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THE OBSERVER,

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THE LOVELINESS OF DEATH.

Can death be lovely? Is there any thing in the terrible aspect of the "grim monster," which can possibly arouse in the beholder pleasant thoughts, or feelings other than those of repulsion and gloom? Under what circumstances may death divert himself of his forbidding garb, and assume the pleasing habiliments of loveliness? We have often stood with folded arms and pensive brow, beside the bed of the dying, and have felt our heart beat in sympathy and in union with the throes of agony of the departing one; and as we witnessed the indications of pain or anguish, in the convulsive movements or nervous contortions of feature of muscle in the final struggle, we have not always recognized the loveliness of death on such occasions. But are there no occasions no circumstances under which it may be said: Behold the loveliness of death! Is the "last enemy" always terrible? Nay, verily, we rejoice to say that our eyes and heart can bear testimony, and that without a shadow of doubt or misgiving, to the fact that death is not always horrible and disgusting; but in some forms he is really lovely and beautiful, and in one of those we have recently beheld his bright appearance.

On the 29th of November, 1876, a fair young girl whose health had been delicate and uncertain in all her few, short days of life, lay through all that dark, gloomy and snowy November day in a dying condition.

As the day wore away towards the night, her gentle spirit seemed ready to depart with it also. And when at last the lingering rays of the declining day faded out of view, she, too, appeared on the verge of time to linger but a moment, and then sweetly "fell asleep in Jesus." Miss Susan J. Stroud was indeed a lovely character. Lovely in her life and in her faith; and lovely in death.

Some ten years ago, she professed the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, and on the 4th of October, 1866, was immersed by Rev. F. M. Jordan, and united with the Mass Hill Baptist church in Orange county, and subsequently with the Hillsboro church, of which she remained a lively member till death severed the tie.

From the beginning of her profession, to the time of her departure from earth, hers was the radiant "path of the just, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day," whose last hours in the militant state shone with the brightness of the triumphant to which she attained through Christ.

Her mind was clear and lucid to the last, and she refused to take alcoholic and stupefying stimulants to revive her waning strength, giving as a reason that she did not want to die under such influences; but wished her mind to remain clear that she might think of Jesus.

There seemed to be but little pain or suffering attending her entire sickness; but that fell disease, consumption, had marked her as its victim. When asked by her mother, "Do you fear to die, my child?" "Oh, no, mother," she replied, "I long to see my Saviour. I know I shall be at rest." Her pastor asked, "Where is your trust in view of death?" Her answer was, "I trust in my blessed Saviour."

Once she looked anxiously around as if desiring to ask for something, and being questioned as to what it was, she replied, "Nothing but heaven."

To her weeping mother and sisters and to her many friends who stood around, overwhelmed with grief, she would turn her dying eyes, tenderly beaming, even in death, with love to all and say, "Why do you weep so, I am happy. Jesus is with me. I long to go to him, and I am patiently waiting his time." To her pastor who held her hand, she said, "Feel my pulse and tell me how long now." When informed that all pulse at her wrist had ceased to beat, and only the clammy dew of death was there, the sweetest smile of peace and joy that was ever seen on a dying countenance played around her lips and over her entire features, lovely even in death. How pleasant death seemed in that moment.

When breath was almost gone, her feeble voice was distinctly heard singing a line of the hymn, "Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep." Then waiting a moment to recover strength she sang a strain of these words—

"It is the hope, the blissful hope,
Which Jesus' grave has given,
The hope when days and years are past,
We all shall meet in heaven."

And then, like an innocent babe that sighs itself to sleep upon its mother's gentle bosom, Miss Sue Stroud sweetly passed away from earth to heaven, without a gurgle, without a pang, without a single contortion of feature or body, with every muscle as perfectly composed as if lying in the calmest slumber, and leaving her head on the loving breast of her dear Saviour, she breathed her "life out sweetly there."

Oh, the loveliness of such a death! Who can describe it! Jesus had placed his own beautiful signature upon it, and every appearance, every phase that one would naturally expect to see repulsive and disagreeable, was in the highest sense, most pleasant and comforting to the believer in "the resurrection and the life." "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

W. B. HARRELL.

Hillsboro N. C.

RUM THE DEGRADER.

From the Baltimore Sun.
In the Criminal Court of Baltimore, George Barton was placed in the prisoner's dock on trial for the theft of a pair of trousers, valued at \$3.50, from Joseph Brenner. He had been arrested while intoxicated, and the pantaloon, with Brenner's card on them, being found in his possession, Brenner was sent for. He had not sold them to Barton, whom he had never seen before, and Barton being unable to account for the property, he was presented for the larceny. On being asked by Judge Brown whether he had anything to say, the prisoner addressed the court as follows:

