skelter—
O'er side-hills steep, through snow-drifts deep,
I ha' climbed, to make this shelter.
My debts are raised, The Lord be praised !
They left my old heart lighter ;
That mortgage I fed to the fire-mouths red—
And it made the flame burn brighter !

There's a smile that speaks, in the plump red
cheeks
Of the apples in these dishes ;
They go down square, with a business air
Of consultin' my stomach's wishes.
I am feelin' the charms of comfort's arms,
Which never opened wider,
With the sober frown of my doughnuts
brown,
And the laugh of my sweet-kept cider.
(Of course I know that this all must go,
In a whirl of death or sorrow ;
But there's nothing lost in the work it cost,
If I knew I should die to-morrow !)

My mind will play, this Christmas-day,
Round the sad-faced little stranger
That smiled on them at Bethlehem;
And I wish it had been my manger!
I'd ha' told 'em square to get out o' there,
For I hadn't o'er much o' shed-room,
And move that lad and what else they had,
Straight into my parlour bedroom.
'Twas a story too true, and stranger, too,
Than fairy tale or fable;
An awkward thing for that preacher king
To be tossed about in a stable!

'Twould ha' been a joy to ha' given that boy
A quiet heart ovation,
Before He was known as heir to a throne,
Or had struck His reputation.
But I think I've read some words He said,
In one of His printed sermons,
"Of the least of these," in which one sees
The poor, the weak, the infirm 'uns;
So I b'lieve I know ten turkeys or so—
Each one a fat old sinner—
Who'll wend their way to the poor-house t'day,
And probably stay to dinner.

Growl—growl—ye storm-dogs, howl
As if ye was tryin' to tree me!

For all o' your tricks, my grown-up chicks
Are comin' to-day to see me!
My best I've done for every one—
My heart gets their caressing;
It seems to me like a Christmas tree,
Hung round with every blessing.
(Of course I know that this all must go;
But grief wasn't made to borrow,
And I'd get my pay for the fact to-day,
If I knew I should die to-morrow!)

[FARMER'S WIFE.]

Let's see—there'll be ten—eleven—twelve—on
this side,
The old table's growing too small;
Our larder, as well as our hearts must provide,
And our hearts will make room for them all.

There'll be Jim with his jokes (and I hope
they'll be new,
Not those he has told twice before);
There'll be Sam with his stories, more startling
than true,
Which always remind him of more;

There'll be Kate, with her fat little pig of a
lad,
Whose stomach unceasingly begs;

And her other one, who, though not cut out for
bad,
Is a hurricane mounted on legs;

There'll be John, with his tiny brown tribe of
brunettes,
And Lue, with her one little blonde;
And Tom, with two armfuls of wife and their
pets,
A trifle too startlingly fond!

For 'tis dangerous business—this loving too
well—
It somehow brings Heaven over-near;
When our hearts their sweet stories too noisily
tell,
The angels are certain to hear;

The angels are certain to hear what we say,
In their search for the brightest and best;
And they're likely to carry our prizes away,
To make Heaven more happy and blest.

Though our table be short, yet our hearts extend
wide—
This food's with no stinginess chilled;

Let's see : there'll be ten—eleven—twelve—on
this side—

And—the chair that will never be filled.

Oh my poor darling boy, lying silent to-day,
With the storm spading snow on your breast!
The angels, they found you, and made you their
prey,

In their search for the brightest and best !

My boy-love ! I did not believe you would go !
How I begged and implored you to wake,
As you lay here so white, on that dark day of
woe,

That they brought you home, drowned, from
the lake !

And whoever may come, and whatever betide,
You still have your room and your chair ;
Is it true that I feel you sometimes at my side,
And your lips on my forehead and hair ?

The house will be running clear over with glee,
We all shall be merry to-day ;
But Christmas is never quite Christmas to me,
With one of my loved ones away.



THE FESTIVAL OF ANECDOTE

OR,

AN EVENING IN THE COUNTRY STORE.

I.



AN evening in the quaint old country store!

While Winter's feet were kicking at the door,

And Winter's white-nailed fingers striving hard
To raise the windows he himself had barred ;
Save when he chased upon their weary rounds,
Through tracks of air, his yelling tempest-
hounds.

Bark louder, storm-dogs ! to our dreamy sight,
Your voices make the fire-cheer twice as bright,
Promoting high beyond a moment's doubt,
The value of the dry-goods shelved about.

There's little you'll be wanting, cheap or
dear,
That has not something somewhat like it, here ;
Whatever honest people drink or eat,
Or pack their bodies in, from head to feet,
Want what you may, you'll get it—search no
more—

Or imitation of it—in this store.
The body's needs not only here you find,
But food, too, for the sympathies and mind ;
For in one corner, fed by many lands,
The small post-office dignifiedly stands,
With square, red-numbered boxes in its arms,
Well stocked with white and brown-enveloped
charms.

Here the lithe girl, irresolutely gay,
Asks if there's "any thing for us to-day ;"
Here the farm lad, who wider fields would
seek,

Comes for the country paper once a week.
Through this delivery port-hole there is hurled
Printed bombardment from the outside world ;
The great, far world, whose heart-throbs, up
and down,
Strike pulses, e'en within this quiet town.

The quaint, well-populated country store !
A hospitable, mirth-productive shore,

Where masculine barks take refuge from distress,

In the port of an evening's cheerfulness.

The rusty stove, with wood-fed heat endowed,

Shoots hot invisible arrows at the crowd,

To which the chewing population nigh

Send back a prompt and vigorous reply,

And find time for side-battles of retort,

In various moralised stories, long and short :

From one that's smart and good enough to
print,

To one that has a hundred hell-seeds in't.

Here laws are put on trial by debate,

Here solved conundrums, both of Church and
State;

Here is contested, with more voice than brain,

Full many a hot political campaign ;

The half-surmised shortcoming of the Church

Are opened to some sinner's anxious search ;

And criticisms the minister gets here,

From men who have not heard him once a
year.

Or maybe some inside the sacred fold

No longer their experiences can hold

Within the flock, who've harked to them so oft,

Invariably referring them aloft,

That, tired of this monotony, they yearn

A little godless sympathy to earn.

And maybe it is one of these, who now,
With elevated feet and earnest brow,
And face where sentiment flits to and fro,
Tells sorrows he has felt not long ago :

[OUR TRAVELLED PARSON.]

For twenty years and over, our good parson
had been toiling,
To chip the bad meat from our hearts, and keep
the good from spoiling ;
But suddenly he wilted down, and went to look-
ing sickly,
And the doctor said that something must be put
up for him quickly.
So we kind o' clubbed together, each according
to his notion,
And bought a circular ticket, in the lands across
the ocean ;
Wrapped some pocket-money in it—what we
thought would easy do him—
And appointed me committee-man, to go and
take it to him.
I found him in his study, looking rather worse
than ever ;
And told him 'twas decided that his flock and
he should sever.

Then his eyes grew big with wonder, and it
seemed almost to blind 'em,
And some tears looked out o' window, with
some others close behind 'em!
But I handed him the ticket, with a little bow
of deference,
And he studied quite a little ere he got the
proper reference;
And then the tears that waited—great unman-
ageable creatures—
Let themselves quite out o' window, and came
climbing down his features.

I wish you could ha' seen him, when he came
back, fresh and glowing,
His clothes all worn and seedy, and his face all
fat and knowing;
I wish you could ha' heard him, when he prayed
for us who sent him,
Paying back with compound int'rst every dollar
that we'd lent him!
'Twas a feast to true believers—'twas a blight
on contradiction—
To hear one just from Calvary talk about the
crucifixion;
'Twas a damper on those fellows who pretended
they could doubt it,
To have a man who'd been there stand and tell
'em all about it!

Why every foot of Scripture, whose location used
to stump us,
Was now regularly laid out with the different
points o' compass;
When he undertook a subject, in what nat'ral
lines he'd draw it!
He would paint it out so honest that it seemed
as if you saw it.
And the way he went for Europe! oh, the way
he scampered through it!
Not a mountain but he clim' it—not a city but
he knew it;
There wasn't any subject to explain, in all crea-
tion,
But he could go to Europe and bring back an
illustration!
So we crowded out to hear him, quite instructed
and delighted;
'Twas a picture-show, a lecture, and a sermon—
all united;
And my wife would rub her glasses, and serenely
pet her Test'ment,
And whisper, "That 'ere ticket was a splendid
good investment."

Now, after six months' travel, we was most of us
all ready

To settle down a little, so 's to live more staid
and steady ;
To develop home resources, with no foreign cares
to fret us,
Using house-made faith more frequent ; but our
parson wouldn't let us !
To view the same old scenery, time and time
again he'd call us—
Over rivers, plains, and mountains he would any
minute haul us ;
He slighted our soul-sorrows, and our spirits'
aches and ailings,
To get the cargo ready for his regular Sunday
sailings !
Why, he'd take us off a-touring, in all spiritual
weather,
Till we at last got home-sick and sea-sick all
together !
And "I wish to all that's peaceful," said one
free-expressed brother,
"That The Lord had made one cont'nent, an'
then never made another !"

Sometimes, indeed, he'd take us into old,
familiar places,
And pull along quite nat'ral, in the good old
Gospel traces :

But soon my wife would shudder, just as if a
chill had got her,
Whispering, "Oh, my goodness gracious! he's
a-takin' to the water!"
And it wasn't the same old comfort, when he
called around to see us;
On some branch of foreign travel he was sure at
last to tree us;
All unconscious of his error, he would sweetly
patronise us,
And with oft-repeated stories still endeavour to
surprise us.

And the sinners got to laughing; and that
finally galled and stung us,
'To ask him, Wouldn't he kindly once more settle
down among us?
Didn't he think that more home produce would
improve our soul's digestions?
They appointed me committee-man to go and
ask the questions.
I found him in his garden, trim an' buoyant as
a feather;
He shook my hand, exclaiming, "This is quite
Italian weather!
How it 'minds me of the evenings when, your
distant hearts caressing,

Upon my dear good brothers, I invoked God's
choicest blessing!"

I went and told the brothers, "No; I cannot
bear to grieve him;
He's so happy in his exile, it's the proper place
to leave him.
I took that journey to him, and right bitterly I
rue it;
But I cannot take it from him; if *you* want to,
go and do it."

Now a new restraint entirely seemed next
Sunday to enfold him,
And he looked so hurt and humbled, that I
knew that they had told him.
Subdued-like was his manner, and some tones
were hardly vocal;
But every word and sentence was pre-eminently
local!
Still, the sermon sounded awkward, and we
awkward felt who heard it;
'Twas a grief to see him steer it—'twas a pain
to hear him word it.
"When I was abroad"—was maybe half a
dozen times repeated,
But that sentence seemed to choke him, and was
always uncompleted.

As weeks went on, his old smile would
occasionally brighten,
But the voice was growing feeble, and the face
began to whiten ;
He would look off to the eastward, with a wistful,
weary sighing,
And 'twas whispered that our pastor in a foreign
land was dying.

The coffin lay 'mid garlands, smiling sad as if
they knew us ;
The patient face within it preached a final
sermon to us ;
Our parson *had* gone touring—on a trip he'd
long been earning—
In that wonder-land, whence tickets are not
issued for returning !
O tender, good heart-shepherd ! your sweet
smiling lips, half-parted,
Told of scenery that burst on you, just the
minute that you started !
Could you preach once more among us, you
might wander, without fearing ;
You could give us tales of glory that we'd never
tire of hearing !

II.

The grave sends fascination with its fear :
We shrink and dread to see it yawning near,
But when on others falls the endless spell,
We like to talk about it mighty well ;
And handle o'er, with fear-abated breath,
The gruesome, grim particulars of death.
Never can horror so a tale unfold,
But curious mortals love to hear it told,
As if they were not of the race they view,
And subject to the same conditions, too.
When the last speaker had a period found,
And placed his parson safely under-ground,
Mortality of every phase and age
Became at once the conversational rage ;
And he was sachem of our gossip-tribe,
Who had the dolefullest death-pangs to describe.
Most well I recollect, of course (though least),
My own addition to the horror-feast.
I had seen two men hanged, for some red crime
Committed in drink's murder-harvest time ;
By sheriff-usher through the jail-yard shown,
They walked unto this funeral of their own :
Their rites were said by one in priesthood's
guise ;
Two empty coffins lay before their eyes.

One scarcely yet had left youth's pleasure-vale;
(His mother waited for him near the jail.)

The other had his tutor been in crime,
And sold the devil half a manhood's time.

They did not flinch, when first frowned on their
sight

Their gallows death-bed, standing bolt-up-
right;

But when the youngster turned and took his
place,

A cold wind brushed the noose against his face;
Then first that feigned indifference seemed to
fail;

Death, when it came, made not the boy more
pale.

(I saw him in the coffin, after this;

It was a face that woman-eyes would kiss.)

Close to his side, notice the older pass:

Teacher and pupil, standing in one class.

This rogue had learned a knack to calmly die,
And glanced the younger wretch a cold good-
bye;

But he, unmagnetised from past control,
With silent-moving lips prayed for his soul.

(The black cap hid the last part of his prayer,
And shut it in, but could not keep it there.)

He had prayed for his body, had he known;
For while the older died without a groan,

When with a "thud!" the two went bounding
high,
He struggled, gasped, and wailed, but could not
die,
Till the slow-gripping rope had choked him
quite.
And strong men fainted at the piteous sight,
(I thought I told this pretty middling well;
But was eclipsed by an old sea-dog swell,
Anchored by age in our calm rustic bay,
Who'd seen twelve Turks beheaded in one day.)
Then followed accidents, by field and flood,
Such as had fettered breath or loosened blood;
Fires, earthquakes, shipwrecks, and such cheer-
ful themes,
Furnished material for our future dreams.
And when at last there came a little pause
(The silent horror-method of applause),
A lad, with face appropriately long,
Said, "Jacob, won't you sing that little song
That you sat up all t'other night to make,
About the children drowned in the lake?"
Jacob, whose efforts none had need to urge
Promptly materialised the following dirge:

[A DIRGE OF THE LAKE.]

On the lake—on the lake—
The sun the day is tinging ;
The sky's rich hue shows brighter blue
Above its forest fringing.
The breezes high blow far and nigh
White cloudlets, like a feather ;
The breezes low sweep to and fro,
And wavelets race together.

Up the lake—up the lake—
The busy oars are dipping ;
The blades of wood that cleave the flood,
With streamlets fresh are dripping.
A graceful throng of golden song
Comes floating smoothly after ,
Like silver chains, ring loud the strains
Of childhood's merry laughter.

By the lake—by the lake—
The lilies' heads are lifting,
And into night the warmth and light
Of happy homes are drifting.
The bright sun-rays upon them gaze,
In pity unavailing ;
With laughing eyes, between two skies
They for the grave are sailing.

In the lake—in the lake—
The barge is sinking steady;
A startled hush, a frantic rush—
The feast of Death is ready!
A pleading cry, a faint reply,
A frenzied, brave endeavour—
And o'er them deep the wavelets creep,
And smile as sweet as ever.

'Neath the lake—'neath the lake—
The wearied forms are lying;
They sleep away their gala-day—
Too fair a day for dying!
With hands that grasped, and nothing clasped,
With terror-frozen faces,
In slimy caves and gloomy graves,
They nestle to their places.

From the lake—from the lake—
They one by one are creeping;
Their very rest is grief-possessed,
And piteous looks their sleeping.
Upon no face is any trace
Of sickness' friendly warning,
But sad they lie 'neath even-sky,
Who were so gay at morning!

O'er the lake—o'er the lake—
A spectre bark is sailing ;
There is no cry of danger nigh,
There is no sound of wailing.
They who have died gaze from its side—
Their spirit-faces glowing ;
For through the skies the life-boat plies,
And angel hands are rowing.

III.

There was among our various-tempered crowd,
A graduate ; who, having last year ploughed
The utmost furrow of scholastic lore,
Now boarded with his father, as before.
His course was hard, but he had mastered all :
Aquatics, billiards, flirting, and base-ball ;
And now, once more to rural science turned,
Was leisurely unlearning what he'd learned.
The death-theme made him sad and serious-
eyed,
About a college comrade who had died ;
And with a sudden, strong sigh-lengthened
breath,
He gave this boyish paragraph of death :

[THE DEAD STUDENT.]

'Twas mighty slow to make it seem as if poor
Brown was dead ;

'Twas only just the day he died, he had to take
his bed ;

The ~~day~~ before, he played first-base, and ran
Marland down ;

And then to slip away so sly—'twas not at all
like Brown.

'Twas hard for my own life to leave that fellow's
life behind ;

'Tis work, sometimes, to get a man well laid
out in your mind !

It wouldn't have shook me very much, long
after all was o'er,

To hear a whoop, and see the man go rushing
past my door !

Poor Brown !—so white and newly still within
his room he lay !

I called upon him, as it were, at noon the second
day.

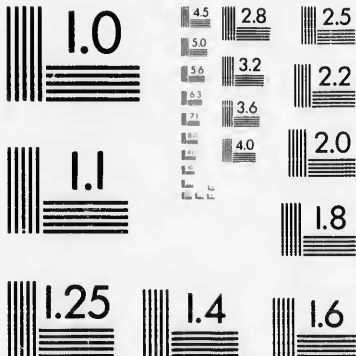
A-rushing into Brownie's room seemed awk-
ward-like, and queer ;

We hadn't spoken back and forth for some-
thing like a year.



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We never pulled together square a single night
or day:
Whate'er direction I might start, Brown went
the other way;
(Excepting in our love affairs; we picked a
dozen bones
About a girl Smith tried to get, who fin'ly
married Jones.)

He worked against me in our class, before my
very eyes;
He opened up and scooped me square out of
the Junior prize;
I never wanted any place, clean from the last to
first,
But Brown was sure to have a friend who
wanted it the worst;

In the last campus rush, we came to strictly
business blows,
And with the eye he left undimmed, I viewed his
damaged nose;
In short, I came at last to feel—I own it with
dismay—
That life would be worth living for, if Brown
were out the way.

He lay within his dingy room, as white as
drifted snow—
Things all around were wondrous neat—the
women fixed them so;
'Twas plain he had no hand in that, and naught
about it knew;
To've seen the order lying round, it would have
made him blue!

A bright bouquet of girlish flowers smiled on
the scene of death,
And through the open window came a sweet
geranium-breath;
Close-caged, a small canary bird, with glossy,
yellow throat,
Tripped drearily from perch to perch, and never
sung a note;

With hair unusually combed, sat poor McFar-
land near,
Alternately perusing Greek, and wrestling with
a tear;
A homely little girl of six, for some old kind-
ness' sake,
Sat sobbing in a corner near, as if her heart
would break;

The books looked pale and wretched-like,
almost as if they knew,
And seemed to be a-whispering their titles to
the view;
His rod and gun were in their place; and high
where all could see,
Gleamed jauntily the boating-cup he won last
year from me;

I lifted up the solemn sheet; the honest, manly
face
Had signs of study and of toil that death could
not erase;
As western skies at twilight mark where late
the sun has been,
Brown's face showed yet the mind and soul that
late had burned within.

He looked so grandly helpless there upon that
lonely bed—
Ah me! these manly foes are foes no more
when they are dead!
"Old boy," said I, "'twas half my fault; this
heart makes late amends."
I grasped the white cold hand in mine—and
Brown and I were friends.

IV.

"That was a sudden death, 'twill be allowed,"
Said a half-Yankeed Scotchman in the crowd :
"We never know what paths may help or kill ;
Death has a-many ways to work his will.
It is his daily study and his care,
To utilise earth, water, fire, and air,
Seduce them from their master man's employ,
And make the traitors murder and destroy.
Men call this 'accident.' Of one I know,
That came about not very long ago,
Where I once lived, three thousand miles away;
I read it in my paper, yesterday."
Then, with a strong voice that came not amiss,
He told the story, something like to this :

[THE DEATH-BRIDGE OF THE TAY.]

The night and the storm fell together upon the
old town of Dundee,
And, trembling, the mighty firth-river held out
its cold hand toward the sea.
Like the dull-booming bolts of a cannon, the
wind swept the streets and the shores ;
It wrenched at the roofs and the chimneys—it
crashed 'gainst the windows and doors ;

Like a mob that is drunken and frenzied, it
surged through the streets up and down,
And screamed the sharp, shrill cry of "Murder!"
o'er river and hill-top and town.
It leaned its great breast 'gainst the belfries—
it perched upon minaret and dome—
Then sprang on the shivering firth-river, and
tortured its waves into foam.
'Twas a night when the landsman seeks shelter,
and cares not to venture abroad ;
When the sailor clings close to the rigging, and
prays for the mercy of God.

Look ! the moon has come out, clad in splendour,
the turbulent scene to behold ;
She smiles at the night's devastation—she dresses
the storm-king in gold.
She kindles the air with her cold flame, as if to
her hand it were given
To light the frail earth to its ruin, with the
tenderest radiance of heaven.
Away to the north, ragged mountains climb
high through the shuddering air ;
They bend their dark brows o'er the valley, to
read what new ruin is there.
Along the shore-line creeps the city, in crouch-
ing and sinuous shape,

With firesides so soon to be darkened, and doors
to be shaded with crape!
To the south, like a spider-web waving, there
curves, for a two-mile away,
This world's latest man-devised wonder—the
far-famous bridge of the Tay.
It stretches and gleams into distance; it creeps
the broad stream o'er and o'er,
Till it rests its strong, delicate fingers in the
palm of the opposite shore.
But look! through the mists of the southward,
there flash to the eye, clear and plain.
Like a meteor that's bound to destruction—the
lights of a swift-coming train!

O cruel and bloodthirsty tempest! we sons of
humanity know,
Wherever and whene'er we find you, that you are
our faithfullest foe!
You plough with the death-pointed cyclone
wherever life's dwellings may be;
You spur your fire-steeds through our cities—
you scuttle our ships on the sea.
The storm-shaken sailor has cursed you; white
hands have implored you in vain;
And still you have filled Death's dominions, and
laughed at humanity's pains.

But ne'er in the cave where your dark deeds are
plotted and hid from the light,
Was one half so cruel and treacherous as this
you have kept for to-night!
You lurked 'round this bridge in its building;
you counted each span and each pier;
You marked the men's daily endeavours—you
looked at them all with a sneer;
You laughed at the brain-girded structure; you
deemed it an easy-fought foe,
And bided the time when its builders your easy-
plied prowess should know.
O tempest! feed full with destruction! fling
down these iron beams from on high!
But temper your triumph with mercy, and wait
till the train has gone by!

O angels! sweet guardian angels!—who once
in the body drew breath,
Till, wearied, you found the great river, and
crossed on the black bridge of death,
You who, from the shores of the sun-land, fly
back on the wings of the soul,
And round your frail earth-loves yet hover, and
strive their weak steps to control,
Look out through the mists to the southward!—
the hearts on yon swift-coming train,

So light and so happy this moment, are rushing
to terror and pain !
Oh whisper a word to the driver, that till morn-
ing the bridge be not braved ;
At the cost of a night lost in waiting, the years
of these lives may be saved !
On yon cheer-freighted train there are hundreds,
who soon beyond help will be hurled ;
Oh whisper to them the dread secret, before it is
known to the world !
On this home-lighted shore are full many who
wait for their friends, blithe and gay ;
They will wait through full many a night-time—
through many a sorrow-strewn day.
The trim evening lamps from the windows their
comfort-charged beauty will shed ;
The fire will burn bright on the hearthstone—
its rays will be cheerful and red ;
The sun will come out of the cold sea—the
morning will rise clear and bright,
But death will eclipse all its radiance, and
darken your world into night !

Mid the lights that so gaily are gleaming yon
city of Dundee within,
Is one that is waiting a wanderer, who long o'er
the ocean has been.

His age-burdened parents are watching from
the window that looks on the firth,
For the train that will come with their darling
—their truest-loved treasure on earth.
“He’ll be comin’ the nicht,” says the father,
“for sure the hand-writin’s his ain ;
The letter says, ‘Ha’ the lamp lichted—I’ll
come on the seven o’clock train.
For years in the mines I’ve been toiling, in this
wonderfu’ West, o’er the sea ;
My work has brought back kingly wages—
there’s plenty for you an’ for me.
Your last days shall e’en be your best days ;
the high-stepping youngster you knew,
Who cost so much care in his raising, now’ll
care for himself and for you.
Gang not to the station to meet me ; ye never
need run for me more ;
But when ye shall hear the gate clickit, ye
maun rise up an’ open the door.
We will hae the first glow of our greeting when
nae one o’ strangers be nigh,
We will smile out the joy o’ our meeting on the
spot where we wept our good-bye.
Ye maun put me a plate on the table, an’ set in
the auld place a chair ;
An’ if but the good Lord be willing, doubt never
a bit I’ll be there.

So sit ye an' wait for my coming (ye will na'
watch for me in vain),
An' see me glide over the river, along o' the
roar o' the train.
Ye may sit at the southernmost window, for I
will come hame from that way ;
I will fly where I swam, when a youngster,
across the broad Firth o' the Tay.'"

So they sit at the southernmost window, the
parents, with hand clasped in hand,
And gaze o'er the tempest-vexed waters, across
to the storm-shaken land.
They see the bold acrobat-monster creep out
on the treacherous line ;
Its cinder-breath glitters like star-dust—its
lamp-eyes they glimmer and shine.
It braces itself 'gainst the tempest—it fights for
each inch with the foe—
With torrents of air all around it—with torrents
of water below.
But look ! look ! the monster is stumbling, while
trembles the fragile bridge-wall—
They struggle like athletes entwining—then
both like a thunderbolt fall !
Down, down through the dark the train plunges,
with speed unaccustomed and dire ;

It glows with its last dying beauty—it gleams
like a hail-storm of fire !
No wonder the mother faints death-like, and
clings like a clod to the floor ;
No wonder the man flies in frenzy, and dashes
his way though the door !
He fights his way out through the tempest ; he
is beaten and baffled and tossed ;
He cries, "*The train's gang off the Tay Brig !
lend help here to look for the lost !*"
Oh, little to him do they listen, the crowds to
the river that flee ;
The news, like the shock of an earthquake, has
thrilled through the town of Dundee.
Like travellers belated, they're rushing to where
the bare station-walls frown ;
Suspense twists the blade of their anguish—
like maniacs they run up and down.
Out, out, creep two brave, sturdy fellows, o'er
danger-strewn buttress and piers ;
They can climb 'gainst that blast, for they carry
the blood of old Scotch mountaineers.
But they leave it along as they clamber ; they
mark all their hand-path with red ;
Till they come where the torrent leaps bridge-
less—a grave dancing over its dead.
A moment they gaze down in horror ; then
creep from the death-laden tide,

With the news, "There's nae help for our loved
ones, save God's mercy for them who have
died!"

