

WIDE BLUE RIDGE BLADE.

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THE MIRROR OF LIFE.

Let us look in the glass for a moment.
Let us brush off the mist from the face—
The mirror of life that is broken.
When death in our ear knells the token
To crumble in aspen.

We must fall whether praying or pining,
Whether fearing or mocking the blow,
Brush the mist from the mirror, then trem-
bling—
The grave is no place for dissembling—
There vanishing lies low.

The eyes, as they gaze to earth's glory,
Peer into that mirror of pain
Where the slain of our years lies all gory,
Bent over by grim shadows hoary
Eccentric each strain.

Not a blot nor a blemish escapes them,
The sins of the loved and the loved
The crime where we paddled or paltered,
The dark things that life never faltered
There cry out aloud.

They are there, and no tempest can hide
Them;
They glow with accusing and shame,
Tho' the years be all dead, they are living.
Mid the silence they cry for forgiving
With dirful acclaim.

On the wreck-plank of life is there pardon
When joy is worn hollow in sin?
When the heart sees no light in the sparkle,
Nor gloom where the drowsy waves darkie
O'er foam and kin?

Then brush the world's mist from the mirror
While life in our bosom is sweet,
And turn, with a love of the purest,
O'er pathways the fairest and surest,
The trace of our feet.

Aunt Maggie's Story.

Yes; what your grandfather came to tell me, lassie, was that Paul Cardell was dead. He was just 85. He'd lost sight and hearing both, they say, and was glad to go. It's not so bad with me; but I wouldn't mind going too. It stirred my memory to hear of Paul's death. I've loved a many in my life, but never any one as I did him. Ah! I'm not ashamed of it, lassie, if I am an old maid. He was just lovely.

We met often, and for a while I thought he liked me pretty well. But soon I began to think I was mistaken. It makes a girl tremble to think that she may show a man who does not love her that she likes him over well. All that she can do is to wait. Ah! lassie, many a time the waiting is a weary thing, and the right one doesn't come, and the wrong one does, and even the wrong one is better than none at all. I don't blame women for things that seem wrong often; they haven't much chance to do right. It seems to me that Paul was my right one; but he didn't court me, and I could not court him. And James Reeder being a man, could do as he chose, and did. He loved me, and I loved Paul Cardell. God help us all. I think if we women had no hearts the world would be a merrier place, lassie.

I put James Reeder off a while, and just kept my eye on Paul. I did not love him, and I did love Paul. Why couldn't I love the man that loved me?

Then said I to myself, "Be a sensible woman. It's better to marry a man who is fond of you, if he doesn't seem perfection, than to waste your youth and your strength and your hope pining for one you are nothing to." It's prettier in a poem, but I wasn't so very young or so very beautiful that the whole world wanted me. I guessed what life would be when I was a lonely old maid, handed about like a bad penny from Cousin Jack's to Uncle Ben's, and from Sister Hannah's to Sister Jane's. Not much wanted anywhere. Better try to make a man who loved me happy, and so learn to love him. They say "love comes with the children"—some who have tried it.

I thought it all over before I went to bed one night, and I made up my mind that James Reeder should have a "yes" when he asked for it. Then I cried—oh! how I cried, lassie. "Oh, must I give you up, Paul?" said I; "and oh, must I give you up?" and I knew I'd never had him give up or to keep.

The girls envied me my handsome, dashing beau. But often, walking with him, or riding with him, I'd pass Paul Cardell in his stately coat, and say to myself, "Oh, to be a man—just to be a man, and give a courting whom I choose, instead of taking what comes, as though matrimony were like the 'grab bag' at a church fair. I didn't want money, nor such beauty, as James Reeder had so much of. I wanted—well, lassie, I wanted Paul, and no one else; though why he was perfection to me, heaven only knows, I do not, and never will.

What seemed a great deal to me isn't much to tell; I there were picnic parties where I met Paul, but where he let James carry me off when he pleased, and never tried to step between us.

At last Kitty Walsingham married, and they gave her a great wedding party. They were rich, and bid it in fine style. They had a fine house and fine furniture, and silver and china, such as no one else had thereabout. And it was an all-day party. The wedding first, then breakfast and dinner, and a dance and supper, of course. I was a bridesmaid, and Paul stood up with me. After that, you know, it was his place to be my beau all day. I thought of that and more. A word from him and I'd give James Reeder the mitten. A word—a look even.

