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Selected Poetry.

THE PET OF THE SEASON.

Oh, happy fly,
With watchful eye,
The open butter dish to spy;
Best fat of all
In it to fall,
And o'er the table-cloth to crawl.
Tis so like him,
To plunge and swim
Around the syrup-pitcher brim;
The saccharine dregs
Cling to his legs,
As up the sides he toils and pegs.
Lo! where the cream,
In lucid stream,
Falls on the berries like a dream,
His greedy soul
Delights to roll
And plunge and tumble in the bowl.
Round honeyed leaks
He crawls and sneaks,
And into cups of sluggard peeks,
The sours* of men,
With tongue and pen,
Abuse him—he comes back again.
With thirsty lips
Your tea he sips,
Or in the coffee's dark eclipse,
In liquid night,
Oh, happy sight!
He drowns your breakfast cup blights,
No hostile boom,
With fluttering plume,
Can drive him from the sitting room;
Him off we take
In currant cake,
Yet find him busy when we wake.
When you would read,
With dreadful speed,
He bites your eyelids 'till they bleed;
And would you doze,
He slowly goes
With tickling feet across your nose.
In vain, in vain,
With might and main,
To smite him hip and thigh you strain;
You claw and tear,
And beat the air,
But when you strike, he is not there.
*And daughters and wives.

At Sunset.

It was just the close of day.
The west shone in scarlet splendor,
and dimpled cloud-ships lay serenely
clustered in sun-kissed argosies over
the peaceful vale, where all was sweet
tranquility.
The robin was chanting his vesper
song, and the roses dropped indolently
in the balmy breeze, and seemed
waited to a realm of delicious visions.
At this heaven-fraught hour I wandered
down a woodland avenue with
a girl whose beauty is beyond description.
Her large black eyes looked
fondly into mine as we sat on a fallen
tree. Her soft, jeweled fingers lay in
mine. Oh, heavenly moment. I could
feel her warm breath on my neck, for
our lips almost touched. She asked
me in faltering accents:
"Were you ever in love?"
"Never till now," I replied.
And then she looked at me most
lovingly, and I drew her close to my
bosom, and was just kissing her for
the second time when the vision broke
and I paid the dentist and left! It
was my first experience with nitrous
oxide gas.—Puck.
Shakespeare know human nature
by heart. Here is one of his bright
sayings, which is put in the masculine
gender just to save the consequences,
but which is really as feminine in its
application as it is masculine: "When
I said I would die a bachelor I did
not think I should live till I were
married."

CLAIRE'S WOERS.

