



### WHAT DOES IT MATTER?

It matters little where I was born,  
Or if my parents were rich or poor;  
Whether they shrank at the cold world's  
scorn,  
Or walked in the pride of wealth secure;  
But whether I live an honest man,  
Or live till my bones and pate are bare;  
And hold my integrity firm in my clutch,  
I tell you, brother, plain as I am,  
It matters much!

It matters little how long I stay  
In a world of sorrow, sin and care;  
Whether in youth I am called away,  
Or live till my bones and pate are bare;  
But whether I do the best I can  
To soften the weight of adversity's touch  
On the faded cheek of my fellow-man.  
It matters much!

It matters little where be my grave,  
Or on the land or on the sea,  
By purling brook or 'neath stormy wave,  
It matters little or naught to me;  
But whether the angel of death comes down  
And marks my brow with his loving touch,  
As one that shall wear the victor's crown,  
It matters much!

### AN ENGAGEMENT RING.



HERE could no longer be any reasonable doubt. Poor Jack Lester had been drowned in the wreck of the Ootacumund, and Celia Grey was the most unhappy girl in Woodbury. She was forced to keep her grief to herself because she had not been officially engaged to Jack. She thought it might have been a little easier to bear if her friends had known how unhappy she was, and with what good reason. With this great secret sorrow in her heart the ordinary routine of life grew painful. She had no spirit for tennis parties, she hated her gay summer frocks, she even wished she need not act as bridesmaid to her cousin Susie. She used to lie awake at night and think about Jack, and wonder how much he had minded being drowned. However, Celia went to her cousin's wedding, and spent three days away from Woodbury. The news of the wreck was a fortnight old and forgotten by most people when she came back again. She arrived by a morning train, sent her trunk to Beechdene House with a porter, and walked home through Woodbury High street, where she wished to do some shopping. As she went into the stationer's she saw Fannie Potter there, a girl she knew slightly and disliked. If it had been possible she would have escaped from the shop rather than speak to Fannie, but she was recognized at once.

"Good-morning, Celia," said Miss Potter, putting down a packet of black-edged envelopes and coming forward. For a short time some years ago the two girls had been in the same class at the high school, and on the strength of this Fannie continued to address Celia by her Christian name. She did not often get the chance of doing so. The Potters were not people with whom the Greys wished to be on friendly terms. Mr. Potter was an attorney of doubtful reputation. It was well known that on Fannie's behalf he had threatened a well-to-do farmer with a breach-of-promise case, and that the young man had only got off by paying a substantial sum. Since that time Fannie had dressed more fashionably than ever, but she had not been asked for her hand and heart again.

Celia bought what she wanted, and was about to leave the shop when Fannie followed her and said that they might as well walk a little way together. She was going past Beechdene.

Celia had no excuse on the tip of her tongue, so she did as she was asked, although she rather objected to be seen in Miss Potter's society. The two young women walked through the town together, and were soon in a quiet country road. It was a very hot morning.

"You must find that gown rather heavy," said Celia, who saw that her companion wore mourning deep enough for a young widow.

"My heart is very heavy," said Fannie, with an accentuated sigh.

Celia reflected. She had not heard of Mr. Potter's demise; and Mrs. Potter she had seen at the station dressed in bright blue.

"I did not know you were in trouble," she said, civilly.

It was rather difficult to be more

than civil, because Fannie showed her grief in such an objectionable way. She had pulled out a pocket handkerchief with a broad black border, and was sobbing into it so loudly that anyone they passed stared at them.

"Didn't you know?" howled Fannie.

"No," said Celia. "What is the matter?"

"I thought everyone knew. I am staying with the Lesters. That is why I have to pass Beechdene."

Celia felt as if her heart stopped for a moment and then went on in a greater hurry than was comfortable. She laughed rather nervously and said:

"I don't know what you mean. You are not in mourning because you are staying with the Lesters, I suppose?"

