

AFTERWHILE.

Love will send its greeting, and the breath of angel wings
Will refresh the weary toiler, as the sweetest music rings
From out the brightening future, lit by hope's eternal smile—
Tears of joy will drown all sadness in that coming afterwhile.
Stars will shed their radiance with a beaming, tender glow,
Upon the soul rejoicing, that at last it seems to know
That its dreary days, so lonely, with naught them to beguile,
Is blending with the glory of that dearest afterwhile.
The blossoms once so drooping beside the dearest way,
Will blush with rarest fragrance at the breaking of the day,
And offer incense welcome, as we plod each weary mile
That brings us closer, closer to that coming afterwhile.
—Atlanta Constitution.

The Testing of Tim Baker.

BY PAUL PASTOR.

THE soft evening air, laden with mingled odors of hayfield and resinous woodland, came stealing through the porch of Farmer Willett's old homestead. At opposite ends of a rustic bench, on the porch, sat pretty Lucy Willett and her most devoted suitor and admirer, Tim Baker. Lucy had many admirers—more than any other girl in the township; but Tim was the most persistent of them all. Yet, for all that, the young man's persistency did not seem to advance his cause. If he had been capable of taking a hint, perhaps he might have wondered why Lucy always sat at the opposite end of the bench on the porch, or the sofa in the parlor, when he called. But Tim Baker was as obtuse as he was persistent, and all the delicate language of inference and suggestion was as unintelligible to him as Sanskrit.

On this particular evening Lucy Willett seemed disposed to let her caller do all the talking, while she rolled and crumpled a honeysuckle leaf in her fingers, looking away across the purple meadows, and occasionally breaking into the murmured refrain of a song which Charlie Gray, the son of the village physician, had taught her.

Tim Baker's monologue, wandering from subject to subject, finally touched upon ghosts. "D'you ever see one, Lucy?" he queried, making a fruitless effort to get within the line of vision of the girl's faraway eyes. Lucy shook her head very slightly. "Nor I, nuther," said Tim. "But I kind o' reckon I shouldn't be skeered o' one a mite, ef I did. Naow, I happen to know that Charlie Gray and Arthur Bean and Ben Truman" (naming his most formidable rivals) "hain't got no curridge when it comes to sooper-natural critters like spooks, for I heern 'em tallin' onct how they was passin' through a graveyard, arter dusk, when the wind was fresh and damp—an' 'er jew know how, a rain-bringin' wind will turn up the under sides o' the leaves and make the trees all look white? Wal, them fellers got skeered at a row of young popples, and every man of 'em put over the fence, helter-skelter, stumblin' out the graves, and grabbin' each other's cut-throats, and hollerin' murder. Gosh! wouldn't I 'a' luffed, ef I had 'em then to see 'em! Ketch me a-runnin' 'm s row of popple trees!" And Tim Baker, the ardent boaster, leaned back and laughed boisterously.

Was it a gleam of mischief in Lucy's eyes, or only a reflection of her suitor's merriment, as she turned to him and said: "Tim, did you know that the old deserted Pinney house was haunted?" Tim sobered immediately. "Hain't 'ed?" he repeated,—"the Pinney place? Wal, no, I never heern-tell on't before. How do you know?" "Oh, I have it on good authority," replied Lucy significantly. "Arthur Bean was one of those who told me, and he said that he shouldn't dare to spend a night in a house that had such strange things told about it." (Again the mischievous twinkle in the girl's eyes.) "Now I don't know how it would be with a fellow of your courage, Tim. Perhaps you would be brave enough to spend a night there, and

find out whether there is any truth in the ghost stories they tell. I am real curious to know."

Tim Baker shifted his position uneasily. "What do they say 'bout the Pinney place?" he asked. "That's just it, nobody knows, exactly," replied Lucy. "Only there are said to be strange rappings and groanings in the walls, and now and then footsteps steal across the floors, and some people passing by have seen a large white object staring through one of the broken windows. But I guess it won't be any use to ask you to solve the mystery. Tim, I declare! you look as scared as any of 'em, now! You're as pale as if you saw a ghost out under those lilac bushes."