"I must confess, Reginald, that your present course is to me a great puzzle, and that I am both hurt and disappointed."
Mr. Frank Malvern drew his tall, stately figure erect as he spoke, and upon his handsome face was a cloud of reproach and regret, seeing which his companion winced and faltered. They were both men past sixty; but while Mr. Malvern carried his years lightly, a very handsome, middle-aged man, Reginald Foster looked a much older man than he was, spare of figure, bent and feeble, with a face marked by care.
Both were wealthy men, Mr. Malvern a bachelor, his friend a widower with "one fair daughter, and no more," and it was this daughter, winsome Claire Foster, who was the subject of their earnest conversation.
After Mr. Malvern's speech, Mr. Foster, passing one slender white hand nervously over the other, again and again, said, in a low, faltering tone:
"You have a right to reproach me, Frank. And yet I never meant to deceive you. I thought it would be for Claire's happiness to be your wife!"
"And will it not?" the other broke in, with a passionate eagerness in strong contrast to his stately appearance. "Who can love her as I love her?" he continued—"I, who have known her from a mere child! Reginald, you know this! you know we talked of this when she was a school-girl!"
"I know," was the reply, in broken tones, "and I thought Claire must love you—because you are worthy of her love. But, Frank, I am afraid—in spite of my watchfulness—her heart has gone into the keeping of Royce Clifton."
"But! a girl's infatuation for a handsome face and winning tongue. I am not afraid!"
"Frank, I said that once! We are friends of many years' standing, but you have known me only since I was widowed. There is a past in my life of which I never speak, which tortures me in the silent night-watches, but over which I have drawn a veil of silence. I will tell you the story, and then you will understand why, if Claire loves Royce Clifton, I dare not hold my consent to their marriage back."
"Twenty-two years ago, when I was in the prime of life, I loved Claire's mother, as you love Claire. As you know, I have always been a studious man, loving solitude, and with large wealth to give me every advantage without necessity for business or anxiety. I lived here, at Woodlawn, as I do now, and my sister kept house for me. My lawyer, John Duprez, was almost my only visitor, and in one of his professional calls he mentioned to me the illness of his only daughter Julie. She was then convalescent, and her physician advised change of air, and perfect quiet. Mr. Duprez asked me if there was not a farm-house near here where his daughter could board, and Mary, my sister, being called into consultation, knew of one.
"It was quite natural that Mary should feel an interest in the child, daughter of an old friend, and she soon became intimate, bringing Julie here often to spend a day, and taking her for long drives or short walks. It was like sunshine in winter to have Julie in the house. She sang like a bird as she flitted about the house, dancing along the wide halls and up or down the broad staircases. She would take bowls and fill them with fruit in the garden and trim them with flowers for our cosy luncheons. And while a very child for light-heartedness, she had her grave hours, too, and could converse well, without pedantry.
"I worshiped her. It was not simply love, it was idolatry I brought to her feet. When I told her father, he gave cordial consent to my wooing, and promised Julie should be mine. And Julie, when I asked her love, put a cold, timid hand in mine, and said she would marry me.
"She went home in the fall, and Mary and I made the old house new for my wedding. And while it was in the hands of upholsterers, painters and plasterers, Mary and I went to

New York for the winter. I went out of my shell to join Julie in the gayeties she loved. I dressed carefully in order to present to her a stylish escort for concerts, balls, operas or social gatherings. I rifled hot-houses for their choicest blossoms to please her, and yet—Frank—I knew she did not love me. She was gentle and kind, entirely too willing to yield to every wish I expressed, but she was never loving. She would shiver sometimes when my lips pressed hers, as if my caress chilled her heart.
"Very gradually the truth came home to me. She loved a younger man, of whom her father disapproved. He was very frank with me when I taxed him with concealing this, telling me that the wooer was a man he would never receive as his son, and assuring me that Julie was far too obedient a child to thwart her father.
"And I, blind fool, thought of what my love would compass, my wealth command. We were married in December, and went abroad. I put aside all my hermit-like inclinations to give Julie perfect happiness. Every wish she expressed was gratified, and my only thought was to please her. I could find no fault in her. Utterly submissive to my will, gentle in every word, touchingly grateful every gift or gratification, she was, in my eyes, perfect as she had ever been, but she did not love me. I know that she did not let her heart rest upon the love she had forsaken. She was too pure, too conscientious to nurse a grief or love that was a sin, but she had married from a mistaken sense of duty, and had only duty to sustain her.
"When we came home, nearly two years after our wedding day, I had such a pale shadow of my old love to show my friends that I hurried through the city, hoping that the more bracing air of Woodlawn would bring health back to Julie. But bracing air and exercise failed as my love had failed. Uncomplaining, sweet, and tender, my wife was fading away before my eyes. In the spring Claire was born—a wee snow-drop of a babe—and Julie seemed to strength in the happiness of mother-love. But it was only a temporary strength, for when the summer days came, we built up no more false hope, but sadly told each other and our own hearts she was dying. The doctors called it a decline, talked of 'want of tone,' general weakness, and feeble constitution. I looked my conscience at last in the face, and said, 'She dies broken-hearted.' I was worthy of her until I dared to think I could force love, and make her turn traitor to her own heart. Remorse was useless then. I could only give her tender care, until she put her wasted arm around my neck, let her soft cheek touch mine as her head rested upon my shoulder, and said:
"Forgive me, Reginald, that I could not love you. I have tried, and, oh, believe, I am not ungrateful for your love and patience; but I could not forget. I meant to be true to you, and I never forgot one moment my duty or my faith, but I should not have married you, when my heart was not my own. I have tried to be a good wife, Reginald, but I can not live this double life. It has killed me. Oh, forgive me for having wrecked your happiness with my own."
"And with her eyes full of tears, pleading for pardon, where I was the sinner, she died in my arms.
"I can tell you little of the next two years. I was on the verge of lunacy, travelling incessantly, striving to forget, driven here and there by the agony of useless remorse, for I had killed her. But for me she might have been a happy, loving wife, and she was dead!
"When I came home at last my baby was a toddling, prattling child, and I resolved to atone for the wrong done Julie by devotion to her child. But, Frank, never, by one word, by one feather-weight of influence, will I risk her happiness as I risked her mother's. If she loves you, you know my best wishes attend your wooing. If she loves Royce Clifton, I will not oppose her heart. Royce is worthy of her. There is nothing but poverty in the way, and my only child need not fear that."
"He will never love her as I love her!"
"But if she loves him she will never

