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Poetry.

Content.

Didst ever hear the moon complain
Because 'twas not the sun;
Or knew a star to sigh in vain
To be a brighter one?

Methinks the smallest orb that glows
In yonder fields of light,
Its brightest, purest lustre shows,
To glorify the night.

What if the brooks should cease to be,
And hush their prattling tone,
Because the music of the sea
Was grander than their own?

But rippling o'er their shining sands,
They keep the meadows green,
Unmindful of the wondrous lands
The ocean rolls between.

For every mountain peak, snow clad,
Majestic and alone,
A thousand little hills are glad,
With verdure overgrown.

And from each leafy grove and vale
Such dulcet music flows,
Each bird might be a nightingale
And every flower a rose.

So, in the earth beneath our feet,
In skies above us bent,
In lonely path, or crowded street,
God teaches us content.

Then why, my soul, shouldst thou repine,
Thought, poor thy gifts, and small,
And fawn the blessings that are thine?
His love is in them all.

And thou canst learn while others teach,
Canst list while others sing,
And loving God, at length canst reach
The good in everything.

THE LOST LINCH PIN.

'It's no use, Susy, we can't find it. I'll have to take the whipping.'

There was a dejected thrill in the sad child-voice, telling alike of the physical dread and of utter helplessness of spirit.

'Wait a minute, Robbie,' answered a cheerier tone. 'Wait until I look under the hay-bed. A lynch-pin's little you know, and it might roll. I can't bear to give up yet.' And as the girl spoke she swung her lantern under the huge vehicle, and stopping began to search carefully among the loose chaff and wisps of hay scattered over the door.

The scene was on the threshing-floor of a large barn with great mows frowning darkly above on either hand, and vast granaries stretching away in the rear, and the speakers were a little orphan boy who had lost a lynch-pin, and the sympathetic kitchen girl of the farm. As the latter rose from her fruitless search the bright glow of the lantern fell full upon her, revealing a face, not pretty, certainly, if viewed from a cultivated, artistic standpoint, but fresh and girlish, and just now, glorified by a halo of womanly pity.

'Oh, Robbie! I'm so sorry she said, rising. 'Can't you think where you had it last?'

'No Sue, I can't. I've tried and tried I reckon old Beson will nearly kill me—he did the last time.' Then with a shudder, throwing his childish arms around her waist, 'Oh, Sue, he's awful.' 'Poor baby!' cried the girl, clasping him closer, while her soft, gray eyes filled with tears. 'I wish I could save you. How did you ever come to be left with him, anyhow?'

'Why you see,' was the reply, 'when mother died there was only me and Chris, and Chris ain't like me. He's strong and smart, and afraid of nobody. So he thought he would go away and make a fortune for us both. His name is Christopher—like Christopher Columbus, you know—and he meant to do some great thing too. Not in a ship, though, but in a big city. He had read of poor boys making money there, and as the homestead was gone he was bound to try it. And then old Beson offered to keep me while he was away. But Chris, never meant for me to be abused, I heard him say that I was 'to go to school, and be well treated, and that he would pay for my board and expenses when he came back. But I reckon he'll never come, now.' And the poor child's tears fell fast at the thought.

'Oh, maybe he will,' answered the girl, soothingly. 'We'll hope so anyway.'

'Well, may, maybe,' he assented dreadingly. 'But, O Sue, if I were only of age, like you, wouldn't I go to seek him? Then, as if with a sudden thought, 'Sue what makes you stay? You were of age six months ago.'

'I know,' she said and paused as if the question was an unsettled one with herself, then, with the light still upon her brow, 'partly for your sake, maybe, Robbie, and partly because I don't know where to go. I don't mind working, and I must do that in any place. Besides it is better for me; I'm in the

house with Miss, and Robbie, she isn't like him. Many a piece of bread and meat she gives to the hungry beggars, and many a poor tramp she allows to sleep in the barn when he ain't around.'

The last clause was unfortunate for the boy, clinging yet closer, cast a glowering glance upward toward the great mows where the shadows were scarcely disturbed by their feeble glow of light.