"What a heartless girl you must be to make fun of us when we are in such trouble!" sobbed Fannie. She paused while a wave of extra strong emotion shook her breast; and then she added in a sepulchral tone, "Poor Jack Lester is drowned!"

"I know that," said Celia sharply; "but I don't see yet why you should be in mourning."

"Jack and I were engaged."

Celia turned ashen white. Otherwise she made no sign. She walked ahead doggedly, and kept her open sunshade between her companion and herself.

"He gave me this ring," continued Fannie, pulling off her glove. "Look at it! 'From Jack to Fannie' is engraved inside. Poor, dear Jack!"

Celia raised her sunshade a little and glanced at the ring. She thought it rather vulgar, and quite suitable for Miss Potter. It consisted of a large emerald surrounded by coarsely cut diamonds. She thought it did not look Jack's choice.

"How long—" she began, and then, to her vexation, she could not go on. Her heart beat too much.

"How long were we engaged? Oh! only just before he sailed. No one knew of it; but when I heard that he was drowned I wrote to his father and mother. I felt sure they would be glad, poor old things. I am staying with them now."

"Really!" said Celia, and then, having arrived at the gate of Beechdene, she rather abruptly bade goodby.

From her mother Celia learned that the impossible story was true. Woodbury rang with the news. The Lesters were great people, the Potters very little ones. No one could understand why Jack Lester should have made such a trumpery choice or how Fannie with her blowy beauty had managed to captivate him. Without the ring she would hardly have persuaded any one that she told the truth. Directly the confirmation of his death arrived she had put herself into mourning and drawn down the parlor blinds, while Mr. and Mrs. Potter, with an air of great surprise, spread the story of her bereavement. They had not known of any engagement, they said, until poor, dear Fannie swooned at the news of the wreck, and afterward exhibited herring. She nearly swooned again when Colonel Lester called. She said he reminded her so strongly of her beloved Jack.

Colonel Lester and his wife were elderly people, who led a secluded life in their beautiful old home. They saw little of the world outside the Langholme Gates. When Fannie's letter reached them they had to make inquiries about her, and the answers they got were unpleasing. But in the first stress of their great sorrow they would have welcomed the Woodbury sweep at Langholme if he could have proved that their only son had given him an invitation. As it was, they prepared the west bedroom for Fannie Potter and asked her to spend a fortnight with them.

Woodbury looked on astonished. Mr. and Mrs. Potter held up their heads and talked about the dear Colonel and his wonderful affection for their eldest girl. Celia drooped. Her mother thought of sending her to the sea, she lost color and weight so fast. The poor child was grievously hurt. She had loved Jack Lester and believed in him. There had been enough of an understanding between them to warrant her hopes. Had he deceived her? And what made her heart ache most—the fable of his treachery or the thought that he was dead?

About a month after the wreck of Ootacumund Mrs. Grey said that she must go and see Mrs. Lester one after-

noon, and she hoped that Celia would accompany her.

"You go without me," said Celia.

"Mrs. Lester is so fond of you," observed Mrs. Grey.

"Oh! but she has the Potter girl now," said Celia, dejectedly.

Nevertheless, when the afternoon came she went to Langholme with her mother. They were shown into the drawing-room and found Mrs. Lester and her guest at tea. Miss Potter advanced to meet them, and without any loss of time began to show how much she felt at home.

"How d'ye do, Celia!" she cried, and her jet bangles rattled as she wobbled Celia's hand to and fro in the latest society manner. "So glad you've come. You'll cheer up the old lady. Fresh tea, Wilkins, and some hot tea cakes; these are cold. Try this chair, Mrs. Grey. The old lady's right ear is not so deaf as her left one."

But neither Mrs. Grey nor Celia took very much notice of the young woman. Mrs. Leslie welcomed her old friends with affection, led them to a distant part of the large room and gave her orders to Wilkins. For a little Miss Fannie felt out of it. She put a word in on several occasions when she had better have remained silent; she moved restlessly about the room, and when the fresh tea came she would have dispensed it if Mrs. Lester had not chosen to take possession of the tray herself. It was not until Colonel Lester appeared that Miss Fannie had a chance of reasserting herself.

