



THE SWEETNESS OF LIFE.

It fell on a day I was happy,
And the winds, the convex sky,
The flowers and the beasts in the meadow
Seemed happy even as I,
And I stretched my hands to the meadow,
To the bird, the beast, the tree;
"Why are ye all so happy?"
I cried, and they answered me,
What sayest thou, oh meadow,
That stretchest so wide, so far,
That none can say how many
Thy misty marguerites are?
And what say ye, red roses,
That for the sun-blanch'd wall
From your high black-shadew'd trellice
Like flame or blood-drops fall?
"We are born, we are reared, and we
linger
A various space, and die,
We dream, and are bright and happy,
But we cannot answer why."
What sayest thou, oh shadow,
That from the dreaming hill
All down the broadening valley
Liest so sharp and still?
And thou, oh murmuring brooklet,
Whereby in the noonday gleam
The loosestrife burns like ruby,
And the branched lilies dream?
"We are born, we are reared, and we
linger
A various space and die;
We dream, and are very happy,
But we cannot answer why."
And then of myself I questioned,
That like a ghost the while
Stood from me and calmly answered
With slow and curious smile:
"Thou art born as the flowers and wilt linger
Thine own short space and die;
Thou dreamst and art strangely happy,
But thou canst not answer why."
—Arch. Lampman, in Youth's Companion.

The Story of a Mortgage.

BY LEROY ARMSTRONG.

In the first place, the mortgage never should have been made.
Ben Morgan was one of our "active men," one of the class termed "huslers" in these years of new word coinings. He was in some regards a brilliant man. People said he could make money at anything. He had no regular business aside from the farm, but he was thrifty, alert and fortunate. Sometimes he had thousands of dollars on hand; sometimes he had to borrow. It was on one of these latter occasions that he put the mortgage on the farm. It was the first time he had ever done such a thing. Perhaps if Sam Morgan, his only son, who was away at school in the State University—had not fallen into trouble, the loan would never have been made. But it would have been better and kinder and wiser to have asked Sam to pay the fiddler, since he had insisted on dancing.
However, there was the mortgage, and there it had been since the fatal November 26, 1886. Mrs. Morgan didn't really understand what it meant when she had signed the paper. She was suffering keenly, as only a mother can, and silently, over the knowledge that Sam had been expelled. She knew very little of her husband's business. He never talked of it much, to her or any one. She never knew what he did with the money, but she knew by his sleeplessness, by his evasive mood of apprehension, by the puzzled expression, by the sobered face, and finally by the hopeless return one night, that affairs had not prospered.
She sat by his bedside that early winter, she gave the medicine all through that season of illness, she followed him over the frozen ground when they buried him in January.
And then she came home and tried to take up his burden in addition to her own.
Fanny was eighteen, and almost out of high school. Madge was three years younger and would not be consoled. Allan was twelve, and resolute to help his mother.
First she sold the pony to pay the doctor's bill, and Fanny walked to town each morning and home each night. Then she sold some of the cattle, for the feed was running short as the spring approached. Then she rented most of the fields, for Allan was too small to farm.
But the men, who gave her "one-third in the field," seemed to take a very large two-thirds for themselves. And it was not easy to meet the constant claims which came up against the estate during that first year. She wondered that her husband had left nothing, and fully believed the time would come when some one would find a fortune stowed away and waiting for her.
Fanny began teaching school in the spring of '87, but the pay was small, and the girl was away from home so much.
How the widow's heart hungered for her children: for a little of the comfort that had gone out of her life when that strong man laid down and died.
Madge grew restless in the loose restraint, and troubled the mother not a little. Allan worked like a Trojan in the garden and the orchard. If it had not been for the interest, she would have gotten along very well.
But there before her, less than four years away now, was that impending mortgage, and nothing on earth, unless it were the hidden treasure, could ever vanquish it.
So one year grew into two, and two into three, and three years finally added to themselves a fourth. Fanny was a strong woman now. She had found her footing, and the world did not daunt