'Oh, Sue!' he cried wildly. 'What if he should make me stay all night in the barn? He has threatened to many a time. Oh, Sue, what can we do?'

The poor excited boy sank down in despair. 'We might pray,' said Sue, timidly. 'Behave! he prays.'

There was a whole volume of implicit skepticism in these three bitter words.

'I know,' answered Sue, sorely puzzled, yet clinging to her anchor. 'I know, but if don't sound like the prayers I used to hear at the asylum. There they spoke to some one close at hand, so gentle, so loving, and yet so mildly.'

'Oh, Robbie, now I just remember the words, so strong to deliver.' Who knows but He might save you. There was the man in the den of lions, and the three children in the fiery furnace.'

'It's no use, Sue,' he answered sadly. 'There's no deliverer for me but Chris, and he'll never come now. Go on to the house and tell the old man that I can't find it. It's as well to get it over.'

'Poor lamb!' said the tender-hearted girl, kissing the quivering lips that were trying so hard to be brave. 'I'll leave the light, and I'll beg hard for you.'

And repressing a sigh over the hopelessness of her task, she guided him to the starlight, leaving the poor little victim to await a cruelty which, considering the centuries of Christian progress that have elapsed since the slaughter of the innocents, not only out-Herods Herod, but is one of the darkest blot upon our social scale.

Just here must I pause to offer a plea for the children, the most defenseless objects in all God's creation: We sigh over the miseries of poor Smike, over little David Copperfield's sorrowful journey; alas! that magic hand which so moved us has vanished forever, but I can match these thrilling narratives with true stories of a child rendered idiotic by continued cruelty, and of a little fugitive bound boy who, after weary days of hunger and travel, sank blistered and fainting at his mother's feet. I can tell of a woman—think of it—a woman who, for some childish fault committed during the day, followed an orphan boy to his bed with a horsewhip, and then, when there was no protection save the little thin night garment, broke upon his innocent slumber with stinging blows. And, upon the evidence of the laundry girl, when the same little garment came to the wash, it was striped with blood.

This is not pleasant reading. It is far from being pleasant writing.

'A father to the fatherless is God in his holy habitation!' Think of this, O mother, whose household contains one of these children of the Highest. Think of it as you gather your little ones around the glowing fireside for song or story, and make room for the stranger within your doors. When you divide the hoarded store of cakes or apples, remember that his own little milk teeth are as eager for sweets as your own darling's, and be there much or little, give him a share. When your hand is laid caressingly upon your own children's heads, let his light pressure also touch his young brow. Who knows but it may be there like a consecrating chrism, anointing him for noble deeds for God and humanity? Do these things, and do them now. Check not your kindly impulses until it is too late, until the thin hands are crossed within the coffin, and the sad eyes—hungry for their mother's kiss—have gone to tell their pitiful story to Him who has said, 'Suffer the children; or worse, until a young soul shall have grown hardened; and a little one, offended by you, shall have become a curse and clogging millstone upon the neck of society.'

But to return to my story. Left alone in the great barn the sensitive child endured the two-fold agony of nervous terror and anticipated suffering. But he had not long to wait. Soon the heavy boots of old Beson were heard tramping across the cow-yard into the barn. Robbie stole one fugitive glance as he entered, saw the hard-set face, saw the long black whip trailing from his hand, and the last vestige of hope was gone.

'Now, you young rascal, I'll pay you for your carelessness,' cried the bitter master, as he caught sight of the cowering form; and seizing the trembling boy by the arm, he raised the whip like a

great stiffening serpent, high in the air.

But why did it not descend? The boy, who had closed his eyes, and set his teeth hard, wondered at the delay. From somewhere above came a rustling sound, and the cruel, uplifted arm was grasped and held with a grip of iron. What could it mean? Had God sent one of his mighty angels down to rescue the little wail, too hopeless to implore his protection? It well might be so, for our Father is not indifferent to the troubles of His suffering children; but the eyes of his glorious deliverer were gleaming with too much indignant fury and human passion for those of a heavenly visitant.