Then she came forward again and made a to-do about his cup of tea. She must pour it out for him. She knew how much sugar he liked. She felt sure that draught at the back of his head could not be good for him. He must really allow her to shut the window. The old man looked worried by these attentions, but he seemed to reckon them well meant. He treated her with exquisite kindness, and Mrs. Grey felt sure that he rather than his wife was responsible for Miss Potter's prolonged stay in the house. Mrs. Lester's manner to her guest had not been very cordial.

Colonel Lester looked delighted to see Celia, but he asked her why she had grown so white and thin.

"What can a young girl be so fret about?" he said.

"Oh! Colonel!" sighed Miss Potter, reproachfully.

Every one had finished tea, and Mrs. Lester proposed an adjournment to the flower garden, when they were stopped by Wilkins coming in and asking, with a shaky voice, for his master. The old servant looked scared and upset.

"What is it, Wilkins?" said Miss Potter. "Anything I can do? The Colonel is tired."

Wilkins vouchsafed no reply. He did not even look her way. Colonel Lester got up and went out of the room. Perhaps two minutes passed before he returned. The ladies had begun to talk of something else, when the Colonel opened the door, stood still for a moment on the threshold, looked fixedly at his wife, and then over his shoulder toward the hall. It was just as if Mrs. Lester could read something in his face that no one else understood. She got up and walked in a quick, trembling way toward her husband.

"Jack!" she cried. She went with outstretched hands beyond the door, and before any one quite understood what had happened, Jack rushed forward and took his mother into his arms.

Celia turned so white that her mother thought she would faint; but the next moment she had blushed rosy red because Jack Lester had seized her hand and seemed reluctant to let it go again. No one noticed the Potter girl steal stealthily toward the low French window that stood open to the lawn.

"What does it mean, Jack?" said his mother at last. "You look very ill."

"I've been pretty bad. I lay in a hut on the Spanish coast for three weeks. I was knocked silly, you know, against the rocks, and then hauled out by some fishermen. The poor chap they took for me must have got hold of my coat with my papers in. It all happened in the dark and in such a hurry. I might have wired from London, but I thought I would just come on. When they put me on board at Cardiz I was not in a condition to act for myself, and the people

who looked after me did not know how to get at you."

"We have been taking care of your bride, Jack," said Colonel Lester, who was a good deal surprised by his son's cool manner to her.

Jack looked puzzled, pleased, undetermined.

"My bride!" he said, with a happy light in his eyes, "Celia!"

And he held out both his hands to Miss Grey, at whose side he had remained. But she hung back blushing and embarrassed.

"Jack!" exclaimed his father sternly.

"I mean Miss Potter."

"There goes Miss Potter!" said Mrs. Grey, pointing to the French window that she could see from her seat. Colonel Lester looked startled and turned round. They could all see a buxom crape-clad figure speeding down the lawn.

"She said you were engaged," gasped the Colonel. "We believed it."

"You did," said Mrs. Lester. "I disliked the girl from the first."

"You never believed it?" said Jack to Celia.

"She wore your ring," stammered Celia.

"That she most certainly did not," said Jack.

"It had 'From Jack to Fannie' inside. I saw the inscription."

"Yes," said the Colonel, "there was no doubt about the inscription."

"I did not give it to her."

"It is very curious," said Mrs. Lester. "How did she get the ring?"

"I think I know," said Mrs. Grey, who had listened with a meditative face to Jack's denial. "The man who jilted her, the man she threatened with a breach-of-promise case, was called John Smith. He is in Australia now, and the whole business happened out of Woodbury, so I suppose she thought it quite safe to use his ring."

"None of us could understand your taste, Jack," said Mrs. Lester.

"You do now, though," said Jack, taking Celia's hand.—Illustrated London News.

