WEST-CAROLINA RECORD.

THE STRONGEST BULWARK OF OUR COUNTRY—THE POPULAR HEART.

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WEST-CAROLINA RECORD.

RUTHERFORDTON, N. C.

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Written for the Record.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

BY OUR DYSARTSVILLE CORRESPONDENT.

Accept the shadow, Lady, of your friend,
The substance none would ever have,
Accept,
And when above your Album's leaves you bend
If this be with its cherished treasures kept,
Glance on it kindly—nor misunderstand
Its meaning if it lean to touch your hand,
Tunruing the leaf—
Since it would thus express,
And here in flowers of verse, its thankfulness,
For favors past.
The heart within its bosom,
Its poet heart admired the bridal blossom
Some summers since—
Now from its inner core,
Likes the young matron infinitely more.
The child-wife of its friend, its twofold bro'her
In arms and masonry, likes the fond mother,
Seeming herself an elder sister yet,
Of pretty "Baby Belle," its darling pet,
And sweetest prattler it has ever met.
It is as well this privilege of age
As license of the poet in his art,
To breathe his love out on the conscious page
Whoever the rapt feeling may impart.
To love the lovely and to tell them so,
And till he tell them not to let them go.
Flozelle or Florence, or no matter whom,
If freshly sparkling in life's morning bloom,
Musing over the memorial picture-book,
On this poor image, lady, kindly look.
Haply years hence, when still and dark and cold,
Its heart lies mingled with earth's kindred mould,
The heart that so loved your romantic land,
And hymned its maidens—
When the weary hand,
That thrilled with joy in love's or friendship's clasp,
Or waved the weird pen in its wizard grasp,
Has lost its cunning and is laid to rest,
Crossed on the quiet unresponsive breast,
Unstrung and nerveless on the ruined shell,
Whence never more glad melody shall swell,
And vain the hope that its surviving rhyme,
Sounding thro' ages o'er the tide of time,
Shall on the rushing world's ear ring the name,
Victoria—when that flower in glory's flame,
Translated blooms in the bright fields of bliss,
And earth retains no trace of her but this.

But why this sad, deep, solemn undertone
To one so young—so radiant?
Shall I own
The source from which it wails—the sad low moan?
Is it because I'm utterly alone?
Or that the raven wing of sorrow known,
I feel its shadow on my spirit thrown?
That this fine weather is my last in Yancey?
That I must bid our little Town farewell
And never here another summer dwell?
But thanks to you wherever I may be
You make for me a pleasant home to me,
Your mountains, meadows, summer's sunset sky.
All that blooms beautiful to mind and eye,
Rich forests clad in Autumn's rainbow hues,
Eve's yellow lustre, twilight's starry dews,
The holy calm of moonlight, bending skies,
So full of pitying love from spirit-eyes,
I shall remember all, but dear friends most,
And I thank heaven, not that I have a host
But that I have a hostess, and regret
That I must leave them, but I'll not forget,
Nor fairy Little Belle, my pretty pet,
Nor flowering charms, that fascinate fancy,
And all that ministered to me in Yancey.
And when I catch sight of the mountains blue,
Their forms shall rise in radiance to my view.
Accept the semblance, Lady friend, I pray,
And think of me the absent as the dead,
Thus think of me when I am far away.
Show Belle the shoulder where she laid her head,
The arms in which she slept, the harsh rough face,
That softened at her presence into grace,
And ever broke into a smile of love
For little children fresh from heaven above.
My Lady-friend, perhaps akin to me,
A cousin in some sixty-fourth degree,
Star-blossom on the overtopping tree,
Where bloom and fade the 'Jo. Smith family,'
My cousin, since I've proved the pedigree,
Bright eyed and lightly stepping like a deer,
And long thou may you glance and glitter here,
But can't you stop a moment, 'tis not much,
Nor shrink from the dark woman-hater's touch
If in your heart you can believe him such,
Nor know the charge is false.
All Ladies must,
Instinctively they feel it is unjust,
Light is the sun's life, and the poet's, love,
And woman dear to him all else above,
Heaven's masterpiece, and 'twas hell's ill ever lurk,
Where Woman lies his last and loveliest handiwork.
Could I have loved her merely, worshiped less,
I might have won man's common happiness,
Could I have recognized as simply real,
Not sublimated her to the ideal.
But fools rush in, where angels fear to tread,
And fops take hold, where poets halt in dread,
Adoring beauty too divine for them,
Kneeling in dust to touch her garments hem,
Hence some,—shy spirits of celestial mould,
Are reckoned woman-haters stern and cold,
While keenly sensitive from Love's excess,
And dying for a kiss, clasp or caress,
Till they could smash to bleeding the roselips,
Smatch hand till blood spurt from the finger-tips,
Crush the ribs in, and worse than 'lacing' tight,
Squeeze the breath out, thus killing (whom?) outright.
I smile but smile like one when teardrops dim his sight.
Friend, that all that in it is, dear friend,
And this wild outburst too, must have an end,
But keep the likeness, manhood's iron heart,
Is molten here, and when we dwell apart,
Gazed on, poor thing, it will return the gaze,
All it can do, recalling happy days.
Whatever fate its prototype attend,
Believe him, Lady, what he is,
YOUR FRIEND.