'Christ! The one glad cry burst from Robbie's lips, and then, unnoticed by either, he sank sobbing among the hay and straw littering the floor.

'Coward! hypocrite! traitor!' These were the words which burst impetuously from the young man's lips, and with each epithet a stunning blow was planted in the breast of the farmer. 'Is it thus you treat the little brother I entrusted to your care. Were it not that since I have been away from your vicinity, I have learned to be something of which you do not even know the meaning—a gentleman—I would take the horsewhip and lay you within an inch of your life. Well, indeed, it occurred to me to test your faithfulness in treating him kindly before I gave of my hard earnings for the boy's board. Here in my pockets are four hundred dollars designed for you—payment for every week he has been here—but not one copper of it will you see now. On the contrary, I shall use it to prosecute you to the utter limit of the law.'

And he kept his word. This youth, whose energy and pluck had won the victory in a hand-to-hand struggle with the world, was not likely to be troubled with morbid pity for his adversary; and with Sue's fair, honest face on the witness-box, not only was the full measure of justice obtained, but the hard, grasping farmer was disgraced forever in the eyes of his friends and neighbors.

Aside from the triumph concerning his little brother, the trial resulted most happily for Chris, himself. While seeking to redress an injustice and a wrong, like his illustrious namesake, he discovered another fair realm—even the sweet old Eldorado of love. And now, when the western sun sinks amid the flowery prairies of Missouri, his last beams gild a cottage porch, where often sits a slender student youth and a broad shouldered, bronze-face pioneer—the rescuer and the rescued; while above them beams the soft, womanly face of happy Sue—wife and sister—loved and honored beyond all the world.

Pay as You Go.

The best of all rules to be successful and make both ends meet, is 'Pay as you go.' Beyond all countries in the world, ours is the one in which the credit system is most used and abused. A family can live respectably on a moderate income, if they always take the cash in hand and buy where they can buy to the best advantage. They must be careful first to get what is necessary. Extra comforts will be had, if they can afford them. But it is a bad policy to buy on a credit. No wise dealer sells so cheaply on credit as for cash.

The dress of a family is so much a matter of taste that it need hardly be said it is just as easy to be respectable in clothing that costs a little as in that which is expensive. To dress according to one's means is the only respectable style.

One must have a home, and in every place there are dwellings suited to the ability of the purchaser. When the rent, the food and the clothing are kept within one's income the margin for benevolence, for luxury and for pleasure, may be measured and used. In these, as in other matters, 'Pay as you go.'—*Rural Messenger.*

The Wife.

A judicious wife is always nipping off from her husband's moral nature little twigs that are growing in wrong directions. She keeps him in shape by continual pruning. If you say anything silly, she will affectionately tell you so. If you declare that you will do some absurd thing, she will find some means of preventing you from doing it. And by far the chief part of all the common sense there is in this world belongs unquestionably to women. The wisest things a man commonly does are those which his wife counsels him to do. A wife is a grand wielder of the moral pruning-knife. If Johnson's wife had lived, there would have been no hoarding up of orange peel, no touching the posts in walking along the streets, no eating and drinking with disgusting voracity. If Oliver Goldsmith had been married, he never would have worn that memorable and ridiculous coat. Whenever you find a man whom you know little about oddly dressed or talking absurdly you may be sure that he is not a married man, for the corners are rounded off—the little shoots pared away—in married men. Wives have generally much more sense than their husbands, even though they may be clever men. The wife's advice is like the ballast that keeps the ship steady.—*Ruskia.*

An English Idea.

Speaking of his visit to England last year, John T. Raymond recently said at a London dinner party, the lady he escorted to the table said to him in a very earnest voice:

'Mr. Raymond, are you really an American? You are not in the least like my idea of one.'

'I am an American, but not an aboriginal,' responded he.

'An aboriginal! You mean an Indian. That reminds me to ask if you have much trouble with the Indians in New York?'

