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Selected Poetry.

THE RING MY MOTHER WORE.

The earth has many treasures rare,
In gems and golden ore;
My heart hath one, more precious far—
The ring my mother wore.
I saw it first, when I, a child,
Was playing by her side;
She told me then 'twas father's gift
When she became his bride.

I saw it oft in sorrow's hours,
Which marked the after years,
When shining on the soft white hand
That wiped away my tears,
And, oh! I saw it once again,
When, on her dying bed,
She lifted up her hand in prayer,
And laid it on my head.

Beside that bed, where fell my tears,
The ring to me was given;
She placed it on my hand, and said,
"We'll meet again in Heaven;"
I kissed the cheek I oft had pressed,
From which the rose had fled;
And, bowed with grief, stood motherless,
Alone, beside the dead.

Among the blest in realms above,
Where sorrows are unknown,
Oh, may I meet my mother dear,
No more to weep alone.
Her dying words of love and faith
I'll cherish evermore
Within the heart which holds so dear
The ring my mother wore.

The longest tunnel in the world is undoubtedly that called the "Joseph I. Adit," in Hungary, connecting the mines of Hodritz and Schemnitz. It was begun in 1782 during the reign of Joseph I., hence the name, and was completed in September, 1873, just ninety-six years. Its length is 16,538 meters, or nearly ten and a half miles. The other lesser tunnels are those of Mt. Cenis, 12,233 meters, and the St. Gothard, 14,920.—*Boston Transcript.*

Discovery of a Mastodon.

NEWBURGH, N. Y., July 7.—On Saturday some bones of a mastodon were discovered in a swamp on the farm of Hugh Kelley, in the town of New Windsor, seven miles southwest of this city. Excavations were immediately begun and still continue. The following have been found, and it is thought the entire skeleton will be found. Dimensions in inches—skull, 45 long, 28 wide, 29 high, and 23½ between the eyes; diameter of nostrils, 6 inches, nostril extending into the head 2 feet. Four teeth were found in each jaw in an excellent state of preservation. The enamel is of a bluish tint and unbroken. The four back teeth are eight-pointed, measure 9 by 3 and three-fourth inches, and stood 4 inches out of the jaw. The four front teeth are six-pointed, and measure 4½ by 3¼ inches. All of the bones of the legs have been found except two pieces. The length of the fore leg, including the shoulder-blade, is 7 feet, and the shoulder-blade 36 by 27½ inches. The sockets of the knee-joints are from 7 to 9 inches in diameter. Twenty-four ribs have been found thus far, the longest measuring forty-six inches. Numerous vertebræ have been excavated, with part of the feet.

A small boy was hoeing corn in a sterile field by the roadside when a passer-by stopped and said: "Pears to me your corn is rather small." "Certainly," said the boy, "it's dwarf corn." "But it looks yellow," "Certainly," replied the boy, "we planted yellow kind." "But it looks as if you wouldn't get more than half a crop." "Of course not," said the boy, "we planted her on shares."

SISTER ANNE'S TOWER WINDOW.

How long ago did we give the window its name? When we were little children, my brother, Fred, my father's pupil, Tom Birch, and myself. We had merry hearts in those days, and were far better versed in fairy love than in arithmetic and grammar.

Father was a country schoolmaster, and Tom, an old farmer's son, boarded in our cottage, going to the old red school house with Fred and me every morning. The tower window was in a turret chamber father had added to the house for his astronomical observations. It looked upon the heavens, but it also commanded a view down the main road to the sea beyond. From it we could see the wagons and people going to and from Huntsville, and far out to the sea the vessels, many of which found horror in Huntsville Cove.

But chiefly did we use it to play Bluebeard, and whenever Annotte Churchill, our neighbor's daughter, would come and join our games. One brother alone would come to the rescue of the illfated wife, and we took turns in the personation of character.

All that was long ago; so long that the tears dim my old eyes, thinking of the four children and the life pilgrimage they have journeyed over, since those days.

It is Nettie's story I want to write, and Nettie was Tom's only child. We four, Tom, Fred, Annette, and I, passed from childhood to maturity in our quiet village, and when my brother married Annette and went to China, in the employ of a great tea company, Tom and I were betrothed. Tom was by that time in his city home, working his way to fortune.

Then my father died, and I took his place in the old school-house, owning our cottage home, for Fred was doing well, and would touch none of the little money father had saved. And Tom was false to me! He married a Cuban girl, not an heiress, but poor as himself. Fred wrote me a letter that made me shudderingly rejoice that the seas lay between my false lover, and I suffered as loving women do suffer when they give their whole heart away to have the returned.

Six years later my aunt died and left me a modest fortune, far above my simple needs, so I gave up teaching. Only six months later Tom wrote to me.