When I walked into church on his arm I kept thinking how it would seem to be the bride. I looked prettier than she—I know it. I was dark, and white became me. I had roses in my hair and pearls in my ears. I did look pretty, lassie. You're not so pretty, vain as you are. It's all gone at eighty—all gone—all gone! What do we live to be eighty for? Lord forgive me—and Paul.

Do you love any man, lassie? Just think, then, how that man looks to you. You can't see his faults, or they grow to be beauties. Don't they say "Love is blind"? I think he has sharper eyes than any one else, and finds out charms no other can. Oh, my beautiful Paul. And brother Dick told me last night how very plain he was; and there I sat with my blood boiling—yes, boiling, lassie. My beautiful Paul plain! My exquisite, graceful, sweet-faced Paul plain! And I looked and fidgeted. And says Dick, "You are nervous to-night, Maggie. I hope you ain't a getting the rheumatism?" And was I not old fool enough to tell him I was angry, and why? You didn't look away to laugh, lassie?

Nay, was it to cry? No need of that either. Cry for the young that have it all to live through. I am eighty.

Sometimes he looked at me that morning as if he liked me. He told me how my dress became me. Any man may do that, but it made me happy. I had not been so happy for months.

After we came home from church there was the breakfast—and he beside me all the while—and then we all went into the garden. We sat under a great tree apart from the rest, and all of a sudden he looked me straight in the eyes. "Miss Maggie," he said, "do you think—I?" But before I knew what he wanted to know if I thought, some one came all in a hurry up the path and stopped beside me. It was James Reeder.

"Here you are," said he, "Paul Cardell, Mrs. Walsingham wants you to drive Grandma Thompson over home. She isn't over well, and wants to go. I'll take care of Miss Maggie meanwhile."

Paul got up. He gave me a look I couldn't understand, and after he had gone a dozen steps he came back and offered me his hand. "Good-bye, Miss Maggie," he said, and I heard his breath come short and fast; "Good-bye," and away he went. And I and James Reeder were left alone.

It happened exactly as I knew it would. He asked me to be his wife before we had been together half an hour, and I said "Yes."

Oh; now don't, lassie. It's all against the woman in this world. It always will be. Let the strong-minded bodies do what they may. You can't alter the hearts we are born with. We are bought and sold a good deal as Turkish girls are, after all. There is a kind of cold, pretty doll that is happy enough, but women who have hearts suffer—suffer at eighteen and eighty. Don't I know. I've been both.

And now I said to myself: "I will be content. I've made my own choice." I know I hadn't all the while. "I am to marry the richest man I know, and in love with me too. What more do I want?"

It wouldn't do. I hid the fox in my bosom, but it gnawed me all the while.

"The sooner it is over the better," I said; and as if that was the way to have it over, I let James coax me to set the day very soon—six weeks from that of our engagement.

There was a busy time at our house, you may guess. All my things to make in a hurry. I couldn't sit down to sew. I was like one wild. In a sort of fever all the time. They teased me. "In love," they said. "So was I, lassie, but not with James Reeder." So one day mother said to me: "You are the only idle one, Maggie, run over to Mrs. Walsingham's and borrow the pattern of Kitty's traveling basque. It will just fit you, and I want yours to be like it."

I went, of course, and got the pattern of Mrs. Walsingham. She was a merry soul, and she would tease me. No one knew I hid my blushes so. It wasn't for the reason they thought. We stood talking, and she was teasing, until all of a sudden she said: "And James isn't jealous any more, is he?"

"Oh, he was wild the day our Kitty was married," said she, "wild with jealousy of Paul Cardell. He told me all about it. They are paired off together," said he, "and with a girl it is the first who asks her. Paul is as much in love as I, and you have lost her to me." So Granny and I set our wits to work to help him. And we sent for Paul, as you know, and gave him his chance. Now say "thank you," Maggie, as he did.

