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POETRY.

MASONIC ODE.

EMPIRES and kings have pass'd away
Into oblivion, mine;
And towering domes have felt decay,
Since auld lang syne.

But MASONRY, the glorious art,
With wisdom's ray divine;
'Twas ever so, the Hebrew cries,
In auld lang syne.

Behold the occidental chair
Proclaims the day's decline—
Hiram of Tyre was seated there,
In auld lang syne.

The South proclaims refreshment nigh
High twelve's the time to dine;
And beauty decked the southern sky,
In auld lang syne.

Yes, Masonry, whose temple here
Was built by hands divine,
Shall ever shine as bright and clear,
As auld lang syne.

Then, brethren, for the worthy three,
Let us a wreath entwine,
The three great heads of Masonry
In auld lang syne.

Remember oft that worthy one,
With gratitude divine,
The Tyrian youth—the widow's son
Of auld lang syne.

WINE'S WORK.

'Promise me, Charlie.'
She was leaning over the back of his chair, looking down into his face. By 'she' I mean Mrs. Cole and 'Charlie' was her husband. He had just settled himself for a quiet after-dinner cigar. But Mrs. Cole had mischievously snatched it from his hand, threatening to withhold it until he gave her the desired promise. And now she laid one hand caressingly on his forehead, and stealing the other under his chin she looked archly yet earnestly down into the dark depths of his eyes, with her tender blue eyes, as she repeated: 'Promise me, Charlie. Now do; that's a dear!'
'Nonsense Virginia!'—and he tried to put away her hand.
'Oh, Charlie!' reproachfully.
'Pshaw, do let me go. You'll choke me,' he said, half impatiently.
'And so I will,' she cried merrily, 'if you don't promise me this very minute, not to drink anything stronger than pure cold water at Uncle Logan's party to-night.'
'Yes, yes, yes! There, now I hope I've promised often enough to satisfy you.'
'On your honor?'
'Certainly. Yes of course!'
'Oh, sir, I thought I could bring you to terms. Recollect, you have said on your honor.'
And then, while her face grew earnest, in its pleading, she added: "Oh Charlie you don't know how anxious I have felt about this party ever since we decided to go. They always have such a gay time

at Uncle Logan's. And you know dear, though you would not do a wrong thing yourself, how easy it is for your companions to make you go too far because you are such a dear good-natured fellow. But now that you have promised me, I feel quite easy. And, dear, don't forget when the young men begin to get too gay, come up stairs to me and baby.'
And he promised.
Going out to an evening party at Uncle Logan's was no small affair, considering that it was a good five mile ride from Glendale, out into the country, over rough roads, with Maple River—swollen by recent rains—to be crossed. For this was in a remote and secluded part of England, distant from any railroad, and with no town near where a vehicle might be obtained—Besides Virginia Cole was a first-rate horsewoman and feared nothing on her own account. That she was thus rather rash and foolhardy, will appear from the fact that she had resolved to encumber herself with a burden though of a very interesting kind.
Lights were glimmering from the windows as they rode up to Uncle Logan's gate, and the number of horses and vehicles already congregated around it showed that the invited guests of the Christmas-eve party were already beginning to drop in. Aunt Lizzie came out to the door to meet them, and took the sleeping babe from Virgie's poor tired arms.
'Remember Charlie!' she said imploringly, laying her head upon his shoulders as they were on the point of separating—she, for Aunt Lizzie's comfortable room above-stairs—he, for the society of his boon companions.
'Never fear me!' And he went gaily away.
Alas! for the promise made to the fond, credulous wife, sitting upstairs in the quiet matronly circle, with her babe on her knee, so proud and happy—for it was her first child. And what young mother ever failed to appreciate the dignity of her position at such a time?
In less than half an hour Charles Cole had forgotten his promise, wife, child, everything; and again and again his glass was filled, and his voice raised in riotous chorus with the loudest.
The night waned and the guests began to disperse. Virgie sat in the dressing-room all ready for the ride, holding in her lap what seemed to be a huge bundle of shawls, but which was in reality little Charlie, who lay curled up in his warm nest fast asleep, with one little fat thumb in his mouth.
'I wonder what makes Charlie so late,' she said at last impatiently?
'Aunt Lizzie will you please send for him, and say I'm waiting?'
He came at length. But the first words he spoke told her all. She knew at once that he was intoxicated, though to others only a very slight excitement was all that appeared unusual about him.
Oh! the shame! She hardly dared to