He that giveth beyond his power is a prodigal; he that giveth in a measure is liberal; he that giveth nothing is a niggard.

Earning a Fee.

A DEACON'S PLOT.

A reasonably good man was Deacon Pilsey, as times went, but if he had a weakness, it was for making things in general go about as he wanted them to go. Not an overbearing man by any means, and certainly not a violent one, but with wonderfully cute and quite subtle ways of his own, by which he brought matters about without letting other-folks know how the thing was done. When a man is accustomed to have his own way he makes up his mind pretty easily; but there was one point of all others upon which Deacon Pilsey had been set and fixed for years, and the care of which lay heavy on his mind, for the time had come when, in his judgment, something deep required to be planned all his skill exercised in carrying it out. To a mind like his, that had taken a perfect measure of every other in the village, and for miles around it, there could be little difficulty in selecting his tools and assistants, and he had no need of counsellors. That was how he came to be talking so confidentially with Joe Gaines, as the two stood by the yard gate.

"Why, Deacon," said Joe, "I always thought you liked Bob Humphrey. He's a tip-top fellow and a good match for any girl I know of."

"So he is, so he is," said the deacon. "Can't say a word agin him. Knew him from a boy. Can't forbid him the house or any of that sort of nonsense; but then he can't have Irene Wyer."

"I don't see how you'll help it, deacon. You're only her guardian, and she's about of age."

"Not for a year yet, that's how the will reads—and she's in my house, you know. I guess I can fix some things, 'specially if you'll turn in and help me. You're a lawyer, Joe Gaines, but you're a young one yet, and I'll give you the fattest fee you ever dreamed of, if you'll only hitch teams with me and see that Bob Humphrey don't get the upper hand."

"Well, if that's what you're after, so it's all right and square, I'd as lief earn a fee one way as another. What's your programme?"

"Well, you know, there's nigh unto thirty thousand dollars coming to Irene Wyer, in her own right, and I've took the best kind of keer of it. It's bin a mighty sight of trouble, and all along I've thought of my son Scott."

"Scott Pilsey!" interrupted Joe. "Why he's in California."

"He won't be long. He's coming home inside of six months, and I want to keep Irene safe for him. They used to be wonderful thick, and he writ to her regular ever so long after he went away, and she to him."

"Do they correspond now?" asked Joe.

"No, not now. There's the rub. That's one reason I'm looking so sharp after Bob. Now I want you to just take hold and try and keep Bob off till Scott gets back. Won't be long, and Irene ain't such bad company, nohow."

"I don't know," said Joe. "There's Maggie and her mother. I couldn't be particularly attentive to Irene without their knowing it. And Bob Humphrey will be round most of the time, and it won't be long before I have the whole village talking the matter up."

"Never mind that, Joe, never mind that. It'll be all right when Scott gets home. I'll give you the biggest kind of a fee."

"Well, deacon," cooly replied the young lawyer, "it's a pretty tough case," but I'll take it on one condition."

"What's that?"

"Why, so long as its only fun, and all that I'll go ahead, but if it seems as if I was doing any harm, anything real bad, you know, I'm to be at liberty to back out."

"Well, I don't mind, so long as you let me know in time."

And so the deacon and the lawyer discussed their plot to their satisfaction, and when all was settled, the latter took his way down the broad and grass-grown street of the village.