But I couldn't. I took the pattern, and ran away. I ran up and looked into the water. "No, no," I kept saying to myself, "no, no; he never cared anything about me. I gave him chance enough to speak, and he did not." And while I said it I heard a step upon the bridge. I looked around—'twas Paul Cardell. I couldn't move. I stood still and he came up to me. I had not seen him before since Kitty's wedding party, when he came to say "good-bye."

He held out his hand. "How do you do, Miss Maggie?" said he.

I did his speak—only bowed.

"You are to be married very soon, I hear," he said.

"They say so," I answered.

"I hope you may be very happy," he said. "James Reeder is a splendid fellow, and as rich as he is handsome." And he caught his breath in a little sigh. "God bless you, Maggie."

He had never called me Maggie before. He had never looked as he did then.

I tried to thank him, but I didn't know what I said. Suddenly he took both my hands.

"I'd like you to know it. I was very fond of you, Maggie. I loved you, you know. James hadn't called me when he did that day, I should have told you so, and had my 'No,' from you. I always felt afraid you liked James best. No wonder. It's better for you—algebra better. Only, quite as a past thing, I'm glad you know I loved you. Better than my life, Maggie. I'm not going to pine to death, or make an idiot of myself. I shall marry Lucy Swallow. She has promised to be my wife. Lucy would not care for such love as I have not now to give; and she's very good, and pretty, and she shall be happy. God bless you, and good-bye."

He took my hand and put it to his lips near. I dropped, like one dead.

Only for what he had said to Lucy Swallow, I'd have called him back. But if they were to be married, better let matters stand as they were. I held myself up by the bridge rail until he was out of sight; then I dropped, like one dead.

It did not marry on the day set for me, for I was ill of a fever then and not expected to live; and afterward I knew my heart too well. I could not forgive James for cutting short the words that would have made Paul and me happy for life, and I told him plainly that I never could love.

But Paul and Lucy Swallow married, and she lived thirty years with him—thirty long years! What a happy woman to live thirty years with Paul Cardell!

I never married—never, as you know. And James Reeder never did either. When he was sixty he told brother Dick there never had been but one woman in the world for him, and that was Maggie. Poor Jim! He cried when I told him he must go. And he was very handsome, so they said—a very fine man, but I can't remember much about his looks.

And you, say, I never forgot Paul. I could draw his picture now. I know the touch of his hand, and the perfume of his

Hanging a Hammock.

Swinging in a hammock is the very luxury of repose. It is restful, just to think of it; and to pass by a clump of shade trees, or a vine curtained veranda, and watch the lazy swirl of one of these aerial couches without envy is an example of virtue that is not often vouchsafed to one with generous capacity for resting. The general idea is that hammocks are only for the wealthy, the "stylish," or professional time-killers. It is a great mistake. Every well-to-do farmer—every owner of a cozy village home—every commander of a stay-at-home club who commands a spot big enough to swing one—should have a hammock. A very good one may be bought for \$1.50 to \$4, or as much higher as you choose to go. It should be hung where there is a good afternoon shade, and if intended in part for children's use, so low that small children can get into it by the aid of a box or low stool, and over soft ground, so that the numerous tumbles that are probable will be harmless. If no other place is available, it may be hung between the pillars of a shady veranda, a place well enough for the older people who use it, but undesirable for children, on account of the lack of a soft turf, as well as for the noise which accompanies its use by the youngsters. When children only are to use the hammock the manner of hanging is not important, but if provided for the use of grown persons it should then be so suspended that the head will always be considerably higher than the feet, and much of the comfort of one who uses it depends upon a proper observance of the fact. If you have no suitable place, suspend it from the columns or a veranda. The hook which supports the head end should be six and a quarter feet from the floor, and for the foot end three and three quarters feet, and these proportions should be observed wherever it may be hung, to secure the most desirable curve for the ease of the occupant. Another point to be observed; the head end should be fastened to the hook by a rope less than a foot long—just enough to properly attach it, while at the foot is a rope four and one-half feet long. This gives the greatest freedom for swinging the lower part of the body, while the head moves but little. This is a point which cannot be observed in a hammock for children, who think more of it as a spring than as a place for comfort and repose. When trees serve for supports, ample provision should be made to prevent injury to the bark, by means of stout canvas or Buffalo tannin, and I've seen the thermometer stand at 130 degrees in the middle of Lake Huron.