her. She had proven her worth, and her services were rewarded.
Madge had never attempted high school. The walk was too long, and besides, her mother could not consent to lose her. Allan had saved a little, and had developed some of his father's talent for trading. The sheep and the calves had grown into money. He had made more money with them. Fanny had finished her school, and the three children were sitting with their mother about the fire in the evening.
"We have just managed to live and keep up the interest," said Mrs. Morgan. "No one but a widow can know how the farm is stripped when the good man dies."
"But we have always held together, and we are very happy," said large-hearted Fanny.
"If it wasn't for the mortgage we would get along all right," said Allan.
"But the mortgage is there," sighed mother. "We cannot meet it in any way I can see, and next year we must lose the farm."
"Some one is coming," said Madge. The dog began barking in a most forbidding way. He tempered the threatening tone little by little, and presently they knew by the rapping of his tail on the kitchen door that he knew the visitor and would welcome him.
It was Squire Folkstone.
"I thought I would call a minute," said the farmer. He never called unless the quarterly interest were due, and the widow was by no means sure his visit portended pure kindness. She remembered how her husband had scorned the slow, scheming old man.
"I just wanted to say a word about cutting down trees in the woods," he continued, turning to Allan.
"What about it?" asked the young man. Allan was taller and heavier than Squire Folkstone. His mother noted that with pride as she watched him fronting the money-lender.
"Well, you know I hold a mortgage on the farm, and every stick of timber is worth something."
"Yes, but we have to have fire wood."
"And you could get fire wood without picking out the best red-oak trees, couldn't you? I was walking through the woods the other day, and I noticed whenever you cut down a tree you always cut down the finest one. Now, of course, you can't expect to pay that mortgage next year. The farm will naturally fall to me, and I have a right to see that you don't damage me."
There was a moment of very painful silence. It was the heaviest cross the widow had had to bear. She could not truly hope to pay off that awful mortgage. The possible fortune that Ben Morgan might have left seemed never forthcoming. She had done the very best she could. So had her children. She thought of Sam, long since lost sight of, and wished he were here to protect his mother and save the heritage of her children.
Allan seemed struggling with a passion too great for his untrained control. Presently he said:
"What business had you in the woods?"
"Well, I had a right to see that my property was not—"
"But this isn't your property," protested Allan.
"But it will be," said the squire, lifting his eyebrows and smiling a hard smile at the young man.
"But it won't be," retorted Allan.
"We are going to pay that mortgage when it is due. Now, don't let me hear of you on this farm again till your claim is due. I guess I will go a little farther. You came here with a mean purpose to-night. I guess this house is too small for you and the rest of us. You get out! Get out!" Squire Folkstone?
"Allan—" protested Mother Morgan, but her heart flamed with the proud certainty that he was justified.
"What—why?" began the squire, rising in something like fear; for the youth was angry and very strong.
"Go out, I tell you. Go, or I will—"
He did not need to finish the threat. The justice started to his feet, felt behind him for the latch, opened the door in a bewildered fashion, passed out so hurriedly that the dog sounded another threatening bark, and so escaped to the highway.
"Now, what shall we do?" asked timorous Madge.
"Do just what I said," replied Allan; "pay the mortgage."
"But, my son, we have nothing to pay it with," said the widow. She was full of misgivings after all.
"We will have," said Allan.
Then they began planning. Fanny would draw no more money till the end of the winter term. It would be a little inconvenient, but Allan would take the coats and drive over after her every Friday night, and take her back to the school every Monday morning. Madge would help mother as she never had helped before, and Allan would sell all the stock that could safely be spared and let the farm for working as soon as spring opened.
"I do wish Sam were here," said mother.
"Sam will be here when the mortgage is paid and will help us celebrate," said hopeful Allan. "I am glad we kept the two lower fields last fall and sowed them in wheat."
So day followed day, and the frost of winter melted into the veins of spring.
"Go in to that field," said Squire Folkstone cheerfully, leaning over the fence