"The old shark!" he muttered as he strolled leisurely along. "What on earth put it into his plotting old head to pitch on me for his tool?" He never was more'n half decent to me before. I reckon I'll earn my fee, but I'll be fair and square with Bob Humphrey. What would Irene say if she knew what was up? Wouldn't those black eyes of hers strike fire?"

Now it happened, that of late, unknown perhaps, to the deacon, there had been growing up more than a little closeness of intimacy between Joe Gaines and Bob Humphrey, and that it was treachery to his friends as well as unfairness to the pretty heiress, to which the lawyer had allowed himself to be bribed by the deacon's promised fee.

A deep fellow was Joe Gaines, and a marvellous manipulator of social affairs. Again and again, as days and weeks went by, did Deacon Pilsey congratulate himself on his admirable selection, and chuckle in his inmost being as he witnessed the well-contrived success of Joe's manœuvres. There were pic nics and drives and parties and entertainments of various kinds, but in vain did Bob Humphrey invite or propose; the young lawyer was sure to be beforehand with him, and it almost seemed as if sweet, unassuming Maggie Pilsey, the deacon's daughter, had joined the secret league against her friend Irene, so often was the same excuse devised by which she was made to appear in the latter's stead.

Then, too, were the home evenings at deacon's house, when the subtle-minded plotter could have hugged himself with satisfaction as he sat by and witnessed with his own eyes the admirable manner in which Joe Gaines worked for his fee.

"It takes a lawyer, after all," said he to himself. "I don't care much what he charges. I only hope he'll keep it up that way till Scott gits home again. And then to see Bob Humphrey! Why the fellow's got the perseverance of the saints, but he ain't nowhere with Joe Gaines."

As for Irene Wyer herself, her red lips laughed and pouted, and her bright black eyes sparkled and deepened, and her life seemed flowing onward very pleasantly, as if no deep laid plots and schemings had any power over her or her happiness. Moreover, through it all, Joe Gaines seemed to maintain the most complete external semblance of frank-hearted friendship with Bob Humphrey. Old as it may seem, the young lawyer also found that his practice had undergone a very sensible increase caused mainly by the warm, though covert encomiums which the good deacon's heart compelled him to utter here and there, in his keen appreciation of his young friends's tact and management.

Time will fly, however, and the mails brought at last to the Pilsey homestead the welcome news that its absent hope and heir would shortly return. There were letters from Scott Pilsey to his mother, and his sister Maggie, and to Irene Wyer, and even to his old cronies and schoolmates, Joe Gaines and Bob Humphrey, and to each, doubtless some matter of special interest to communicate.

No noisy, smoky, disgusting railway trains as yet vexed the retirement and repose of the village; but at last, on a morning when all things were in a state of almost painful expectancy of his arrival, not the ordinary stage coach, but a private hired carriage, heavy with trunks and packages, brought Scott Pilsey to his father's home.

In an instant the little verandah was full of those who awaited him, but when the deacan's tall, sun-burned, and bushy-headed son sprang out upon the grass, he turned his back to the verandah for a moment, while he aided the movements of a gracefull, well-favored, dark-featured young lady, who followed him, and whom, even in the first marmth of his "welcome home" he introduced as "my wife, my Lucia."

Maggie Pilsey hugged her and kissed her, and so did Irene Wyer, and so, in a moment more, did old Mrs. Pilsey, and the Deacon was too wise a man to seem altogether astonished, while Joe Gaines and Bob Humphery were fairly boisterous. In fact Scott Pilsey's California bride was so overcome by the warmth of her greeting that the poor thing forgot her pride, and burst into tears. In half a minute after that, there wasn't a lady visible, and then Bob and Joe knew enough to leave the deacon and his son to themselves. The young men walked off arm in arm, but they were back again before the day was over.

The deacon's face was a trifle serious, but not exactly cloudy, and before long he managed to get Joe Gaines by himself for a bit of private conversation.

"And so, Joe," said he, "you and the rest knew all about this matter of Scott's some time ago?"

"Well, yes; Irene told me in confidence, and then, when they wrote and told Scott how matters were here, he wrote to congratulate us, and begged us not to spoil his surprise. We, of course, couldn't tell after all that, you know."

"Ahem! well—no—no—I can't say; perhaps not. I can't be mad with Scott; for she's brought him a big ranche and a mine; but what am I to do with you now? I like Bob Humphrey first rate—I allers did like Bob—and now it can't be Scott, I don't see as I ort to interfere. You've arned my fee, and I'll pay it; but then you see, there ain't no more use."