How sweetly the sunlight can sparkle o'er graves
where our best hopes have lain!

How brightly its gold beams can glisten on
faces that whiten with pain!

Oh, never more gay were the wavelets, and
careless in innocent glee,

And never more sweet did the sunrise shine
over the town of Dundee.

But though the town welcomed the morning,
and the firth threw its gold lances back,

On the hearts of the grief-stricken people death's
cloud rested heavy and black.

And the couple who waited last evening their
man-statured son to accost,

Now laid their heads down on the table, and
mourned for the boy that was lost.

"'Twas sae sad," moaned the crushed, aged
mother, each word dripping o'er with a tear,

"Sae far he should come for to find us, and
then he should perish sae near!

O Robin, my bairn! ye did wander far from us
for mony a day,

And when ye ha' come back sae near us, why
could na' ye come a' the way?"

"I *hae* come a' the way," said a strong voice,
and a bearded and sun-beaten face
Smiled on them the first joyous pressure of one
long and filial embrace:
"I cam' on last nicht far as Newport; but
Maggie, my bride that's to be,
She ran through the storm to the station, to
get the first greeting o' me.
I leaped from the carriage to kiss her; she held
me sae fast and sae ticht,
The train it ran off and did leave me; I could
na' get over the nicht.
I tried for to walk the brig over—my head it
was a' in a whirl—
I could na'—ye know the sad reason—I had to
go back to my girl!
I hope ye'll tak' kindly to Maggie; she's pro-
mised to soon be my wife;
She's a darling wee bit of a lassie, and her
fondness it saved me my life."

The night and the storm fell together upon the
sad town of Dundee,
The half-smothered song of the tempest swept
out like a sob to the sea;
The voice of the treacherous storm-king, as
mourning for them he had slain;

O cruel and bloodthirsty tempest ! your false
tears are shed all in vain !
Beneath the dread roof of this ruin your sad
victims nestle and creep ;
They hear not the voices that call them ; if they
come, they will come in their sleep.
No word can they tell of their terror, no step of
the dark route retrace,
Unless their sad story be written upon the
white page of the face.
Perchance *that* may speak of their anguish when
first came the crash of despair ;
The long-drawn suspense of the instant they
plunged through the shuddering air ;
The life-panoramas that flitted swift past them,
with duties undone ;
The brave fight for life in a battle that strong
death already had won ;
The half-stifled shouting of anguish the aid of
high Heaven to implore ;
The last patient pang of submission, when effort
was ended and o'er.
But, tempest, a bright star in heaven a message
of comfort sends back,
And draws our dim glances to skyward, away
from thy laurels of black :
Thank God that whatever the darkness that
covers His creature's dim sight,

He always vouchsafes *some* deliverance, throws
some one a sweet ray of light;
Thank God that the strength of His goodness
from dark depths ascended on high,
And carried the souls of the suffering away to
the realms of the sky;
Thank God that His well-tempered mercy came
down with the clouds from above,
And saved one from out the destruction, and him
by the angel of love.

V.

What mind-smith who can trace the subtle links
That join a man's ideas, when he thinks?
Given the thought by which he's pleased or
vexed,
Who can predict what one will strike him next?
Given a memory, who can tell us all
The other memories that its voice may call?
Given a fancy, who betimes can read
What other unlike fancies it may breed?
Given a fact, who surely can foreknow
What distant relatives may come and go?
Beneath our thoughts, thoughts hidden thickly
teem;
Each mind is but a stream above a stream.

Given a story, what dissimilar one
May't not remind you of before 'tis done !
Scarce had the Scotchman's tale been fairly
told,

When a quaint farmer, wrinkled but not old,
Hastened to execute a cross-legged change,
And with no consciousness of seeming strange,
Leaped from the thought-depths that had him
immersed,

His conversational puff-ball sharply burst,
Contributing, with countenance severe,
These notes, from his pecuniary career,
As if the average listener it might strike,
That the two tales were sing'larly alike :

[THE LIGHTNING-ROD DISPENSER.]

Which this railroad smash reminds me, in an
underhanded way,
Of a lightning-rod dispenser that came down on
me one day ;
Oiled to order in his motions—sanctimonious in
his mien—
Hands as white as any baby's, an' a face unnat'ral
clean ;
Not a wrinkle had his raiment, teeth and linen
glittered white,

And his new-constructed neck-tie was an inter-
estin' sight !
Which I almost wish a razor had made red that
white-skinned throat,
And that new-constructed neck-tie had composed
a hangman's knot,
Ere he brought his sleek-trimmed carcase for my
woman-folks to see,
And his buzz-saw tongue a-runnin' for to gouge
a gash in me !

Still I couldn't help but like him—as I fear I
al'ays must,
The gold o' my own doctrines in a fellow-heap
o' dust;
For I saw that my opinions, when I fired 'em
round by round,
Brought back an answerin' volley of a mighty
similar sound.
I touched him on religion, and the joys my heart
had known :
And I found that he had very similar notions of
his own !
I told him of the doubtings that made sad my
boyhood years :
Why, he'd laid awake till morning with that
same old breed of fears !

I pointed up the pathway that I hoped to
heaven to go :

He was on that very ladder, only just a round
below !

Our politics was different, and at first he galled
and winced ;

But I arg'ed him so able, he was very soon
convinced.

And 'twas gettin' tow'rd the middle of a hungry
Summer day—

There was dinner on the table, and I asked him,
would he stay ?

And he sat him down among us—everlastin'
trim and neat—

And he asked a short crisp blessin' almost good
enough to eat !

Then he fired up on the mercies of our Ever-
lastin' Friend,

Till he gi'n The Lord Almighty a good first-
class recommend ;

And for full an hour we listened to that sugar-
coated scamp—

Talkin' like a blessèd angel—eatin' like a blasted
tramp !

My wife—she liked the stranger, smiling on him,
warm and sweet ;

(It al'ays flatters women when their guests are
on the eat !)
And he hinted that some ladies never lose their
youthful charms,
And caressed her yearlin' baby, an' received it
in his arms.
My sons and daughters liked him—for he had
progressive views,
And he chewed the cud o' fancy, and gi'n down
the latest news ;
And *I* couldn't help but like him—as I fear *I*
al'ays must,
The gold of my own doctrines in a fellow-heap
o' dust.

He was chisellin' desolation through a piece of
apple-pie,
When he paused an' gazed upon us, with a tear
in his off-eye,
And said, "O happy family !—your joys they
make me sad !
They all the time remind me of the dear ones
once *I* had !
A babe as sweet as this one ; a wife *almost* as
fair ;
A little girl with ringlets—like that one over
there.

But had I not neglected the means within my way,
Then they might still be living, and loving me to-day.

“One night there came a tempest ; the thunder-peals were dire ;
The clouds that marched above us were shooting bolts of fire ;
In my own house I lying, was thinking, to my blame,
How little I had guarded against those bolts of flame,
When crash !—through roof and ceiling the deadly lightning cleft,
And killed my wife and children, and only I was left !

“Since then afar I’ve wandered, and naught for life have cared,
Save to save others’ loved ones whose lives have yet been spared ;
Since then, it is my mission, where’er by sorrow tossed,
To sell to worthy people good lightning-rods at cost.
With sure and strong protection I’ll clothe your buildings o’er ;

'Twill cost you—twenty dollars (*perhaps a trifle*
more;
Whatever else it comes to, at lowest price I'll
put;
You simply *sign a contract* to pay so much per
foot)."

I—signed it! while my family, all approvin',
stood about;
The villain dropped a tear on't—but he didn't
blot it out!
That self-same day, with waggons came some
rascals great and small;
They hopped up on my buildin's just as if they
owned 'em all;
They hewed 'em and they hacked 'em—ag'in'
my loud desires—
They trimmed 'em off with gewgaws, and they
bound 'em down with wires;
They hacked 'em and they hewed 'em, and they
hewed and hacked 'em still,
And every precious minute kep' a runnin' up the
bill.

To find my soft-spoke neighbour, did I rave
and rush an' run:
He was suppin' with a neighbour, just a few
miles further on.

"Do you think," I loudly shouted, "that I need
a mile o' wire,
For to save each separate hay-cock out o'
heaven's consumin' fire?
Did you think, to keep my buildin's out o' some
uncertain harm,
I was goin' to deed you over all the balance of
my farm?"

He silenced me with silence in a very little
while,
And then trotted out the contract with a re-
assuring smile;
And for half an hour explained it, with exas-
peratin' skill,
While his myrmurdums kep' probably a-runnin'
up my bill.
He held me to that contract with a firmness
queer to see;
'Twas the very first occasion he had disagreed
with me!
And for that 'ere thunder story, ere the rascal
finally went,
I paid two hundred dollars, if I paid a single
cent.
And if any lightnin'-rod dist wants a dinner-
dialogue

With the restaurant department of an enter-
prisin' dog,
Let him set his mouth a-runnin', just inside my
outside gate ;
And I'll bet two hundred dollars that he don't
have long to wait.

VI.

"Time to shut up," the lean storekeeper said :
"It's time that honest folks should be in bed.
And all this crowd I honest hold to be,
And penniless, so far as I can see ;
If there's a cent here, it's well out of sight ;
My cash-box has not seen it ; friends, good-
night !"





THE FESTIVAL OF CLAMOUR;

OR,

THE TOWN MEETING.

T WAS our regular annual town-meeting;
And smooth as a saint could desire,
Our work we were swiftly completing,
Till it came to electing a "Squire";

Which office retained a slight vestige
Of old country power, as it were,
And most of the honour and prestige
A township like ours could confer.

Which office (with latitude speaking),
Commencing nobody knew when,
Had long been relentlessly seeking
Two very respectable men;

For in virtuous political cases,
'Tis known as the regular plan,

That the man must not seek for the places ;
The places must seek for the man.

But past these two men, and around them,
The squireship had happened to roam,
And, strangely, had never yet found them,
Although they were always at home ;

And manfully laid fear behind them ;
And whispered to friends far and wide,
That if office was anxious to find them,
They never were going to hide !

And now, in undignified action,
Themselves and their partisans fought,
To decide, to their own satisfaction,
Which one 'twas the office had sought.

A half day we clamoured and voted,
And each to success drew him nigh,
But neither as victor was quoted :
It always resulted "a tie ;"

All voted for one or the other ;
Except two young barbarous elves,
Who, simply proceedings to bother
Kept voting, like sin, for themselves ;

(Except a few times it was noted,
Some charges of self-love to smother,
A conf'rence they had, ere they voted,
Then proceeded to "go" for each other !)

So all of our voting and prating,
To neither side victory brought,
While the office stood patiently waiting
To find out which one it had sought.

Till, tired of these semi-reverses,
A few of the worst of each clan
Loaded up their word-guns with sly curses,
And fired at the opposite man.

And morally petrified wretches,
These two men to be were allowed,
In small biographical sketches
That began to appear in the crowd.

The one, as a swindler high-handed,
Was painted unpleasantly plain ;
With pockets like bladders expanded,
And filled with unstatesman-like gain ;

They stated that all his life-labours
Were tinged with pecuniary sin ;

That things left out nights by his neighbours,
They frequently failed to take in ;

They claimed that his business transactions
Flowered out at the people's expense ;
And named, as among these subtractions,
Three dollars and twenty-nine cents.

No odds that he stoutly denied it—
It hushed not the clamour at all ;
Yet all the more fiercely they cried it,
And chalked the amount on the wall.

And a letter was found that convicted
This man to have some time been led
To have some time somehow contradicted
Some things that he some time had said,

But really, until very recent,
His name had not been a bad word ;
But naught he had done that was decent,
To the minds of his foes now occurred.

His nature was kindly intentioned,
And free from ungenerous taint ;
A fact not obtrusively mentioned,
In his enemies' bill of complaint.

He rose from a low, humble station ;
 His boy-life was sturdy and good ;
 He was hard-striving youth's inspiration ;
They kept that as still as they could.

He had sown gold successes for others ;
 He cast a kind glance upon all ;
 No true men but what were his brothers ;
They did not chalk that on the wall.

He was cultured, and broad, and discerning ;
 Strong thoughts on his countenance sat ;
 He dwelt by the fountains of learning ;
They never accused him of that.

In short, had he heard the malicious
 Black words that were throttling his cause,
 He'd have shuddered to learn what a vicious
 Unholy old villain he was ;

And, terms theological using,
 He e'en might have wished he were dead,
 Had not the same linguistic bruising
 Adorned his antagonist's head.

They said *he* was haughty in greeting ;
 Above all his neighbours he felt,
 And to make him look slender in meeting,
 Wore under his jacket a belt ;

That he always had hoped and expected
The place he now openly sought,
But knew not enough, if elected,
The office to fill as he ought ;

That he just hummed the ancient tune "Tariff,"
When other folks shouted and sang ;
That he once had the luck to be sheriff,
When a woman was sentenced to hang ;

That his mind he had long been diverting
With future political fame,
His head in a barrel inserting,
And shouting out " Squire " to his name ;

And while, like a ball, the words bounded,
And doubled themselves, o'er and o'er,
He pondered how pompous it sounded,
And went on and did it some more ;

And that this rather terse conversation,
And having been oft at it caught,
Comprised all the qualification
He had for the office he sought.

Now his life had the grim, noble beauty
The deed-painter's brush loves to tell ;
He was one who had studied his duty,
And done it exceedingly well ;

He was one of the bravest and quickest
To shield threatened Liberty's form ;
He stood where the bullets were thickest,
To cover her safe from the storm ;

Well framed for his foes' admiration—
Well-named by his friends "The Superb";
A part of the edge of the nation—
His whole life a transitive verb ;—

He was worthy and grand—who could doubt it ?
His fame was as fresh as the morn ;
But his foemen forgot all about it,
And drabbled his name with their scorn.

No odds how turned out the election,
Concerning the lesson I'd teach ;
But my conscience that night, on reflection,
Made me this political speech :

"'Tis over high time you repented,
You servile young partisan hound,
For being to-day represented
In that idiot asylum of sound !

"Henceforth, in these conflicts exciting,
Learn, whether by speech or by pen,
With *principle's* sword to be fighting,
And not to be slandering *men*."



THE FESTIVAL OF MELODY;

OR,

THE SINGING-SCHOOL.



R. ABRAHAM BATES was a tune-stricken man,

Built on an exclusively musical plan;
With a body and soul that with naught could
commune,

Unless it might somehow be set to a tune.
His features, harmoniously solemn and grim,
Resembled a doleful old long-metre hymn;
His smile, half-obtrusively gentle and calm,
Suggested the livelier notes of a psalm;
And his form had a power the appearance to
lend

Of an overgrown tuning-fork, set upon end.
They who his accomplishments fathomed,
averred

That he knew every tune that he ever had
heard;

And his wife had a secret we all helped her
keep,
That he frequently snored a rough tune in his
sleep.
When he walked through the fields, with an
inward-turned ear,
And a general impression that no one was near,
He with forefinger stretched to its fullest com-
mand,
Would beat quadruple time on the palm of his
hand
(So firmly his singing-school habits would cling),
With his "Down, left, right, up! down, left,
right, up! Sing!"

What a monarch he was, to us tune-killing
wights,
When he stood in the schoolhouse, on long
Winter nights,
With a dignity born our young souls to over-
whelm,
Proclaiming the laws of his musical realm!
The black-board behind him frowned fierce on
our sight,
Its old forehead creased with five wrinkles of
white,
On which he paraded his armies of notes,

And sent on a raid through our eyes to our
throats ;
From the scenes of which partly harmonious
turmoils
They issued, head-first, with our breath as their
spoils.
How (in his particular specialty) grand
He looked, as he tiptoed, with bâton in hand,
And up, down, and up, in appropriate time,
Compelled us that slippery ladder to climb,
As he flourished his weapon, and marched to
and fro,
With his " Do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, sol, la, si, do ! "

Nathaniel F. Jennings! how sadly you tried,
With your eyes a third closed, and your mouth
opened wide,
To sport an acceptable voice, like the rest,
And cultivate powers that you never possessed !
They were just out of music, it used to be said,
When they drafted the plan of your square,
shaggy head.
You fired at each note, as it were, in the dark,
As an amateur rifleman would at a mark ;
And short of opinion, till after the shot,
Of whether you'd happen to hit it or not.
E'en then you didn't know, till your sharp eye
was told

By the way that the master's would flatter or scold.

The latter more oft; for your chances, sad wight,

Were seven to be wrong against one to be right,
And ne'er was a tune so mellifluously choice,
You could not embitter the same, with your voice.

But though your grim head hadn't the shade of a tone,

Your heart had a musical style of its own;
And we all found it out, 'neath the forest-trees wild,

The last night we hunted for Davis's child.

"May as well give it up," said our leader: "No good;

We've hunted three days and three nights in this wood;

We may as well look at it just as it is:

He's eaten or starved, long enough before this."

And Davis spoke up: "It's a fact, boys; he's right;"

But he leaned 'gainst a tree, looking death-like and white.

You exclaimed, when your eyes his mute agony met,

"I'll be blanked if I'll stand this! I'll hunt a week yet!"

Poor Davis crept round till he got by your side,
Caught hold of your hand like a baby, and
cried,

A picture of grateful, incompetent woe—
(’Twas rather dramatic, as incidents go ;)
Then we all of us yelled, in a magnetised cry,
An absurd proposition to find him, or die.
It was only an hour and a quarter from then
Your wing-shout came skurrying o’er woodland
and glen,

As if to go round the whole world it would
strive,

“ I’ve found the young blank, an’ he’s here and
alive ! ”

Your voice had, as usual, less music than might,
But you led a remarkable chorus that night ;
An anthem of joy swelled from many a throat,
And you, as our chorister, gave the first note.
When your hand was near squeezed out of
shape by your mates,

None shook it more warmly than Abraham
Bates ;

Who, suggesting (to you) an impossible thing,
Shouted, “ Down, up ! down, up ! Sing ! ”

Little Clarissa Smith ! how you thrilled through
us all,

When you made that young soul-sweetened
voice rise and fall!

The whippoorwill's voice is sweet-spoken and
true,

But not with a heart and a spirit like you ;
The lark trails the music of earth through the
skies,

But the flame of her song does not flash from
her eyes!

Our girl prima-donna!—Your fame was not
spread,

Nor by world-wide applauses your vanity fed ;
But you star with a grand brilliant company,
now :

The laurels of heaven have encircled your
brow.

'Twas a dreary procession you led on that day
When so still in the old-fashioned coffin you
lay ;

No delicate casket, grief-laden with care,
And trimmed with exotics expensive and rare,
Had ever more tears on its occupant shed
Than you, in your old-fashioned coffin of red.

'Twas strange how the unstudied wiles of your
art

Had soothed and delighted the average heart ;
How much of heaven's glory had glittered and
smiled

Through the cultureless voice of an innocent
child.

You looked very pretty, and half saucy, there,
With natural flowers in your girlish-combed
hair;

And a little old half-worn-out book on your
breast,

Containing the hymns that you used to sing best.
The roughest old villain that lived in our town
Stood back from the grave, and, with head
hanging down,

Was heard, in a reverent whisper, to say,
"Heaven needed that voice, and God took it
away."

And Abraham Bates, who, 'twas general belief,
Had never before given rein to a grief,
Felt sorrow sweep over his heart like a storm,
When it came, as it were, in a musical form;
And choked down and sobbed, with eyes filled
to the brim,

While attempting to lead in the funeral hymn.
And long when the sound of that sorrow had
waned,

In his rough old heart-caverns its echo re-
mained;

And audible tears to the surface would spring,
Of that "Down, left, up! down, left, up
Sing!"

Mrs. Caroline Dean, how *you* revelled in song!
There was no singing-school to which you didn't
belong,

Save in some locality far away, so
That you and your meek little husband couldn't
go.

What a method was yours, of appearing pre-
pared

To make every tune in the note-book look
scared !

Your voice was voluminous, rather than rich,
And not predistinguished for accurate pitch ;
But you seemed every word to o'erpoweringly
feel,

And humbled and drove away skill with your
zeal.

The villain referred to above, on the day
That you and your larynx were safe stowed
away,

Didn't make the remark he was credited with
At the time of the burial of Clarissa Smith,
But muttered, as low with himself he com-
muned,

"I suppose she will do, when they get her
retuned,"

Though the strains of the choir sounded weak
and afraid

Without your soprano's stentorian aid,

Mr. Abraham Bates, if I was not deceived,
Worked lighter in harness, and acted relieved ;
And when the hymn stated you "lovely and
mild,"

And "as summer breeze gentle," he very near
smiled ;

For those who had learned his biography, knew
He had rather encounter a tempest than you,
When he dared, with a placating, angular smile,
To venture a hint on your musical style.

You remember how promptly he wilted, among
The tropical rays of your scorn-blazing tongue ;
For your talents you easily turned, when you
chose,

From fancy-gemmed song into plain business
prose.

You knew how to make him as miserably meek
As a tin-peddler's horse at the close of the
week.

You knew how to make a most desperate thing
That "Down, left, right, up! Sing!"

Sweet hymn-tunes of old!—You had blood in
your hearts,

That pulsed glowing life through your several
parts :

From bass to soprano it surgingly climbed,
As grandly the chords of your melody chimed !

"Coronation" that brought royal splendours
in view,
And solemn "Old Hundred," invariably new—
That golden sledge-hammer, of ponderous
grace,
That drove every word like a wedge to its place ;
"Balerna," of melody full to the brim,
And "Pleyel's" grandly plaintive melodious
hymn ;
With others, that memory's ear loves to meet,
Which, with different names, might have sounded
less sweet.
Then with what a loud concatenation of sounds
We charged in our might on the glees and the
rounds !
There was nothing, though polished, or harsh
and unkempt,
That we had not courage enough to attempt ;
And if tunes, when suggestion of murder arrives,
Were not gifted, like cats, with a number of
lives,
There's many a living and healthy old strain,
We'd have sent long ago to repose with the
slain.

O strong Winter nights! when all earth was
aglow

With crystal stars dancing on meadows of
snow ;
When the blade of youth, hilted with pleasure's
gold wreath,
Flashed out of its home like a sword from a
sheath,
And advanced o'er the plains and the hill-tops,
to dare
The quick-cutting edge of the frost-tempered
air !
How through foaming drifts we careened to and
fro,
And tossed the white waves with our ship of the
snow,
Which fluttered far back, as we sailed swift
along,
A streamer of rich elementary song !

O tall, queenly nights ! to eternity's haze
You have followed your short little husbands of
days ;
But jewelled and braided with youth-freshened
strains,
Your memory-ghosts walk the hills and the
plains.
Not one of life's glittering subsequent nights,
With feverish pleasures and costly delights,

On treasure-fringed harbours and sail-whitened
bays,
Not nights lit with fashion's cold, variable blaze,
Not when the gay opera's beauty-sown song
Plants passion's red flowers in the hearts of the
throng ;
No nights, dressed in splendour and carried with
grace,
Old brave Winter nights, can e'er stand in your
place ;
Till the long one of death may perhaps bring us
nigh
To the star-lighted singing-school held in the
sky.





THE FESTIVAL OF INDUSTRY;

OR,

THE COUNTY FAIR.

I.



HEY brought the best and sleekest of
their flocks—

The milkiest cow, the squarest-shouldered ox ;

The bull, with mimic thunder in his cry,
And lightning in each eager, wicked eye ;
The sheep that had the heaviest garments worn,
The cock that crowed the loudest in the morn ;
The mule, unconscious hypocrite and knave,
The horse, proud high-born Asiatic slave ;
The playful calf, with eyes precocious-bright,
The hog—grim quadrupedal appetite ;
The Indian corn-ears, prodigal of yield,
The golden pumpkin, nugget of the field ;
The merriest-eyed potatoes, nursed in gloom,
Just resurrected from their cradle-tomb ;

Rich apples, mellow-cheeked, sufficient all
To've tempted Eve to fall—to make them fall;
The grapes, whose picking served strong vines
to prune,
The peach—rich alto of the orchard's tune;
The very best the farmer's land had grown,
They brought to this menagerie of their own.
But listen! from among the scattered herds
Came to my hearing these equestrian words:

[DIALOGUE OF THE HORSES.]

FIRST HORSE.

We are the pets of men—
The pampered pets of men!
There is naught for us too gentle and good
In the graceful days of our babyhood;
We frisk and caper in childish glee—
Oh, none so pretty and proud as we!
They cheer and cherish us in our play—
Oh, none so smilingly sweet as they!
And when a little our lives have grown,
Each has a table and room his own,
A waiter to fill his bill of fare,
A barber to clean and comb his hair.
Yes, we are the pets of men!
The pampered pets of men!

They show us, gaily dressed and proud,
To the eager eyes of the clamorous crowd ;
They champion us in the rattling race,
They praise our beauty and cheer our pace ;
They keep for us our family trees—
They trumpet our names beyond the seas ;
They hang our portraits on their walls,
And paint and garnish and gild our stalls.

Yes, we are the pets of men—
The pampered pets of men !

SECOND HORSE.

We are the slaves of men—
The menial slaves of men !

They lash us over the dusty roads,
They bend us down with murderous loads ;
They fling vile insults on our track,
And know that we can not answer back ;
In winds of Winter, or Summer sun,
The tread of our toil is never done ;
And when we are weak, and old, and lame,
And labour-stiffened, and bowed with shame,
And hard of hearing, and blind of eye,
They drive us out in the world to die.

Yes, we are the slaves of men—
The slaves of selfish men !

They draft us into their bloody spites,
They spur us, bleeding, into their fights ;

They poison our souls with their senseless ire,
And curse us into a storm of fire.
And when to death we are bowed and bent,
And take the ball that for them was meant,
Alone they leave us to groan and bleed,
And dash their spurs in another steed !