where Allan was heaping brush on a patch of new ground.
"Well, meebly, meebly," replied the young man. "It does look cloudy now, that's a fact."
But he did not desist from his working.
"Go in to plow up that fall wheat, ain't you?" persisted the money-lender.
"No, why?"
"Cause it's winter killed," replied the squire. "It never can make— and with all this wet weather agin' it now."
Allan was by no means sure. Boys do not watch the seasons. But there was one thing that armed him. It was hope. He never flinched for a moment. He did the best he could, and counted on fortune to favor him.
She did seem inclined to smile, for in spite of the rainy February and the cold March, the wheat came up splendidly. In spite of the threatening drought through April, the corn ground broke up in the best of shape, and about the middle of the month Allan came in at night and reported the fields ready for planting.
"Squire Folkstone says it is too dry to plant," said Madge. "He called me to the fence and told me so this afternoon when he was going home from town."
"Well, we'll plant to-morrow just the same," said resolute Allan. "And we'll want all the help you people can give us." He was filled with the zest of action, encouraged by the crown of manhood he knew he was earning. His sleep was so sound up there in the little bedroom under the roof. The night fled away with such unimpeding tread. The morning came with such brimming goblets of life in its hands. Allan was up very early. It was to be his first crop of corn.
That day was worth a fortune to the Morgan farm. It was not alone the proof of Allan's manliness, it was the proof of Fanny's strength.
She had driven horses ever since she was a little girl. She knew they could not afford to hire a man. So she shaded her face in a sunbonnet and mounted the driver's seat of the corn planter. She drove all day through that sultry sun, closing her lips and turning her eyes from the clouds of dust that rose repeatedly. Allan sat there behind her, silent, grim, determined, throwing the lever forward and back and dropping the chosen grains exactly in crosses.
Madge brought them a luncheon and a mug of cold milk when the forenoon had half vanished. She and mother planted the corn in the new ground, where the checkrower would not work.
All of that day, nearly all of the next, and then the planting was done. Allan took a gallon of grain from the sack at the end of the field and planted it all in a "king-hill."
"That's for good luck," he said.
"Fanny, you're worth as much as a man."
"Thank you," said Fanny, as she looked at her tortured hands. She was really very tired.
"Too bad to lose all your seed that way," called Squire Folkstone, while Allan was busy about the barn at the close of the day. "See that moon? Go in to have two weeks of dry weather. Besides, no one ever ought to plant corn in the first quarter." The boy did not answer.
The next morning was Sunday. Allan was roused by the rolling of thunder. He was lulled to sleep again by the soothing sound of rain. He only waked an hour afterward when his mother called him.
"And the corn is all in!" she added thankfully.
Squire Folkstone was willing to admit that Allan had been favored of the weather in the matter of corn, but he had plenty of time to prove that this rain was the worst possible thing on wheat.
"That long dry spell filled it with fly, and if any of it misses the fly this rain will fill it with rust," he said.
"And if it comes to a good harvest it will fill you with disappointment," laughed the young man.
All through the months of summer and autumn it seemed the God of the widow and the fatherless smiled upon them. All through the season when the sun above and the earth below, when the dews of night and the winds of dawn were pouring their treasures into the ears of corn and the heads of wheat, it seemed that a greater hand was doing the work, that a greater hand had planned. Never in all the years of his cradled life had old Squire Folkstone seen such wheat as the harvester found on the Morgan farm. Never in the memory of the neighborhood had such giant stalks born such massive ears of corn. Never had the orchard swung such luscious treasures above a sod so fragrant. And never had the humbler crops of berries, plants and potatoes so richly rewarded industry.
But these neighbors will long remember that Fanny Morgan did many a hard day's work outdoors. They will not soon forget the sight of tender Madge struggling bravely, if not quite effectively, with burdens that a man might have wearied under. And none of them can overlook the tedious days when mother added her strength, that had never before been tested so roughly, to the efforts of her children.
As to Allan, he found his abundant reward. The crops had prospered mightily. His resolution, taken without the aid of horoscope for the future or experience for the past, had been vindicated.
The summer was over, the harvest was ended, and they have been saved.
This is a simple story. It is the story