'No, we have got them pretty well under, there,' was the reply.

'And they are—do they dress as you do?'

'Oh, yes; in New York city they are great snobs, but at Niagara Falls they run about in the simplicity of nothingness.'

'How dreadful!' murmured the lady; and Dean Stanley wrote so glowingly of the place and never said a word about it.—*Cincinnati Enquirer.*

A Woman's Quick Wit.

The part of Tennessee through which I have been knocking about is full of reminiscences of the war, but there is none of the bitterness left. In the war (time the people were greatly divided in their sentiments, and no man could tell 'tuther from which. This remark reminds me of a story I heard yesterday; about an estimable woman of seventy odd, who died two or three years ago here in the mountains. One day, during the war, when the country was fairly alive with guerrillas, she had occasion to take some valuable goods, with her on a trip she was making, and put them on her horse, back of her. When she had gone some distance in the woods she heard a squad of guerrillas approaching, and knowing the goods would not be safe for a moment, she straddled her horse, man fashion, and throwing her long skirt over the package behind her, completely concealed it. When the guerrillas rode up she was unable to guess whether they belonged to the North or to the South—their uniform being no solution whatever. She determined, if questioned, to play a bluff game with them; and she soon had a chance to exercise her wit. 'Hello!' called one of the guerrillas. 'Hello!' she returned. 'What side are you on?' he changed. She laughed a good laugh at him as she replied, kicking out her feet, 'On both sides, of course; can't you see?' This brought a roar from the whole squad, and they began to banter her in her own fashion. 'Which side is your ole man on?' asked one of them. 'He's on neither side,' she laughed; 'he's on his back, and has been for years.' Such wit saved her, and they let her pass on unmolested.—*Ex.*

Don't Whine.

Don't be whining about not having a fair chance. Throw a sensible man out of a window, he'll fall on his feet and ask the way to his work. The more you have to begin with, the less you will have in the end. Money you earn yourself is much brighter than any you get out of dead men's bags. A scant breakfast in the morning of life whets the appetite for a feast later in the day. He who has tasted a sour apple will have the more relish for a sweet one. Your present want will make future prosperity all the sweeter. Eighteen pence has set up many a poddler in business, and he has turned it over until he has kept his carriage. As for the place you cast in, don't find fault with that; you need not be a horse because you were born in a stable. If a bull tossed a man of metal sky-high, he would drop down into a good place. A hard-working young man with his wits about him will make money while others will do nothing but lose it. 'Who loves his work and knows how to spare, may live and flourish anywhere.' As to a little trouble, who expects to find cherries without stones, or roses without thorns? Who would win must learn to bear. Idleness lies in bed sick of the mulligrubs, where industry finds health and wealth. The dog in the kennel barks at seas, the hunting dog does not even know that they are there. 'Laziness' waits till the river is dry, and never gets to market. 'Try' swims it and makes all the trade. 'Can't do it' would not eat the bread put for him; and 'Try' made meat out of mushrooms.—*John Plowman.*

The Wife.

A judicious wife is always nipping off from her husband's moral nature little twigs that are growing in wrong directions. She keeps him in shape by continual pruning. If you say anything silly, she will affectionately tell you so. If you declare that you will do some absurd thing, she will find some means of preventing you from doing it. And by far the chief part of all the common sense there is in this world belongs unquestionably to women. The wisest things a man commonly does are those which his wife counsels him to do. A wife is a grand wielder of the moral pruning-knife. If Johnson's wife had lived, there would have been no hoarding up of orange peel, no touching the posts in walking along the streets, no eating and drinking with disgusting voracity. If Oliver Goldsmith had been married, he never would have worn that memorable and ridiculous coat. Whenever you find a man whom you know little about oddly dressed or talking absurdly you may be sure that he is not a married man, for the corners are rounded off—the little shoots pared away—in married men. Wives have generally much more sense than their husbands, even though they may be clever men. The wife's advice is like the ballast that keeps the ship steady.—*Ruskia.*

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