"Oh, no, not a bit," interrupted Joe. "Bob is a good fellow, and he and Maggie are just suited Irene and I think that Maggie couldn't have made a better match, and we think Scott's done splendidly well."

"Irene and you!" exclaimed the deacon.

"Yes, of course. I've explained to Irene that I can't lose my fee. I told her at the beginning, and she said I must earn it. Seems to me I've done that, but I'll let you up."

"Done it?" exclaimed the deacon. "Well, yes, Joe, on the whole I should rather be inclined to say I rather guess I think you have. Yes—you and Irene?"

The Value of a Newspaper.

The following is the experience of a mechanic concerning the benefit of a newspaper:

Ten years ago I lived in a town in Indiana. On returning home one night, for I am a carpenter by trade, I saw a little girl leave my door, and I asked my wife who she was. She said, Mrs. Harris had sent her after their newspaper, which my wife had borrowed. As we sat down to tea my wife said to me, by name:

"I wish you would subscribe for the newspaper; it is so much comfort to me when you are away from home."

"I would like to do so," said I, "but you know I owe a payment on the house and lot. It will be all I can do to meet it."

She replied: "If you will take this paper, I will sew for the tailor to pay for it."

I subscribed for the paper; it came in due time to the shop. While resting one noon and looking over it, I saw an advertisement of the County Commissioners to let a bridge that was to be built. I put in a bid for the bridge and the job was awarded to me, on which I cleared $300, which enabled me to pay for my house and lot easily, and for the newspaper. If I had not subscribed for the newspaper I should not have known anything about the contract, and could not have met my payment on my house and lot. A mechanic never loses anything by taking a newspaper.

Mount Shasta.

In the northern part of California, unfrequented by the ubiquitous tourist, and as yet scarcely touched by the pen of the versatile Bohemian, lies a region, which, in the granduer and variety of its mountain scenery, is suggestive of the marvelous glacial districts of the Alps. Mount Blance, the Jungfrau and the Matterhorn were all unconsciously suggested to me as I caught a full view of the rugged snowy peaks of Shasta, standing like a sentinel at the gate of the rich Sacramento valley, differing radically from the Yosemite in the character of its landscapes, it has everything to gain and little to lose by the comparison. Around its base, magnificently watered and wooded, lies one of finest hunting and pasture grounds of the Continent; while rising up to a height of 14,448 feet is one of the most remarkable regions of volcanic desolation now in existence. The brilliant hues of the trees near the base made a sort of wild mosaic of the forest before us the colors changing successively to a somber gray, a duly earthy hue, and a fleecy at which it seemed to me that I should never grow weary of gazing. But a nudge and a word from the driver assured us that the great lumbering stage on which we were seated was approaching "Sisson!" This is a station on the California and Oregon stage-road, 225 miles north of Sacramento, 75 miles of which distance we had just staged from Redding, on the California and Oregon branch of the Central Oacific Railway. It has an elevation of 3,500 feet above sea level and is our point of departure for the mountain. Sisson provides horses, blankets, provisions, and a guide—the last not the least essential, for it is over eighteen miles to that coveted summit, and half of that must be traversed on foot, along tortuous and rugged paths. Many a time before I was done the ascent, I thought of Goethe's words:—"Heights charm us; the steps that lead to them do not."

The ride towards the top of the mountain is very beautiful, especially in the late evening of the year. The leaves of the aspen, willow, mountain mahogany and balm of Gilead have lost their vived green, so remarkable earlier in the summer, and it has been succeeded by a rich delicate orange, a blended green and yelley, or an apple-red. These exquisite hues, mingled with the heather green of the pins, the bright-glazed of the silver firs, give an attractive variety and a beautiful contrast of colors rarely seen elsewhere. The aspen leaves especially, tinted with golden and orange, and sensitive to the slightest breath of wind, seem like myriads of gaudy butterflies fluttering in the sunlight. The limbs of the aspen are smooth and glistening and of a delicate grayist white, beautifully complementing the dark, laminated bark of the surrounding coniferous giants;—one suggesting feminine beauty, grace and timidity, the other, masculine strength, and the settled harshness of feature which comes of exposure to wind and weather.—*Thomas Magee, in Scribner's for August*

A few books, well chosen are of more use that a great library.