Yes, we are the slaves of men—
The slaves of brutish men !

II.

The grim mechanic waved a hardened hand—
Behold ! on every side his trophies stand :
The new-made plough, with curving iron beam,
The thresher, with its snowy plume of steam ;
The cultivator, striped, gay, and proud,
With new ideas and dental wealth endowed ;
The windmill, now once more at work for men,
Like some old help discharged and hired again ;
The patent churns, whose recommends would
seem
To promise butter, almost without cream ;
Sewing-machines, of several-woman power,
And destitute of gossip, sweet or sour.
The loud piano raised its voice on high,
And sung the constant chorus, Who will buy ?
The patent washer strove to clinch the creed
That cleanliness and laziness agreed ;

The reaper, resting idly on its wheel,
Held forth a murderous arm of iron and steel,
And seemed to think 'twas waiting over-long
Before it might begin its rattling song :

[SONG OF THE REAPER.]

My grandfather was right little and old,
And crooked and worn was he ;
But his teeth were good, and his heart was bold,
And he swam the waves of a sea of gold,
But he couldn't keep up with me—me—
me—
Couldn't keep up with me.
Then hie ! away to the golden plain !
We will crash and dash through glistening grain,
And gather the wealth of earth and sun,
And the world will eat when our work is done !

My father he was bent and lean,
But a wide-spread hand had he ;
And his fingers they were long and clean,
And he swung his broadsword bright and keen.
But he never could fight with me—me—
me—
Never could fight with me !
Then hie ! away where the sunlight sleeps,
And the wide-floored earth a granary keeps ;

We will capture its bushels, one by one,
And the world will eat when our work is done !

The grain-stalk bows his bristling head,
As I clatter and clash along,
The stubble it bends beneath my tread,
The stacker's yellow tent is spread,
And the hills throw back my song—my
song—

The hills throw back my song !
Then hie ! where the food of nations glows,
And the yellow tide of the harvest flows,
As we dash and crash and glide and run ;
And the world will eat when our work is done !

III.

Edge deftly with me into "Floral Hall,"
Where toil's handwriting, on each crowded wall,
Weighs Industry in balance, o'er and o'er,
And finds the greater part not out-of-door.
The bread loaf, in an unobtrusive place,
Displays its cheerful, honest featured face,
A coin of triumph, from the mintage struck,
Of chemistry, skill, faithfulness, and luck.
What statesman, moulding laws, can understand
The far-eyed cunning of a housewife's hand ?

What queen her subjects with more anxious
eyes

Can watch, than she her "emptyings," as they
rise?

What conquest gives what warrior more delight
Than she has, when her baking comes out right?
(Ah me! we oft know not, till over-late,
What things are truly small, and what are
great!

'Tis sometimes hard to tell, in God's vast sky,
What's actually low, and what is high!)
Here rests, not over-free from pain and ache,
Bread's proud, rich, city-nurtured cousin, Cake:
Gay-plumaged as his sisters are, the pies—
Food chiefly for the palate and the eyes.
These canned fruits, like the four-and-twenty
birds

Imprisoned in the nursery ballad's words,
Will be expected, when at last released,
To sing sweet taste-songs for some Winter
feast.

Proudly displayed, rich trophies there are found
Of the fierce needle's thread-strewn battle-
ground:

This is a bed-quilt—its credentials show—
Stitched by a grandame, centuries ago;
That is embroidery, made this very year,
By some unteened miss, who is lurking near.

The picture family is abroad to-day,
Dressed up in every gaze-enticing way :
Here an oil-painting pleads for truthful art,
Wrought by some local genius with his heart ;
He sighs to see his soul misunderstood,
And hear them call the picture "pr'tty good."
Work on, poor boy, with courage that en-
dures :

Stars have burst forth from blacker clouds than
yours.

Feel with your own heart—think with your own
mind,
And make the canvas speak the thoughts they
find !

The eyes may not be very far away
That will, on some glad, unexpected day,
Bring other eyes within your weird control,
And lift your name alongside of your soul.
This is the town photographer's display ;
Who shows his showiest patrons here to-day.
He places in his pillory of frames
The faces of the town's most talked-of names :
The mayor, with his eyebrows stiffly arched,
And collar unconditionally starched,
Shows, through this careful chemical design,
His last majority, in every line.
His wife hangs in an advantageous place,
With new-discovered beauties in her face,

From the sun-artist's thrifty, cunning trade :
Photography, you are a flatt'ring jade !
Some of their subjects dangling here are found—
A settlement of faces clusters round—
A kind of kingdom, as it were, in sport :
The mayor holding photographic court.
Each one in half-fictitious splendour's dressed,
And each is doing his pictorial best.
The artist, grinning down a look of gall,
Worked for these baby-pictures most of all ;
Dear, dear ! How low he had to bow and
scrape,
To keep his infant popinjays in shape,
And hold the sinless villain's glance in check,
To save his shadow enterprise from wreck !
To keep this little wandering Arab-eye
He made himself a miscellaneous guy ;
He was this petty tyrant's vassal true,
His portrait-painter, and court-jester, too ;
And, that a first-class picture might be done,
Made himself into a ridiculous one ;
Said "Hooty-tooty," and that sort of thing,
And made the rattle-box insanely sing.
But, passing from these posy-sprinkled bowers
(For children's features are the facial flowers),
Come with me, where white hands have thickly
strewn
The horticultural house-pets they have grown.

What are but weeds beneath a southern sky,
Are here, as house-plants, rated precious-high,
As villains go to uncongenial climes,
But, being less known, have better social times
(So our old Mullein, here of deference scant,
Struts round in England as "The Velvet Plant;"
And "Cactus"—Thistle when in south-land
met—

Is here a prickly flower, to keep and pet.)
But woman's wand-like nature can, indeed,
Make beauty spring from e'en a common weed;
How much more, when, around some flower-
gem rare

She throws the setting of her tender care!
Sweet window-gardeners! with dainty arts
Tracing the floral language of your hearts,
Making The Home, with these gay-liveried
slaves,

A bloom-fed island 'mid the winter-waves;
In which the frost-bit caller can commune
With bright hours stolen from some day in June.
'Tis your sweet, cultured taste that bids us call
This niche of labour's temple "Floral Hall."

IV.

The people stood about on every side,
And keenly these familiar wonders eyed,

Each minute seeking some new ocular prize ;
But, as they gazed about, their greedy eyes
On nothing queerer than mankind could fall,
And so they watched each other most of all.
There was the thrifty farmer : quickly he
Had seen about all that he wished to see,
And knew, while up and down condemned to
 roam,

How much more he would feel at home, at
 home.

The farmer's wife, with smiles of rural grace
O'erflowing from her soul into her face,
Screamed loud as each acquaintance hove in
 view,

And gave the cordial cry, " How *dew* you dew ? "
The farmer's boy bore vigour in his tread,
And in his hands a block of gingerbread ;
The farmer's girl was somewhat prone to flirt,
Watched by her mother, lest she come to hurt ;
Whose words had full as much effect as when,
Around some pond, an anxious-eyed old hen
To draw away her gosling-children strives,
And take them from their life, to save their
 lives.

The doctors, lawyers, merchants, and that kind,
Looked round, their old-time customers to find,
Or shun—and smiling 'mid the verbal din,
Dilated on *their* country origin.

A writer for the Agricultural Press,
Who farmed (on foolscap) with complete success,
Who raised great crops of produce in a wink,
And tilled large farms with paper, pen, and
ink—

Who, sitting in-door, at a regular price,
Gave large amounts of good out-door advice,
And, as his contribution to the Fair,
Had brought himself and an oration there—
Arose, in somewhat over-conscious strength,
And gave his views at any amount of length.
As when the sun at morning upward crowds
His kingly path through thickly gathered
clouds,

Sometimes, behold! these vapour -birds have
flown,

Driven by his rays, and left him there alone,
So from this luminary, fancy-fired,
The saddened audience gradually retired;
Though still stayed where they were when he
began,

Three children, and a very deaf old man.
And even these showed signs of weakening,
When the sad poet rose, and with a fling
Of paper that a ragman might rejoice,
Remarked, in timidly defiant voice:
"Spirits of earth-dead agriculturists!
If the ghost ear to rhythmic nonsense lists

(And if I have a hearing, that must be,
For I'm not jostled by mortality)—
Spirits, if you should deem attention due
To one who soon must starve his way to you
(A process that this rich world, by-the-way,
Is aiding quietly, from day to day,
Seeming to think the poet's proper place
Is 'mongst his own—ahem!—angelic race)
Oh list to me, said spirits, here declare
My contribution to the County Fair
To be a drop of rhythm from off my pen,
Which I denominate

THE LABOURING MEN.

Who are the labouring men?

We are the labouring men:

We, the muscle of tribes and lands,
With sun-trod faces and horn-gloved hands;
With well-patched garments, stained and
coarse—

With untrained voices, heavy and hoarse;
Who brave the death of the noontide heats—
Who mow the meadows and pave the streets;
Who push the plough by the smooth-faced sod,
Or climb the crags with a well-filled hod.

Yes—we are the labouring men—

The genuine labouring men!

And each, somewhere in the stormy sky,
Has a sweet love-star, be it low or high;
For pride have we to do and dare,
And a heart have we—to cherish and care;
And power have we: for lose our brawn,
And where were your flourishing cities gone?
Or bind our hands or fetter our feet,
And what would the gaunt world find to eat?
Ay, where were your gentry then?
For we are the labouring men!

Who are the labouring men?
We are the labouring men:
We who stand in the ranks of trade,
And count the tallies that toil has made;
Who guard the coffers of wealth untold,
And ford the streams of glistening gold;
Who send the train in its breathless trips,
And rear the buildings, and sail the ships;
And though our coats be a trifle fine,
And though our diamonds flash and shine,
Yet we are the labouring men—
The genuine labouring men!
We bolt the gates of the angry seas;
We keep the nation's granary keys;
The routes of trade we have built and planned
Are veins of life to a hungry land.

And power have we in our peaceful strife,
For a nation's trade is a nation's life;
And take the sails of our commerce in,
Where were your "artisans' pails of tin?"
 Ay, where were your "labourers" then?
 For we are the labouring men!

Who are the labouring men?
We are the labouring men:
We of the iron and water way,
Whom fire and steam, and tide obey;
Who stab the sea with a prow of oak—
Who blot the sky with a cloud of smoke;
Who bend the breezes unto our wills,
And feed the looms and hurry the mills;
Who oft have the lives of a thousand known,
In the hissing valves that hold our own!

 Yes, we are the labouring men—
 The genuine labouring men!
And though a coat may a button lack,
And though a face be sooty and black,
And though the words be heavy of flow,
And new-called thoughts come tardy and slow,
And though rough words in a speech may
 blend,
A heart's a heart, and a friend's a friend!
And power have we: but for our skill,
The wave would drown, and the sea would kill;

And where were your gentry then ?
Ay, we are the labouring men !

Who are the labouring men ?

We are the labouring men :

We of the mental toil and strain,
Who stall the body and lash the brain ;
Who wield our pen when the world's asleep,
And plead with mortals to laugh or weep ;
Who bind the wound and plead the cause,
Who preach the sermons and make the laws ;
Who man the stage for the listening throng,
And fight the devils of Shame and Wrong.

Yes, we are the labouring men—

The genuine labouring men !

And though our hands be small and white,
And though our flesh be tender and light,
And though our muscle be soft and low,
Our red-blood-slurges are swift of flow !
We've power to kindle Passion's fire
With the flame of rage and fell desire ;
Or quell, with soothing words and arts,
To throbs of grief, the leaping hearts.

And who shall question, then,

That we are the labouring men ?

Who are NOT the labouring men ?

They're not the labouring men :

They who creep in dens and lanes
To rob their betters of honest gains,
The rich that stoop to devour the poor;
The tramps that beg from door to door;
The rogues who love a darkened sky,
And steal and rob, and cheat and lie;
The loafing wights and senseless bloats
Who drain their pockets to wet their throats!

They're not the labouring men—
The genuine labouring men!
And all true hearts that the price would give
For honest joy and a right to live,
And every soul to truth alive,
Willing to thrive and let others thrive,
Should rise with a true and steady hand,
And mark these foes with a villain-brand;
And shame them into the ranks of toil,
Or crush them under their kindred soil,
Away from the labouring men—
The genuine labouring men!

V.

Before the reading of this rhyme had ceased,
A crowd near by, that gradually increased,
Had gathered round a tramp, old, bent, and gray,
Who somehow through the gates had made his
way,

For human pity rather than for pelf :
This clanless gipsy, wandering by himself,
No face and brow more wrinkles could have
worn ;

His clothes were most spectacularly torn ;
But something in his general effect
Drew from the throng a rough, unkempt respect ;
For crushed old age, in heart-enlightened lands,
Carries a pathos with it that commands.
He had been talking to the one most near :
Those standing by were not averse to hear,
And soon about him formed a massive ring ;
His audience swelled like valley-streams in
spring.

Crowds gather crowds by wondrous swift
degrees ;

One comes to see what 'tis another sees.

For curiosity has ever shown

A greedy-grasping avarice of its own,
And few there are in this world, high or low,
Who do not like to know what others know.

He, with no oratorical display,
Spoke to the farmers in their own rough way,
And they looked at him as some prophet
cast

Out of the dusty cobwebs of the past,
With nineteenth-century rags about him hung,
And current lack of grammar on his tongue.

He *was* a prophet ; for he clear could see
The past—dead father of what is to be ;
He who *what has been* faithfully can tell,
May prophesy the future pretty well.
With half-defiant and half-modest air,
His sad eyes flashing, and his silver hair
Tinged by the sun's last rays of autumn-gold —
This is the story that the old man told :

[THE TRAMP'S STORY.]

If experience has gold in it (as discerning folks
agree),
Then there's quite a little fortune stowed away
somewhere in me,
And I deal it out regardless of a regular stated
price,
In rough-done-up prize packages of common-
sense advice .
The people they can take it, or run round it, as
they please ;
But the best thing they'll find in it is some
words like unto these :

*Worm or beetle—drought or tempest—on a
farmer's land may fall ;
But for first-class ruination, trust a mortgage
'gainst them all.*

On my weddin'-day my father touched me
kindly on the arm,
And handed me the papers for an eighty acre
farm,
With the stock an' tools an' buildin's for an
independent start ;
Saying, " Here's a wedding present from my
muscle and my heart ;
And, except the admonitions you have taken
from my tongue,
And the reasonable lickin's that you had when
you was young,
And your food and clothes and schoolin' (not so
much as I could wish,
For I had a number eatin' from a some'at scanty
dish),
And the honest love you captured when you
first sat on my knee,
This is all I have to give you—so expect no
more from me."

People 'd said I couldn't marry the sweet girl I
tried to court,
Till we smilingly submitted a minority report ;
Then they laid their theories over, with a quick-
ness queer to see,
And said they knew we'd marry, but we never
could agree ;

But we did not frame and hang up all the
neighbours had to say,
But ran our little heaven in our own peculiar
way ;
We started off quite jolly, wondrous full of health
and cheer,
And a general understanding that the road was
pretty clear.

So we lived and toiled and prospered ; and the
little family party
That came on from heaven to visit us were
bright, and hale, and hearty ;
And to-day we might ha' been there, had I
only just have known
How to lay my road down solid, and let well
enough alone.
But I soon commenced a-kicking in the traces,
I confess ;
There was too much land that joined me that I
didn't yet possess.
When once he gets land-hungry, strange how
ravenous one can be !
'Twasn't long before I wanted all the ground
that I could see.
So I bought another eighty (not foreboding any
harm),

And for that and some down-money put a
mortgage on my farm.
Then I bought another forty—hired some cash
to fix up new—
And to buy a covered carriage, and of course
the mortgage grew.
Now my wife was square against this, 'tis but
right that you should know
(Though I'm very far from saying that I think
it's *always* so);
But she went in hearty with me, working hard
from day to day,
For we knew that life was business, now we had
that debt to pay.

We worked through spring and winter—through
summer and through fall—
But that mortgage worked the hardest and the
steadiest of us all;
It worked on nights and Sundays—it worked
each holiday—
It settled down among us, and it never went
away.
Whatever we kept from it seemed a'most as
bad as theft;
It watched us every minute, and it ruled us
right and left.

The rust and blight were with us sometimes,
and sometimes not;
The dark-browed, scowling mortgage was for
ever on the spot.
The weevil and the cut-worm, they went as well
as came;
The mortgage stayed for ever, eating hearty all
the same.
It nailed up every window—stood guard at
every door—
And happiness and sunshine made their home
with us no more.
Tili with failing crops and sickness we got stalled
upon the grade.
And there came a dark day on us when the
interest wasn't paid;
And there came a sharp foreclosure, and I kind
o' lost my hold,
And grew weary and discouraged, and the farm
was cheaply sold.
The children left and scattered when they hardly
yet were grown;
My wife she pined an' perished, an' I found my-
self alone.
What she died of was "a mystery," an' the
doctors never knew;
But I knew she died of *mortgage*—just as well 's
I wanted to.

If to trace a hidden sorrow were within the
doctors' art,
They'd ha' found a mortgage lying on that
woman's broken heart.

Two different kinds of people the devil most
assails:
One is the man who conquers—the other he who
fails.
But still I think the last kind are soonest to
give up,
And to hide their sorry faces behind the shame-
ful cup;
Like some old king or other, whose name I've
somehow lost,
They straightway tear their eyes out, just when
they need 'em most.
When once I had discovered that the debt I
could not pay,
I tried to liquidate it in a rather common way:
I used to meet in private a fellow-financier,
And we would drink ourselves worth ten thou-
sand dollars clear;
As easy a way to prosper as ever has been
found;
But one's a heap sight poorer when he gets back
to the ground.

Of course I ought to ha' braced up, an' worked
on all the same;
I ain't a-tryin' to shirk out, or cover up from
blame;
But still I think men often, it safely may be
said,
Are *driven* to temptations in place of being led;
And if that tyrant mortgage hadn't cracked its
whip at me,
I shouldn't have constituted the ruin that you
see.
For though I've never stolen or defaulted,
please to know,
Yet, socially considered, I am pretty middlin'
low.

I am helpless an' forsaken—I am childless an'
alone;
I haven't a single dollar that it's fair to call my
own;
My old age knows no comfort, my heart is scant
o' cheer,
The children they run from me as soon as I
come near.
The women shrink and tremble—their alms are
fear-bestowed—
The dogs howl curses at me, and hunt me down
the road.

My home is where night finds me; my friends
are few and cold;
Oh, little is there in this world for one who's
poor and old!
But I'm wealthy in experience, all put up in
good advice,
To take or not to take it—with no difference in
the price;
You may have it, an' thrive on it, or run round
it, as you please,
But I generally give it wrapped in some such
words as these:

*Worm or beetle — drought or tempest — on a
farmer's land may fall;
But for first-class ruination, trust a mortgage
'gainst them all.*





THE FESTIVAL OF INJUSTICE;

OR,

THE LAWSUIT.

THERE was a lawsuit in our town:
Two honest farmers, White and Brown,
Who'd been near neighbours all their
lives,

Had from the same home lured their wives,
Had interchanged celestial views,
On Sundays, from adjoining pews,
Subjecting thus, in the same church,
Their neighbours' sins to weekly search;
Had shared each golden Christmas chime,
And "changed works" every harvest time;
Had felt a partnership, half hid,
In everything they said and did;
Had always, on town-meeting day,
Talked, yelled, and voted both one way;
Who each, whate'er he wished to do,
Had all the influence of the two

(And two united, as men run,
Are more than twice as strong as one);
Whose children, through youth's sun and shade,
Had with each other fought and played—
These men fell out, one raw March day,
In something like the following way :

White had a sheep he boasted o'er :
Value two dollars—maybe more.
Brown did a brindle dog possess ;
Value, two cents, or maybe less.
The sheep, one night, was killed by stealth ;
The dog retained his usual health.
White felt the separation-shock
As if the sheep had been a flock ;
And reaped a crop of mental blues
(We always value what we lose).
Brown's heart the theory could not hear,
Which White propounded to his ear,
That his dog's life should make amends
(No cur so mean but has his friends).
White vowed, in words profanely deep,
That Brown's canine had killed his sheep
(Which accusation was o'er-true ;
The dog himself well knew it, too).
Brown, unconvinced and anger-eyed, .
Insisted that his neighbour lied.

White skirmished round, by day and night,
In hopes to shoot the dog at sight ;
Brown kennelled him beneath his bed,
And sent bad language out instead.
Suit for the sheep was brought by White ;
Brown fought him back with all his might.
Thus are the reasons jotted down,
Why we'd a lawsuit in our town.

White's lawyer was, when fairly weighed,
The meanest of that tempted trade ;
With all the vices of his clan,
And not a virtue known to man.
In almost every calling, he
Had shown how little, men can be ;
Had demonstrated, teaching schools,
That small men can be monstrous fools,
And by strong pupils, once or more,
Was taught the object of the door ;
Had preached awhile, at his own call,
With hearers few, or none at all
(For souls to cling are seldom prone
Round men who have none of their own) ;
At farming once had tried his hand,
But laziness grows poor on land.
He had, for half a month or more,
Been salesman in a country store,

Where, though his talents he ne'er hid,
Some of the cash somebody did ;
And he, before his sphere enlarged,
By his employer was discharged.
Then his frouzed head and lantern-jaw
Had fin'ly drifted toward the law
(Not *to* it—candour must admit—
But only just in sight of it) ;
And so he took a dead-head trip,
On pettifoggery's pirate ship,
Coming at last, it may be said,
To be its brazen figure-head.
This wolf became, at one fell leap,
Attorney for White's missing sheep.
Brown's lawyer equal praise would bear ;
Ah me ! they were a pretty pair !

Such villains cast no shade of blame
On any honest lawyer's name ;
There are those do not hew their life
Into the kindling-wood of strife,
To fire men's hearts and homes in turn,
That they may rob them as they burn ;
Who only take such causes as
The eternal Right already has ;
Who, when a client comes along
Upon the fragile stilts of wrong,

And strives to make law help him bear
His weight through Error's putrid air,
Show him the sin on which he's bent,
Induce him, maybe, to repent,
And send him home, with altered plan,
A wiser and not poorer man.
Such, with strong heart, and head, and hand,
Are benefactors to the land ;
It is not to the craft's disgrace
That there were none such in this case.

Scarce did the rage-envenomed din
Have leisure fairly to begin,
Through the thick crowd an old man strode,
Making himself a ragged road ;
With gestures lower than his looks,
Upset a pile of huge law-books,
Inked a half-quire of legal cap,
Also Brown's lawyer's left-hand lap ;
Ignoring, with a scorn profound,
The judge and jury clustering round,
He climbed his greatest tiptoe-height,
And made this speech to Brown and White :

So you're at it, sure enough—
Side-hold, square-hold, kick and cuff—
Any way to down each other, if it's only brought
about ;

With two rogues in your employ,
For to hollo out "S't boy!"
An' to superintend your pockets, an' pick up
what rattles out.

An' your folks, too, it appears,
Have been gettin' by the ears,
All prepared to hate each other, for forever an'
a day
The devil gives a shout
When a family falls out;
But what is that to you 'uns, if you only have
your way?

An' your friends an' neighbours, too,
Have been wranglin' over you;
Your example has been followed, as to brother
fightin' brother;
There is more bad blood round here
Than 'll drain off in a year;
But what is that to you 'uns, if you only bleed
each other?

Can our church such things endure?
You're agoin' to bu'st it, sure!
An' the hosts of sin are ready to begin their
triumph-revel;
But what would you 'uns give
To save all the souls that live.

So you just can clinch together, an' go rolling
toward the devil?

And the Lord that o'er us reigns:
He has taken extra pains
For to put you two in harness, so's to pull to-
gether square;
'Stead o' which you kick an' bite,
With a reg'lar ten-mule spite;
Do you think that, strictly speaking, you're a-
treatin' on Him fair?

O you law-bamboozled fools!
You old self-ground devil's-tools!
Do you know you're sowin' ruin out o' hell's
half-acre lot?
Do you know when smart men fight
They Calamity invite,
Who comes round an' stays for ever, till he eats
up all they've got?

O you poor cat's-paws of spite!
Ain't there 'nough things for to fight—
Ain't there rust an' blight an' tempest—ain't
there misery sore an' deep—
Ain't there ignorance an' wrong,
An' what woes to them belong,
But that you must fight each other 'bout a
brindle dog and sheep?

Why, man is just one race,
In a very ticklish place,
With a thousand forces fightin' for to lay him
on the shelf;
Don't it strike you, foolish men,
As a losin' business, then,
When he tears down his defences, an' goes
fightin' of himself?

An' these lawyers round here gawkin'—
Who has tried to stop my talkin'—
If they come it once too often, I—I vow I'll
smash 'em both;
What d'ye s'pose they care for *you*,
Or for what *they* say or do?
For they don't pay no expenses, an' they ain't
put under oath.

Shake han's now, an' be friends,
An' say, Here the matter ends,
An' divide the costs between you—what has so
far been incurred;
It'll make this world less sad—
It'll make all heaven glad!
“Peace on earth,” is just as good news as the
angels ever heard.

Here the judge spoke, with angry air:
“We have no jurisdiction there;

It's more than all our work is worth,
To keep things steady here on earth ;
We can't pretend, best we can do,
To litigate for angels too.
I hereby fine you, for this sport,
Ten dollars, for contempt of court.
And you will in the jail be laid,
Until the little sum is paid.
Remove this person from the place,
And let us go on with the case."

With look most cheerful and polite,
The old man turned to Brown and White,
Saying, "For your good I made this speech:
Pray lend me now, five dollars each.
I've been a-throwin' you advice
You couldn't ha' bought at any price.
If you will give my words an ear,
They're worth ten thousan' dollars clear."

His eloquence had no avail ;
They took the old man off to jail.
The suit went on—please don't forget—
And, I believe, isn't finished yet.



THE FESTIVAL OF DIS-REASON;

OR,

THE DEBATE.

THEY came in sleighs and cutters down
the snow-paved country-road—
No farmhouse in the district but sent
something of "a load,"
No home so high or humble, but threw in its
mental mite
Toward an equitable judgment on the issue of
the night;
For the question to be settled was an elemental
one:
Namely, whether fire or water had the greater
damage done.