"That was awful," sighed one of the sitters.

"Well, it was fairish, but we didn't call it hot till we got into the St. Clair river, and the mercury ran up to 150 degrees when hanging against the water-but. The boys used up 728 palm leaf fans on one trip that year. On one of our trips down we were becalmed for three days on Lake Huron. We got it there and no mistake."

"Purty hot, eh?"

"Well, I'm an old man, and I don't care to go lying at this day, but I'll tell you a few solemn facts. Every sail on that schooner smoked and smoldered till they fell to pieces on a deck and left us under bare poles! Yes, sir, we hadn't a rag aloft as big as your hand. That was just at sunrise in the morning, and within an hour we had to wet down decks to prevent them from burning. I went down stairs to consult the thermometer and it lay on the floor, all melted into a chunk of glass and tin! Then I began to realize how hot it was, and I got frightened."

"What could you do?"

"Well, not much. We had begun to rig lines over the lee side, so that all could take to the water, when the top-sail yard came down and killed the cook. The links in the chain had melted right off! I never knew a case like it since, but then the weather has cooled off greatly since 1836."

"And about the cook?"

"Nothing about him. When we picked the body up to heave it overboard it had spread out into a mass about four feet square, and we had to use shovels before we got through. He was a good young man and a perfect gentleman, and his mother never blamed me in the least for scoop-shoveling his remains over the rail. We finally rigged our lines and got overboard."

"And it was much cooler?"

"Ah! young man, how little you repeaters know of the great lakes spread out before you on the maps! Cooler! Why, the minute we struck the water we began squirming like so many eels. The lake was red hot. The water would have cooked an egg in four minutes. I was blistered from head to heel in no time. Some day I will take off my coat and vest and show you my

She's All Right.

M. C. Shakespeare, a farmer, residing in the northwestern part of Texas, and possibly a distant relative of the renowned bard of that name, called on the Rev. J. H. Richey, at two o'clock, and said:

"Parson, do you know all the ladies in Waco?"

"No," replied Mr. Richey, "I don't know half of them."

"Do you know a widow lady named Mrs. Ward, who is employed in the family of Dr. McGregor?"

"I have not," said Mr. Richey, "the honor of her acquaintance, but why do you ask?"

"Well," said Mr. Shakespeare, "I don't know her either; never saw her in my life, but thinking as maybe you knew all about her I thought I'd come and ask you. I'm thinking about marrying her."

"I should think," remarked Mr. Richey, "that you would refer the matter to the young lady herself."

"I will, so I will," said Mr. Shakespeare, "but not until I have first seen Dr. McGregor," and so saying, he turned and walked away.

About three-quarters of an hour later in the day Mr. Shakespeare again stood in the presence of Mr. Richey.

"I've seen Dr. McGregor," said he, "and he says he has known the lady for sixteen years, and she's all right." Then exacting from Mr. Richey a promise that he would wait in the office "a little while," Mr. S. walked off, saying he would "call on the lady."

And he did. "It's all right, parson," said he, on walking into Mr. Richey's office, less than an hour afterward. "I've seen the lady, and she says it's all right. Quick as I can get a pair of licenses I want you to go up and tie the knot."

At twenty minutes past four o'clock M. C. Shakespeare was married to Mrs. Nancy Ward, Rev. J. H. Richey officiating, and the newly wedded pair left at once for their rural home. Mr. Shakespeare has a good farm and is well-to-do and his wife comfortable. Mrs. Shakespeare is a good housekeeper and is otherwise well qualified to make a good wife. Two hours and twenty minutes, dating from the moment the would-be bridegroom's first inquiries were made, is the precise time occupied in the accomplishment of this alliance.

First Guard Duty.