"Me?" exclaimed Tim, drawing himself up with a manly effort, "Me look pale? Me afraid of a ghost? Pooh! Ketch Tim Baker showin' a white feather to the sooper-natural? I'll go this very night to the old Pinney house, and you kin make me pay any forfeit you please, ef I don't stay there, spite of all your rapin's and groanin's and footsteps till broad daylight-to-morrow mornin'."

"Good for you, Tim Baker!" exclaimed Lucy. She was secretly delighted, because her suitor's boast gave her a possible opportunity for getting rid of that persistent young man without hurting his feelings. "Let's see," she continued, as if puzzling her brains for an idea, "what forfeit shall I impose on you? H'm—oh, yes! If the ghosts frighten you out of the Pinney house before daylight-to-morrow, you shan't come to see me again for seven years." And Lucy laughed as heartily as if the forfeit were the hugest of jokes.

Tim Baker looked rather staggered. "That's a purty tough one on me, Lucy," he said, "and looks e'ensomest as ef you meant it serious, too. But never mind! Ghosts shan't drive me out of the Pinney house, so long as them air the conditions—not much! Ahem!" and Tim reached over shyly, as if he would like to clasp Lucy's little white hand in his big brown one. But the girl pretended not to notice the gesture, and rose, saying:

"Well, Tim, it's beginning to get dark. The ghosts will be stirring in about half an hour, and I guess you'd better be on your way to the Pinney place."

Tim Baker reluctantly said good night, shambled out of the yard, and soon faded from sight in the dusk. About fifteen minutes after he had gone, a buggy came rolling in at the open gate. Lucy ran to the kitchen window.

"Oh, is that you, Arthur?" she cried. "I'm so glad you happened to drive in. I've got something to tell you." Arthur Bean hitched his horse and went around to the front porch, where Lucy joined him, and they sat down on the rustic bench—with not quite so much distance between them as Lucy and Tim had maintained.

"Tim Baker has been here boasting about ghosts," said Lucy. "He pretended he didn't care a rap for them, and I dared him to go and spend the night in the haunted Pinney house, on the forfeit that, if he gets frightened away before daylight-to-morrow, he shan't come to see me again for seven years."

"Ha, ha, ha?" laughed Arthur Bean. "What a nice broad hint for poor Tim. Seven years, eh? Ho, ho, ho!" "Now," said Lucy, when they had both laughed till they were tired, "you know what I want you to do, Arthur?"

"No?" replied the young man, with a questioning inflection of voice.

"Why, you do too," protested the girl. "You know I want you and Charlie Gray and Ben Truman, and as many others as you please, to arrange a little surprise ghost party for Tim Baker to-night. Scare him out of his wits—make him take to his heels—fix it so that he won't come around bothering me again for seven years."

Another fit of laughter seized Arthur Bean, but as soon as he recovered breath, he exclaimed:

"Glorious! What fun! Leave it all to me, Lucy. I'll get the fellows together within an hour, and we'll arrange a very interesting and lively programme for Mr. Baker, I can assure you."

A few minutes later Arthur Bean's buggy rolled away, and Lucy went

into the house to speculate, while darning her father's socks, on the probable results of the tragedy which was about to befall Tim Baker.

In the meanwhile that young man had reached the deserted Pinney house, which stood on a lonely cross road, about two miles from the village. In spite of his valiant resolutions and bold language concerning the "sooper-natural," Tim felt a curious shrinking of heart when he saw the broken, staring windows of the deserted house, and heard the rising wind moan about the rickety old building. Three times, instead of entering the open door, the young man's feet refused to obey his will and bore him cautiously around the house. Finally, with a tremendous effort, he forced himself up the creaking steps and into the hallway.

What a damp, musty, foul, decaying smell the old place had. Such an odor is enough of itself to strike foreboding to the heart, for one feels as if it must generate ghosts, as decomposing solutions generate infusoria.