He was dying, and his wife already dead. He implored me to take his little girl, Jeannette, and I hastened to the city to bid him farewell, to hold his cold hand once more in mine and promise true love and a happy home to the little creature who already clung to me.

Fred was furious. I do not like to recall the bitter letter he wrote to me of unmaidly forwardness. You understand, I was still under thirty, though I felt very much older, and Huntsville people called me an old maid. But I would not trust Tom's child into the word friendless, even if Fred stormed, and so I took Nettie home.

She was a beautiful little creature, with soft dark eyes and bright, golden hair, and from the first days of our intercourse I knew that she was one to suffer much or rejoice much. She was keenly sensitive, full of loving, tender emotions, and with two lives, one of reality, one of imagination. She idealized everything, and I built grand castles in the air of her fortune fame as an artist, a poet, or a novelist.

I was a fond, foolish old maid. Instead of clipping the wings of her fancy by prosaic teaching, I fostered and encouraged it. I was her only teacher, and our lessons were unfitted for any but Nettie. Our geography was travel over the globe, stopping here or there while we talked of the counties under the pencil point. We made our arithmetic into rhyme, and if we gave a fore-noon to solid study, we spent the afternoon roaming in the woods, sketching or versifying.

In music we generally delighted, and Nettie's one master was our old organist, who trained her slender fingers over the piano and organ keys.

Need I say that the child revelled in our tower window? Not a day passed but she spent some portion of it looking out upon the road or sea. In winter she would wrap herself in a great shawl, and watch the storms till she was half frozen; and, in summer, the hottest sun that baked the roof could not keep her away from her favorate seat. She established a library in the turret, and wrote verses describing our youthful sports and "Sister Anne's Tower Window."

But she never cared to play with the village children. I taught her to sew, as a matter of duty, and Susan, my old servant, gave her lessons in housewifery, but she cared for neither and nobody forced her inclinations.

So she grew up till she was eighteen, a beautiful, dreamy girl, loving and good, but, ah, me! very unfit for the world's hard usage. She was just eighteen when Fred sent his only son to New York to carry on the tea business. Fred and I had long before made up our differences, and many a handsome present came from his full purse to his sister. Yet he wrote:

"Charlie will come to see you, of course. But do not let him grow intimate with Tom Birch's daughter. She comes of a faithless father, a frivolous mother, and I have never forgotton her father's treachery."

"Now, was it not in the very nature of Fate's perversities for Charlie to come on a June evening when Nettie was singing to me? She was dressed in one of the fleecy muslins Fred had sent to me, and had pale blue flowers in her hair and at her throat. How long Charlie stood on the porch looking in at us, I cannot say, but when he stepped over the window-sill I saw in his large dark eyes an expression that made my heart sink.

I knew him instantly, for he had Fred's handsome face, Fred's tall, erect figure, and Fred's clear, ringing voice. He was like a breath of fresh west wind in our quiet life. Nettie was accustomed to such society as Huntsvile afforded, and we had spent two winters in New York, but Charlie could tell her of wonderous foreign lands. He had been educated in Germany, had traveled in England, Spain, France, had lived in China. What in the twenty-five years of life had he not seen? And yet he was as unaffected and frank as a boy. Could I turn him out when he announced his intention of paying me a month's visit, before setting down to work in New York? Could I tell him his father's wish, and lower my darling in the eyes of any man, for her father's fault?

I wrote to Fred, and told him truly what my Nettie was, anticipating no future, but simply stating my own conviction that no man could seek or win a greater treasure than the pure hearted maiden who was the comfort of my life.

Yet I strove conscientiously to guard Nettie by telling her of Fred's great ambitions for his only son, of his riches, his pride, hinting that he probably looked for great wealth and position in his future daughter. And Nettie assented, as innocent as a child.

And yet,, Charlie would climb the narrow stairs, and read Nettie's verses, look out of the tower window with her, to criticise the people on the road, or watch the road, or watch the sea and sky. Charlie would join us in our rambles, gather wild strawberries in broad leaves for Nettie, violets in tiny bunches for Nettie, primroses, daisies, dainty fern leaves, all for Nettie.

When July came, he left us, but he came to and fro, and bought a low carriage and gentle horse for me—"to meet him at the steamboat landing."

And my one dragon-like precaution was to go alone when he had expected, knowing Nettie watched every step of my journey from the tower window.

When the leaves had turned to crimson and gold, Charlie asked Nettie to be his wife, and when the mischief was done, I showed him his father's letter, telling Nettie as gently as I could why her father's child would not be welcome in my brother's home.

She was gently dignified, refusing utterly to listen to Charlie, but won, at last, to own her love, her willingness to be his wife, if he could gain his father's consent.