speaking to him. All her thought was to get him away before he betrayed his condition to other eyes.
'Give me the child,' he said.
And as she did so, she felt that his arm was unsteady.
'Oh! I dare not trust the baby with him,' was her thought, but she was silent. She could not bear that those around should know the mortifying truth.
'I do wish you would stay all night, Virgie,' spoke Aunt Lizzie, renewing her entreaties. 'It is so late, and it is growing colder.'
Virgie thought of the dreary five mile ride with a drunken husband—and then the river! She had before refused to stay, but now she thought better of it.
'What do you think of it Charles? Hadn't we better stay?' she asked persuasively.
But liquor had made him sullen.
'No, we must go home,' he said surlily. She knew it would avail nothing to argue the question with him, but only lead to a painful exposure, so she commenced paying her adieux.
By dint of gentle coaxing she induced him to give the baby to her before they started.
As they rode away Uncle Logan shouted out to them:
'Look out for the river!'
Virgie's heart was too heavy for a reply, but Charles shouted back with maudlin cheerfulness:
'All right!'
As they rode on she saw that he was sinking into a drunken stupor. Oh, if they were only safe at home how glad she would be. And then she thought of the river yet to be forded; and every breath was a prayer. She determined not to let him have the child when they came to the crossing, but to trust to her own arm and courage to carry herself and the babe through. She hoped he would not think to ask her for the child, and was nerving herself for a refusal in case he should, when they came in sight of the water.
The moon shone down, making it almost as bright as day. Virgie thanked Heaven for that! But she shuddered as the sweep of the waters fell on her ear; and she saw it foaming white in the moonlight, as it swept on in a strong current.
Charles roused himself.
'Where's the boy?' he asked.
'Never mind, dear! he's asleep, and I don't like to disturb him. I can carry him over. I'm strong enough for it.'
'What is the woman thinking of? You carry him over, indeed! Give him to me.'
'But Charles, you are not in a condition to hold him. I shall be thankful if you can guide your horse over safely, as you are.'
'Ha! What do you mean by that?' She made him no answer.
'Do you take me for a fool?' he said, roughly and angrily.

'Now, Charles, don't do so. You know your arm is very unsteady, just now. It is indeed!'
'Ah, I understand you now. So, madam. I suppose you think I am drunk?'
Again she was silent.
'Give me the child!' he said fiercely.
'O, Charles! For God's sake—'
'Give him to me. I say! Do you think to brave me so? Give him here this minute.'
Resistance, she knew, was useless.—It would only serve to infuriate him, and what will not a drunken man do?
Uncovering the little sleeping face, she kissed it once—then drawing the thick shawl which enveloped the little figure, she covered the face again and gave him into her husband's arms.
'Charles! For the love of Heaven be careful.'
'Don't be a fool!'
So they plunged in, and she did not take her eyes from the other two until they had nearly reached the opposite bank. Then her horse stepped on a stone and slipping, nearly precipitated her into the water. When her attention was again free they had reached the opposite bank.
'There he is!' said Charles, triumphantly, as he placed the bundle in her arms. 'What a simpleton you were to think I couldn't bring him over safely.'
How very light it was! Good heaven! She moved it about in her arms, pressed closer, and then uttered an awful shriek.
'My child! My little child! My Charlie! O, my child!'
Both turned simultaneously back to the water. The quick eye of the mother was just in time to catch one last brief glimpse of a little rosy, pitiful, upturned face—and then it disappeared down the current, and the rapid waters flowed on.
In his drunken unconsciousness Charles had let the sleeping infant slip out of the shawls, and nothing could be heard above the noise of the waters. He did not know it till the mother screamed.
There was no help. Oh! it was pitiful heartbreaking! Poor young mother!

The home of the Coles is very still now. Virgie's pale face seems paler yet, from contrast with her black dress. The cradle looks desolate, standing always back in one corner of the nursery. She never passes it without having her heart rung anew; and she will sit for hours, folding and unfolding the little clothes, and her hands linger lovingly among them. There is a pair of tiny worn shoes in the drawer of her work table, and a lock of fair, soft baby hair in the great Bible.
Let us hope that Charles Coles is a better man.
A HARD CASE.—The good little boy was sitting on the front steps whittling up his sister's embroidery frame and muntering to himself. "This ain't no good world to live in, unless a fellow is his father's and mother's only orphan boy. What makes me get so mad is to have my sister go and take all my ripe peaches to give to that big loafer of a sweetheart of hers that comes around here seven nights in a week to get a square meal, and makes out as if he wanted to talk politics with the old man. I wish they'd marry and go to Texas, I do!" And then he threw the remnants of the frame in the street and seemed lighter hearted.

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