Tim groped his way out into the kitchen and sat down on what was left of the rusty old cooking stove. Suddenly, he gave a terrified start, and his heart seemed to leap into his windpipe and choke him. Something was rapping in the walls. Rat-a-tat, rat-a-tat, rat-a-tat, r-r-r-r—bang! Ah, that last sound explained the mystery. It was a loose clapboard, rattling in the wind. Tim went to the window, reached out, and found the loose board. It quivered and shook in his hand, until he thrust a stick under it, and that stopped the rapping. But other noises, intensified by his aroused imagination and the acute straining of his senses, began to strike new terrors to the heart of the lonely watcher. Surely that could not be the wind moaning—it was so deep, so hollow, so full of human anguish. And hark! was not that a sound like the trailing of garments across the floor?

Poor Tim's courage was fast ebbing out at his fingers' ends. If it had not been for that forfeit which Lucy Willett had imposed upon him he would have sneaked away long ago. As it was, his teeth began to chatter softly, and his knees, nestling together for company, could not help smiting each other.

At this juncture something crossed Tim Baker's field of vision in the room beyond, which took the last particle of strength out of his limbs, and caused him to fairly collapse upon the floor. It was a huge, indistinct white object, with eyeballs like coals of fire, staring at him through the open doorway. How came it there? Silently it had approached, silently it stood—until Tim in his terror fell upon the floor, bringing down a portion of the old stove after him with a crash. Then the white monster bounded forward! It was an awful moment. Tim gave himself up for dead. He felt a fierce gust of air upon his cheek, and then the trailing of a long, cold, shroud-like garment over him. Ere the poor fellow's blood had ceased to curdle from its clammy touch, the spook turned, and its terrible eyes glared at him again from the opposite corner of the room. Twice the baleful lights tossed up and down; twice there was a muffled sound, as if something were striking the floor of the room, as a signal for another onslaught upon the trembling ghost despoiler.

At this critical moment Tim's terror seemed to lift him clean off the floor, as by an electric thrill. He leaped to his feet and with winged speed dashed to the window and flung himself headlong out. As he fell he struck upon one shoulder and turned a sprawling somersault in the grass. But quick as a flash he was on his feet again, and bounded away through the dark old orchard, uttering a shrill, blood-curdling yell at every leap.

Hark! was that a chorus of laughter behind him? fiends exulting in demonic glee at his defeat? On he sped, dodging among the trees, leaping over fences, tearing through briars and blackberry tangles, until he came to the dark, concealed bank of the creek—and plunged in, headforemost.

"But who played the part of the ghost?" laughed Lucy Willett, as she listened to the story of Tim Baker's testing next morning.

"Oh, that was Uncle Eben's cross old ram," explained Arthur Bean. "We dressed him up in a sheet, tied

pads on his feet, so that he would not make any noise, and let him loose in the house after Tim had been there long enough for his nerves to get pretty well shaken. When Tim came crashing down off the stove, the old ram went for him, of course. Ha, ha! What a fighting ghost he made! You ought to have seen Tim come flying out of the window, and heard him shriek as he legged it through the orchard! Then, in a few minutes, we heard him go plump into the creek. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Poor Tim! I am almost sorry for him—I truly am," said Lucy. "I don't know as I should hold him to his forfeit, after all, if he wasn't such an exasperating, incurable, everlasting boaster that I can't endure him any longer."

But whether Lucy Willett would have relented or not, had Tim Baker come penitently and humbly to her, confessing his fault, will never be known; for, two days after his ghostly adventure, Tim left town. It is to be hoped that, before he goes courting again, he will have learned that Cupid does not take kindly to empty boasts.—Detroit Free Press.

A Great Railroad's Employees.

Eighty thousand men, women and boys make up the army of Pennsylvania Railroad employes, and are carried upon the pay rolls of the largest corporation in the world. Even this enormous total does not include all who are dependent upon the company, for there are several thousand miners in the anthracite region who are paid by one of the companies controlled by the Pennsylvania, and besides there are nearly always many thousands more in the employ of contractors who are building extensions, erecting buildings or laying side tracks on some one of the numerous divisions of this gigantic system. It is estimated that nearly 100,000 persons derive their support directly from this company, not to mention the thousands more indirectly employed in making rails and other forms of iron, building cars, mining coal for locomotives, and engaged in producing the thousand articles that the great corporation requires for its continuous operation.