O Peace! thy famous mantle is a lovely thing
to view,
But what unimportant matters can suffice to
tear it through!

Now a three-month had this "district" been by
thee as much inspired,
As a first-class summer evening, when the sun
has just retired ;
Till some indiscreet debater fired the battle's
signal gun,
Asking whether fire or water had the greater
damage done.

As when the housewife, whisking through her
culinary toil,
Bathes the inside of a kettle, it will foam and
seethe and boil,
As when a brawny blacksmith, his hot iron all
agleam,
Stabs the unsuspecting water, it will hiss and
yell and scream,
So the most pronounced convulsions it had ever
known as yet,
Made life lively in this neighbourhood when
fire and water met.

Not when the choir, one Sunday, chirped a
secular-sounding song ;
Not when the pastor married diametrically
wrong ;
Not when the new schoolmaster, with a sweet
and cheerful smile

Flogged three champion schoolhouse bullies in
improved athletic style ;
Had there been so fierce excitement.—Naught
more bitter words can make,
Than discussion where the parties haven't any
thing at stake.

O War! thy grim material pauses not at guns
and swords :
There are campaigns of opinion—there are
carnages of words !
Now that neighbourhood, so peaceful till this
unexpected day,
Formed itself, as if by magic, in belligerent array,
Full of empty emulation, and disinterested ire ;
About half denouncing water—the remainder
fighting fire

There were deadly feuds engendered, in that
clash of word and will,
That have crept through generations, and are
living even still ;
There were families embittered—sacred friend-
ships rent in twain—
In that well-nigh useless contest of the heart
and of the brain.
For the fight on this occasion had grown bitter
and intense,

In proportion as the issue was of little consequence.

Old Squire Taylor took his children out of school, without delay,
When the teacher taught Volcanoes in an underhanded way ;
Deacon Stebbins, it was whispered, gave his son a whipping rare,
Just for drawing on the Deluge in his verse at morning prayer ;
And the good but shrewd old preacher—half in love and half in fear—
Scarcely mentioned fire or water in his sermons for a year.

There were fisticuffs and lawsuits bred among the brawny men—
Women who ne'er borrowed sugar at each other's house again ;
And the children called their playmates, when they fell out, in their games,
"Water-fowl," and "Papa's fire-bug," and such-like endearing names ;
While a keen demand existed 'mongst the people, great and small,
For the evening when this question should be settled once for all.

They came in sleds and cutters down the snow-
paved country roads;
They swarmed like bees in anger, from the
depths of their abodes;
They urged their bell-fringed coursers; they
hurried, with one will,
To the little old red schoolhouse at the summit
of the hill.
For 'twas there that the discussion was ap-
pointed to take place,
And the fiercest of debaters meet each other
face to face.

O little old red schoolhouse! your prosperous
days are flown!
You are a sad old schoolhouse, decrepit and alone.
Within your grimly ruins, now half crumbled to
the ground,
The wind repeats its lessons, in a listless, droning
sound;
The snow-flakes leap your windows, and cluster
on your floor,
Or, like belated youngsters, creep slyly through
the door;
No more incipient maidens softly to your portals
come,
With pantalettes of nankeen, and surreptitious
gum;

No more the idle urchin, wrapped in secret
hardihood,

Daily strives to make you useful in the line of
kindling-wood ;

No more the youthful chalk-fiend traces inco-
herent scrawls,

And startling hieroglyphics, on your dim and
dingy walls ;

Your painted rival perches on the yonder neigh-
bouring hill ;

The restless feet that sought you are lying very
still.

The flowers of many summers upon their graves
have grown ;

You are a sad old schoolhouse, decrepit and
alone.

But you have had your triumphs ; and, if
accounts be right,

You were not over-lonely on that famous winter
night !

Oh, what a crowd had gathered, and how wide
awake they were,

To see this mighty struggle of the elements occur !

The buds and blooms of beauty of that region
had turned out,

Also all the brain and muscle of the country
round about ;

For, as some one gravely mentioned—'twas an
interesting time—
A trial whose attorneys gloried in their clients'
crime.

There was Corporal Joseph Bellamy, a veteran
fierce and gray,
Whose left leg took a furlough on the field of
Monterey,
And who whispered, "How'd the Waterites get
away, he'd like to know,
With the fire that burned the powder in our war
with Mexico?"
There was Captain Abel Stockwell, who the
raging main had ploughed,
And had some old claim of wreckage which he
wished to get allowed;

There was Andrew Clark, a bully, who remarked,
he couldn't debate,
But could lick the biggest waterin'-trough that
spouted in the State;
There was pretty Jessie Miller, with her blush-
ing face half hid,
Who didn't say much on the question—just be-
cause her lover did;
There was "Uncle Sammy," smiling gay and
happy—nothing loth

To dispute with either faction, or, if necessary,
both;

There was dear old Sister Dibble, amiable and
pleasant-eyed,
Who agreed with all she talked to, and no
matter on which side;
There was Uncle James K. Hopkins, who
espoused one cause to-day,
And to-morrow morning early, always thought
the other way;
There was Township Treasurer Hawley, who a
theory could frame,
That The Law of Compensation made them
both destroy the same;

There was Road Commissioner Reynolds, who,
as president, would state
The true meaning of the question they had
come there to debate;
But was checked by Uncle Sammy, with his
back firm 'gainst the wall,
Who declared, as if astonished, that that wasn't
it at all!
So an hour they wrangled, trying to discover,
beyond doubt!
What it was that all the people had been
quarrelling about.

As well might be imagined, 'twas a trifle
ludicrous

To hear this crowd discussing as to what they
should discuss;

Until the conversation reached the pure asser-
tive stage,

The pattering of word-drops turned to thunder-
peals of rage,

And young Napoleon Peaslee, with his black
eyes opened wide,

Shook his fist at several others, and informed
them that they lied.

When this argument was stated ('tis a not un-
common one),

Andrew Clark bobbed up his body, like the
rammer of a gun

When the load at last is driven, and remarked,
with aspect hot,

That into his department the discussion now
had got;

Then, striding o'er three benches, to the speaker
he drew nigh,

And advanced a heavy argument at Napoleon's
nearest eye

As when the thrifty farmer his cold yard with
fodder strews,

Two sturdy youthful bullocks will develop
different views,
And join belligerent issue—then their rage
infects the herd,
Till the peacefullest old mulley feels her blood
with battle stirred,
So this meeting joined in conflict; and affairs
assumed a shape
As if sin's unpleasant future had effected an
escape.

No prestige was respected, in the storm of rage
that rose;
The deacon shook ten knuckles underneath the
elder's nose;
The squire upset the sheriff, with undignified
display,
When the latter "Peace" demanded, in a very
warlike way;
And even Sister Dibble her fat fist to shake began,
And vowed to goodness gracious that she wished
she was a man!

E'en the stove—a shattered veteran, which for
many years had stood
On two legs, and two frail crutches made of
bricks and blocks of wood,
And, like some worthy people who are nothing
if not plumb,

Had no single earthly merit save its equilibrium,
Lost even that; and, falling 'mid this clash of
frantic souls,
Smashed, and emptied out a bushel of the
liveliest kind of coals.

As when the juvenile shepherd scares his flock
of timid sheep
Through the narrows of a fence-gap, they will
rush and plunge and leap,
So the bravest, and the strongest, and the
fiercest that were there,
Loitered not upon their journey to the free and
open air;
Which, flying from their presence, rushed into
the open door,
And scattered coals and fire-brands all about
the schoolhouse floor.

"It's a-burnin' up the buildin'!" was the uni-
versal shout:
"We'll be taxed to build another, if we do not
put it out!"
The debaters, each forgetting his rhetoric ends
and aims,
Rushed in with snow and water, to subdue the
rising flames;
And 'twas even hard to tell there, when the
victory was won.

Whether fire or whether water had the greater damage done.

They drove their sleighs and cutters homeward
o'er the snowy road;
Their clothes were wet and freezing — their
hearts with anger glowed;
E'en those agreeing differed; cutting up the
question, they
Disagreed on its divisions, and disputed by the
way.
And only one was happy who to this affair had
come;
And he was under-witted, and was also deaf and
dumb.

O thinkers and debaters! be moderate and
more slow;
You can't make true opinions—they have to
seed and grow.
Be generous in your conflicts; look very sharp
to see
What points you can discover whereon you may
agree;
Remember, mere assertion to mere brutishness
comes nigh,
And the shallowest of arguments is the poisoned
words, "You lie!"



THE FESTIVAL OF REUNION;

OR,

THE GOLDEN WEDDING.



WAKE up, wife!—the black cloak of Night
begins to fade,
And far in the east The Morning his
kitchen fire has made;
And he is heating red-hot his stove of iron-gray,
And stars are winking and blinking before the
light o' day.

Mind you what I was doin', just fifty years
agone?—
Brushing my Sunday raiment an' puttin' my
best looks on;
Clothin' myself in courage, so none my fright
would see;
An' my coward heart within, the while, was
pounding to get free!

Ten mile wood an' bramble, and three mile field
an' dew,
In the cold smile of morning, I walked, to marry
you ;
No horse had I but my wishes—no pilot but a
star ;
But my boyish heart it fancied it heard you
from afar !

So through the woods I hurried, an' through
the grass an' dew,
An' little I thought o' tiring, the whole of my
journey through ;
Things ne'er before nor after do so a man
rejoice,
As on the day he marries the woman of his
choice !

And then our country wedding—brimful o'
grief an' glee,
With every one a-pettin' an' jokin' you an' me ;
The good cheer went and came, wife, as it some-
times has done
When clouds have chased each other across the
Summer sun.

There was your good old father, dressed up in
weddin' shape,

With all the homespun finery that he could
rake an' scrape ;
And your dear-hearted mother, the sunlight of
whose smile
Shone through the showers of tear-drops that
stormed her face the while ;

Also your sisters an' brothers, who hardly
seemed to know
How they could scare up courage to let their
sister go ;
An' cousins an' schoolhouse comrades, dressed
up in meetin' trim,
With one of them a-sulkin' because it wasn't
him ;

An' there was the good old parson, his neck all
dressed in white,
A bunch o' texts in his left eye, a hymn-book
in his right ;
And the parson's virgin daughter, plain an'
severely pure,
Who hoped we should be happy but wasn't
exactly sure ;

And there was the victuals, seasoned with kind
regards an' love,

And holly-wreaths with breastpins of rubies, up
above ;
An' there was my heart a-wonderin' as how such
things could be,
And there was the world before us, and there
was you and me.

Wake up, wife! that gold bird, the Sun, has
come in sight,
And on a tree-top perches to take his daily
flight !
He is not old and feeble ; an' he will sail away,
As he has done so often since fifty years to-day.

You know there's company coming — our
daughters an' our sons :
There's John, and James, and Lucy, an' all their
little ones ;
And Jennie, she will be here, who in her grave
doth lie
(Provided company ever can come from out the
sky) ;

And Sam—I am not certain as he will come, or
not ;
They say he is a black sheep—the wildest of
the lot.

Before a son's dishonour, a father's love stands
dumb ;

But still, somehow or other, I hope that Sam
will come !

The tree bends down its branches to its children
from above—

The son is lord of the father, and rules him with
his love ;

And he will e'er be longed for, though far they
be apart,

For the drop of blood he carries, that came from
the father's heart.

Wake you, wife ! the loud sun has roused the
sweet Daylight,

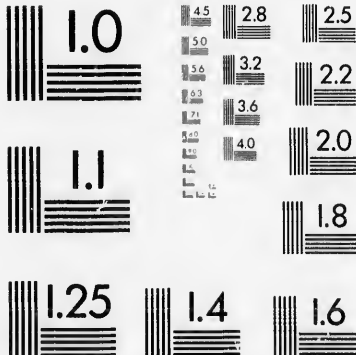
And she has dressed herself up in red and yellow
and white ;

She has dressed herself for us, wife—for our
weddin'-day once more—

And my soul to-day is younger than ever it
was before !



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THE FESTIVAL OF MEMORY;

OR,

CONVERSE WITH THE SLAIN.

[Read at the National Cemetery on the Custis Farm, Arlington Heights, Va., Decoration Day, 1877.]

THERE where the Nation's domes salute
our eye,
And lift their fingers up to freedom's
sky,

Here where, by green-flagged hill and flowery
glade,


Camps evermore the Nation's dead brigade,
And, though our stars upon the day are tossed,
White, gleaming head-stones tell of what they
cost,

And Triumph's guns are decked with Sorrow's
strain,

Let us hold converse with the Nation's slain.

I.

Strong men fast asleep,
With coverlets wrought of clay,



Do soft dreams o'er you creep,
Of friends who are here to-day ?
Do you know, O men low lying
In the hard and chilly bed,
That we, the slowly dying,
Are giving a day to the dead ?
Do you know that sighs for your deaths
Across our heart-strings play,
E'en from the last faint breaths
Of the sweet-lipped mouth of May ?
When you fell, at Duty's call,
Your fame it glittered high,
As leaves of the sombre Fall
Grow brighter though they die.
Men of the silent bands,
Men of the half-told days,
Lift up your spectre hands,
And take our heart-bouquets.

[RESPONSE.]

Our heads droop on the world's broad breast ;
Our work is done, and we have gone to rest.
These footsteps, lingering round our bed,
The sun that shines, the storm that sweeps
o'erhead,
The summer hour, when naught sounds nigh
Save the low, drowsy humming of the fly,
Or the wind's moan when day is done,
All feed our sleep, and all to us are one.

When morning sows the sky with gold,
To blossom forth at noon a million-fold,
When, shaded from the setting sun,
The weary father clasps his little one,
While she whose chastened love ne'er die
Leans on them with her patient mother-eyes,
When the brown frame of even-time
Is pictured deep with song and laughter's chime ;
Of all these sweet and pure and blest,
Not one avails to call us from our rest.
Fought we for wealth? We own, to-day,
Death's tattered robes, and six good feet of clay.
For noisy Fame's bright coronets?
The world applauds us, but it soon forgets.
And yet, on royal robes we fall :
We fought for Love--and Love is king of all.

II.

Women, whose rich graves deck
The work of Stridged spade,
Shining wrecks of the wreck
This tempest of war has made,
You whose sweet pure love
Round every suffering twined,
Whose hearts, like the sky above,
Bent o'er all human kind,
Who walked through hospital streets,
'Twixt white abodes of pain,

Counting the last heart-beats
Of men who were slowly slain ;
Whose thrilling voices ever
Such words of comfort bore,
That many a poor boy never
Such music had heard before ;
Whose deeds were so sweet and gracious,
Wherever your light feet trod,
That every step seemed precious,
As if it were that of God ;
Whose eyes so divinely beamed,
Whose touch was so tender and true,
That the dying soldier dreamed
Of the purest love he knew ;
O martyrs of more than duty !
Sweet-hearted woman-braves !
Did you think, in this day's sad beauty,
That we could forget your graves ?
Could you think, of these yearning hours,
None from your memory grew ?
That we brought a garden of flowers,
And never a blossom for you ?
Great is the brave commander,
With foemen round him slain,
But greater far, and grander,
Is she who can soothe a pain.
Not till selfish blindness
Has clouded every eye,

Not till mercy and kindness
Have flown back to the sky,
Not till a heart that is human
Within this world beats not,
Shall the kind deeds of a woman
Be ever by man forgot.
Heaven's best evangels,
Artists of mercy's arts,
Earth-types of the angels,
Take these flowers from our hearts.

[RESPONSE.]

Sound and deep our bodies sleep
'Neath a bright green covering,
Slender shades of tender blades
Over us are hovering.

Fragrant sheaves of floweret leaves
Sweetest odours fling to us,
Merry birds with music-words
Perch aloft and sing to us.

Butterflies, with wings of eyes,
Flash a kindly cheer to us,
Stalks of clover, like a lover,
Bend and whisper near to us.

And we bless, with thankfulness,
All the flowers you give to us,
And we greet, with feelings meet,
All the hours you live to us,

But while we, 'neath hill and lea,
Floral favours owe to you,
We above, with smiles of 'ere,
Blooms of blessings throw to you.
Once we stood, in doubtful mood,
On a hill-top, listening—
Gazing where, supremely fair,
Heaven's domes were glistening:
Widowed wives, whose own good lives
Their great grief had cost to them;
Mothers who till death were true,
Maids whose loves were lost to them;
They who strove, with deeds of love,
To keep back the dying ones,
Until *they* were drawn, one day,
'Mongst the heavenward flying ones;
So we stood, in doubtful mood,
On a hill-top, listening,
Gazing where, supremely fair,
Heaven's domes were glistening;
Wondering why there came not nigh
Some who all had dared for us,
Sad together wondering whether
Our sweet dead yet cared for us!
At a sound we turned around:
They had stolen near to us,
They whom we had yearned to see—
They who were so dear to us;

So, while you these heroes true
Praise, and with flowers cover them,
We above throw looks of love,
And caresses, over them.

III.

Men who fell at a loss,
Who died 'neath failure's frown,
Who carried Strife's red cross,
And gained not Victory's crown,
Whose wrong fight was so brave
That it won our sad applause,
Who sleep in a hero's grave,
Though clutched by the corpse of a cause;
Sleep sweet ! with no misgiving,
By bitter memories fed,
That we, your foes when living,
Can be your foes when dead.
Your fault shall not e'en be spoken ;
You paid for it on the pall ;
The shroud is Forgiveness' token,
And Death makes saints of all.
Your land has in its keeping
Our brothers, doomed to die :
Their souls went upward, sweeping
Through storms of a southern sky ;
The dead sons of our mothers
Reach for your hands of clay ;
So we, with your living brothers,
Would clasp glad hands to-day ;

That this young Queen of Nations,
As famous as the sun,
Which has lived through tribulations
A hundred years and one,
Shall wrap the centuries round her
Again and yet again,
Till their gleaming braids have wound her
In a thousand years and ten !

[RESPONSE.]

From our dead foemen comes no chiding forth ;
We lie at peace ; Heaven has no South or North.
With roots of tree and flower and fern and heather,
God reaches down, and clasps our hands together.

IV.

Men of the dark-hued race,
Whose freedom meant—to die—
Who lie, with pain-wrought face
Upturned to the peaceful sky,
Whose day of jubilee,
So many years o'erdue,
Came—but only to be
A day of death to you ;
The flowers of whose love grew bright,
E'en in Oppression's track,
The mills of whose hearts ran right,
Though under a roof of black ;
Crushed of a martyred race,
Jet-jewelry of your clan,

You showed with what good grace
A man may die for man.
To cringe and toil and bleed,
Your sires and you were born ;
You grew in the ground of greed,
You throve in the frost of scorn !
But now, as your fireless ashes
Feed Liberty's fruitful tree,
The black race proudly flashes
The star-words " We are free !"
Men who died in sight
Of the long-sought promise-land,
Would that these flowers were bright
As your deeds are true and grand !

[RESPONSE.]

Oh ! we had hearts, as brave and true
As those that lighter covering knew ;
Love's flowers bloomed in us, pure and bright,
As if the vases were of white !
And we had homes, as sweet and rare
As if our household gods were fair ;
But Death's was not the only dart
That came to force our joys apart !
And we had souls, that saw the sky,
And heard the angels singing nigh ;
But oft in gloom those souls would set,
As if God had not found them yet !

Columbia brought us from afar—
She chained us to her triumph-car;
She drove us, fettered, through the street,
She lashed us, toiling at her feet!

We prayed to her, as prone we lay;
She turned her scornful face away!
She glanced at us, when sore afraid;
We rose, and hurried to her aid!

White faces sunk into the grave—
Black faces, too—and all were brave;
Their red blood thrilled Columbia's heart—
It could not tell the two apart.

v.

Boys, whose glossy hair
Grows gray in the age of the grave,
Who lie so humble there,
Because you were strong and brave;
You, whose lives cold set
Like a Winter sun ill-timed,
Whose hearts ran down ere yet
The noon of your lives had chimed;
You, who in the sun
Of girlhood's smiles were basking,
Who left fresh hearts all won—
White hands to be had for asking;
You, whose bright true faces
Are dimmed with clouds of dust,

Who hide in the gloomy places,
And cringe in the teeth of rust;
Do you know your fathers are near,
The wrecks of their pride to meet?
Do you know your mothers are here,
To throw their hearts at your feet?
Do you know the maiden hovers
O'er you, with bended knee,
Dreaming what royal lovers
Such lovers as you would be?
Ruins of youthful graces,
Strong buds crushed in Spring,
Lift up your phantom faces,
And see the flowers we bring.

[RESPONSE.]

We struck our camp at break of day—we
marched into the fight;
We laid the rose of pleasure down, and grasped
the thorns of right.
The drum's roll was joy to us; the fife was
sweetly shrill;
The waving of our country's flag—it made our
pulses thrill.
They cheered us as we walked the streets; they
marched us to and fro;
And they who stayed spoke loud to us how brave
it was to go.

Our faces set with iron deeds that yet were to
be done ;

Our muskets clean and bright and new, and
glistening in the sun ;

It was so like some tournament—some grander
sort of play—

That time we bravely shouldered arms, and
marched, marched away !

There came a sudden dash of tears from those
who said good-bye—

We set our teeth together tight, and made them
no reply.

There leaped a moisture to our eyes, but Pride
was there, on guard,

And would not pass the aching tears that came
so fierce and hard.

'Twould never do to droop our heads so early
in the fray !

So gallantly we shouldered arms, and marched,
marched away.

But when the cold and cruel night about our
tents did creep,

And Memory took the midnight watch, and
Pride had gone to sleep,

When hard Endurance threw aside the mask
that he had worn,

And all we had a day ago seemed ever from us
torn,

And when the boy within us had to perish for
the man,

'Twas then the holiday was done—'twas then
the fight began!

Full many arts of agony can Trouble's hand
employ;

And none of them but she will use upon a
home-sick boy!

The old house came back to us; and every
scene was there,

The bright and cheerful morning hour—the
singing and the prayer;

(Before us, every olden scene in perfect outline
lay;

There never was a view so clear that seemed so
far away!)

The neat and tidy noon-time—the evening
banquet spread—

The smiles that flew from face to face—the
pleasant words we said;

The evening ramble down the road—'twas then
our fight began,

When first the boy within us had to perish for
the man!

The morning broke; and ere the dark retreated
from the sun,

Came shuddering through the fresh air a heavy
signal-gun;

And oh! it was a grand time when, through
the battle's cry,
We went, to show, if needs must be, how bravely
boys could die!

It seems so like some brilliant dream—that
glory-painted day,
We turned our faces toward the fight, and
marched, marched away!

But when, the frantic battle done, we lay amid
the slain,
Our blue coats trimmed with crimson blood—
our bodies stabbed with pain—

When, with no friend to care for us, we stretched
us out to die,
Without a shelter to our heads except the
distant sky;

'Twas then the agony of war, in all its woe we
knew;
We ordered up our hearts' reserves, and fought
the battle through!

But soon, the hand of suffering its heavy weight
upbore—
And sweet Relief came near to us, and opened
heaven's door:

The spirit brave from every clime gave welcome
to their band;
Old heroes smiled into our eyes, and grasped
us by the hand!

We were the honoured guests of heaven—the
heroes of the day;
With laurel-wreaths upon our brows, we marched
marched away!

VI.

Sleep well, O sad-browed city!
Whatever may betide,
Not under a nation's pity,
But 'mid a nation's pride.
The vines that round you clamber,
Brightest shall be, and best;
You sleep in the honour-chamber—
Each one a royal guest.
Columbia e'er will know you,
From out her glittering towers,
And kisses of love will throw you,
And send you wreaths of flowers;
And e'er in realms of glory
Shine bright your starry claims;
Angels have heard your story,
And God knows all your names.

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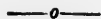
SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON AND COMPANY,
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TO
THE MEMORY OF A NOBLEMAN,
MY
FARMER FATHER.





P R E F A C E.



THE "Farm Ballads" have met with so kind and general a reception as to encourage the publishing of a companion volume.

In this book, also, the author has aimed to give expression to the truth, that with every person, even if humble or debased, there may be some good worth lifting up and saving: that in each human being, though revered and seemingly immaculate, are some faults which deserve pointing out and correcting; and that all circumstances of life, however trivial they appear, may possess those alternations of the comic and pathetic, the good and bad, the joyful and sorrowful, upon which walk the days and nights, the summers and winters, the lives and deaths, of this strange world.

He would take this occasion to give a word of thanks to those who have stayed with him through evil and good report; who have overlooked his literary faults for the sake of the truths he was struggling to tell; and who have believed—what he knows—that he is honest.

With these few words of introduction, the author launches this second bark upon the sea of popular opinion; grinds his axe, and enters once more the great forest of Human Nature, for timber to go on with his boat-building.

W. C.





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FARM LEGENDS.

—o—

THE SCHOOLMASTER'S GUESTS.

I.

THE district schoolmaster was sitting
behind his great book-laden desk,
Close-watching the motions of scholars,
pathetic and gay and grotesque.

As whisper the half-leafless branches, when
autumn's brisk breezes have come,
His little scrub-thicket of pupils sent upward
a half-smothered hum.

Like the frequent sharp bang of a waggon,
when treading a forest path o'er,
Resounded the feet of his pupils, whenever
their heels struck the floor.

There was little Tom Timms on the front seat,
whose face was withstanding a drouth ;
And jolly Jack Gibbs just behind him, with
a rainy new moon for a mouth.

There were both of the Smith boys, as
studious as if they bore names that could
bloom ;
And Jim Jones, a heaven-built mechanic,
the slyest young knave in the room,

With a countenance grave as a horse's, and
his honest eyes fixed on a pin,
Queer-bent on a deeply-laid project to
tunnel Joe Hawkins's skin.

There were anxious young novices, drilling
their spelling-books into the brain,

Loud-puffing each half-whispered letter, like
an engine just starting its train.

There was one fiercely muscular fellow, who
scowled at the sums on his slate,
And leered at the innocent figures a look of
unspeakable hate,

And set his white teeth close together, and
gave his thin lips a short twist,
As to say, "I could whip you, confound you!
could such things be done with the fist!"