And Charlie, with a quiet gravity I had never seen before upon his handsome face, said:

"I will see my father, auntie, and convince him of my love and his prejudice. It would be altogether useless to write, so I will go at once to China."

"You talk as if it was across the street!"

"It is not so far but I can carry my love there, and bring it safely back again. Father loves me, and if he knows my life's happiness rests with him, he will not be unreasonable. Probably I can persuade him to return with me, for he has long talked of retiring. Nettie, will you trust me, and wait for me, till I come again?"

"I will trust you, and wait for you," Nettie answered.

But after Charlie left us, my darling drooped so visibly that I knew at last that even in one summer a woman's heart may love till that love is her very life. I had lived down my own heart sorrow, but Nettie was of a different nature. And she did not know Fred. I was as sure of Charlie's love winning my brother over as I was of my life. His very honor would shriek from Charlie's committing the same crime against manhood's holiest ties, as Tom Birch had committed years before.

The winter wore away slowly. Nettie took a severe cold sitting in the turret, and she could not shake off the cough. She would not have a doctor, and, indeed, she looked so well that I had no fear. Never had I watched consumption's treacherous inroads, and I did not guess the meaning of the brilliant eyes, and deeply tinted cheeks, that would have told an experienced eye of my darling's danger. The cough was more troublesome at night, and Nettie hid that from me. Spring came, and we began to hope for Charlie's return; but Nettie would not walk out much; she ceased to sing; she panted on the stairs she had once scaled so easily.

Too late I sought advice, and heard only the hopeless verdict: "She may live till autumn, but her lungs are incurably diseased!"

"Oh, my darling! Shall I ever again know the self-reproaching agony of that hour? I wakened from a stunned stupor of pain to find Nettie clinging to me.

"Don't grieve so," she whispered. "I know! You know I have poor mamma's diary, and my last year is just like hers. I could almost believe I had written what I read, day after day. But, auntie, pray for me, and I may see Charlie just once more."

I know then why she climbed the turret stairs so wearily every morning, every evening, at the hours when the New York boat touched the Huntsville warf.

In June the letter came. Fred had consented to his son's happiness, and they were coming back together.

"You and I will live in the old house," Fred wrote, "and Charlie carry on the business in New York."

"Expect us by the 11:30 boat on Wednesday?"

Nettie had never looked fairer than on that Wednesday morning when she stood upon the porch, watching me gather up the reins to drive to the boat. She wore white only—a soft dress of muslin with lace ruffles, an ivory comb holding the rippling bands of hair and falling curls from her sweet face. There was a radiance of happiness in her countenance that filled my heart with hope.

"Charlie's coming will make her well," I thought, "in spite of the doctor's prophecies."

My expected guests were at the warf, and we drove home rapidly, our eyes often seeking the tower window from which a handkerchief fluttered. When we were near, we could see the golden head resting on the back of the old arm-chair near the window, but Nettie did not come to meet us at the door.

Charlie sprang up the turret stairs before us, but we followed. A cry as a man gives only in extreme of agony hurried our steps, and we entered the little, square room only to see Charlie kneeling by the arm-chair, vainly striving, with fond words and caresses, to win one word of welcome from his betrothed. Smiling still, her eyes fixed upon the road, her heart full of expectant happiness, Nettie had left us forever, keeping her last watch at Sister Anne's Tower Window.

A Lesson in Law.

The average American farmer certainly knows how to look after his harvests, and he has a keen wit that is hard to get over. For example: Some days ago the conductor of a freight train who was out with his train, saw a couple of fine-looking ducks on the river near the track. He had a shot-gun in the caboose car, and stopping the train for a few minutes, he got off and shot both the birds. He thought this was something to congratulate himself on, and when he reached his home he invited a little party of friends to partake of the fruits of his prowess. A couple of days after this the conductor happened to be stopped at the place where the ducks had been shot. He got out his gun and walked down to the river with the intention of bagging a couple more, if possible. He had scarcely reached the edge of the river, before a man who looked like a farmer, approached him and said:

"Are you the man who shot those two ducks here day before yesterday?"

"Yes, that was me," said the sportsman, rather proudly.

"Well, those ducks belonged to me. They wasn't any of your wild ducks, but tame ones."

"Oh, pshaw! You can't fool me. I guess I know a wild duck from a tame one."

"Will you pay for the ducks?" said the farmer, coolly.

"No, sir, I won't. You can't prove the ducks were not wild ones."

"All right," said the farmer starting off toward the nearest village.

"Where are you going? What do you intend to do?" asked the conductor.

"Well," said the farmer, quietly, as he leaned against a tree, "I am going to a 'square to make an information against you for killing wild ducks out of season. If you insist that them ducks was wild, it'll cost you $5 a duck. If you come to the conclusion they were tame, it'll only cost you $2.50 a duck. Now what'll you do?"