Of the 80,000 employes about 50,000 are attached to the main line, east of Pittsburg, and to the half dozen leased or controlled lines in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland. There are 3000 employes in the workshops at Altoona, 1000 clerks inhabit the great central office in South Fourth street, and many hundreds are required to handle the floating equipment in New York Bay. On the lines west of Pittsburg and Erie there are but 30,000 employes, as traffic is not so heavy nor as concentrated as in the East. That all these 80,000 persons should discharge their respective duties promptly and efficiently without any loss of time is due to a system of management that is considered the most perfect of all the great railroad corporations of the country.—New York Advertiser.

The Molecular Theory.

The modern idea of the structure of metals and other materials used in machines is that they are composed of infinitely small portions, to which the name of "molecules" is given, and that each molecule has a definite part to play in the whole machine. When machines were first built there was no reason to suppose that they would in the course of time undergo a change in their internal structure. It has, however, been found that after working for a considerable time some change took place in the material which caused the molecules to alter their relative positions, the new arrangement of the molecules being weaker, as a whole, than before the change took place. When this happens a machine is said to be "tired." Thus, for instance, chains used on lifts and hoists receive a jar as each link is wound on the hoisting drum. The periodical shaking causes the metal to lose its fibrous character, and to crystallize gradually, the change being accompanied by a loss of strength. In the same way, and from the same cause, locomotive axles require to be periodically annealed or softened to enable them to be used with safety for any length of time.—New York Dispatch.

TRICKY SMUGGLERS.

SOME OF THE MANY SCHEMES EMPLOYED BY THEM.

How They Pass the Customs Officers With Contraband Goods—Dry Goods Smuggled on Sheep's Backs.

A FEW years ago the French Government tried to utilize the expenses of the revenue service by sending several regiments of the regular army to the Spanish frontier, but the experiment had soon to be abandoned as worse than useless.

"If we want to train our recruits in the hardships of a mountain campaign," said a Deputy from Oleron, "the plan may answer the purpose; but do not let us deceive ourselves by the idea that our conscripts from the Seine and Loire could cope with the veteran smugglers from these highlands. We might as well expect sheep to catch a swarm of foxes." The results of the campaign seem, indeed, to have justified that conclusion. The activity of the blockade runners had increased till the border towns were glutted with contraband goods. In broad daylight the troops of Highlanders crossed the frontier with their pack mules, while the uniformed guard were hurrying off on a wrong trail or guarding passes which the natives contrived to circumvent. Every mountain mist suspended the operation of the soldiers, and in moonless nights the bold contrabandists had things all their own way. On one occasion a sentry in a lonely mountain gap was cross-examined by a horseman, who introduced himself as scout of a mounted patrol, and bullied the poor recruit with questions and special instructions, while a band of monteros trotted by unchallenged and gained a start which made pursuit useless when the mystified soldier reported his experience next morning.

Manuel Perez, a noted leader of the outlaws, boasted that he had repeatedly interviewed the French officers in their own tents, and once obtained their permission to have his mules shot at the camp smithy. There is hardly any bulky article of merchandise that has not been made a vehicle of smuggling lighter but more valuable articles. Rum and opium have been shipped in logs of dyewood; laces in bundles of flax and shapless lumps of resin. Chinese opium has been smuggled through in such ingenious hiding places that the Californians have to probe every chunk of dried meat and every tea chest with a protuberance suggesting the possibility of a double bottom. One pigtail man in British Columbia shipped the precious drug in the pectoral cavity of salt fish for months before his trick was discovered, but was yet outdone by a Belgian sharper who made a drove of sheep smuggle a cargo of expensive dry goods. About a dozen lean wethers had been shorn to the skin about midway between headquarters and neck, then wrapped round and round with silk and laces, well protected under a stratum of dust proof linen and covered with a strip of woolly felt that had been cleverly fitted to the remains of the animals' natural fleece. In a troop of stout rams these silk bound contrabands looked entirely unsuspecting, and would have fooled the most vigilant officials for years if the trick had not been revealed by the assault of a vicious dog, who caught an extra fat sheep in the flank and sent it flying down the road unrolling yard after yard of glittering satin.