The first tour of guard duty at West Point was performed by the late Major-General T. W. Sherman, on one of the most terrible nights I ever witnessed. A storm of wind and rain arose soon after nightfall and raged during the greater part of the night with unabated fury, while frequent flashes of lightning disclosed the old forts and other picturesque surroundings of the point only to render it more appalling. Add to this frequent peals of thunder echoing among the surrounding peaks as if the world was coming to an end, and you can form some idea of the scene that comes up so vividly to my memory after the lapse of nearly half a century. In the midst of this terrible war of the elements it occurred to three of our cadets—one of them, perhaps, the corporal of the guard—that this would be a favorable time to test the metal of the young "plebs" from Newport. I shall never forget Sherman's appearance as he entered our tent: the next morning, his gun cut and scarred in various places, his clothes wet and dripping and covered with mud. Withlorn (also from Newport) and myself eagerly inquired for the cause of his plight, and were informed that three men or devils—the devils did not know nor care which—had approached his post in the midst of the storm, covered with "white sheets," and endeavored to pass without giving the countersign. One of them, armed with a musket and a fixed bayonet, attempted to force his way; "but," said he, "I stood my ground, and would have run him through, but for his superior skill in using the weapon." As soon as the young trio found that young Sherman meant business, they disappeared under the cover of the darkness, leaving him master of the situation, and I doubt not, have kept their detest to this day a profound secret. The incident, however, is too good to be lost, and I now put it on record because I am probably the only living man, Whitehorn having died early, that knows anything about it; and also because it gave unmistakable promise of the brilliant career now a part of our national history.

A Rule of Hospitality.

True hospitality is a thing that touches the heart and never goes beyond the circle of generous impulses. Entertainment with the truly hospitable man means more than the feeding of the body; it means an interchange of soul gifts. Still it should have its laws, as all things good must have laws to govern them.

The obligation to be hospitable is a sacred one, emphasized by every moral code known to the world and a practical outcome of the second great commandment.

There should never be a guest in the house whose presence requires any considerable change in the domestic economy.

However much the circumstances of business or mutual interests may demand in entertaining a stranger, he should never be taken into the family circle unless he is known to be wholly worthy a place in that sanctum sanctorum of social life; but when once a man is admitted to the home fireside he should be treated as if the place had been his always.

The fact of an invitation gives neither host or guest right to be master of the other's time, and does not require even a temporary sacrifice of one's entire individuality or pursuits.

A man should never be so much himself as when he entertains a friend.

To stay at a friend's home beyond the period for which one is invited is to perpetrate a social robbery.

To abide uninvited in a friend's home is as much a desecration as borrowing his coat without his permission. It is debasing the coin of friendship to mere dross when a man attempts to make it pay his hotel bills.

The fact of two men having the same occupation and interests in life gives to neither a social right to the other's bed and board. A traveling minister has no more right to go uninvited to a fellow-preacher's house than a traveling shopkeeper or shoemaker has to go uninvited to the house of his fellow craftsman. Men are ordained to the ministry as preachers, teachers and pastors, and not as private hotel keepers.

A Miraculous Escape at Niagara Falls.

A gentleman and his wife arrived at Niagara Falls, on the 16th of July. They were on their way from New London, Conn., to their home in Minnesota, and he had a letter from his wife in order to visit the great falls. Arriving late they concluded that they would not go to a hotel, and waited in the Erie depot until after 4 o'clock, when they started down town to see the sights. They stayed first down into the bank of the river just below Witter's mill. Here the gentleman attempted to bathe his face, when he suddenly became dizzy and fell helplessly into the boiling rapids. The screams of his wife attracted the attention of William Dinnan, who was watering his horses near by. Dinnan tied his horses to a tree and rushed toward the Cataract House, and was carried in to the quiet water, where he managed to secure a hold on the masonry, and climbed out upon terra firma. The man's escape from death was little less than miraculous. He hardly realized at first the magnitude of the danger he had escaped. He had not seen the falls, and he asked Mr. Dinnan whether he would be killed to a certainty if he had been carried over the Cataract.

—The failures of farmers are becoming alarmingly frequent in England. In 1870 they numbered 229; in 1875, 254; in 1876, 480; in 1877, 527; in 1878, 815; and in the first half of 1879, no fewer than 614.

BRIEFS.

—Nashville boasts of \$300,000 worth of improvements in six months.

—The dividends paid in Boston in August aggregated \$2,533,065.

—The soil on which timber is grown increases or deteriorates its value.

—In Cambria county, Pa., butter sells at eight cents per pound.