**"Sundowners" Lose Their Avocation.**

"Sundowners" have lost their avocation. Probably it is only in Washington that "sundowners" are known, and it is therefore necessary to explain, writes Walter Wellman, what is meant by that term. A sundowner is a clerk in one of the Government departments who has studied medicine, law or some other profession and reached a point where he is entitled to practice if he can find clients. While feeling his way in the profession he retains his employment under the Government and attends to his professional duties only after the departments are closed, or between 4 o'clock in the afternoon and bedtime. Hence the term "sundowner." There are several hundred of these practitioners in the city, principally in medicine, and the regular physicians have growled a good deal about this method of cutting in upon their trade. Yesterday the Commissioner of Pensions issued an order forbidding any employe of that bureau to engage in medical practice, and this order will doubtless be extended to other departments of the Government. The revolution was brought about by a colored doctor named Johnson, employed in the Pension Bureau, who attended a smallpox case after hours, for which he was suspended. They have had one dreadful smallpox scare in the Pension Office, and the officials do not want another there. The "sundowners" are in mourning.—Chicago Herald.

**Les Miserables.**

First Despondent—"Say, you ain't going to jump in the river, are you?"

Second Despondent—"Yes, I am."

"Well, that's what I came here to do also. What's your complaint?"

"I had thirteen poems rejected by one editor."

"And I had one poem rejected by thirteen editors. Join me."

(They plunge.)—Life.

**A Needless Inquiry.**

"What was the principal object of interest in America when you were there?"

The eminent British novelist looked at his questioner with chilling scorn and replied:

"I was, of course."—Washington Star.

### FARM AND HOUSEHOLD.

**PLANT WALNUT FOR TIMBER.**

There is profit in black walnut timber aside from the fruit they bear. When planted on good ground a tree will become in a single lifetime a valuable piece of property. Seventy-five years ago Thomas L. Walker, of Tennessee, planted four walnut trees, and before he died these trees had grown to a diameter of three feet, and worth \$400 each. A Tennessee paper remarks that if Mr. Walker had gone through Tennessee planting walnuts, as Johnny Applesseed ninety years ago went through the Northern States planting apple seeds, Tennessee would now be the richest State in the Union. It might, however, have broken the market for walnut timber. When everybody goes to doing the same thing for profit the experiment sometimes results that way.—Boston Cultivator.

**KILL THE POOREST HOG FIRST.**

When a lot of hogs are being fattened there is sure to be some weaklings that, though apparently healthy and good feeders, will not make the gain they should. If the lot is very large, it may be that these do not get a fair chance with the others, and putting them in a pen by themselves will put them in the way to gain rapidly. Usually, however, the hog that is inferior to its mates of the same litter has not the digestive power to make as good use of its food as does the others. The sooner such a hog is killed and the expense of feeding him is stopped, the better will be the farmer's profit. It is quite common at hog-killing time to save a few that are not up to the average weight and feed them longer. This is a serious mistake. The hog that up to 150 pounds has grown faster than the others will probably make 250 or 275 pounds, while the weaklings are gaining up to 175 or 200 pounds. Very often the latter will eat as much, and if they don't they are none the better for that fact. A hog that will not eat well is a failure, for it misses the most important duty of the hog's existence and mission.

**SHELTER YOUR COWS.**

Under fairly good housing cows in cold weather will use up sixty per cent. of the food they eat to keep their bodies warm, and when exposed to the cold by standing in the rain and cold winds they will apply eighty per cent. of the food they eat to keeping them warm. Now is not twenty per cent. or one-fourth of what they eat worth saving by making them comfortable in the stable. And this is just the time of year to begin that work. Do not put it off, but look up some old boards if you cannot afford new ones, or get some tarred paper, that is about as good and much cheaper than boards.

Go to the woods with the wagon and the children and get loads of leaves out of the stump holes and fence corners and store them where they will keep dry for use as bedding for the cows. There is no greater pleasure to a good man than to see his cows on a cold bitter night standing knee deep in leaves in their stalls with no breeze blowing around their legs. He can sleep well at night because he knows he has done a good act, is making money by it, and moreover will have a comfortable place to milk in the morning. There is nothing so inspiring to action as a little selfishness in our philanthropy.—Atlanta Journal.