The donanier, who had passed the live stock of that firm, was so severely reprimanded that he not only lost his faith in the living generation, but stopped a funeral procession the very next week: "Hold on there! Not a step further till I see if that corpse isn't a mummy with a stuffing of point lace!"

Swamp jungles form an all but impregnable base of operations for smuggling enterprises. The opium peddlers and pirates of the Chinese Sea land their cargoes in small bamboo rafts that float like corks and can be run across shallows that would stop an ordinary boat. Once in the midst of their coast thickets they can defy pursuit. The mixture of jungle shrub and canebrake cannot be set on fire even in the driest

season, and is so impervious that those not familiar with the deer trails might spend days in trimming out a path of half a mile and withal expose themselves to the fire of ambushed foes.

The Mexican revenue officials experience a similar difficulty on the coast of Tamaulipas, between Matamoros and Tampico. Their raiders are excellently armed, and go in boats with bullet proof gunwales, and furnished with canned provisions and portable camping outfit, but the superior topographical knowledge of the smugglers outweighs all those advantages, and the best the raiders can do is to scare the contrabandists from the neighborhood of the larger ports, and oblige them to transport their plunder through coast lagoons with countless "portages." Some of the merchandise imported in that way is said to come from Jamaica, and net the smugglers an advance of 100 per cent. on the British market prices.

A still more profitable traffic is carried on via El Paso, from Guaymas on the west coast of our sister Republic. With all the restrictions of her commercial policy, Mexico beats us hollow in the liberality of her immigration laws. She welcomes Mormons and Mohammedans, Cuban refugees, Malay coolies and all the pigtail men of the Celestial Empire care to ship. There are small Chinese colonies in all the principal resort towns from Mazatlan to Tehuacan, though landrises cannot be expected to pay liberal dividends in a country where a regulation dress suit consists of a straw hat and a woolen blanket. But Mongolian business managers were not long in discovering the value of Port Guaymas as an entrepot—a half way station between Shanghai and the North American Promised Land of shirt wearing Caucasians.

From Southern California, where the would-be immigrants were received with shotguns, their route of circuitous travel shifted to Arizona, and—where there is a will there is a way—finally to El Paso, the gate city of Southern New Mexico, on a comparatively new branch road of a transcontinental railway line. The Rio Grande del Norte is a shallow river at that point, and a night pig-tailed specter can be counted shifting about the ford, like the shadows of the Goths about the grave of King Alaric.

The Mexican Government ostentatiously discourages that sort of traffic, but—well, the enterprise Celestial emigrant agents needs no encomium after the memorable discovery at Lewiston, N. Y., where American soldiers—soldiers of the regular United States Army—were caught in the act of ferrying Chinese blockade runners across the Niagara River for \$2.50 a piece.—F. L. Oswald, in Cincinnati Enquirer.

A Pious Tree Blown Down.

One of the disasters of the recent storm in Chicago was the destruction of a cottonwood tree, in the shade of which was perpetrated the Fort Dearborn massacre of August 15, 1812. Fernando Jones, who went from Buffalo to Chicago in the spring of 1835, said that this and another tree about 200 yards from it were first pointed out to him by an old drunken Indian called Captain Isaac, who professed to have taken part in the slaughter and who mimicked the scalping and shooting in a realistic manner. Between the two trees the wagon conveying the women and children from Fort Dearborn was stopped by the Indians and they were dragged out and tomahawked. The tree stood on Eighteenth street, opposite the house of General M. Pullman and near the Fort Dearborn massacre monument recently erected by Mr. Pullman.—Berkshire Post-Express.

A Practical Solution.

A professor at the University of Texas was explaining some of the habits and customs of the ancient Greeks to his class. "The ancient Greeks built no roofs over their streets," said the professor. "What did the ancient Greeks do when it rained?" asked Johnny Flanagan. "The professor took off his spectacles, polished them with his handkerchief and replied calmly: "They got 'em I suppose."—Texas Billings.