of a year just ended, the story of a season when the gathered sunshine of seventy-two consecutive days have heaped their golden treasures in our land. It might be easy to bring back that prodigal son at the last day of grace, supplied with Ben Morgan's missing treasure and let him lift the mortgage that no hand at home could manage. It might be easy to draw upon the undeposited stores of the improbable. But it is much nearer the truth to say that these four helped themselves, and then God filled the measure of their needs.—The Voice.
Lieutenant Dravo's Indians.
There is a company of cavalry at Fort Niobrara, commanded by Lieutenant Dravo, of which he is very proud.
"On the 21st day of April," said the officer, "I completed the enlistment of the fifty-five Indians in my company. An Indian is more easily enlisted into the cavalry, because he is allowed a horse."
"His own pony?"
"No; he must be mounted upon a horse as the other cavalry soldiers are."
"Do you find it difficult to discipline the Indians?"
"Not at all. They obey orders better than white men, and you should see the improvement in them. The comparison between the Indian soldier and their relatives at the agency is most favorable to the soldier. An Indian, while he is not round-shouldered, leans forward and bends his knees, but six months' setting-up drill has changed all this materially. Ten of my men are from the Carlisle School in Pennsylvania, and the junior corporal is a son of the famous Two Strikes. We have a school in the garrison and they are at present learning the alphabet. It is hard for them, too, but they are very much in earnest and learn readily. I promised them when they enlisted that they should be as fully equipped as the white soldiers, and I have just returned from a nine days' trip around the reservation, in which they proved my words good to their relatives and friends."
"How did you induce them to cut their hair?"
"It is funny about that. I told them they could have no uniforms until they were clean and their hair cut. This was Saturday; if they were ready, they could don their uniforms Monday morning. Sunday—the whole day—was spent in bathing, six at a time, and on Monday morning the entire company reported, clean and with hair cut. I explain to them their orders. They wish sincerely to learn the white man's way, and, as I said before, are the most earnest workers imaginable."
Lieutenant Dravo is in Omaha under orders to be consulted upon army matters. He is enthusiastic upon the Indian question, and personally cares for the men.—Omaha World-Herald.
Limit of Vision.
A well-known and popular journal of science published the following just after the close of the Egyptian war of 1882:
"An interesting experiment in heliography, or signalling by sunshine, was successfully made in Egypt during the recent campaign. Colonel Keyser ascended one of the Pyramids near Cairo, and by means of a heliographic mirror reflected a ray of sunshine to Alexandria, 120 miles away. At that great distance the signals, appearing like pinpoints of brightness, were ascertained to be a message from Sir Garnet Wolseley to the Khedive."
Professor N. B. Webster, in commenting on the above, says: "The remarkable point in this statement is that the rays of sunlight, if seen from the earth's surface by those at Alexandria, must have been curved or bent from a tangent, or else the pyramid climbed by Colonel Keyser was at least one mile and four-fifths in height. The fact is that from the top of the highest of the pyramids the limit of vision fixed by the rotundity of the earth is about twenty-seven miles. If two pyramids were each 480 feet high and sixty miles apart, their bases having a geodesic level, the brightest light at the top of one would be invisible from the top of the other. In popular histories of the Seven Wonders of the World read that the Pharos, the first lighthouse, could be seen at a distance of 100 miles. In order for this to have been possible the Pharos must have been about a mile and a quarter in height.—St. Louis Republic.
Coke Made by Nature.
A seam of natural coke, closely resembling the manufactured article, has recently been discovered in New South Wales at the Bull Pass coal mines. The coal measure at this point covers an area of about 550 acres and is six feet in thickness. The upper half of this seam is coal of a character differing but little from the ordinary Australian coals, while the lower portion of the measure is a natural coke. The junction of the coal and coke is clearly defined and can be traced all through the workings.
This natural coke is slightly heavier than the manufactured article, contains slightly less fixed carbon, but a much smaller quantity of ash and a lower percentage of sulphur. This natural coke burns without smoke and can be mined for much less than the cost of manufactured coke.—Philadelphia Record.
Every teacher who has taught in the public schools of Sweden five years or more receives a pay of at least \$139 a year.