There were two knowing girls in the corner,
each one with some beauty possessed,
In a whisper discussing the problem, which
one the young master likes best.

A class in the front, with their readers,
were telling with difficult pains,
How perished brave Marco Bozzaris while
bleeding at all of his veins;

And a boy on the floor to be punished, a
statue of idleness stood,
Making faces at all of the others, and enjoying
the scene all he could.

II.

Around were the walls gray and dingy, which
every old school-sanctum hath,
With many a break on their surface, where
grinned a wood-grating of lath.

A patch of thick plaster, just over the school-
master's rickety chair,
Seemed threat'ningly o'er him suspended, like
Damocles' sword, by a hair.

There were tracks on the desks where the
knife-blades had wandered in search of
their prey ;
Their tops were as duskily spattered as if
they drank ink every day.

The square stove it puffed and it crackled,
and broke out in red-flaming sores,
Till the great iron quadruped trembled like a
dog fierce to rush out-o'-doors.

White snow-flakes looked in at the windows ;
the gale pressed its lips to the cracks ;
And the children's hot faces were streaming,
the while they were freezing their backs.

III.

Now Marco Bozzaris had fallen, and all of his
suff'rings were o'er,
And the class to their seats were retreating,
when footsteps were heard at the door ;

And five of the good district fathers marched
into the room in a row,
And stood themselves up by the hot fire, and
shook off their white cloaks of snow ;

And the spokesman, a grave squire of sixty,
with countenance solemnly sad,
Spoke thus, while the children all listened
with all of the ears that they had :

“ We’ve come here, schoolmaster, intendin’ to
cast an inquirin’ eye ’round,
Concernin’ complaints that’s been entered, an’
fault that has lately been found ;
To pace off the width of your doin’s, an’ wit-
ness what you’ve been about,
An’ see if it’s payin’ to keep you, or whether
we’d best turn ye out.

“ The first thing I’m bid for to mention is,
when the class gets up to read,
You give ’em too tight of a reinin’, an’ touch
em’ up more than they need ;
You’re nicer than wise in the matter of holdin’
the book in onehan’,
An’ you turn a stray *g* in their doin’s, an’ tack
an odd *d* on their *an*’.

There ain't no great good comes of speakin'
the words so *polite*, as *I* see,
Providin' you know what the facts is, an' tell
'em off jest as they be.

An' then there's that readin' in corncert, is
censured from first unto last ;

It kicks up a heap of a racket, when folks is
a-travelin' past.

Whatever is done as to readin,' providin'
things go to *my* say,

Sha'n't hang on no new-fangled hinges, but
swing in the old-fashioned way."

And the other four good district fathers gave
quick the consent that was due,
And nodded obliquely, and muttered, "*Them*
'ere is my sentiments tew."

"Then, as to your spellin' : I've heern tell, by
them as has looked into this,
That you turn the *u* out o' your labour, an'
make the word shorter than 'tis ;

An' clip the *k* off o' yer musick, which makes
my son Ephraim perplexed,
An' when he spells out as he ought'r, you
pass the word on to the next.
They say there's some new-grafted books
here that don't take them letters along ;
But if it is so, just depend on't, them new-
grafted books is made wrong.
You might just as well say that Jackson didn't
know all there was about war,
As to say that old Spellin'-book Webster
didn't know what them letters was for."

And the other four good district fathers gave
quick the consent that was due,
And scratched their heads slyly and softly,
and said, "*Them's my sentiments tew.*"

"Then, also, your 'rithmetic doin's, as they
are reported to me,
Is that you have left Tare an Tret out, an'
also the old Rule o' Three ;

An' likewise brought in a new study, some
high-steppin' scholars to please,
With saw-bucks an' crosses and pot-hooks,
an' *w*'s, *x*, *y*'s, and *z*'s.
We ain't got no time for such foolin'; there
ain't no great good to be reached
By tiptoein' childr'n up higher than ever their
fathers was teached."

And the other four good district fathers gave
quick the consent that was due,
And cocked one eye up to the ceiling, and
said, "*Them's my sentiments tew.*"

"Another thing, I must here mention, comes
into the question to-day,
Concernin' some things in the grammar you're
teachin' our gals for to say.
My gals is as steady as clock-work, an' never
give cause for much fear,
But they come home from school t'other
evenin a-talkin' such stuff as this here :

*'I love,' an' 'Thou lovest,' an' 'He loves,' an'
'Ye love,' an' 'You love,' an' 'They—'*

An' they answered my questions, *'It's gram-mar'—*'twas all I could get 'em to say.

Now if, 'stead of doin' your duty, you're carryin' matters on so

As to make the gals say that they love you,
it's just all that *I* want to know ;—"

IV.

Now Jim, the young heaven-built mechanic,
in the dusk of the evening before,
Had well-nigh unjointed the stove-pipe, to
make it come down on the floor ;

And the squire bringing smartly his foot
down, as a clincher to what he had said,
A joint of the pipe fell upon him, and larruped
him square on the head.

The soot flew in clouds all about him, and
blotted with black all the place,

And the squire and the other four fathers
were peppered with black in the face.

The school, ever sharp for amusement, laid
down all their cumbersome books,
And, spite of the teacher's endeavours, laughed
loud at their visitors' looks.

And the squire, as he stalked to the door-
way, swore oaths of a violet hue ;
And the four district fathers, who followed,
seemed to say, "*Them's my sentiments*
tew"






THREE LINKS OF A LIFE.

I.



WORD went over the hills and plains
Of the scarce-hewn fields that the
Tiffin drains,
Through dens of swamps and jungles of trees
As if it were borne by the buzzing bees
As something sweet for the sons of men ;
Or as if the blackbird and the wren
Had lounged about each ragged clearing
To gossip it in the settlers' hearing ;
Or the partridge drum-corps of the wood
Had made the word by mortals heard,
And Diana made it understood ;
Or the loud-billed hawk of giant sweep
Were told it as something he must keep ;



As now, in the half-built city of Lane,
Where the sons of the settlers strive for
gain,

Where the Indian trail is graded well,
And the anxious ring of the engine-bell
And the Samson Steam's deep, stuttering
word

And the factory's dinner-horn are heard ;
Where burghers fight, in friendly guise,
With spears of bargains and shields of lies ;
Where the sun-smoked farmer, early a-road,
Rides into the town his high-built load
Of wood or wool, or corn or wheat,
And stables his horses in the street ;—
It seems as to each and every one
A deed were known ere it well be done,
As if, in spite of roads or weather,
All minds were whispering together ;
So over the glens and rough hill-sides
Of the fruitful land where the Tiffin glides,
Went the startling whisper, clear and plain,
“ *There's a new-born baby over at Lane !* ”

Now any time, from night till morn,
Or morn till night, for a long time-flight,
Had the patient squaws their children borne ;
And many a callow, coppery wight
Had oped his eyes to the tree-flecked light,
And grown to the depths of the woodland dell,
And the hunt of the toilsome hills as well,
As though at his soul a bow were slung,
And a war-whoop tatooed on his tongue ;
But never before, in the Tiffin's sight,
Had a travail bloomed with a blossom of
white.

And the fire-tanned logger no longer pressed
His yoke-bound steeds and his furnace fire ;
And the gray-linked log-chain drooped to
rest,
And a hard face softened with sweet desire ;
And the settler-housewife, rudely wise,
With the forest's shrewdness in her eyes,
Yearned, with tenderly wondering brain,
For the new-born baby over at Lane.

And the mother lay in her languid bed,
When the flock of visitors had fled—
When the crowd of settlers all had gone,
And left the young lioness alone
With the tiny cub they had come to see
In the rude-built log menagerie ;
When grave Baw Beese, the Indian chief,
As courtly as ever prince in his prime,
Or cavalier of the olden time,
Making his visit kind as brief,
Had beaded the neck of the pale-face miss,
And dimpled her cheek with a farewell
kiss ;
When the rough-clad room was still as
sleek,
Save the deaf old nurse's needle-click,
The beat of the grave clock in its place,
With its ball-tipped tail and owl-like face,
And the iron tea-kettle's droning song
Through its Roman nose so black and long,
The mother lifted her baby's head,
And gave it a clinging kiss, and said .

Why did thou come so straight to me,
Thou queer one?
Thou might have gone where riches be,
Thou dear one!
For when 'twas talked about in heaven,
To whom the sweet soul should be given,
If thou had raised thy pretty voice,
God sure had given to thee a choice,
My dear one, my queer one!

“Babe in the wood” thou surely art,
My lone one:
But thou shalt never play the part,
My own one!
Thou ne’er shalt wander up and down,
With none to claim thee as their own;
Nor shall the Redbreast, as she grieves,
Make up for thee a bed of leaves,
My own one, my lone one!

Although thou be not Riches’ flower,
Thou neat one,

Yet thou hast come from Beauty's bower,
Thou sweet one!

Thy every smile's as warm and bright
As if a diamond mocked its light ;
Thy every tear's as pure a pearl
As if thy father was an earl,

Thou neat one, thou sweet one!

And thou shalt have a queenly name,
Thou grand one :

A lassie's christening's half her fame,
Thou bland one!

And may thou live so good and true,
The honour will but be thy due ;
And friends shall never be ashamed,
Or when or where they hear thee named,
Thou bland one, thou grand one !

E'en like the air—our rule and sport—
Thou meek one,

Thou art my burden and support,
Thou weak one!

Like manna in the wilderness,
A joy hath come to soothe and bless ;
But 'tis a sorrow unto me,
To love as I am loving thee,
 Thou weak one, thou meek one !

The scarlet-coated child-thief waits,
 Thou bright one,
To bear thee through the sky-blue gates,
 Thou light one !
His feverish touch thy brow may pain,
And while I to my sad lips strain
The sheath of these bright-beaming eyes,
The blade may flash back to the skies,
 Thou light one, thou bright one !

And if thou breast the morning storm,
 Thou fair one,
And gird a woman's thrilling form,
 Thou rare one :
Sly hounds of sin thy path will trace,
And on thy unsuspecting face

Hot lust will rest its tarnished eyes,
And thou wilt need be worldly-wise,
Thou rare one, thou fair one !

Oh, that the heaven that smiles to-day,
My blest one,
May give thee light to see thy way,
My best one !
That when around thee creeps The Gloom,
The gracious God will call thee home,
And then, increased a hundredfold,
Thou proudly hand Him back His gold,
My best one, my blest one !

II.

A word went over the many miles
Of the well-tilled land where the Tiffin smiles,
And sought no youthful ear in vain :
“ *There's a wedding a-coming off at Lane !* ”

They stood in the shade of the western door—
Father, mother, and daughter one—

And gazed, as they oft had gazed before,
At the downward glide of the western sun.
The rays of his never-jealous light
Made even the cloud that dimmed him bright ;
And lower he bent, and kissed, as he stood,
The lips of the distant blue-eyed wood.

And just as the tired sun bowed his head,
The sun-browned farmer sighed, and said :

And so you'll soon be goin' away,
My darling little Bess ;
And you ha' been to the store to-day,
To buy your weddin'-dress ;

And so your dear good mother an' I,
Whose love you long have known,
Must lay the light o' your presence by,
And walk the road alone.

So come to-night, with mother and me,
To the porch for an hour or two,
And sit on your old father's knee,
The same as you used to do ;

For we, who ha' loved you many a year,
And clung to you, strong and true,
Since we've had the young Professor here,
Have not had much of you!

But lovers be lovers while earth endures;
And once on a time, be it known,
I helped a girl with eyes like yours
Construct a world of our own;

And we laid it out in a garden spot,
And dwelt in the midst of flowers,
Till we found that the world was a good-
sized lot,
And most of it wasn't ours!

You're heavier, girl, than when you come
To us one cloudy day,
And seemed to feel so little at home,
We feared you wouldn't stay;

Till I knew the danger was passed, because
You'd struck so mortal a track,

And got so independent an' cross,
God never would let you back !

But who would ever ha' had the whim,
When you lay in my arms an' cried,
You'd some time sit here, pretty an' prim,
A-waitin' to be a bride !

But lovers be lovers while earth goes on,
And marry, as they ought ;
And if you would keep the heart you've
won,
Remember what you've been taught :

Look first that your wedded lives be true,
With naught from each other apart ;
For the flowers of true love never grew
In the soil of a faithless heart.

Look next that the buds of health shall rest
Their blossoms upon your cheek ;
For life and love are a burden at best
If the body be sick and weak.

Look next that your kitchen fire be bright,
And your hands be neat and skilled ;
For the love of man oft takes its flight
If his stomach be not well filled.

Look next that your money is fairly earned
Ere ever it be spent ;
For comfort, and love, however turned,
Will ne'er pay ten per cent.

And, next, due care and diligence keep
That the mind be trained and fed ;
For blessings ever look shabby and cheap
That light on an empty head.

And if it shall please the gracious God
That children to you belong,
Remember, my child, and spare the rod
Till you've taught them right and wrong ;

And show 'em that though this life's a start
For the better world, no doubt,
Yet earth an' heaven ain't so far apart
As many good folks make out.

III.

A word went over the broad hill-sweeps
Of the listening land where the Tiffin creeps :

*"She married, holding on high her head ;
But the groom was false as the vows he said ;
With lies and crimes his days are checked ;
The girl is alone, and her life is wrecked."*

The midnight rested its heavy arm
Upon the grief-encumbered farm ;
And hoarse-voiced Sorrow wandered at
will,

Like a moan when the summer's night is still ;
And the spotted cows, with bellies of white,
And well-filled teats all crowded awry,
Stood in the black stalls of the night,
Nor herded nor milked, and wondered why.

And the house was gloomy, still, and cold ;
And the hard-palmed farmer, newly old,

Sat in an unfrequented place,
Hiding e'en from the dark his face;
And a solemn silence rested long
On all, save the cricket's dismal song.

But the mother drew the girl to her breast,
And gave to her spirit words of rest :
Come to my lap, my wee-grown baby; rest
 thee upon my knee ;
You have been travelling toward the light,
 and drawing away from me ;
You turned your face from my dark path to
 catch the light o' the sun,
And 'tis no more nor less, my child, than
 children ever have done.
So you joined hands with one you loved,
 when we to the cross-road came,
And went your way, as Heaven did say, and
 who but Heaven to blame ?

You must not weep that he you chose was all
 the time untrue,

Or stab with hate the man whose heart you
thought was made for you.
The love God holds for your bright soul is
more to get and give
Than all the love of all of the men while He
may bid them live.
So let your 'innocence stanch the wound made
by another's guilt ;
For Vengeance' blade was ever made with
neither guard nor hilt.

Who will avenge you, darling ? The sun that
shines on high.
He will paint the picture of your wrongs
before the great world's eye.
He will look upon your sweet soul, in its pure
mantle of white,
Till it shine upon your enemies, and dazzle
all their sight.
He'll come each day to point his finger at
him who played the knave ;

And 'tis denied from him to hide, excepting
in the grave.

Who will avenge you, darling? Your sister,
the sky above.

Each cloud she floats above you shall be a
token of love ;

She will bend o'er you at night-fall her pure
broad breast of blue,

And every gem that glitters there shall flash
a smile to you.

And all her great wide distances to your good
name belong ;

'Tis not so far from star to star as 'twixt the
right and wrong.

Who will avenge you, darling? All the
breezes that blow.

They will whisper to each other your tale of
guiltless woe ;

The perfumes that do load them your inno-
cence shall bless.

And they will soothe your aching brow with
pitying, kind caress.

They will sweep away the black veil that
hangs about you: fame :

There is no cloud that long can shroud a vir-
tuous woman's name.

Who will avenge you, darling? The one who
proved untrue.

His memory must undo him, whate'er his will
may do ;

The pitch-black night will come when he
must meet Remorse alone ;

He will rush at your avenging as if it were
his own.

His every sin is but a knot that yet shall
hold him fast ;

For guilty hands but twine the strands that
fetter them at last.

Lay thee aside thy grief, darling !—lay thee
aside thy grief !

And Happiness will cheer thee beyond all
thy belief !

As oft as winter comes summer, as sure as
night comes day,

And as swift as sorrow cometh, so swift it
goeth away !

E'en in your desolation you are not quite
unblest :

Not all who choose may count their woes
upon a mother's breast.





ROB, THE PAUPER.

I.

ROB, the Pauper, is loose again.
Through the fields and woods he
races.

He shuns the women, he beats the men,
He kisses the children's frightened faces.
There is no mother he hath not fretted ;
There is no child he hath not petted ;
There is no house, by road or lane,
He did not tap at the window-pane,
And make more dark the dismal night,
And set the faces within with white.

Rob, the Pauper, is wild of eye,
Wild of speech, and wild of thinking ;
Over his forehead broad and high,
Each with each wild locks are linking.

Yet there is something in his bearing
Not quite what a pauper should be wearing :
In every step is a shadow of grace ;
The ghost of a beauty haunts his face ;
The rags half-sheltering him to-day
Hang not on him in a beggarly way.

Rob, the Pauper, is crazed of brain :
The world is a lie to his shattered seeming.
No woman is true unless insane ;
No man but is full of lecherous scheming.
Woe to the wretch, of whate'er calling,
That crouches beneath his cudgel's falling !
Pity the wife, howe'er high-born,
Who wilts beneath his words of scorn !
But youngsters he caresses as wild
As a mother would kiss a rescued child.

He hath broke him loose from his poor-house
cell ;
He hath dragged him clear from rope and
fetter.

They might have thought; for they know
full well

They could keep a half-caged panther
better.

Few are the knots so strategy-shunning
That they can escape his maniac cunning;
Many a stout bolt strives in vain
To bar his brawny shoulders' strain;
The strongest men in town agree,
That the Pauper is good for any three.

He hath crossed the fields, the woods, the
street;

He hides in the swamp his wasted feature;
The frog leaps over his bleeding feet;

The turtle crawls from the frightful creature
The loud mosquito, hungry-flying,
For his impoverished blood is crying;
The scornful hawk's loud screaming sneer
Falls painfully upon his ear;
And close to his unstartled eye
The rattlesnake creeps noisily by

He hath fallen into a slough of sleep,
 A haze of the past bends softly o'er him
 His restless spirit a watch doth keep,
 As Memory's canvas glides before him.
 Through slumber's distances he travels;
 The tangled skein of his mind unravels;
 The bright past dawns through a cloud of
 dreams,
 And once again in his prime he seems;
 For over his heart's lips, as a kiss,
 Sweepeth a vision like to this:

A cozy kitchen, a smooth-cut lawn,
 A zephyr of flowers in the bright air straying;
 A graceful child, as fresh as dawn,
 Upon the greensward blithely playing;
 Himself on the door-stone idly sitting,
 A blonde-haired woman about him flitting.
 She fondly stands beside him there,
 And deftly toys with his coal-black hair,
 And hovers about him with her eyes,
 And whispers to him, pleading-wise:

O Rob! why will you plague my heart? why
will you try me so?

Is she so fair, is she so sweet, that you
must need desert me?

I saw you kiss her twice and thrice behind
the maple row,

And each caress you gave to her did like a
dagger hurt me.

Why should for her and for her smiles your
heart a moment hunger?

What though her shape be trim as mine, her
face a trifle younger?

She does not look so young to you as I when
we were wed;

She cannot speak more sweet to you than
words that I have said;

She cannot love you half so well as I, when
all is done;

And she is not your wedded wife—the
mother of your son.

O Rob! you smile and toss your head; you
mock me in your soul;

You say I would be overwise—that I am
jealous of you ;
And what if my tight-bended heart should
spring beyond control ?
My jealous tongue but tells the more the
zeal with which I love you.
Oh, we might be so peaceful here, with
nothing of reproving !
Oh, we might be so happy here, with none
to spoil our loving !
Why should a joy be more a joy because,
forsooth, 'tis hid ?
How can a kiss be more a kiss because it is
forbid ?
Why should the love you get from her be
counted so much gain,
When every smile you give to her but adds
unto my pain ?

O Rob! you say there is no guilt betwixt the
girl and you :

Do you not know how slack of vows may
break the bond that's dearest ?
You twirl a plaything in your hand, not
minding what you do,
And first you know it flies from you, and
strikes the one that's nearest.
So do not spoil so hopelessly you ne'er may
cease your ruing ;
The finger-post of weakened vows points
only to undoing.
Remember there are years to come, and
there are thorns of woe
That you may grasp if once you let the
flowers of true love go.
Remember the increasing bliss of marriage
undefiled ;
Remember all the pride or shame that waits
for yonder child !

II.

Rob, the Pauper, awakes and runs ;
A clamour cometh clear and clearer.

They are hunting him with dogs and guns ;
 They are every moment pressing nearer.
 Through pits of stagnant pools he pushes,
 Through the thick sumac's poison bushes ;
 He runs and stumbles, leaps and clambers,
 Through the dense thicket's breathless
 chambers.

The swamp-slime stains at his bloody tread ;
 The tamarack branches rasp his head.

From bog to bog, and from slough to
 slough ;

He flees, but his foes come yelling nearer ;
 And ever unto his senses now

The long-drawn bay of the hounds is
 clearer.

He is worn and worried, hot and panting ;
 He staggers at every footstep's planting ;
 The hot blood races through his brain ;
 His every breath is a twinge of pain ;
 Black shadows dance before his eyes ;
 The echoes mock his agony-cries.

They have hunted him to the open field ;

He is falling upon their worn-out mercies.

They loudly call to him to yield ;

He hoarsely pays them back in curses.

His blood-shot eye is wildly roaming ;

His firm-set mouth with rage is foaming ;

He waves his cudgel, with war-cry loud,

And dares the bravest of the crowd.

There springs at his throat a hungry hound ;

He dashes its brains into the ground.

Rob, the Pauper, is sorely pressed.

The men are crowding all around him.

He crushes one to a bloody rest,

And breaks again from the crowd that
bound him.

The crash of a pistol comes unto him—

A well-spiced ball goes crushing through him ;

But still he rushes on—yet on—

Until, at last, some distance won,

He mounts a fence with a madman's ease,

And this is something of what he sees :

A lonely cottage, some tangled grass,
 Thickets of thistles, dock, and mullein ;
 A forest of weeds he scarce can pass,
 A broken chimney, cold and sullen ;
 Trim housewife-ants, with rush uncertain,
 The spider hanging her gauzy curtain.
 The Pauper falls on the dusty floor,
 And there rings in his failing ear once
 more
 A voice as it might be from the dead,
 And says, as it long ago hath said :

O Rob ! I have a word to say—a cruel word
 —to you :

I cannot longer live a lie—the truth for
 air is calling !
 I cannot keep the secret locked that long
 has been your due,
 Not if you strike me to the ground, and
 spurn me in my falling !
 He came to me when first a cloud across your
 smile was creeping—

He came to me—he brought to me a slighted
heart for keeping ;
He would not see my angry frown ; he sought
me, day by day ;
I flung at him hot words of scorn, I turned
my face away.
I bade him dread my husband's rage when
once his words were known.
He smiled at me, and said I had no husband
of my own !

O Rob ! his words were overtrue ! they burned
into my brain !
I could not rub them out again, were I
awake or sleeping !
I saw you kiss her twice and thrice—my chid-
ings were in vain—
And well I knew your wayward heart had
wandered from my keeping.
I counted all that was at stake—I bribed my
pride with duty ;

I knelt before your manly face, in worship of
its beauty ;
I painted pictures for your eyes you were too
blind to see ;
I worked at all the trades of love, to earn you
back to me ;
I threw myself upon your heart ; I plead and
prayed to stay ;
I held my hands to you for help—you pushed
them both away !

He came to me again ; he held his eager
love to me—
To me, whose weak and hungry heart
deep desolation dreaded !
And I had learned to pity him ; but still my
will was free,
And once again I threatened him, and
warned him I was wedded.
He bade me follow him, and see my erring
fancy righted.

We crept along a garden glade by moon-
beams dimly lighted ;
She silent sat 'mid clustering vines, though
much her eyes did speak,
And your black hair was tightly pressed unto
her glowing cheek. . . .
It crazed me, but he soothed me sweet with
love's unnumbered charms ;
I, desolate, turned and threw myself into his
desolate arms !

O Rob ! you know how little worth, when
once a woman slips,
May be the striking down a hand to save
herself from falling !
Once more my heart groped for your heart,
my tired lips sought your lips ;
But 'twas too late—'twas after dark—and
you were past recalling.
Tis hard to claim what once is given ; my
foe was unrelenting ;

Vain were the tempests of my rage, the mists
of my repenting.

The night was dark, the storm had come, the
fancy-stars of youth

Were covered over by the thick unfading
cloud of truth ;

So one by one the stars went back, each hid
its pale white face,

Till all was dark, and all was drear, and all
was black disgrace.

O Rob ! good-bye ; a solemn one !—'tis till
the Judgment-day.

You look about you for the boy ? You
never more shall see him.

He's crying for his father now full many
miles away ;

For he is mine—you need not rage—you
cannot find or free him.

We might have been so peaceful here, with
nothing of reproving—

We might have been so happy here, with
none to spoil our loving—
As I, a guilty one, might kiss a corpse's
waiting brow,
I bend to you where you have fallen, and
calmly kiss you now ;
As I, a wronged and injured one, might seek
escape's glad door,
I wander forth into the world, to enter here
no more.

III.

Rob, the Pauper, is lying in state.
In a box of rough-planed boards, unpainted,
He waits at the poor-house grave-yard
gate,
For a home by human lust untainted.
They are crowding around and closely peer-
ing
At the face of the foe who is past their fear-
ing ;

The men lift children up to see
The arms of the man who was good for three ;
The women gaze and hold their breath,
For the man looks kingly even in death.

They have gone to their homes anear and
far—

Their joys and griefs, their loves and
hating ;

Some to sunder the ties that are,

And some to cooing and wooing and mat-
ing.

They will pet and strike, they will strive and
blunder,

And leer at their woes with innocent wonder ;

They will swiftly sail love's delicate bark,

With never a helm, in the dangerous dark ;

They will ne'er quite get it understood

That the Pauper's woes were for their good.



THE THREE LOVERS.

THERE'S a precept, young man, you
should follow with care :
If you're courting a girl, court her
honest and square.