**FARM AND GARDEN NOTES.**

Breed for vigor of constitution as well as for form and pedigree.

Don't drive the horse in slippery weather unless his shoes are sharp.

Wheat mixed with corn and oats makes a better feed than either alone.

The feeding value of wheat would never have been developed at a dollar a bushel.

After you get your blood, says a swine grower, then everything depends upon your feed and care.

Sufficient room, warmth, light and cleanliness are the four points which must be observed to render the keeping of animals profitable.

Adopt a system of rotation which will suit your farm and conditions. It need not be "iron clad," but should be intelligent and systematic.

Feeding potatoes with long sprouts to cattle is a very dangerous practice, as the sprouts contain a poison which acts injuriously on the nervous system.

Plants elaborate the food elements which they get from the soil and air into more complex substances which make suitable food for animals and man.

Tillage should be begun just as soon as the ground is dry enough in the spring. This tillage should be repeated as often as once in ten days throughout the growing season, which extends from spring until July or August.

It usually pays best to kill pigs by the time they weigh 150 pounds, and from that to 250. If allowed to grow much heavier than this the cost of food in proportion to gain is increased, except when the hogs become too sluggish and fat to take exercise, but after that the gain is at the expense of healthfulness of the meat when killed.

How about the water working in through the wall to the floor of the house? It will prove an expensive leak before May. Cards of invitation may as well be issued now to witness the slaughter of the innocents, for it is sure to take place. That wet spot will breed roup, and all its attending evils. Look out for it before the ground closes up for the winter.

Every poultryman finds more or less of the eggs in the basket at night stained in such a manner that washing with water will not remove it. If he has a really choice market and every egg is to be perfectly clean, many of these eggs must be thrown out for the home table, a common market. Rubbing the stain with home made cider vinegar will remove every trace of stain and leave the egg clean and shining.

**RECIPES.**

**Rice Rolls**—Moisten cold boiled rice with a little milk, and stir in enough white flour to make a stiff dough. Knead on a moulding board, and roll out about half an inch thick, but in finer lengths an inch and a half wide, place in a floured pan and bake in a quick oven.

**Coffee Cake**—One cupful of strong cold coffee, one cupful of molasses, two-thirds of a cupful of sugar, two-thirds of a cupful of butter or lard, one cupful of raisins, a teaspoonful of salt, a teaspoonful of soda, and spices. Mix the ingredients quickly and lightly, and bake in a brisk oven.

**Jelly Cake Fritters**—Cut some stale sponge cake, or plain cake into rounds with a cake cutter. Fry them a nice brown in hot lard. Dip each slice for a moment in a bowl of boiling milk; drain, lay on a hot dish, spread thickly with jam, serve hot with cream.

**Thistle Puffs**—Stir into half a pint of sifted flour, to which a saltspoonful of salt has been added, one gill of milk. Beat the white of an egg to a stiff froth. Mix the well beaten yolk with a gill of milk and stir into the batter; add the white of egg and bake in muffin pans in quick oven.

**New Tactics.**

At the session of the school for non-commissioned officers of one of the companies stationed at Fort Wayne, the following question was asked of Sergeant —:

"What is strategy? Give me an instance of it."

After studying for a moment or two the Sergeant gave the reply:

"When in battle and you are out of ammunition and don't want the enemy to know it, it is good strategy to keep right on firing."

The captain gave the school a vacation.—Detroit Free Press.

**Where Petroleum is Found.**

Petroleum is found in Sicily, the North of Italy, in many volcanic isles in the Mediterranean, at Baku on the Caspian, on the slopes of the Caucasus, at Ragoon, in Burmah, in the Island of Trinidad, in Ontario, Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York, West Virginia, California, in Siberia, Tartary, China and in several places in Africa.—New York Advertiser.

There are forty-five survivors of the War of 1812 on the roll of the Pension Office, of whom fifteen are one hundred or more years old. There are twelve pensioners of the Revolutionary