BUDGET OF FUN.

HUMOROUS SKETCHES FROM VARIOUS SOURCES.

An Awful Warning—A Dainty Dog—Didn't Know How to Apply It—A Social Catechism—Rather Stale Bread, Etc.
He didn't read the papers for they hadn't any news;
At least, they didn't coincide with his special views,
And when he came to town one day, with criticism ripe,
He climbed to an electric lamp to light his ancient pipe;
He hadn't read the papers—but he knew just what was best;
He simply touched the wires and—the fluid did the rest.
—Weekly Journalist.
A Dainty Dog.
Tramp—"Say, gov'n'r, will yer dog bite me?"
Owner—"Not he. He's very particular what he eats."
—Judge.
MEN AND MONEY.
"Money talks," remarked the rich Mr. Smartellique to a young woman late one evening.
"It goes sometimes, too," she replied, and he didn't understand.—Detroit Free Press.
DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO APPLY IT.
Lady (to rheumatic old woman)—"I am sorry you should suffer so—you should try electricity."
Old Woman—"Thank you kindly, mum. Be I to swallow it or rub it in?"
—Texas Siftings.
A SOCIAL CATECHISM.
"And what do you mean by a wise man?"
"One who can do without the world."
"And by a fool?"
"One who fancies that the world cannot do without him."
—Judge.
HIS VICTOR WON.
Returned Tourist—"Is Mr. Goodheart still paying attention to your daughter?"
"Indeed he isn't paying her any attention at all."
"Indeed! Did he jilt her?"
"No, he married her."
—St. Louis Star-Sayings.
SHE WAS PERENNIAL.
"Mrs. Trotter," quoth Mr. T., "you remind me of certain flowers by your direct oppositeness to them."
"What do you mean, sir?"
"I refer, madam, to those dainty flowers that always shut up at sunset."
—Harper's Bazar.
AN ANGLOMANIAC.
Morrison—"I hear Stivey met the Prince, last summer."
Jansen—"Yes."
Morrison—"What did Stivey say to him?"
Jansen—"Apologized for being an American."
—Life.
RATHER STALE BREAD.
Mrs. Slim Diet—"The boarders are coming in. Cut the bread, Matilda."
Miss Slimdiet—"Ma, I saw in a society paper to-day that bread should be broken, not cut."
Mrs. Slimdiet—"That's the style now, eh? Very well. Where's the ax?"
—Good News.
JOHNNY'S POOR LUCK.
"Well, Johnny, what are you thankful for?" asked the invited guest.
"Nuthin'," said the boy. "I ain't had any luck this year. On'y had one cold all the fall, 'n' that wasn't bad enough to keep me out of school more'n a day. My chum's had the mumps, 'n' has been out three weeks."
—Bazar.
A TOUGH OLD SPONGE.
Uncle Joe (on his second eight-month visit to Johnny's house)—"Johnny, stop pinching your uncle. What are you up to, you little rascal!"
Johnny—"Why, ma said you were a regular sponge, and I was pinching you to see if you would squeeze up like my sponge that I bought down town."
—Pharmaceutical Journal.
HE FOLLOWED INSTRUCTIONS.
Lawyer—"Now, sir, listen to me, and please give straightforward answers. You say you drove a baker's cart?"
"No, I did not."
"Do you mean to tell me you do not drive a baker's cart?"
"No, sir."
"What do you do, then?"
"I drive a horse."
—London Tit-Bits.
WANTED A HEAD PUT ON HIM.
An old man with a head as destitute of hair as a watermelon, entered a Manhattan avenue drug-store and told the clerk he wanted a bottle of hair restorer.
"What kind of hair restorer do you prefer?"
"I reckon I'll have to take a bottle of red hair restorer. That was the color it used to be when I was a boy."
—Texas Siftings.
THESE NEVER IMPROMPTUS.
Bullfinch—"That was a wonderfully clever speech that your husband just made; and he tells me it was entirely impromptu."
Mrs. Wooden—"Oh, yes; quite so."