Mr. 'Liakim Smith was a hard-fisted farmer,
Of moderate wealth,
And immoderate health,
Who fifty-odd years, in a stub-and-twist
armour
Of callus and tan,
Had fought like a man
His own dogged progress, through trials and
cares,
And log-heaps and brush-heaps and wild-cats
and bears,

And agues and fevers and thistles and briars,
Poor kinsmen, rich foemen, false saints, and
true liars ;

Who oft, like the "man in our town," over-
wise,

Through the brambles of error had scratched
out his eyes,

And when the unwelcome result he had seen,
Had altered his notion,
Reversing the motion,

And scratched them both in again, perfect and
clean ;

Who had weathered some storms, as a sailor
might say,

And tacked to the left and the right of his
way,

Till he found himself anchored, past tempests
and breakers,

Upon a good farm of a hundred-odd acres.

As for 'Liakim's wife, in four words may be
told

Her whole standing in life :
She was 'Liakim's wife.
Whereas she'd been young, she was now
growing old,
But did, she considered, as well as one could,
When HE looked on her hard work, and saw
that 'twas good.
The family record showed only a daughter ;
But she had a face,
As if each fabled Grace
In a burst of delight to her bosom had caught
her,
Or as if all the flowers in each Smith genera-
tion
Had blossomed at last in one grand culmina-
tion.
Style lingered unconscious in all of her
dresses ;
She'd starlight for glances, and sunbeams for
tresses.
Wherever she went, with her right royal
tread,

Each youth, when he'd passed her a bit,
turned his head ;
And so one might say, though the figure be
strained,
She had turned half the heads that the town-
ship contained.

Now Bess had a lover—a monstrous young
hulk ;

A farmer by trade—
Strong, sturdy, and staid ;

A man of good parts—if you counted by
bulk ;

A man of great weight—by the scales ; and,
indeed,

A man of some depth—as was shown by his
feed.

His face was a fat exclamation of wonder ;

His voice was not quite unsuggestive of
thunder ;

His laugh was a cross 'twixt a yell and a
chuckle ;

He'd a number one foot,
And a number ten boot,
And a knock-down reserved in each separate
knuckle.

He'd a heart mad in love with the girl of his
choice,
Who made him alternately mope and rejoice,
By dealing him one day discouraging messes,
And soothing him next day with smiles and
caresses.

Now Bess had a lover, who hoped her to
wed—

A rising young lawyer — more rising than
read ;

Whose theories all were quite startling ; and
who,

Like many a chap
In these days of strange hap,
Was living on what he expected to do ;
While his landlady thought 'twould have
been rather neat

Could he only have learned,
Till some practice was earned,
To subsist upon what he expected to eat.
He was bodily small, howe'er mentally great,
And suggestively less than a hundred in weight.

Now Bess had a lover—young Patrick ; a
sinner,

And lad of all work,
From the suburbs of Cork,
Who worked for her father, and thought *he*
could win her.

And if Jacob could faithful serve fourteen
years through,

And still thrive and rejoice,
For the girl of his choice,
He thought he could play the same game
one or two.

Now 'Liakim Smith had a theory hid,
And by egotism fed,
Somewhere up in his head,

That a dutiful daughter should always as bid
Grow old in the service of him who begot
her,

Imbibe his beliefs,

Have a care for his griefs,

And faithfully bring him his cider and water.
So, as might be expected, he turned up his
nose,

Also a cold shoulder, to Bessie's two beaux,
And finally turned them away from his door.
Forbidding them ever to enter it more ;
And detailed young Patrick as kind of a
guard,

With orders to keep them both out of the yard.
So Pat took his task, with a treacherous smile,

And bullied the small one,

And dodged the big tall one,

And slyly made love to Miss Bess all the
while.

But one evening, when 'Liakim and wife
crowned their labours

With praise and entreating
At the village prayer-meeting,
And Patrick had stepped for a while to some
neighbour's,
The lawyer had come, in the trimmest of
dress,
And, dapper and slim,
And small, e'en for him,
Was holding a session of court with Miss
Bess.
And Bess, sly love-athlete, was suited first
rate
At a flirtation-mill with this legal light-weight;
And was listening to him as minutes spun on,
Of pleas he could make,
And of fees he would take,
And of suits that he should, in the future,
have won;
When just as the cold, heartless clock counted
eight,
Miss Bessie's quick ear caught a step at the
gate.

"'Tis mother!" she cried: "oh, go quick, I implore!

But father 'll drive 'round and come in the back-door!

You cannot escape them, however you turn!
So hide for a while—let me see—in this churn!"

The churn was quite large enough for him to turn in—

Expanded out so,

By machinery to go,

'Twould have done for a dairy-man-Cyclops to churn in.

'Twas fixed for attaching a pitman or lever,
To go by a horse-power—a notion quite clever,

Invented and built by the Irishman, Pat,
Who pleased Mrs. 'Liakim hugely by that.

The lawyer went into the case with much ease,
And hugged the belief
That the cause would be brief,

And settled himself down with hardly a
squeeze.

And Bess said, "Keep still, for there's plenty
of room,"

And shut down the cover, and left him in
gloom.

But scarcely were matters left decently so,

In walked—not her mother,

But—worry and bother!—

The mammoth young farmer, whose first
name was Joe.

And he gleefully sung, in a heavy bass tone,

Which came in one note

From the depths of his throat,

"I'm glad I have come, since I've found you
alone.

Let's sit here a while, by this kerosene light,

An' spark it a while now with all of our
might."

And Bessie was willing; and so they sat
down,

The maiden so fair and the farmer so brown.
They talked of things great, and they talked
of things small,

 ' Which none could condemn,
 And which may have pleased them,
But which did not interest the lawyer at all ;
And Bessie seemed giving but little concern
To the feelings of him she had shut in the
churn.

Till Bessie just artlessly mentioned the man
And Joe with a will to abuse him began,
And called him full many an ignoble name,

 Appertaining to "Scrubby,"
 And "Shorty," and "Stubby,"
And other descriptions not wide of the same ;
And Bessie said naught in the lawyer's behalf,
But seconded Joe, now and then, with a
laugh ;

And the lawyer said nothing, but winked at
his fate,

 And, somewhat abashed,
 And decidedly dashed,

Accepted Joe's motions sans vote or debate.
And several times he, with policy stern,
Repressed a desire to break out of the churn,
Well knowing he thus might get savagely
used,

And if not quite eaten,
Would likely be beaten,
And probably injured as well as abused.

But now came another quick step at the door,
And Bessie was fearful, the same as before ;
And tumbling Joe over a couple of chairs,
With a general sound
Of thunder all 'round,

She hurried him up a short pair of back-stairs ;
And close in the garret condemned him to
wait

Till orders from her, be it early or late.
Then tripping her way down the staircase,
she said,

"I'll smuggle them off when the folks get to
bed."

It was not her parents ; 'twas crafty young
 Pat,
Returned from his visit ; and straightway *he*
 sat
Beside her, remarking, The chairs were in
 place,
So he would sit near her, and view her sweet
 face.
So gaily they talked, as the minutes fast flew,
Discussing such matters as both of them
 knew,
While often Miss Bessie's sweet laugh
 answered back,
 For Pat, be it known,
 Had some wit of his own,
And in irony's efforts was sharp as a tack.
And finally Bessie his dancing tongue led,
 By a sly dext'rous turn,
 To the man in the churn,
And the farmer, who eagerly listened o'er-
 head ;
Whereat the young Irishman volubly gave

A short dissertation,
Whose main information
Was that one was a fool, and the other a knave.

Slim chance there must be for the world e'er
to learn

How pleasant this was to the man in the
churn ;

Though, to borrow a figure lent by his posi-
tion,

He was doubtless in somewhat a worked-up
condition.

It may ne'er be sung, and it may ne'er be said,
How well it was liked by the giant o'erhead.

He lay on a joist—for there wasn't any floor—

And the joists were so few,

And so far apart too,

He could not, in comfort, preempt any more ;
And he nearly had knocked through the
plastering quite,

And challenged young Pat to a fair and
square fight ;

But he dared not do otherwise than Bessie
had said,
For fear, as a lover, he might lose his head.

But now from the meeting the old folks
returned,
And sat by the stove as the fire brightly
burned ;
And Patrick came in from the care of the
team ;
And since in the house there was overmuch
cream,
He thought that the horses their supper might
earn,
And leave him full way
To plow early next day,
By working that night for a while at the churn.

The old folks consented ; and Patrick went
out,
Half chuckling, for he had a shrewd Irish
doubt,

From various slight sounds he had chanced
to discern,
That Bess had a fellow shut up in the churn.

The lawyer, meanwhile, in his hiding-place
cooped,
Low-grunted and hitched and contorted and
stooped,
But hung to the place like a man in a dream ;
And when the young Irishman went for the
team,
To stay or to fly, he could hardly tell which ;
But hoping to get
Neatly out of it yet,
He concluded to hang till the very last hitch.

The churn was one side of the house, recol-
lect,
So rods with the horse-power outside could
connect ;
And Bess stood so near that she took the
lamp's gleam in

While her mother was cheerfully pouring the
cream in ;
Who, being near-sighted, and minding her cup,
Had no notion of what she was covering up ;
But the lawyer, meanwhile, had he dared to
have spoke,
Would have owned that he saw the whole
cream of the joke.

But just as the voice of young Patrick came
strong
And clear through the window, "All ready!
go 'long!"
And just as the dasher its motion began,
Stirred up by its knocks,
Like a jack-in-the-box,
He jumped from his damp, dripping prison
—and ran,
And made a frog-leap o'er the stove and a
chair,
With some crisp Bible words not intended
as prayer.

All over the kitchen he rampaged and
tore,

And ran against everything there but the
door;

Tipped over old 'Liakim flat on his back,
And left a long trail of rich cream on his
track.

"Ou! ou! 'tis a ghost!" quavered 'Liakim's
wife;

"A ghost, if I ever saw one in my life!"

"The devil!" roared 'Liakim, rubbing his
shin.

"No! no!" shouted Patrick, who just then
came in:

"It's only a lawyer; the devil ne'er runs—
To bring on him a laugh—

In the shape of a calf;

It isn't the devil; it's one of his sons!

If so that the spalpeen had words he could
utter,

He'd swear he loved Bessie, an' loved no one
butther."

Now Joe lay full length on the scantling
o'erhead,

And tried to make out

What it all was about,

By list'ning to all that was done and was
said ;

But somehow his balance became uncon-
trolled,

And he on the plastering heavily rolled.

It yielded instanter, came down with a crash,

And fell on the heads of the folks with a
smash.

And there his plump limbs through the
orifice swung,

And he caught by the arms and disgracefully
hung,

His ponderous body, so clumsy and thick,

Wedged into that posture as tight as a brick.

And 'Liakim Smith, by amazement made
dumb

At those legs in the air

Hanging motionless there,

Concluded that this time the devil had come ;
And seizing a chair, he belabored them well,
While the head pronounced words that no
printer would spell.

And there let us leave them, 'mid outcry and
clatter,
To come to their wits, and then settle the
matter ;
And take for the moral this inference fair :
If you're courting a girl, court her honest and
square.





THE SONG OF HOME.

"**S**ING me a song, my Alice, and let it
be your choice,
So as you pipe out plainly, and
give me the sweet o' your voice
An' it be not new-fashioned: the new-made
tunes be cold,
An' never awake my fancy like them that's
good an' old.
Fie on your high-toned gimcracks, with rests
an' beats an' points,
Shaking with trills an' quavers—creakin' in
twenty joints!
Sing me the good old tunes, girl, that roll
right off the tongue,
Such as your mother gave me when she an'
I was young."

So said the Farmer Thompson, smoking his
pipe of clay,

Close by his glowing fire-place, at close of a
winter day.

He was a lusty fellow, with grizzled beard
unshorn,

Hair half combed and flowing, clothing over-
worn ;

Boots of mammoth pattern, with many a
patch and rent ;

Hands as hard as leather, body with labour
bent ;

Face of resolution, and lines of pain and care,
Such as the slow world's vanguards are ever
doomed to bear ;

While from his eyes the yearnings of unem-
ployed desire

Gleamed like the fitful embers of a half-
smothered fire.

Alice, the country maiden, with the sweet
loving face,

Sung these words to an old air, with an un-
studied grace :

"There's nothing like an old tune, when friends are far
apart,
To 'mind them of each other, and draw them heart to
heart.
New strains across our senses on magic wings may fly,
But there's nothing like an old tune to make the heart
beat high.

"The scenes we have so oft recalled when once again we view,
Have lost the smile they used to wear, and seem to us un-
true ;
We gaze upon their faded charms with disappointed eye ;
And there's nothing like an old tune to make the heart
beat high.

"We clasp the hands of former friends—we feel again their
kiss—
But something that we loved in them, in sorrow now we
miss ;
For women fade and men grow cold as years go hurrying
by ;
And there's nothing like an old tune to make the heart
beat high.

"The forest where we used to roam, we find it swept away ;
The cottage where we lived and loved, it moulders to
decay ;
And all that feeds our hungry hearts may wither, fade,
and die ;
There's nothing like an old tune to make the heart best
high."

"That was well sung, my Alice," the farmer
proudly said,

When the last strain was finished, and the
last word had fled ;

"That is as true as gospel ; and since you've
sung so well,

I'll give you a bit of a story you've never
heard me tell.

"When the cry o' the axes first through
these parts was heard,

I was young and happy, and chipper as a bird ;
Fast as a flock o' pigeons the days appeared
to fly,

With no one 'round for a six mile except
your mother an' I.

Now we are rich, an' no one except the
Lord to thank ;

Acres of land all 'round us, money in the
bank ;

But happiness don't stick by me, an' sun-
shine ain't so true

As when I was five-an'-twenty, with twice
enough to do.

“As for the way your mother an' I made
livin' go,

Just some time you ask her—of course she
ought to know.

When she comes back in the morning from
nursing Rogers' wife,

She'll own she was happy in them days as
ever in her life.

For I was sweet on your mother ;—why
should not I be ?

She was the gal I had fought for—she was
the world to me ;

And since we'd no relations, it never did
occur

To me that I was a cent less than all the
world to her.

“But it is often doubtful which way a tree
may fall ;

When you are tol'd certain, you are not
sure at all.

When you are overconscious of travelin' right
—that day

Look for a warnin' guide-post that points the
other way.

For when you are feeling the safest, it very
oft falls out

You rush head-foremost into a big bull-thistle
o' doubt.

"'Twas in the fall o' '50 that I set out, one
day,

To hunt for deer an' turkey, or what come
in my way ;

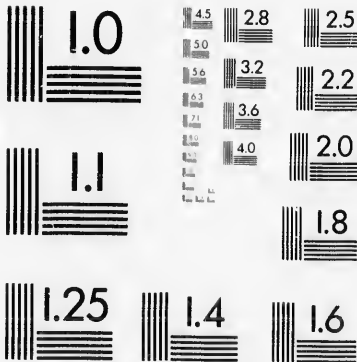
And wanderin' through the forest, my home
I did not seek

Until I was gone from the cabin the better
part of a week.

"As Saturday's sun was creeping its western
ladder down,



(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



1653 East Main Street
Rochester, New York 14609 USA
(716) 482 - 0300 - Phone
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I stopped for a bit of supper at the house of
Neighbour Brown.

He was no less my neighbour that he lived
ten miles away ;

For neighbourhoods then was different from
what they are to-day.

“ Now Mrs. Brown was clever—a good, well-
meaning soul—

And brought to time exactly things under
her control.

By very few misgoings were her perfections
marred.

She meant well, with one trouble—she meant
it 'most too hard.

“ Now when I had passed the time o' day,
and laughed at Brown's last jokes,
Nat'rally I asked 'em if they had seen my
folks.

Whereat she shrugged her shoulders quite
dangerously-wise,

And looked as if a jury was sittin' in her eyes;
And after a prudent silence I thought would
never end,
Asked if my wife had a brother, or cousin, or
other friend;
For some one, passing my cabin, she'd heard,
had lately found
Rather a sleek an' han'some young fellow
hanging round;
Of course it was a brother, or somethin' of
that sort?
I told her 'twas a brother, and cut my supper
short.

"Which same was wrong, as viewed through
a strictly moral eye;
But who, to shield his wife's name, wouldn't
sometime tell a lie?
'Twas nothing but a lie, girl, and for a lie
'twas meant:
If brothers sold at a million, she couldn't ha'
raised a cent.

" Home I trudged in a hurry—who could
that fellow be ?

Home I trudged in a hurry, bound that I
would see ;

And when I reached my cabin I thought
'twas only fair

To peep in at the window an' find out what
was there.

" A nice, good-fashioned fellow as any in the
land

Sat by my wife quite closely, a-holdin' of her
hand,

An' whispering something into her willin'
listenin' ear,

Which I should judge by her actions she
rather liked to hear.

" Now seeing such singular doin's before my
very eyes,

The Devil he came upon me, and took me
by surprise ;

He put his hand on my mouth, girl, and
never a word I said,
But raised my gun an' aimed it straight at
the stranger's head.

"Lightly I touched the trigger; I drew a
good long breath—
My heart was full o' Satan, my aim was full
o' death;
But at that very instant they broke out, clear
an' strong,
A-singing, both together, a good old-fashioned
song.

"That simple little song, girl, still in my ears
does ring;
'Twas one I had coaxed your mother while
courting her to sing;
Never a word I remember how any verses
goes,
But this is a little ditty that everybody
knows:

How though about a palace you might
for ever hang,
You'll never feel so happy as in your own
shebang.

"It woke the recollections of happy days an'
years—
I slowly dropped my rifle, an' melted into
tears.

.

"It was a neighbour's daughter, made on the
tomboy plan,
Who, keeping my wife company, had dressed
like a spruce young man.
An' full of new-born praises to Him where
they belong,
I thanked the Lord for makin' the man who
made that good old song."





PAUL'S RUN OFF WITH THE SHOW.



JANE, 'tis so—it is so!

How *can* I—his mother—bear it?

Paul's run off with the show!

Put all his things in the garret—

All o' his working gear;

He's never a-going to wear it,

Never again coming here.

If he gets sick, deaf, or blind,

If he falls and breaks his leg,

He can borrow an organ an' grind,

He can hobble about and beg.

Let him run—good luck behind him!

I wonder which way they went?

I suppose I might follow an' find him.--

But no! let him keep to his bent!
I'm never a-going to go
For a boy that runs off with the show!

Lay his books up in the chamber;
He never will want them now;
Never *did* want them much.
He al'ays could run and clamber,
Make somersets on the mow,
Hand-springs, cart-wheels, an' such,
And other profitless turning;
But when it came to learning,
He would always shirk somehow.

I was trimming him out for a preacher,
When he got over being wild
(He was always a sturdy creature—
A sinfully thrifty child);
A Cartwright preacher, perhaps,
As could eat strong boiled dinners,
Talk straight to saucy chaps,
And knock down fightin' sinners.

I told him of all Heaven's mercies,
Raked his sins o'er and o'er,
Made him learn Scripture verses,
Half a thousand or more ;
I sung the hymn-book through him,
I whipped the Bible into him,
In grace to make him grow :
What did such training call for ?
What did I name him Paul for ?—
To have him run off with a show ?

All o' the wicked things
That are found in circus rings,
I taught him to abhor 'em ;
But he always was crazy for 'em.
I know what such follies be ;
For once in my life—woe's me—
Let's see—
'Twas the fall before Paul was born—
I myself was crazy for shows.
How it happened, Goodness knows ;
But howe'er it did befall—

Whate'er may ha' been the reason—
For once I went to all
The circuses of the season.
I watched 'em, high an' low,
Painfully try to be jolly;
I laughed at the tricks o' the clown:
I went and saw their folly,
In order to preach it down:
Little enough did I know
That Paul would run off with a show!

What'll they do with the boy?
They'll stand him upon a horse,
To his exceeding joy,
To teach him to ride, of course.
Sakes! he can do that now!
He can whip old Jim to a jump,
And ride upon him standing,
And never get a thump—
Never a bit of harm.
He has trained all the beasts on the farm,
From the ducks to the brindle cow,

To follow his commanding.
Sakes! that it should be so!
Him's I've brought up i' the bosom
Of church, and all things good:
All my pains—I shall lose 'em—
Might have known that I would.
I had hopes beyond my countin',
I had faith as big as a mountain;
But somehow I knew all the while
He'd turn out in some such style—
Always had that fear.

Well, he's never comin' back here.
If he comes to any harm,
If he falls an' sprains his arm,
If he slips and breaks his leg,
He can hobble about an' beg.
He can— Who is that boy out there,
Jane,
Skulkin' 'long by the railroad track,
Head an' feet all bare, Jane,
One eye dressed in black?

My boy! Come in! come in!
Come in! come in! come in!
Come in—you shan't be hurt.
Come in—you shall rest—you shall rest.
Why, you're all over blood an' dirt!
Did they hurt you?—well, well, it's too
bad.
So you thought the old home the best?
You won't run off ag'in?
Well, come in, come in, poor lad;
Come in—come in—come in!





THE KEY TO THOMAS' HEART.

RIDE with me, Uncle Nathan ? . . .
I don't care an' I do.
My poor old heart's in a hurry ; I'm
anxious to get through.
My soul outwalks my body ; my legs are far
from strong ;
An' it's mighty kind o' you, doctor, to help
the old man along.
I'm some'at full o' hustle ; there's business to
be done.
I've just been out to the village to see my
youngest son.
You used to know him, doctor, ere he his
age did get,
An' if I ain't mistaken, you sometimes see
him yet.

We took him through his boyhood, with
never a ground for fears ;
But somehow he stumbled over his early
manhood's years.
The landmarks that we showed him, he
seems to wander from,
Though in his heart there was never a better
boy than Tom.

He was quick o' mind an' body in all he done
an' said ;
But all the gold he reached for, it seemed to
turn to lead.
The devil of grog it caught him, an' held
him, though the while
He has never grudged his parents a pleasant
word an' smile.

The devil of grog it caught him, an' then he
turned an' said,
By that which fed from off him, he henceforth
would be fed ;

An' that which lived upon him, should give
him a livin' o'er ;

An' so he keeps that groggery that's next to
Wilson's store.

But howsoe'er he's wandered, I've al'ays so
far heard

That he had a sense of honour, an' never
broke his word ;

An' his mother, from the good Lord, she
says, has understood

That, if he agrees to be sober, he'll keep the
promise good.

An' so when just this mornin' these poor old
eyes o' mine

Saw all the women round him, a-coaxin' him
to sign,

An' when the Widow Adams let fly a home-
spun prayer,

An' he looked kind o' wild like, an' started
unaware,

An' glanced at her an instant, an' then at his
kegs o' rum,
I somehow knew in a minute the turnin'-point
had come ;
An' he would be as good a man as ever yet
there's been,
Or else let go for ever, an' sink in the sea of
sin.

An' I knew, whatever efforts might carry him
or fail,
There was only one could help God to turn
the waverin' scale ;
An' I skulked away in a hurry—I was bound
to do my part—
To get the mother, who carries the key to
Thomas' heart.

She's gettin' old an' feeble, an' childish in her
talk ;
An' we've no horse an' buggy, an' she will
have to walk ;

But she would be fast to come, sir, the
gracious chance to seize,
If she had to crawl to Thomas upon her
hands an' knees.

.

Crawl?—walk? No, not if I know it! So
set your mind at rest.
Why, hang it! I'm Tom's customer, and
said to be his best!
But if this blooded horse here will show his
usual power,
Poor Tom shall see his mother in less than
half an hour.





THE DOCTOR'S STORY.

I.

GOOD folks ever will have their way—
Good folks ever for it must pay.

But we, who are here and everywhere,
The burden of their faults must bear.

We must shoulder others' shame—
Fight their follies, and take their blame;

Purge the body, and humour the mind;
Doctor the eyes when the soul is blind;

Build the column of health erect
On the quicksands of neglect:

Always shouldering others' shame—
Bearing their faults and taking the blame!

II.

Deacon Rogers he came to me ;

" Wife is agoin' to die," said he.

" Doctors great, an' doctors small,
Haven't improved her any at all.

" Physic and blister, powders and pills,
And nothing sure but the doctors' bills !

" Twenty women, with remedies new,
Bother my wife the whole day through.

" Sweet as honey, or bitter as gall—
Poor old woman, she takes 'em all.

" Sour or sweet, whatever they choose ;
Poor old woman, she daren't refuse.

" So she pleases whoe'er may call,
An' Death is suited the best of all.

" Physic and blister, powder an' pill—
Bound to conquer, and sure to kill !"

III.

Mrs. Rogers lay in her bed,
Bandaged and blistered from foot to head.

Blistered and bandaged from head to toe,
Mrs. Rogers was very low.

Bottle and saucer, spoon and cup,
On the table stood bravely up ;

Physics of high and low degree ;
Calomel, catnip, boneset tea ;

Everything a body could bear,
Excepting light and water and air.

IV.

I opened the blinds ; the day was bright,
And God gave Mrs. Rogers some light.

I opened the window ; the day was fair,
And God gave Mrs. Rogers some air.

Bottles and blisters, powders and pills,
Catnip, boneset, sirups, and squills ;

Drugs and medicines, high and low,
I threw them as far as I could throw.

"What are you doing?" my patient cried ;
"Frightening Death," I coolly replied.

"You are crazy!" a visitor said :
I flung a bottle at his head.

v.

Deacon Rogers he came to me ;
"Wife is a-gettin' her health," said he.

"I really think she will worry through ;
She scolds me just as she used to do.

"All the people have poohed an' slurred—
All the neighbours have had their word ;

"'Twere better to perish, some of 'em say,
Than be cured in such an irregular way."

VI.

"Your wife," said I, "had God's good care,
And His remedies, light and water and air.

"All of the doctors, beyond a doubt,
Couldn't have cured Mrs. Rogers without."

VII.

The deacon smiled and bowed his head ;
"Then your bill is nothing," he said.

"God's be the glory, as you say !
God bless you, doctor! good-day! good-day!"

VIII.

If ever I doctor that woman again,
I'll give her medicine made by men.





THE CHRISTMAS BABY.

"Tha'rt welcome, little bonny brid,
But shouldn't ha' come just when tha' did :
Teimes are bad."

English Ballad.