"This is a most painful position for me, your Honor, to stand before a court of justice charged with an act so degrading as theft. As little as any one did I once think ever to be so shamed. For only four years ago I was an honored member of a bar not undistinguished for ability in another State. How I have fallen, this degradation (indicating by a gesture his position) and these rags (holding out his arms) will show. They are the effects of intemperance. I well know intoxication is no excuse in law for crime. But the essence of criminality in the intent. I am totally oblivious in regard to this act. I know not when nor where nor by whom I was arrested. Could I have intended, then, to do the act? If courts are instituted not alone to find out the truth and to punish the guilty, but to amend and restrain, they must leave narrow rules and advance to broader principles; the spirit of the law rather than its letter must be their animating principle. If this court is administered in that spirit I may again be permitted to enter those fields of exertion and enterprise where I may clothe myself with the honor and respect of my fellow men, for whatever may be the end of this matter, I have resolved never again to degrade my manhood by intoxication. In this presence I repeat and renew the pledge of reform I had made to myself. I will devote my manhood and my old age to winning again the honor, respect, love, friends, and position I once held. I will pursue again the paths and the steps that lead to good repute and happiness."

"But conviction means something very different from these hopes. Conviction means not imprisonment only. It means shame and ruin of a life.—Every hope of rehabilitating life will be in vain. The brand will be on me. Every avenue of honest industry will be closed to me. Nowhere can I escape the stigma. If I take the wings of the morning fly to the uttermost parts of the earth, it will follow me. If for a brief space secure in obscurity it will still hang over me like the sword of Damocles over my head. Ah! how hungry the world is to catch up the evil reports that blacken men's names. I ask not for pity, but only that a way may again be opened for a man's restoration to self respect, friends, and a home once more."

Judge Brown released the prisoner, and the Court officers and spectators made up a purse for Barton to take him home. He had been in jail fifty-six days. It is not probable that he gave his true name.

New York, Jan 27.—The papers here publish a statement that a number of officers of the late war, some of whom served on one side and some on the other, have determined to offer Iglesias their services. The conference was held in Washington yesterday afternoon. One of their number was deputed to wait upon Iglesias and formally tender him their services. This gentleman who graduated at West Point and was in the regular army when the war broke out, and later one of the principal cavalry officers of the Confederacy, will leave here immediately for St. Louis, where he hopes to meet the ex-President and his cabinet and lay the scheme before them. They say they can easily raise 16,000 or 15,000 in Louisiana and Texas.

The announcement made here yesterday that the Metropolitan Insurance Company was in the hands of a receiver, referred to the Metropolitan Fire Insurance Company, and not the Metropolitan Life between which there is no connection. The two should not be confused to the detriment of the last named institution.

An exchange says: "We are in receipt of two poems, one on the 'Throbbing Brain,' and another on a 'Bleeding Heart.' We will wait until we receive one on the 'Stomach Ache,' and publish all three together."

A LESSON.

Mrs White educated her husband badly from the first. It was her custom to wait upon him always. When he came home of an evening she brought him his slippers and gown and took away his boots. If they were going away she "laid his clothes out," found his studs and sleeve-buttons, brushed his coat, and reminded him of everything he had forgotten. Now, Mr. White became so accustomed to this sort of thing that he took it as a matter of course, and did not realize how much of his wife's time was consumed by his selfishness. But the time was coming when his eyes were to be opened. It chanced that on one occasion, when contemplating a journey together, the couple missed the train. "It is your fault," said Mr White to his patient wife. "I sat in the buggy waiting for you for ten minutes." "Yes," said Mrs White, "and every time I started down stairs you sent me back for something you had forgotten." Whereupon a sharp quarrel ensued; for Mrs White was roused at last. The upshot of the matter was that they put off their visit until the next week, and it was agreed that each one should get him or herself ready and go down to the train and go, and the one who failed to get ready should be left. The day of the match came round in due time. The train was to leave at half-past ten o'clock, and Mr White, after attending to his business, went home at a quarter before ten o'clock. "Now, then," he shouted, "only three-quarters of an hour to train time. Fly around; a fair field and no favors, and know." And away they flew. Mr White made a great deal of noise, and dived into one closet after another with inconceivable rapidity, while Mrs White set about her task with calm deliberation. Mr White's first check occurred when he searched for his shirt. He emptied a drawer of its entire contents before ascertaining that it belonged to his wife. Then he vainly searched for his studs ten minutes when she humbly informed him that they were in the garment he had just taken off. Missing cuff-buttons occasioned the next delay. He had left them on the sitting-room mantel-piece, Mrs White said. By this time it was a quarter past ten o'clock, and Mrs White, who had steadily attended to her own affairs, was just putting on her bonnet. "Is my valise packed?" asked the fuming man. "No," she said, "I had hardly time to pack my own." She was passing out of the gate, when he shouted an inquiry concerning his vest. She informed him that she threw it on the hat rack, bade him good-by, and went smiling on her way. And just as the cars moved out of the depot, Mr White, breathless and agitated, put in an appearance, too late for the train. But he never forgot the lesson, and Mrs White waits on him no more.

THOUGHTFUL THOUGHTS.

The pleasures of this world are deceitful; they promise more than they give. They trouble us in seeking them, they do not satisfy us when possessing them, and they make us despair in losing them.