The conductor started at his tormentor, scratched his head, said something about ducks in particular and then paid the $5. He does not carry a gun in his car any more.

Bribed by a Kiss.

A temperance lecturer who has been at work in the towns up the Hudson, has given a reporter a page from his early experience in Michigan. Previous to his arrival in a small town where he intended to do some work, the boys had agreed among themselves to go to the meeting, but not to sign the pledge. He appealed in vain for recruits in the temperance ranks. Not a man would move. At this stage of the proceedings the belle of the town sprang to her feet and cried out: "Boys, this is really too bad. Won't you sign the pledge?" Not a soul moved from his seat. Again the fair belle appealed to the men's better nature, but it was of no avail; they had promised they wouldn't sign. Finally the lady said; "Boys, I'll kiss the first man who signs the pledge." At this juncture up jumped a tall backwoodsman and drawlingly exclaimed; "Sis, I'm yer huckle-berry. What's yer pledge?" The brave girl kissed the fellow, and the cheering which followed made the building rattle. This incident broke the ice, and before the reformer had left the town, nearly every one had donned the ribbon.

"Oh! you've killed me," said a girl as she staggered back when her lover gave her a gentle embrace. "Pray forgive me darling; I wouldn't have hurt you for the world." For some time all was silence. Then, after exchanging a few words, she said: "Kill me again, John."

It is strangely singular how the boy with a pair of new suspenders hates to wear a coat.

Scaring His Wife.

A man of Centre avenue undertook the other day to give his wife a healthy scare, so as to make her more obedient and agreeable in the future; so he put up a quarrel with her, and, bounding up stairs, dipped his razor in some brick dust and water, which he had prepared for the occasion, spilled some more of that awe-inspiring composition over the floor and flung himself down with a crash, grasping the brick-dust and water-stained razor in his hand. He waited eagerly to hear a frightful shriek ring through the house, and to see a woman with an awful white face and a great lament, self-accusing eyes, totter up the stairs, gasp "My husband!" and go off into a set of hysterics in seven acts and ten tableaux. He was, however, doomed to disappointment. His wife measured slowly up stairs, remarking, "You pesky fool, you'll break your neck yet, some of these days, if you will insist on putting both legs in your trowsers simultaneously;" and when she opened the door and saw the horrible sight she said, "Well, I don't think he had the courage and sense of decency to do it. However, I look well in black, and it is a mercy I took up the bedroom carpets to-day and sent them to be cleaned." Then she called to the servant girl, "M'rie come here; your master has killed himself!" And when the girl came and said, "Hadn't I better run for the doctor?—I think I see his left leg wiggle a little," the Spartan matron replied: "No; there's no use throwing good money after bad. I wan't you to see that I didn't kill him, and then run down to the *Tribune* and tell them to send a reporter up here for a scoop on the other papers, and if you breathe a word of this to any one before the other papers have gone to press, I'll tell you, young woman, that you'll buy your raven tresses." Then she went down-stairs, locking the door after her, after audible wondering whether the corpse would keep; and, after about twenty minutes of impatient waiting for her flinty heart to melt, the corpse had to give it up and go and pound on the door to be let out.—*Chicago Tribune.*

How it Came to be Written.

'The Old Oaken Bucket' was written fifty or more years ago by a printer named Samuel Woodworth. He was in the habit of dropping into a noted drinking saloon kept by one Mallory. One day, after drinking a glass of brandy and water, he smacked his lips and declared that Mallory's brandy was surperior to any he ever tasted.

'No,' said Mallory, you are mistaken. There was a drink which in both our estimations far surpassed this.'

'What was that?' incredulously asked Woodworth.

'The fresh spring water we used to drink from the old oaken bucket that hung in the well, after returning from the fields on a sultry day.'

'Very true,' replied Woodworth, tear drops glistening in his eyes.

Returning to his printing office, he seated himself at his desk and began to write. In half an hour

"The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,
The moss-covered bucket that hung in the well,"

was embalmed in an inspiring song, that has become as familiar as a household word.

Sure Signs.

To meet a funeral is a sign of death.

To dissipate to-day is a sign your hair will pull to-morrow.

To kiss a pretty girl against her will is a sign you'll get your face scratched.

To take home a beefsteak is a sign there will be a broil in the family.

To see a dog fly at a farmer's leg is a sign a misfortune is going to befall the calves.

To see a man loafing around a barroom is a sign he will drink—if you ask him to.

To see your sweethert kiss another fellow is a sign you will be disappointed in a love affair

"Now is the time to lay in your winter fuel," as the tramp said when he crept into the replenished wood shed.