FOOT ! ye little rascal ! ye come it on
me this way,
Crowdin' yerself amongst us this
blusterin' winter's day,
Knowin' that we already have three of ye,
an' seven,
An' tryin' to make yerself out a Christmas
present o' Heaven ?

Ten of ye have we now, Sir, for this world
to abuse ;
An' Bobbie he have no waistcoat, an' Nellie
she have no shoes,

An' Sammie he have no shirt, Sir (I tell it
to his shame),
An' the one that was just before ye we ain't
had time to name!

An' all o' the banks be smashin', an' on us
poor folk fall;
An' Boss he whittles the wages when work's
to be had at all;
An' Tom he have cut his foot off, an' lies in
a woful plight,
An' all of us wonders at mornin' as what we
shall eat at night;

An' but for your father an' Sandy a-findin'
somewhat to do,
An' but for the preacher's woman, who often
helps us through,
An' but for your poor dear mother a-doin'
twice her part,
Ye'd 'a seen us all in heaven afore *ye* was
ready to start!

An' now *ye* have come, ye rascal ! so healthy
an' fat an' sound,
A-weighin', I'll wager a dollar, the full of a
dozen pound !
With yer mother's eyes a-flashin', yer father's
flesh an' build,
An' a good big mouth an' stomach all ready
for to be filled !

No, no ! don't cry, my baby ! hush up, my
pretty one !
Don't get my chaff in yer eye, boy—I only
was just in fun.
Ye'll like us when ye know us, although
we're cur'us folks ;
But we don't get much victual, an' half our
livin' is jokes !

Why, boy, did ye take me in earnest ? come,
sit upon my knee ;
I'll tell ye a secret, youngster, I'll name ye
after me.

Ye shall have all yer brothers an' sisters with
ye to play,
An' ye shall have yer carriage, an' ride out
every day!

Why, boy, do ye think ye'll suffer? I'm
gettin' a trifle old,
But it'll be many years yet before I lose my
hold;
An' if I should fall on the road, boy, still,
them's yer brothers, there,
An' not a rogue of 'em ever would see ye
harmed a hair!

Say! when ye come from heaven, my little
namesake dear,
Did ye see, 'mongst the little girls there, a
face like this one here?
That was yer little sister—she died a year
ago,
An' all of us cried like babies when they laid
her under the snow!

Hang it! if all the rich men I ever see or
knew
Came here with all their traps, boy, an'
offered 'em for you,
I'd show 'em to the door, Sir, so quick they'd
think it odd,
Before I'd sell to another my Christmas gift
from God!

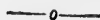




OTHER POEMS.



OTHER POEMS.



COVER THEM OVER.



COVER them over with beautiful
flowers;
Deck them with garlands, those
brothers of ours;
Lying so silent, by night and by day,
Sleeping the years of their manhood away:
Years they had marked for the joys of the
brave;
Years they must waste in the sloth of the
grave.
All the bright laurels they fought to make
bloom
Fell to the earth when they went to the tomb.

Give them the meed they have won in the
past ;

Give them the honours their merits forecast ;
Give them the chaplets they won in the strife ;
Give them the laurels they lost with their life.
Cover them over—yes, cover them over—
Parent, and husband, and brother, and lover :
Crown in your heart these dead heroes of ours,
And cover them over with beautiful flowers.

Cover the faces that motionless lie,
Shut from the blue of the glorious sky :
Faces once lit with the smiles of the gay—
Faces now marred by the frown of decay.
Eyes that beamed friendship and love to
your own ;
Lips that sweet thoughts of affection made
known ;
Brows you have soothed in the day of
distress ;
Cheeks you have flushed by the tender caress.

Faces that brightened at War's stirring cry ;
Faces that streamed when they bade you
good-bye ;

Faces that glowed in the battle's red flame,
Paling for naught, till the Death Angel came.
Cover them over—yes, cover them over—
Parent, and husband, and brother, and lover :
Kiss in your hearts these dead heroes of ours,
And cover them over with beautiful flowers.

Cover the hands that are resting, half-tried,
Crossed on the bosom, or low by the side :
Hands to you, mother, in infancy thrown ;
Hands that you, father, close hid in your own ;
Hands where you, sister, when tried and dis-
mayed,
Hung for protection and counsel and aid ;
Hands that you, brother, for faithfulness
knew ;
Hands that you, wife, wrung in bitter adieu.
Bravely the cross of their country they bore ;
Words of devotion they wrote with their gore ;

Grandly they grasped for a garland of light,
Catching the mantle of death-darkened night.
Cover them over—yes, cover them over—
Parent, and husband, and brother, and lover :
Clasp in your hearts these dead heroes of
ours,
And cover them over with beautiful flowers.

Cover the feet that, all weary and torn,
Hither by comrades were tenderly borne :
Feet that have trodden, through love-lighted
ways,
Near to your own, in the old happy days ;
Feet that have pressed, in Life's opening
morn,
Roses of pleasure, and Death's poisoned
thorn.

Swiftly they rushed to the help of the right,
Firmly they stood in the shock of the fight.
Ne'er shall the enemy's hurrying tramp
Summon them forth from their death-guarded
camp ;

Ne'er, till Eternity's bugle shall sound,
Will they come out from their couch in the
ground.

Cover them over—yes, cover them over—
Parent, and husband, and brother, and lover :
Rough were the paths of those heroes of ours—
Now cover them over with beautiful flowers.

Cover the hearts that have beaten so high,
Beaten with hopes that were born but to die ;
Hearts that have burned in the heat of the
fray,

Hearts that have yearned for the homes far
away ;

Hearts that beat high in the charge's loud
tramp,

Hearts that low fell in the prison's foul damp.
Once they were swelling with courage and will,
Now they are lying all pulseless and still ;
Once they were glowing with friendship and
love,

Now the great souls have gone soaring above.

Bravely their blood to the nation they gave,
Then in her bosom they found them a grave.
Cover them over—yes, cover them over—
Parent, and husband, and brother, and lover :
Press to your hearts these dead heroes of ours,
And cover them over with beautiful flowers.

One there is, sleeping in yonder low tomb,
Worthy the brightest of flow'rets that bloom.
Weakness of womanhood's life was her part ;
Tenderly strong was her generous heart.
Bravely she stood by the sufferer's side,
Checking the pain and the life-bearing tide ;
Fighting the swift-sweeping phantom of Death,
Easing the dying man's fluttering breath ;
Then, when the strife that had nerved her
 was o'er,
Calmly she went to where wars are no more.
Voices have blessed her now silent and dumb ;
Voices will bless her in long years to come.
Cover her over—yes, cover her over—
Blessings, like angels, around her shall hover ;

Cherish the name of that sister of ours,
And cover her over with beautiful flowers.

Cover the thousands who sleep far away—
Sleep where their friends cannot find them
to-day ;

They who in mountain and hill-side and dell
Rest where they wearied, and lie where they
fell.

Softly the grass-blade creeps round their
repose ;

Sweetly above them the wild flow'ret blows ;
Zephyrs of freedom fly gently o'erhead,
Whispering names for the patriot dead.

So in our minds we will name them once more,
So in our hearts we will cover them o'er ;

Roses and lilies and violets blue
Bloom in our souls for the brave and the true.

Cover them over—yes, cover them over—
Parent, and husband, and brother, and lover :

Think of those far-away heroes of ours,
And cover them over with beautiful flowers.

When the long years have crept slowly away,
E'en to the dawn of Earth's funeral day ;
When, at the Archangel's trumpet and tread,
Rise up the faces and forms of the dead ;
When the great world its last judgment
awaits ;

When the blue sky shall swing open its gates,
And our long columns march silently
through,

Past the Great Captain, for final review ;
Then for the blood that has flown for the
right,

Crowns shall be given, untarnished and
bright ;

Then the glad ear of each war-martyred son
Proudly shall hear the good judgment,
"Well done."

Blessings for garlands shall cover them
over—

Parent, and husband, and brother, and lover .
God will reward those dead heroes of ours,
And cover them over with beautiful flowers.



RIFTS IN THE CLOUD.

[GRADUATING POEM, JUNE 17, 1869.]



IFE is a cloud—e'en take it as you
may ;

Illumine it with Pleasure's transient
ray ;

Brighten its edge with Virtue ; let each fold
E'en by the touch of God be flecked with
gold,

While angel-wings may kindly hover near,
And angel-voices murmur words of cheer,
Still, life's a cloud, for ever hanging nigh,

For ever o'er our winding pathways spread,
Ready to blacken on some saddened eye,
And hurl its bolts on some defenceless
head.

Yes, there are lives that seem to know no ill ;
Paths that seem straight, with naught of
thorn or hill.

[day,
The bright and glorious sun, each welcome
Flashes upon the flowers that deck their way,
And the soft zephyr sings a lullaby,
'Mid rustling trees, to please the ear and eye :
And all the darling child of fortune needs,
And all his dull, half-slumbering caution heeds,
While fairy eyes their watch above him keep,
Is breath to live and weariness to sleep.

But life's a cloud ! and soon the smiling sky
May wear the unwelcome semblance of a
frown,

And the fierce tempest, madly rushing by,
May raise its dripping wings, and strike
him down !

When helpless infancy, for love or rest,
Lies nestling to a mother's yearning breast,
While she, enamoured of its ways and wiles
As mothers only are, looks down and smiles.

And spies a thousand unsuspected charms
 In the sweet babe she presses in her arms,
 While he, the love-light kindled in his eyes,
 Sends to her own, electrical replies,
 A ray of sunshine comes for each caress,
 From out the clear blue sky of happiness.
 But life's a cloud! and soon the smiling face
 The frowns and tears of childish grief may
 know,
 And the love-language of the heart give
 place
 To the wild clamour of a baby's woe.

The days of youth are joyful in their way;
 Bare feet tread lightly, and their steps are
 gay.
 Parental kindness grades the early path,
 And shields it from the storm-king's dreaded
 wrath.
 But there are thorns that prick the infant
 flesh,
 And bid the youthful eyes to flow afresh,

Thorns that maturer nerves would never feel,
With wounds that bleed not less, that soon
they heal.

When we look back upon our childhood days,
Look down the long and sweetly verdant ways
Wherein we gaily passed the shining hours,
We see the beauty of its blooming flowers,
We breathe its fresh and fragrant air once
more,

And, counting all its many pleasures o'er,
And giving them their natural place of chief,
Forget our disappointments and our grief.
Sorrows that now were light, then weighed
us down,

And claimed our tears for every surly frown.
For life's a cloud, e'en take it as we will,
The changing wind ne'er banishes or lifts ;
The pangs of grief but make it darker still,
And happiness is nothing but its rifts.

There is a joy in sturdy manhood still ;
Bravery is joy ; and he who says, I WILL,

And turns, with swelling heart, and dares
the fates,

While firm resolve upon his purpose waits,
Is happier for the deed ; and he whose share
Is honest toil, pits that against dull care.

And yet, in spite of labour, faith, or prayer,
Dark clouds and fearful o'er our paths are
driven ;

They take the shape of monsters in the air,
And almost shut our eager gaze from
heaven !

Disease is there, with slimy, loathsome touch,
With hollow, blood-shot eyes and eager
clutch,

Longing to strike us down with pangs of pain,
And bind us there, with weakness' galling
chain.

Ruin is there, with cunning ambush laid,
Waiting some panic in the ranks of trade,
Some profitless endeavour, or some trust
By recreant knave abused, to snatch the crust

From out the mouths of them we love the
best,

And bring gaunt hunger, an unwelcome
guest.

Disgrace is there, of honest look bereft,
Truth in his right hand, falsehood in his left,
Pride in his mouth, the devil in his eye,
His garment truth, his cold black heart a lie,
Forging the bolts to blast some honoured
name;

Longing to see some victim wronged or
wrong;

To see him step into the pool of shame,
Or soiled by loved ones that to him
belong.

A dark cloud hovers over every zone—
The cloud of ignorance. The great un-
known,

Defying comprehension, still hangs low
Above our feeble minds. When we who
now

Have stumbled 'neath the ever-varying load
 That marks the weary student's royal road,
 Have hurried over verbs in headlong haste,
 And various thorny paths of language traced ;
 Have run our muddled heads, with rueful
 sigh,
 'Gainst figures truthful, that yet seemed to
 lie ;
 Have peeped into the Sciences, and learned
 How much we do not know ; have bravely
 turned
 Our guns of eloquence on forest trees,
 And preached grave doctrines to the way-
 ward breeze ;
 When we have done all this, the foggy cloud,
 With scarce a rift, is still above us bowed ;
 And we are children, on some garden's verge,
 Groping for flowers the opposing wall be-
 neath,
 Who, flushed and breathless, may at last
 emerge,
 With a few scanty blossoms for a wreath.

But never was a cloud so thick and black,
But it might some time break, and on its
track
The glorious sun come streaming. Never,
too,
So but its threads might bleach to lighter
hue,
Was sorrow's mantle of so deep a dye.
And he who, peering at the troubled sky,
Looks past the clouds, or looks the cloud-
rifts through,
Or, finding none, remembers their great
worth,
And strikes them for himself, is that man
who
Shows the completest wisdom of this
earth.

When one stands forth in Reason's glorious
light,
Stands in his own proud consciousness of
right,

Laments his faults, his virtues does not boast,
Studies all creatures—and himself the most—
Knowing the way wherewith his faults to
meet,

Or, vanquished by them, owning his defeat,
He pays the penalty as should a man,
And pitches battle with the foe again ;
When, giving all their proper due and heed,
He yet has power, when such shall be the
need,

To go his way, unshackled, true, and free,
And bid the world go hanged, if needs must be,
He strikes a rift for his unfearing eye
Through the black cloud of low servility :
A cloud that's decked the Orient all these
years ;

Neath whose low-bending folds, 'mid groans
and tears,

Priestcraft has heaped its huge, ill-gotten
gains,

And tyrants forged their bloody, clanking
chains ;

A cloud, that when the *Mayflower's* precious
cup

'The misty, treacherous deep held proudly up,
By waves that leaped and dashed each other
o'er,

But onward still the ark of Freedom bore,
Some fair and peaceful Ararat to find,
Plumed its black wings, and swept not far
behind.

To-day it lowers o'er this great, free land—
O'er farms and workshops, offices and
spires—

Its baleful shadow casts on every hand,
And darkens Church and State and house-
hold fires.

It is a thing to pity and to blame,
A useless, vile, humiliating shame,
A silent slander on the Heaven-born soul,
Decked with the signet of its own control,
A flaw upon the image of our God,
When men, obedient to some Mogul's nod—

When men, the sockets of whose addled
 brains
 Are blessed with some illuminate remains
 Wherefrom the glim of reason still is shed,
 Blow out the light, and send their wits to
 bed ;
 And, taking as their sole dictator, then,
 Some little, thundering god of speech or pen,
 Aping submissively the smile or frown
 Of some great brazen face that beats them
 down,
 Or silenced by some lubricated tongue,
 Covered with borrowed words and neatly
 hung—
 They yield their judgments up to others'
 wills,
 And take grave creeds like sugar-coated
 pills ;
 And, with their weakness tacitly confessed,
 Like the unfeathered fledgelings of a nest,
 When the old bird comes home with worms
 and flies—

With half a smile and half a knowing
frown,
They open wide their mouths, and shut their
eyes,
And seem to murmur softly, "*Drop it
down.*"

He who will creep about some great man's feet,
The honeyed fragrance of his breath to meet,
Or follow him about, with crafty plan,
And cringe for smiles and favours, is no man.
A fraction of a man, and all his own,
Although his numerator be but one,
With unity divided up so fine
That thousands range themselves beneath
the line—
Ay, one so insignificantly small
That quick accountants count him not at all—
Is better far, and vastly nobler, too,
Than some great swelling cipher among men,
Naught of itself, and nothing else to do
Except to help some little one count ten!

Let us e'en strike, with courage true endowed,
Straight at the centre of this murky cloud,
And sweep its worthless vapour from the
earth.

Take sense for coin ; opinions at their worth ;
Conviction at its cost ; dictation, when
Our minds and souls are bankrupt—hardly
then !

When Freedom's sons and daughters will do
this,

Our land will know a day of happiness,
Fit for such joy as never yet was seen,
E'en when Emancipation tried her keen
Bright blade upon the galling chains of steel,
And stamped the action with the nation's seal.
E'en when the cable its initial spark
Brought flashing through the ocean's deep
and dark ;

E'en when was fixed, with far-resounding
strokes,

With song, and praise, and thankfulness
and mirth,

The golden fastening of the chain that yokes
The two great restless oceans of the earth!

But over all, and round about us spread,
Hangs the black cloud of Death : a thunder-
head,

Yet ominously silent ; moving on,
While from its threatening folds, so deep
and dark,

The forkèd lightning, ever and anon,
Shoots for some life, and never fails its
mark.

There was one classmate is not here to-day ;
Many an oak is blasted on its way,
Many a growing hope is overthrown.
What might have been, his early growth had
shown ;

What was, our love and tears for him may
tell ;

He lived, he toiled, he faded, and he fell.
When our friend lay within that narrow room
Men call a coffin—in its cheerless gloom

Himself the only tenant, and asleep
In a long slumber, terrible and deep ;
When at the open door his pale, sad face
Appeared to us, without a look or trace
Of recognition in its ghastly hue,
Soon to be hid for ever from our view ;
When, with his sightless eyes to heaven
 upturned,
Wherefrom his royal soul upon them burned,
He waited for his last rites to be said,
With the pathetic patience of the dead ;
When tenderly his manly form we lay
In its last couch, with covering of clay ;
Who in that mournful duty had a part,
But felt the cloud of Death upon his heart ?
But when we thought how his unfettered soul,
Free from his poor sick body's weak control,
Pluming its wings at the Eternal throne,
 Might take through realms of space its
 rapid flight,
And find a million joys to us unknown,
The cloud was rifted by a ray of light.

Old class of '69! together, still,
We've journeyed up the rough and toilsome
hill;

Seeking the gems to labour ne'er denied,
Plucking the fruits that deck the mountain-
side.

Now, in the glory of this summer day,
We part, and each one goes his different way.
Let each, with hope to fire his yearning soul,
Still hurry onward to the shining goal.
The way at times may dark and weary seem,
No ray of sunshine on our path may beam,
The dark clouds hover o'er us like a pall,
And gloom and sadness seem to compass all;
But still, with honest purpose, toil we on;

And if our steps be upright, straight, and
true,

Far in the east a golden light shall dawn,
And the bright smile of God come burst-
ing through.



SOME TIME.



STRONG and terrible Ocean,

O grand and glorious Ocean,

O restless, stormy Ocean, a million
fathoms o'er !

When never an eye was near thee to view
thy turbulent glory,

When never an ear to hear thee relate thy
endless story,

What didst thou then, O Ocean ? Didst toss
thy foam in air.

With never a bark to fear thee, and never a
soul to dare ?

“ Oh, I was the self-same Ocean,

The same majestic Ocean,

The strong and terrible Ocean, with rock-
embattled shore ;

I threw my fleecy blanket up over my
shoulders bare,

I raised my head in triumph, and tossed my
grizzled hair ;

For I knew that some time—some time—
White-robed ships would venture from out
of the placid bay,
Forth to my heaving bosom, my lawful pride
or prey ;

I knew that some time—some time—
Lordly men and maidens my servile guests
would be,
And hearts of sternest courage would falter
and bend to me."

O deep and solemn Forest,
O sadly whispering Forest,
O lonely moaning Forest, that murmureth
evermore !
When never a footstep wandered across thy
sheltered meadows,
When never a wild bird squandered his
music 'mid thy shadows,
What didst thou then, O Forest? Didst
robe thyself in green,

And pride thyself in beauty the while to be
unseen ?

“ Oh, I was the self-same Forest,
The same low-whispering Forest,
The softly murmuring Forest, and all of
my beauties wore.

I dressed myself in splendour all through the
lonely hours ;

I twined the vines around me, and covered
my lap with flowers ;

For I knew that some time—some time—
Birds of beautiful plumage would flit and
nestle here ;

Songs of marvellous sweetness would charm
my listening ear ;

I knew that some time—some time—
Lovers would gaily wander 'neath my pro-
tecting boughs,
And into the ear of my silence would whisper
holy vows.”

O fair and beautiful Maiden,
O pure and winsome Maiden,

O grand and peerless Maiden, created to
adore!

When no love came to woo thee that won thy
own love-treasure,

When never a heart came to thee thy own
heart-wealth could measure,

What didst thou then, O Maiden? Didst
smile as thou smilest now,

With ne'er the kiss of a lover upon thy snow-
white brow?

"Oh, I was the self-same Maiden,

The simple and trusting Maiden,

The happy and careless Maiden, with all of
my love in store.

I gaily twined my tresses, and cheerfully
went my way;

I took no thought of the morrow, and cared
for the cares of the day;

For I knew that some time—some time—
Into the path of my being the Love of my
life would glide,

And we by the gates of heaven would wander
side by side."



BROTHERS AND FRIENDS.

[REUNION OF ALPHA KAPPA PHI SOCIETY, JUNE 16, 1875.]



WOULD I might utter all my heart can
feel!

But there are thoughts weak words
will not reveal.

The rarest fruitage is the last to fall;
The strongest language hath no words at all.

When first the uncouth student comes in
sight—

A sturdy plant, just struggling toward the
light—

Arriving at his future classic home,
He gazes at the high-perched college dome,
Striving, through eyes with a vague yearning
dim,

To spy some future glory there for him,

A child in thought, a man in strong desire,
A clod of clay, vexed by a restless fire,

When, with hard hands, and uncongenial
locks,

And clothes as speckled as young Jacob's
flocks,

Homesick and heartsick, tired and desolate,
He leans himself 'gainst Learning's iron gate.

While all the future frowns upon his track,
And all the past conspires to pull him back,
When, with tired resolution in his looks,

He bends above the cabalistic books,
And strives, with knitted forehead throbbing
hot,

To learn what older students have forgot ;
And wonders how the Romans and the
Greeks

Could cry aloud and spare their jaws and
cheeks ;

And wants the Algebraic author put
On an equation, tied there, head and foot,

Which then, with all Reduction's boasted
strength,

May be expanded to prodigious length ;
When he reflects, with rueful, pain-worn phiz,
What a sad, melancholy dog he is,
And how much less unhappy and forlorn
Are all those students who are not yet born ;
When Inexperience like a worm is twined
Around the clumsy fingers of his mind,
And Discipline, a stranger yet unknown,
Struts grandly by and leaves him all alone ;
What cheers him better than to feel and see
Some other one as badly off as he ?
Or the sincere advice and kindly aid
Of those well worked in Study's curious
trade ?

What help such solace and improvement lends
As the hand-grasp of Brothers and of
Friends ?

When, with a wildly ominous halloo,
The frisky Freshman shuffles into view,

And shouts aloud the war-cry of his clan,
And makes friends with the devil like a man ;
When, looking upward at the other classes,
He dubs them as three tandem-teams of asses,
And, scarcely knowing what he does it for,
Vows against them unmitigated war,
And aims to show them that though they
may tread

In stately, grand procession o'er his head,
The animated pathway that they scorn,
May sometimes bristle with a hidden thorn ;
When, with a vigilance that to nothing
yields,

He scans the fruitage of the neighbouring
fields,

And in the solemn night-time doth entwine
Affection's fingers round the melon-vine ;
When the tired waggon from its sheltering
shed

To strange, uncouth localities is led,
And, with the night for a dissecting-room,
Is analysed amid the friendly gloom ;

When the hushed rooster, cheated of his cry,
From his spoiled perch bids this vain world
good-bye ;

When, in the chapel, an unwilling guest,
And living sacrifice, a cow doth rest ;
When from the tower, the bell's notes, pealing
down,

Rouse up the fireman from the sleeping town,
Who, rushing to the scene, with duty fired,
Finds his well-meant assistance unrequired,
And, creeping homeward, steadily doth play
Upon the third commandment all the way ;
When are played off, with mirth-directed aims,
At the staid Alma Mater, various games,
As feline juveniles themselves regale
In the lithe folds of the maternal tail,
And when these antics have gone far enough,
Comes from her paw a well-considered cuff,
What more to soothe the chastened spirit
tends

Than sympathy from Brothers and from
Friends ?

When the deep Sophomore has well begun
The study of his merits, one by one,
And found that he, a bright scholastic blade,
Is fearfully and wonderfully made ;
Discovers how much greater is his share
Of genius than he was at first aware ;
When, with a ken beyond his tender age,
He sweeps o'er History's closely printed page,
Conjecturing how this world so long endured,
With his co-operation unsecured ;
When, with his geometrical survey
Trigonometrically brought in play,
He scans two points, with firm, unmoved
design
To join them sooner than by one straight
line ;
When he, with oratoric hand astir,
Rolls back the tide of ages—as it were ;
When Cicero he decides for reading fit,
And tolerates happy Horace for his wit ;
When he across Zoölogy takes sight,
To see what creatures were created right,

And looks the plants that heaven has
fashioned through,
To see if they were rightly finished, too ;
When he his aid to any cause can lend,
In readiness, on short notice, to ascend
From any well-worn point, secure and soon,
In his small oratorical balloon,
Expecting, when his high trip's end appears,
Descent upon a parachute of cheers ;
When he decides, beneath a load of care,
What whiskered monogram his face shall wear ;
When, from his mind's high shoulders crop-
ping out,
Linguistic feathers constantly do sprout,
Which, ere they meet the cool outsider's scoff,
Require a quiet, friendly picking-off ;
What better to this operation lends
Than the critiques of Brothers and of
Friends ?

When the spruce Junior, not disposed to shirk,
Begins to get down fairly to his work.

Strives to run foremost in the college race,
Or at least fill a creditable place ;
When he bears, o'er the rough and hard
 highway,
The heat and burden of the college day,
And hastes—his mental lungs all out of
 breath—
As if it were a race of life and death ;
When with some little doubt his brain is
 fraught,
That he's not quite so brilliant as he thought,
And he would strengthen his lame talent still,
By wrapping 'round the bandage of his will ;
When, undergoing the reaction drear
That follows up the Sophomoric year,
He finds each task much harder than before,
And tarries long at every phrase's door,
And pauses o'er his dull oration's page,
Then tears it into pieces in a rage ;
When, had he fifty inkstands, he could throw
Each at some devil fraught with fancied
 woe ;

And when, perchance, atop of all this gloom,
In his heart's world there's yet sufficient room
For Cupid to come blundering through the
dark,

And make his sensibilities a mark,
And, viewing each the other from afar,
Learning and Love frown miserably, and
spar ;

What for his trouble-phantoms makes amends
Like the support of Brothers and of Friends ?