—Senator Wade Hampton's leg still gives him a great deal of trouble.

—London has a police force of 10,474 men, costing \$6,350,000 to maintain it.

—A new directory of Minnesota, Minnesota, indicates that the population of the city is about 52,000.

—The pensions granted last year from the English Civil List, amounted to \$1200.

—Mr. Tennyson has been requested to write the inaugural ode for the Australian International Exhibition.

—The cotton mills of Columbus, Ga., consume annually 18,356 bales of the staple.

—In a Bombay cotton factory a man receives \$8 a month, a woman \$4, and a child \$2.50.

—Since the Crimean war England has reduced her national debt from £300,000,000 to £712,000,000.

—Nearly 300 miles of railroad have been built in California so far this year.

—Split timber is more durable and stronger than that which is hewn from the continuity of the fibres.

—Red ink is a solution of alum, color for all, or an ammoniacal solution of cochineal.

—The Pullman palace cars have been introduced on the Italian routes running from Brindisi and Bologna.

—The crop of pineapples this season is estimated at double that of former years.

—Ground has been broken for the monument to General Wayne, to be erected at Erie, Pa.

—The Ragged School Union of London expends about \$130,000 a year in efforts to elevate the lowest and poorest classes.

—Meissonier will soon finish a portrait of the late Louis Napoleon, begun in 1870, but delayed by the war and the exile.

—Mrs. Mary Howitt has received from the English Government a pension of \$500, in consideration of her literary services.

—The Pennsylvania Railroad Company have ordered the building of eight hundred freight cars and twenty passenger cars at the Altoona shops.

—The President begins work shortly after 9 o'clock in the morning. His son, Webb, sits on his left hand and his stenographer behind his chair.

—The Italian emperor, in Appenzel, Switzerland, a few days ago, a farmer and ten of his cows, one of which he was milking, were killed by lightning.

—The \$500 won by Courtney the other day at Silver Lake has been presented by him to the widow of a man who lost his life while in the sculler's employ.

—Chief Justice Chase's grave at Oak Hill, near Washington, is marked simply by a block of gray granite, bearing only the record of his birth and death following his name.

—The apple crop in Kent county, Md., promises to be much larger than usual, and it is expected that fifteen distilleries, producing 8,000 gallons of apple brandy, will be put in operation.

—At a general Conference of the African Methodist churches of New England, recently held at New Bedford, reports showed a membership of 1,317. The denomination has twelve Sunday-schools, containing 855 scholars.

—For the six months ending June 30th, 1879, there were thirty failures in Boston, with liabilities of \$2,594,000, while for the same time last year there were 175 failures, with liabilities of \$9,536,523.

—The famous solid silver vase, two-and-a-half feet high, and elaborately fabricated, presented by the Whigs to Henry Clay, in 1841, is offered for sale in Boston, by the great man's grandson.

—During the first six months of 1879, 52,334 cases of champagne were imported, an increase of 11,105 cases as compared with the same months of 1878; 736,020 gallons and 45,708 cases of French still wines were imported, an increase of 264,590 gallons.

—Dean Stanley has granted a site for a memorial of the late Prince Louis Napoleon in Westminster Abbey. It is in a recess in Henry VIII's Chapel, near the spot where Cromwell's remains lay till they were disturbed at the Restoration.

—A woman working for a farmer near Detroit was fatally poisoned, recently, by washing a pair of overalls, which he had worn while putting Paris green on his potatoes. The woman had cut or two on her hands, into which the poison penetrated.

—The English Wesleyan Association of Local Preachers, organized in 1849, has paid to the "sick, the aged, and for death," among its own members, over \$275,000. There is a proposal to establish fraternal societies, with 38,000 volumes in their libraries, and with access to 360 different agricultural publications, all exerting a direct influence on the intelligence and future prospects of the tillers of the soil.

—The Employes of the Pennsylvania Railroad Ferry Company, in Jersey City, have organized a fire department. The department is divided into twelve stations, connected by signals with the managers room in the depot. The organization is composed of twenty-four men, who are divided into two watches, one watch being in the daytime and the other at night.

—There are 6,503,500 Jews in the world, according to the Jewish Messengers computation.