He who says education "says government; to teach is to reign; the human brain is a sort of terrible wax that takes the stamp of good or evil, according to whether an ideal touches it or a claw seizes it.

Of all the love on earth the one most like the divine love is that of the good mother—so unselfish, unforgetting, watchful, considerate, free from jealousy, and desiring the good of her children far more than her own happiness.

The human heart is like a mill-stone in a mill; when you put wheat under it, it turns and grinds, and bruises the wheat into flour; if you put no wheat into it, it still grinds on, but then it is itself it grinds, and it slowly wears away.

The miser toils for riches, the hero for fame, the scholar that his name may be known to coming ages. How much higher and nobler the aim of the Christian who is living for eternity—toiling for a crown of everlasting life!

The man who lives right, and is right, has more power in his silence than another has by his words. Character is like bells which ring out sweet music, and which, when touched accidentally even, resound with sweet music.

Paugh is no mean authority on some matters in his little sea-girt isle. Here is his vision of the weather as it falls upon him all the year round:
"Dirty days hath September,
April, June, and November,
And from February until May,
The rain it raineth every day.
All the rest have thirty-one,
Without a single gleam of sun;
And if any should have thirty-two,
They'd be dull and dirty too."

The Baltimore Gazette says, first class in arithmetic stand up. If the Democrats could have bought the Louisiana returning board for a cool million, what is the present value of Hayes' claim to the presidency?

The borrower has a short memory.

POLITICS AND COLLECTION PLATES.

Recently a Radical who is a preacher, tackled Uncle Remus on the subject of politics.

"I understand, old man," said he, "that you are a Democrat."

"I dunno, 'bout dat boss!"

"Well, it comes pretty straight."

"I know dey got two sides, one what dey call Demmy er at an' de other what dey call Radl ket, but I don't bodler wid 'em w'dn de wedder gits dis stiff."

"But, I hear you vote the Democratic ticket every time."

"I vote wid my young master what I nussed w'en he want no bigger dan a duck rabbit."

"Now don't you know this is going back on your color?"

"But hit ain't gwine back on my belly, an' ef I don't tend to dat, de fus' cole rain dat comes 'long mout wash de color' right outen me. I ain't takin' no chances in dis bizness' boss I'm a gettin' old, and de ol' er I gits de hongrier I gets I does for a fact."

"Look at me, I vote the republican ticket, and I'm not losing my flesh."

"You sor-er preches 'round like don't you boss?"

"Sometimes, Yes. Why?"

"Caze out's what de fun comes in, I don't git no chance for ter feed outen no beaver hat, an' I don't est offen no plates what dey takes up church bleekshuns in. I'm a mighty lonesome ole nigger, an' his ter scuffle long de bes' I kin widout enny congeration at my lack."

The preacher looked at his watch, and said he would take some more at another time, while Uncle Remus with a serene smile upon his venerable face, went down the street singing:

Oh! whar shall we go w'en de great day comes
Wid de blowing' up de trumpet an' de langin' uv de drums?
How many po' sinners will be catch'd out late,
An' fine no latch to de golden gate?

PEARLS.

The guardian angel of life sometimes flies so high that it can not be seen; but is always looking down upon us, and will soon hover nearer to us.

Affliction is the wholesome soil of virtue, where patience, honor, sweet humanity, and calm fortitude take root and strongly flourish.

If you would be pungent, be brief for it is with words as with sunbeams—the more they are condensed, the deeper they burn.

Hearts may be attracted by assumed qualities, but the affections are only to be fixed by those that are real.

Nature often enshrines gallant and noble hearts in weak bosoms—oftenest, God bless her! in the female breast.

The bluish is nature's alarm at the approach of sin, and her testimony to the dignity of virtue.

No one who holds the power of granting aid to the worthy poor, can refuse it without guilt.

For every sort of suffering, save that of sin, there is sleep provided by a gracious Providence.

A miser grows rich by seeming poor; and extravagant person grows poor by seeming rich.

Men resemble the gods in nothing so much as in doing good to their fellow creatures.

Never marry but for love; but see that thou lovest that which is lovable.

What is becoming is honorable, and what is honorable is becoming.

When anger, rief, toink of the consequences.

It is difficult to grow old gracefully.

An unprincipled bachelor says troubles never come single.

Foot, on being scolded by a lady, said: "I have heard of tartar and brimstone. You are the crown of the one and the flower of the other."

A New Jersey woman is so cleanly that she sees two rolling-pins, one for the pie crust and the other for her husband's head.

The greatest joiner—the lawyer: He can place a tenant, panel a jury, chisel a client, angur the gains, flow a witness, cut his board, nail the case, hammer the deed, file his bill, and shave the whole column in ty.

A farmer who had sent a bale of cotton to a warehouse instructed a merchant to have the same sold. The merchant complied with the request, and the bale was disposed of. The farmer, upon examining his statement, heard muttering to himself: "Drayage, wharfage, insurance, storage, leakage, weighage—well, I'll take the balance out in lightage."