When, with a strengthened soul and chastened
brain,

The Senior who has laboured not in vain
Looks back upon the four eventful years
Most fruitful that in his past life appears,
When he stands, somewhat shadowed by
remorse,

In the bright Indian Summer of the course,
And muses, had each opportunity
Been seized, how smooth his present path
might be ;

When, having blundered through each college
hall,

Bumping his head 'gainst Inexperience' wall,
There burst upon him through the window-
panes,

Broad Knowledge' deep ravines and fertile
plains ;

When, standing at the door, with gaze of
doubt,

He draws on his world-wrappings, and looks
out

Into the chillness of the winter's day,
And almost wishes that he still might stay,
What nearer to his beating heart extends
Than parting with his Brothers and his
Friends ?

When he at last has bid the school good-
bye,

And finds that many matters go awry ;
Finds much amid Earth's uncongenial fog,
Not mentioned in the college catalogue ;

Finds that The World, in writing his name
down,
Forgets, somehow, to add the letters on
Which serve to make his fellow-mortals see
How little rests behind a big degree ;
Finds, also, that it is inclined to speak
Elsewise than in the Latin or the Greek ;
Finds that the sharp blade of his brightened
mind
Gets dulled upon the pachydermal kind ;
That The World by Declension understands
The sliding-down of houses, stocks, and lands ;
And that Translation means, in this world's
bother,
Translation from one pocket to another ;
Mistrusts that if The World has, as is sung,
A tail by which, perchance, it may be slung,
The blessed place so many hands infold,
He cannot find whereon he may take hold ;
Finds that he best makes ground o'er this
world's road,
As he his college nonsense doth unload ;

What sweeter sound with Life's alarum blends
Than the kind voice of Brothers and of
Friends ?

.

And so, to-day, we live our old lives o'er—
The Freshman gay, the smiling Sophomore,
The anxious Junior, and the Senior proud,
The care-immersed Alumnus, sober-browed,
To shake once more the quick-responding
hand,

To trade in jokes no others understand ;
Our fish-lines into Memory's ponds to throw
For stories which were left there long ago
(Which, like most fishy ventures, as is
known,

Through many changing years have bred
and grown) ;

To beat the big drum of our vanity,
To clash the cymbals of our boisterous glee ;
To bind again the old-time friendships fast,
To fight once more the battles of the past.

Beneath the blue of the clear sunlit sky,
Beneath the storm-cloud, rudely lingering
nigh,

From night to night—from changing day to
day—

The Alpha Kappa Phi has won its way.
And as the lichen plant, when tempest-torn,
And roughly from its native hill-side borne,
Sucks moisture from the whirlwind's shiver-
ing form,

And grows, while yet hurled onward by the
storm,

And when at last its voyage well is o'er,
Thrives sweeter, purer, stronger than before,
The Alpha Kappa Phi has ever grown
Stronger for all the struggles it has known ;
And, 'mid the smiles and frowns that heaven
out-sends,

Our hearts still beat as Brothers and as
Friends.



GONE BEFORE.

I.

PULL up the window-lattice, Jane, and
raise me in my bed,
And trim my beard, and brush my
hair, and from this covering free me,
And brace me back against the wall, and
raise my aching head,
And make me trim, for one I love is
coming here to see me ;
Or if she do not see me, Jane, 'twill be that
her dear eyes
Are shut as ne'er they shut before, in all
of their reposing ;
For never yet my lowest word has failed of
kind replies,

And ever still my lightest touch has burst
her eyelids' closing ;

So let her come to me.

They say she's coming in her sleep—a sleep
they cannot break ;

Ay, let them call, and let them weep, in
dull and droning fashion !

Her ear may hear their doleful tones an age
and never wake ;

But let me pour into its depth my words
of burning passion !

Ay, let my hot and yearning lips, that long
have yearned in vain,

But press her pure and sacred cheek, and
wander in her tresses ;

And let my tears no more be lost, but on her
forehead rain,

And she will rise and pity me, and soothe
me with caresses ;

So let her come to me.

O silver-crested days ago, that wove us in
one heart!

O golden future years, that urged our
hands to clasp in striving!

There is not that in earth or sky can hold us
two apart;

And I of her, and she of me, not long may
know depriving!

So bring her here, where I have long in
absence pining lain,

While on my fevered weakness crashed
the castles of our building;

And once together, all the woe and weary
throbs of pain

That strove to cloud our happiness shall
be its present gilding;

So let her come to me.

II.

They brought her me—they brought her me
—they bore her to my bed;

And first I marked her coffin's form, and
saw its jewels glisten.

I talked to her, I wept to her, but she was
cold and dead ;

I prayed to her, and then I knew she was
not here to listen.

For Death had wooed and won my love, and
carried her away.

How could she know my trusting heart,
and then so sadly grieve me !

Her hand was his, her cheek was his, her
lips of ashen gray ;

Her heart was never yet for him, however
she might leave me ;

Her heart was e'er for me.

O waves that well had sunk my life, sweep
back to me again !

I will not fight your coming now, or flee
from your pursuing !

But bear me, beat me, dash me to the land
of Death, and then

I'll find the love Death stole from me, and
scorn him with my wooing !
Oh, I will light his gloomy orbs with jealous,
mad surprise ;
Oh, I will crush his pride, e'en with the
lack of my endeavour ;
The while I boldly bear away, from under-
neath his eyes,
The soul that God had made for me—to
lose no more for ever ;
Ay, she will go with me.

Pull down the window-lattice, Jane, and turn
me in my bed,
And not until the set of sun be anxious for
my waking ;
And ere that hour a robe of light above me
shall be spread,
And darkness here shall show me there
the morn that now is breaking.
And in one grave let us be laid—my truant
love and me—

And side by side shall rest the hearts that
once were one in beating ;
And soon together and for aye our wedded
souls shall be,
And never cloud shall dim again the
brightness of our meeting,
Where now she waits for me.





THE LITTLE SLEEPER.

THERE is mourning in the cottage as
the twilight shadows fall,
For a little rosewood coffin has been
brought into the hall,
And a little pallid sleeper,
In a slumber colder, deeper
Than the nights of life could give her, in its
narrow borders lies,
With the sweet and changeful lustre ever
faded from her eyes.

Since the morning of her coming, but a
score of suns had set,
And the strangeness of the dawning of her
life is with her yet ;
And the dainty lips asunder
Are a little pressed with wonder,

And her smiling bears the traces of a shadow
of surprise,

But the wondering mind that made it looks
no more from out her eyes.

'Twas a soul upon a journey, and was lost
upon its way ;

'Twas a flash of light from heaven on a tiny
piece of clay ;

'Twas more timid, and yet bolder,

It was younger, and yet older,

It was weaker, and yet stronger, than this
little human guise,

With the strange unearthly lustre ever faded
from its eyes.

They will bury her the morrow ; they will
mourn her as she died ;

I will bury her the morrow, and another by
her side ;

For the raven hair, but started,

Soon a maiden would have parted,

Full of fitful joy and sorrow—gladly gay and
sadly wise ;

With a dash of worldly mischief in her deep
and changeful eyes.

I will bury her the morrow, and another by
her side :

It shall be a wife and mother, full of love
and care and pride ;

Full of hope, and of misgiving ;

Of the joys and griefs of living ;

Of the pains of others' being, and the tears
of others' cries ;

With the love of God encompassed in her
smiling, weeping eyes.

I will bury on the morrow, too, a grandame,
wrinkled, old ;

One whose pleasures of the present were the
joys that had been told ;

I will bury one whose blessing

Was the transport of caressing

Every joy that she had buried—every lost
and broken prize ;

With a gleam of heaven-expected, in her
dim and longing eyes.

I will joy for her to-morrow, as I see her
compassed in,

For the lips now pure and holy might be
some time stained with sin ;

And the brow now white and stainless,

And the heart now light and painless,

Might have throbbed with guilty passion, and
with sin-encumbered sighs

Might have surged the sea of brightness in
the bright and changeful eyes.

Let them bury her to-morrow — let them
treasure her away ;

Let the soul go back to heaven, and the
body back to clay ;

Let the future grief here hidden,

Let the happiness forbidden,

Be for evermore forgotten, and be buried as
it dies,

And an angel let us see her, with our sad
and weeping eyes



'TIS SNOWING.

FIRST VOICE.



URRAH ! 'tis snowing !

On street and house-roof,
gently cast,

The falling flakes come thick and fast ;
They wheel and curve from giddy height,
And speck the chilly air with white !
Come on, come on, you light-robed storm !
My fire within is blithe and warm,

And brightly glowing !

My robes are thick, my sledge is gay ;
My champing steeds impatient neigh ;
My silver-sounding bells are clear,
With music for the muffled ear ;



And she within—my queenly bride—
Shall sit right gaily by my side ;
Hurrah ! 'tis snowing !

SECOND VOICE.

Good God ! 'tis snowing !
From out the dull and leaden clouds,
The surly storm impatient crowds ;
It beats against my fragile door,
It creeps across my cheerless floor ;
And through my pantry, void of fare,
And o'er my hearth, so cold and bare,
The wind is blowing ;
And she who rests her weary head
Upon our hard and scanty bed,
Prays hopefully, but hopeless still,
For bright spring days and whip-poor-will ;
The damp of death is at her brow,
The frost is at her feet ; and now
'Tis drearily snowing.

FIRST VOICE.

Hurrah ! 'tis snowing !
Snow on ! ye cannot stop our ride,
As o'er the white-paved road we glide :
Past forest trees thick draped with snow,
Past white-thatched houses, quaint and low ;
Past rich-stored barn and stately herd,
Past well-filled sleigh and kindly word,
Right gaily going !

Snow on ! for when our ride is o'er,
And once again we reach the door,
Our well-filled larder shall provide,
Our cellar-doors shall open wide ;
And while without 'tis cold and drear,
Within, our board shall smile with cheer,
Although 'tis snowing !

SECOND VOICE.

Good God ! 'tis snowing !
Rough men now bear, with hurried tread,
My pauper wife unto her bed ;

And while, all crushed, but unresigned,
I cringe and follow close behind,
And while these scalding, bitter tears—
The first that stain my manhood years—
Are freely flowing,
Her waiting grave is open wide,
And into it the snow-flakes glide.
A mattress for her couch they wreath;
And snow above, and snow beneath,
Must be the bed of her who prayed
The sun might shine where she was laid;
And still 'tis snowing!





THE BURNING OF CHICAGO.

I.

'**T** WAS night in the beautiful city,
The famous and wonderful city,
The proud and magnificent city,
The Queen of the North and the West.
The riches of nations were gathered in
wondrous and plentiful store ;
The swift-speeding bearers of Commerce
were waiting on river and shore ;
The great staring walls towered skyward,
with visage undaunted and bold,
And said, "We are ready, O Winter! come
on with your hunger and cold!
Sweep down with your storms from the
northward! come out from your ice-
guarded lair!

Our larders have food for a nation! our
wardrobes have clothing to spare!
For off from the corn-bladed prairies, and
out from the valleys and hills,
The farmer has swept us his harvests, the
miller has emptied his mills;
And here, in the lap of our city, the treasures
of autumn shall rest,
In golden-crowned, glorious Chicago, the
Queen of the North and the West!"

II.

'Twas night in the church-guarded city,
The temple and altar-decked city,
The turreted, spire-adorned city,
The Queen of the North and the West.
And out from the beautiful temples that
wealth in its fulness had made,
And out from the haunts that were humble,
where Poverty peacefully prayed,
Where praises and thanks had been offered
to Him where they rightly belonged,

In peacefulness quietly homeward the wor-
shipping multitude thronged.
The Pharisee, laden with riches and jewelry,
costly and rare,
Who proudly deigned thanks to Jehovah he
was not as other men are ;
The penitent, crushed in his weakness, and
laden with pain and with sin ;
The outcast who yearningly waited to hear
the glad bidding, " Come in ;"
And thus went they quietly homeward, with
sins and omissions confessed,
In spire-adorned, templed Chicago, the
Queen of the North and the West.

III.

'Twas night in the sin-burdened city,
The turbulent, vice-laden city,
The sin-compassed, rogue-haunted city,
Though Queen of the North and the West.
And low in their caves of pollution great
beasts of humanity growled ;

And over his money-strewn table the gambler
bent fiercely, and scowled ;
And men with no seeming of manhood, with
countenance flaming and fell,
Drank deep from the fire-laden fountains that
spring from the rivers of hell ;
And men with no seeming of manhood, who
dreaded the coming of day,
Prowled, cat-like, for blood-purchased plunder
from men who were better than they ;
And men with no seeming of manhood,
whose dearest-craved glory was shame,
Whose joys were the sorrows of others,
whose harvests were acres of flame,
Slunk, whispering and low, in their corners,
with bowie and pistol tight-pressed,
In rogue-haunted, sin-cursed Chicago, though
Queen of the North and the West.

IV.

'Twas night in the elegant city,
The rich and voluptuous city,

The beauty-thronged, mansion-decked city,
Gay Queen of the North and the West.
And childhood was placidly resting in slumber
untroubled and deep ;
And softly the mother was fondling her innocent baby to sleep ;
And maidens were dreaming of pleasures and triumphs the future should show,
And scanning the brightness and glory of joys they were never to know ;
And firesides were cheerful and happy, and Comfort smiled sweetly around ;
But grim Desolation and Ruin looked into the window and frowned.
And pitying angels looked downward, and gazed on their loved ones below,
And longed to reach forth a deliverance, and yearned to beat backward the foe ;
But Pleasure and Comfort were reigning, nor danger was spoken or guessed,
In beautiful, golden Chicago, gay Queen of the North and the West.

V.

Then up in the streets of the city,
The careless and negligent city,
The soon to be sacrificed city,
Doomed Queen of the North and the West,
Crept, softly and slyly, so tiny it hardly was
worthy the name,
Crept, slowly and soft through the rubbish, a
radiant serpent of flame. [ing,
The South-wind and West-wind came shriek-
"Rouse up in your strength and your ire!
For many a year they have chained you, and
crushed you, O demon of fire!
For many a year they have bound you, and
made you their servant and slave!
Now, rouse you, and dig for this city a fiery
and desolate grave!
Freight heavy with grief and with wailing
her world-scattered pride and renown!
Charge straight on her mansions of splendour,
and battle her battlements down!

And we, the strong South-wind and West-
wind, with thrice-doubled fury possessed,
Will sweep with you over this city, this Queen
of the North and the West ! ”

VI.

Then straight at the great, quiet city,
The strong and o'er-confident city,
The well-nigh invincible city,
Doomed Queen of the North and the West,
The Fire-devil rallied his legions, and speeded
them forth on the wind,
With tinder and treasures before him, with
ruins and tempests behind.
The tenement crushed 'neath his footstep, the
mansion oped wide at his knock ;
And walls that had frowned him defiance,
they trembled and fell with a shock ;
And down on the hot, smoking house-tops
came raining a deluge of fire ;
And serpents of flame writhed and clambered,
and twisted on steeple and spire ;

And beautiful, glorious Chicago, the city of
riches and fame,
Was swept by a storm of destruction, was
flooded by billows of flame.
The Fire-king loomed high in his glory, with
crimson and flame-streaming crest,
And grinned his fierce scorn on Chicago,
doomed Queen of the North and the
West.

VII.

Then swiftly the quick-breathing city,
The fearful and panic-struck city,
The startled and fire-deluged city,
Rushed back from the South and the West.
And loudly the fire-bells were clanging, and
ringing their funeral notes ;
And loudly wild accents of terror came peal-
ing from thousands of throats ;
And loud was the waggon's deep rumbling,
and loud the wheel's clatter and creak ;
And loud was the calling for succour from
those who were sightless and weak ;

And loud were the hoofs of the horses, and
loud was the tramping of feet ;
And loud was the gale's ceaseless howling
through fire-lighted alley and street ;
But louder, yet louder, the crashing of roofs
and of walls as they fell ;
And louder, yet louder, the roaring that told
of the coming of hell.
The Fire-king threw back his black mantle
from off his great blood-dappled breast,
And sneered in the face of Chicago, the
Queen of the North and the West.

VIII.

And there, in the terrible city,
The panic-struck, terror-crazed city,
The flying and flame-pursued city,
The torch of the North and the West,
A beautiful maiden lay moaning, as many a
day she had lain,
In fetters of wearisome weakness, and throb-
bings of pitiful pain.

The amorous Fire-king came to her—he
breathed his hot breath on her cheek ;
She fled from his touch, but he caught her,
and held her, all pulseless and weak.
The Fire-king he caught her and held her,
in warm and unyielding embrace ;
He wrapped her about in his vestments, he
pressed his hot lips to her face ;
Then, sated and palled with his triumph, he
scornfully flung her away,
And, blackened and crushed in the ruins,
unknown and uncoffined, she lay—
Lay, blackened and crushed by the Fire-
king, in ruined and desolate rest,
Like ravished and ruined Chicago, the Queen
of the North and the West.

IX.

'Twas morn in the desolate city,
The ragged and ruin-heaped city,
The homeless and hot-smoking city,
The grief of the North and the West.



(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



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But down from the West came the bidding,
 "O Queen, lift in courage thy head!
Thy friends and thy neighbours awaken, and
 hasten, with raiment and bread."
And up from the South came the bidding,
 "Cheer up, fairest Queen of the Lakes!
For comfort and aid shall be coming from
 out our savannas and brakes!"
And down from the North came the bidding,
 "O city, be hopeful of cheer!
We've somewhat to spare for thy sufferers,
 for all of our suffering here!"
And up from the East came the bidding, "O
 city, be dauntless and bold!
Look hither for food and for raiment—look
 hither for credit and gold!"
And all through the world went the bidding,
 "Bring hither your choicest and best,
For weary and hungry Chicago, sad Queen
 of the North and the West!"

x.

O crushed but invincible city!
O broken but fast-rising city!

O glorious and unconquered city,
Still Queen of the North and the West!
The long, golden years of the future, with
treasures increasing and rare,
Shall glisten upon thy rich garments, shall
twine in the folds of thy hair!
From out the black heaps of thy ruins new
columns of beauty shall rise,
And glittering domes shall fling grandly our
nation's proud flag to the skies!
From off thy wide prairies of splendour the
treasures of autumn shall pour,
The breezes shall sweep from the northward,
and hurry the ships to thy shore!
For Heaven will look downward in mercy
on those who've passed under the rod,
And happ'ly again they will prosper, and
bask in the blessings of God.
Once more thou shalt stand 'mid the cities,
by prosperous breezes caressed,
O grand and unconquered Chicago, still
Queen of the North and the West!




THE RAILROAD HOLOCAUST.

[*New Hamburg, N. Y., February 1871.*]

OVER the length of the beaten track,
Into the darkness deep and black,
Heavy and fast
As a mountain blast,
With scream of whistle and clang of gong,
The great train rattled and thundered along.

Travellers, cushioned and sheltered, sat
Passing the time with doze and chat;
Thinking of naught
With danger fraught;
Whiling the hours with whim and song,
As the great train rattled and thundered along.

Covered and still the sleepers lay,
Lost to the dangers of the way;



Wandering back,
Adown life's track,
A thousand dreamy scenes among;
And the great train rattled and thundered
along.

Heavily breathed the man of care;
Lightly slept the maiden fair;
And the mother pressed
Unto her breast
Her beautiful babes, with yearning strong;
And the great train rattled and thundered
along.

Shading his eyes with his brawny hand,
Danger ahead the driver scanned;
And he turned the steam,
For the red light's gleam
Flashed warning to him there was some-
thing wrong;
But the great train rattled and thundered
along.

"Down the brakes!" rang the driver's
shout:

"Down the brakes!" sang the whistle out:

But the speed was high,

And the danger nigh,

And Death was waiting to build his pyre;

And the train dashed into a river of fire.

Into the night the red flames gleamed;

High they leaped and crackled and streamed;

And the great train loomed,

Like a monster doomed,

In the midst of the flames and their ruthless
ire—

In the murderous tide of a river of fire.

Roused the sleeper within his bed;

A crash, a plunge, and a gleam of red,

And the sweltering heat

Of his winding-sheet

Clung round his form, with an agony dire;

And he moaned and died in a river of fire.

And they who were spared from the fearful
death,

Thanked God for life, with quickened breath,
And groaned that, too late,
From a terrible fate

To rescue their comrades was their desire,
Ere they sunk in a river of death and fire.

Pity for them who, helpless, died,
And sunk in the river's merciless tide ;
And blessings infold
The driver bold,

Who, daring for honour, and not for hire,
Went down with his train in the river of fire.






THE CABLE.

PEAL the clanging bell!
Thunder the brazen gun!
Over the earth in triumph swell
The notes of a victory won!

Not over field and ditch and corse;
Not by musketry, cannon, and horse;
Not by skirmishes bloody and fell;
Not by the whiz of shot and shell;
But men of will and thought,
Men of muscle and brain,
Have planned, and toiled, and suffered,
and fought,
And conquered the raging main!

Far from an Eastern shore,
By the second ark is brought,



Spanning the dusky distance o'er,
A line of glowing thought!
Dashing through ripples and torrents and
waves,
Courting the gloom of mariners' graves;
Hastily threading the ocean aisles,
And bringing to naught three thousand
miles!
For men of will and thought,
Men of muscle and brain,
Have planned, and toiled, and suffered,
and fought,
And conquered the raging main!

Time in his car, indeed,
Flits fast from place to place;
But restless Thought has dared his
speed,
And Thought has won the race!
Man is as naught in Time's fierce clasp,
But Thought can escape his greedy grasp;

And Time shall have perished, by and by,
But the soul of Thought can never die!

Thunder the guns as you ought!

Well may the church-bells chime!

For man, with the Heaven-given sword
of Thought,

Has conquered the Scythe of Time!





SHIP "CITY OF BOSTON."

"We only know she sailed away,
And ne'er was heard of more."

WAVES of the ocean that thunder and
roar,

Where is the ship that we sent from
our shore?

Tell, as ye dash on the quivering strand,
Where is the crew that comes never to land?
Where are the hearts that, unfearing and
gay,

Broke from the clasp of affection away?
Where are the faces that, smiling and bright,
Sailed for the death-darkened regions of
night?

Waves of the ocean, that thunder and roar,
Where is the ship that we sent from our
shore?

Storms of the ocean, that bellow and sweep,
Where are the friends that went forth on the
deep ?

Where are the faces ye paled with your
sneer ?

Where are the hearts ye have frozen with
fear ?

Where is the maiden, young, tender, and
fair ?

Where is the grandsire, of silvery hair ?

Where is the glory of womanhood's time ?

Where the warm blood of man's vigour and
prime ?

Storms of the ocean, that bellow and pour,
Where is the ship that we sent from our
shore ?

Birds of the ocean, that scream through the
gale,

What have ye seen of a wind-beaten sail ?

Perched ye for rest on the shivering mast,
Beaten, and shattered, and bent by the blast ?

Heard ye the storm-threatened mariner's
plea,

Birds of the bitter and treacherous sea?

Heard ye no message to carry away

Home to the hearts that are yearning to-
day?

Birds of the ocean, that hover and soar,

Where is the ship that we sent from our
shore?

Depths of the ocean, that fathomless lie,

Where is the crew that no more cometh
nigh?

What of the guests that so silently sleep

Low in thy chambers, relentlessly deep?

Cold is the couch they have haplessly won;

Long is the night they have entered upon;

Still must they sleep till the trumpet o'erhead

Summons the sea to uncover its dead.

Depths of the ocean, with treasures in store,

Where is the ship that we sent from our
shore?



THE GOOD OF THE FUTURE.

WHY is the mire in the trodden street,
And the dark stream by the sewer
borne,

Spurned from even under our feet,
Grudged by us e'en the look of scorn ?
There is fresh grass in its gloom—
There are sweetness and bloom ;
There is pulse for men to eat—
There are golden acres of wheat.

But so it is, and hath ever been :
The good of the future is e'er unseen.

Why is the mud of humanity spurned
E'en from the tread of the passer-by ?
Why is the look of pity turned
From the bare feet and the downcast eye ?

There is virtue yet to spring
From this poor trodden thing ;
There are germs of godlike power
In the trials of this hour ;
But so it is, and hath ever been :
The man of the future is e'er unseen.





THE JOYS THAT ARE LEFT.

IF the sun have been gone while we
deemed it might shine ;
If the day steal away with no hope-
bearing sign ;
If the night, with no sight of its stars or
its moon,
But such clouds as it hath, closes down on
our path over-dark and o'er-soon ;
If a voice we rejoice in its sweetness to hear,
Breathe a strain for our pain that glides
back to our ear ;
If a friend mark the end of a page that
was bright,
Without pretext or need, by some reptile-
like deed that coils plain in our sight ;
If life's charms in our arms grow a-tired
and take wing ;



If the flowers that are ours turn to nettles
and sting ;

If the home sink in gloom that we laboured
to save,

And the garden we trained, when its best bloom
is gained, be enriched by a grave ;

Shall we deem that life's dream is a toil
and a snare ?

Shall we lie down and die on the couch of
despair ?

Shall we throw needless woe on our sad
heart bereft ?

Or, grown tearfully wise, look with pain-chas-
tened eyes at the joys that are left ?

For the tree that we see on the landscape
so fair,

When we hie to it nigh, may be fruitless
and bare ;

While the vine that doth twine 'neath the
blades of the grass,

With sweet nourishment rife, holds the chalice
of life toward our lips as we pass.

So with hope let us grope for what joys
we may find ;

Let not fears, let not tears make us heed-
less or blind ;

Let us think, while we drink the sweet
pleasures that are,
That in sea or in ground many gems may be
found that outdazzle the star.

There be deeds may fill needs we have
suffered in vain,

There be smiles whose pure wiles may
yet banish our pain,

And the heaven to us given may be found
ere we die ;

For God's glory and grace, and His great
holy place, are not all in the sky.

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