love you."
There was a silence of some moments, and then Frank Malvern abruptly left the room, stepping across the window-sill upon a wide porch, and from that to the garden path. It was just after sunset, and the soft twilight of a summer evening was gathering slowly. Murmuring gently, the Hudson glittered like a broad band of silver in the half light, and the garden sloped gradually down almost to its bank. In the shadow of a large tree, facing the river, two figures were clearly defined upon the bank, standing erect, and very near each other. With the desperation of suffering, Mr. Malvern went toward them, determined to at least give Claire the choice between her elderly lover and the erect, boyish figure defined against the evening sky.
"She may love me," he murmured; and as it, in answer the air brought to him a voice, low but clear, sweet as a chime of silver bells:
"My father will never heed your poverty, Royce, when he knows our love."
That was all. Unwilling to play eavesdropper, Frank Malvern strode quickly back to the house, to the room where his old friend sat with bowed head and quivering lips, living over his past dreams and sorrows.
"You are right, Reginald," he said, abruptly. "I will say no more. Send me word when the wedding is to be."
Then he was gone. When his superb present of diamonds came to greet Claire's wedding-day, she wondered how the velvet case came to have one great spot to mar its beauty but never guessed that a tear fell there, sacred to love and renunciation.
For while Royce and Claire flit like butterfly-fies through Europe, or come like meteors to Woodlawn on summer visits, to be gone again in a few weeks, the two old friends live out their hermit life, and talk gravely of "the children," and the fortune one day to be theirs.
Never has Claire been saddened by hearing her mother's story, and never has she guessed how deeply and truly Uncle Frank once loved the child of his old friend. She is happy in her love, proud of her husband's rising fame, tender to her father's infirmities, but knows nothing of the penitence and remorse that gave her life's happiness, and saved her from the misery of marriage without love.

The Value of Swimming.

Among the survivors from the terrible wreck of the Princess Alice are three members of the same family—Mr. Thorpe, of the old Kent Road, a young man seventeen years of age; his sister, Miss Thorpe, who is a year older than himself; and his brother, a mere boy of nine. All three owe their lives to the fact that they were able to swim. When the terrible crash was heard and the doomed vessel began to settle down, these three children—for children they almost are in years, if not in courage and presence of mind—found themselves struggling in the water. The boys, it would seem, were somehow separated from their sister. They were both picked up by the same boat, and were, when it helped them from their perilous position, swimming side by side. The sister, who was older than either, achieved her own safety. She struck boldly out, and—in spite of the encumbrance of her garments, the force of the tide, the darkness of the night and the danger to which she can not but have been subjected by the frantic efforts of those who were struggling around her in the water to catch and cling to any object within their grasp—succeeded in reaching the bank. It seems little short of a miracle that, under such circumstances, a mere girl, not twenty years of age, weighted with her heavy woman's dress, bewildered by the suddenness of the catastrophe, frightened—as she must have been—by the terrible nature of the scene, and helpless for want of her natural protectors, should have been able, single-handed, to save her life. The feat is the more remarkable when we bear in mind the fact that Miss Thorpe is not—as are some young women of her age—a swimmer of eminence. That she can hold her own gallantly in the water the result has sufficiently shown. But she is

Taste in the Selection of Colors.