Bullfinch—"It is marvelous that he could do so well when he looks so tired."
Mrs. Wooden—"Well, I should think he might look tired; he sat up all night thinking what he'd say."
—Boston Courier.
WHY HE WAS SO GENEROUS.
Mrs. Grayneck—"Johnny, I am very glad to see that you gave your sister the largest half of your apple."
Johnny—"Yes'm, I was very glad to give it to her."
Mrs. Grayneck—"My little son, you do not know how it delights me to hear you say so."
Johnny—"Yes'm; there was a big worm hole in that half."
—Boston Courier.
A QUICK CURE.
Wagg—"It's too bad about the girl that jumped off the Washington Monument, isn't it?"
Wooden—"Why, what did she jump off for?"
Wagg—"Why, you see she was very thin."
Wooden—"What had that to do with it?"
Wagg—"Why, she thought she'd come down plump."
—Boston Courier.
THEY AGREED.
Capitalist—"My letting of the job for putting up that building, sir, will depend on circumstances. I want to know whether you and I agree on the proper limit as to height."
Architect and Builder—"I have always had decided views on that subject. May I ask how high a building you contemplate putting up?"
"Seventeen stories, sir."
(With much firmness)—"In my opinion, sir, the limit for a building of this class should be seventeen stories."
—Chicago Tribune.
CHEAPER IN THE END.
Boston—"So you are not going to housekeeping when you get married?"
De Boarder—"No. We shall take board for a year."
"Isn't that rather an extravagant way to begin?"
"Not at all. I desire my wife to study economy of my landlady. Then we will start housekeeping, and I will make her an allowance of as much a week as we paid for board."
"What do you think will be the result?"
"Well, by the time we are old she ought to have about a million."
—New York Weekly.
STILL GOING.
One day a Lie broke out of its inclosure and started to travel.
And the man who owned the Premises saw it after it had started and was sorry he had not made the inclosure Lie-tight.
So he called his swiftest Truth and said:
"A Lie has got loose and will do much mischief if it is not stopped. I want you to go after it and bring it back or kill it!"
So the swift Truth started out after the Lie.
But the Lie had one Hour the Start.
At the end of the first Day the Lie was going Lickety-split. The Truth was a long way behind it and was getting Tired.
It has not yet caught up.
And never will.—Chicago Tribune.
HE WANTED IT LIVELY.
He was an old bachelor looking for board.
"Is it pretty lively here?" he asked, as the landlady was showing him about.
"I should just say it was. Now, if you take this room there's a man and his wife on the right. They're always quarreling, and you can hear every word that is said."
"That must be interesting."
"And on the left there's a young man that is learning to play the cornet. He practices half the time. And the family across the hall have a melodeon. I have a piano myself, and a girl upstairs is learning the violin. I think you will find it lively here."
But he said if there wasn't a xylophone and a calliope in the house he wouldn't take the room. He was afraid he would be lonesome.—Detroit Free Press.
Petticoats First Worn by Men.
It is a remarkable fact that the petticoat was first worn by men, and that even in this age and generation men are loth to discard its flowing drapery. When Henry VIII. went to meet Anne of Cleves he was habited, we read, "in a coat of velvet, somewhat made like a frock, embroidered all over with flatted gold of damaske, with small lace mixed between, of the same gold, and other laces of the same going traversewise, that the gound little appeared;" and in a description of a similar garment belonging to his father, Henry VII., we read of its being decorated with bows of ribbon, quite as a belle of the present day would adorn a ballroom dress.—Glasgow Herald.
Fisherman's Luck.
Abner Wilson, a farmer who lives near St. Joseph, Mo., went fishing the other day with a seine in the creek that runs near his home. Finding something dragging heavily at the seine, he got into the water and pulled up an old coffee pot, which, upon examination, proved to contain \$670 in gold coin, none of a later coinage than 1857.—New Orleans Picayune.