Public taste in flowers, as in fruits, animals and dress, is undoubtedly generally in sympathy with strong colors. A bouquet strong in its blue, red and yellow georgousness will catch the eye and open the purpose of the average man and woman, while the more lovely blending of subdued tints will be passed unnoticed. Animals of bright color will often find a purchaser, when those not fashionable as to color, but far better in all that constitutes value, will be passed unnoticed. Thus red apples, red-cheeked pears, high-colored plumes and cherries, will outsell their more sober colored relatives, although intrinsically the lighter colored fruits may be for better to the taste. In flowers, however, there are but two things to be considered, elegance in shape and color, and perfume. In nine cases out of ten, except among the educated tastes, the masses of bloom will be found to be composed almost entirely of blue, red and yellow. The more tender colors, the natural ones, and especially white are often kept entirely out, or very sparsely used. Even among such common flowers as candytuft, annual, plox, verbena and petunias, we seldom see beds of pure white. They are not only elegant to true taste, but indispensable for bouquets, especially in subdued lights, or for evening parties.

Cornered at Last.

His wife had probably been arguing and exacting for years, for he looked like a man whose spirit had been worn out before he had consented to have his photograph taken. He halted at the door of a gallery as if trying to invent some excuse, but she pushed him upstairs and he was in for it at last. He hoped the photographer would be crowded with work, but he wasn't. He hoped the camera was out of order, but it was in prime condition.
"Can't take me to day, can you?" he queried.
"Oh! yes—take you right away," was the reply.
"Have I got to sit up straight?"
No; sit as you please.
"Hain't these clothes too tight?"
"Not a bit."
"I can't spare over three minutes."
"Very well, I'll take you in two."
There was no way to get rid of it, and with a desperate look around and a frown at his wife, the old man dropped into the chair with a sigh, shut his eyes, crossed his legs and groaned out:
"Well, if I must die, bring on your laughing gas, and don't let my wife go through my pockets while I'm unconscious."

An Indian in Love.

One of the Indians in Buffalo Bill's Combination fell violently in love with a maid servant in the Central Hotel and wrote her a tender and affectionate love letter. The letter consisted of a warrior with bow drawn and in a defensive attitude. The interpreter informed the maid servant that this was a proffer of marriage, the warrior representing himself and indicating that he would protect her from perils of every character. It is hardly necessary that she declined to become Mrs. Eagle-that-Flies-High, (for this was the name of the chief who, having passed through a hundred battles in safety, ignominiously fell a victim to Cupid's arrow.
A machine has recently been invented in England for curing hay and grain by artificial heat—a very desirable piece of machinery for the miserable, damp, foggy climate of that country. This hay drier is said to work to a charm—drying from ten to fifty loads of green grass per day, and makes a better article of hay, containing more nutriment than when dried in the ordinary way.
It is all very well to say that "Adversity makes men, but prosperity makes monsters." The truth is that most of us would rather be monsters than men under that law.
If you will make it your religious duty to take everything by the smooth handle you will save yourself a great many unhappy hours.

Lord Mansfield's Witness.

A Jew, speaking of a young man as his son-in-law, was accused of misleading the Court, since the young man was really his son. Moses, however, persisted that the name he put to the relationship was the right one, and addressing the Bench, said: "I was in Amsterdam two years and three quarters; when I come home I find this lad. Now the law obliges me to maintain him, and consequently he is my son-in-law." "Well," said Lord Mansfield, "that is the best definition of a son-in-law I ever yet heard."
The average life of a glass-blower is only thirty-six years while a stump speaker, using twice the wind power, never, never dies.—Free Press.