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Poetry.

THE HEART'S SONG.

BY ARTHUR C. COX.

In the silent midnight watches,
List—thy bosom-door!
How it knocketh, knocketh, knocketh,
Knocketh evermore!
Say not 'tis thy pulse's beating;
'Tis thy heart of sin—
'Tis thy Saviour knocks and crieth:
Rise, and let me in!
Death comes down with reckless footstep
To the hall and hut,
Think you death will stand a-knocking
Where the door is shut?
Jesus was eth, waiteth, watcheth,
But thy door is fast!
Grieved, away the Saviour goeth:
Death breaks in at last.
Then 'tis to stand entreating
Christ to let thee in:
At the gate of heaven beating,
Waiting for thy sin.
Nay, alas! thou foolish virgin,
Hast thou then forgot?
Jesus waited long to know thee,—
But he knows thee not!

Our Contributors.

OUR WASHINGTON LETTER.

STAGNATION OF METROPOLITAN POLITICS.—A. H. STEPHENS BEFORE THE SUPREME COURT—THE EXTRA SESSION OF CONGRESS—WHO WILL BE SPEAKER?—CORRUPTIONS IN THE NAVY AFFAIRS ETC., ETC.

[From our Regular Correspondent.]

Washington, D. C., May 24, 1877.

Political matters are at an apparent standstill. There is nothing sensational in civil service reductions, changes,—reform, as it is called. Still for those who have an eye for the historic and historic, there is ever occurring something for comment, (a dignified name for gossip) and reflection. Yesterday a little, withered, rheumatic old man was carried into the Supreme Court, where he argued in a remarkably able manner a complicated case involving the question whether the money of the late Southern Confederacy had any rights under the laws of a State which the Federal government was bound to protect. A mortgage had been foreclosed after payment had been tendered in Confederate scrip and refused. The plaintiff claimed that the tender was legal and that all rights of property accruing under the act of foreclosure should be set aside. The treatment of the case by the plaintiff's attorney was very remarkable, displaying marvellous facilities of memory. He spoke in a shrill, clear voice arguing the case at length, referring constantly to dates, figures, and incidents, without using notes; his language was energetic and plain recalling the best days of the speaker when, twenty years ago, he was prominent as a possible President of the United States before he had become Vice President of the Confederate States, and long before he had figured in obituary literature.

THE EXTRA SESSION.

The President has not yet issued a call for an extra session of Congress, but, since the cabinet meeting yesterday, it seems to be pretty well understood that the call for an extra session will be made to-morrow, and that the 15th instead of the 4th of June will be the time fixed for the convention of the 45th Congress. There is still some speculation in reference to the probable organization of the House, whether it will be Democratic or Republican, and who in either or any case will be the speaker. In the Democratic caucus Mr. Randall will doubtless, on first ballot, poll more votes than any one of his competitors. The opposition to him will be divided between Morrison who will have the support of the Northwestern States and Mo.; Saylor, who will have the support of Ohio and scattering votes in other States; Cox of New York, who will have a divided Southern support; and Walker of Virginia who will have a few votes here and there. Among the Republican aspirants Garfield has by far the best prospects and it is thought will secure the caucus nomination on first or second ballot. The Republicans are, however, by no means as hopeful of controlling the organization of the House as they were two weeks after the close of the 44th Congress. The general belief is that the Democrats will have it their own way and that the speaker will be Randall. There is much difference of opinion in reference to the duration of the extra session. The President and some members of his cabinet are quoted as saying that it will not continue longer

than the 4th of July; while certain senators and members are of the opinion that it will be an occasion for jobs and special legislation, and extend far into the fall. The heat of summer will have something to do with the length of the session, especially since "Blue Jeans" has sealed the fountains of lemonade.

There is much talk about the discovery of corruption and fraud in the recent administration of the affairs of the Navy, and the inland marine who now has that Department in charge expresses both by word and deed a determination to make the most thorough soundings, and if necessary to dive to the bottom of things. The late secretary was too much disposed to favor contractors, and to accumulate naval stores for which we have no immediate or prospective use. There are now in the different Navy Yards wasting for want of proper means of preservation hundreds of thousands of cubic feet of live oak for which the European governments are now sending agents to this country. Then ex-secretary Robeson was too ingenious in his construction of the bill making appropriation for construction and repair. He was ever disposed to mend an excellent old ship by taking a small piece of it and working it into an entirely new vessel, which, when finished, had little that was peculiar to the original ship except its name; and all this not in the interest of the service but of the contractors. C.

THE INDIANS.

"Red Cloud" and "Spotted Tail" appear to be doing a good service in the interests of peace, and as a consequence the best and lasting good of their race, for it is quite clear to all white people that the only way left to save a remnant of the aborigines will be for them to settle down to habits of civilized life. The administration taking advantage of the acts of the noted chiefs above named, who are doing their best to bring the tribes to surrender, deem the present a fitting time to break up the wild life of roaming savages and offer them homes for their families. It is to be hoped as they accept the well meant offers of the Government, that they will be protected from the rapacity of unprincipled whites who have robbed them in various ways, but chiefly in cheating them out of the supplies which Congress appropriated for their use. Some years ago I heard a speech from "Red Cloud," in which he explained the shameful treatment by Indian agents in giving them shoddy supplies in place of the good articles as stipulated. In that speech Red Cloud said the time was coming when the progress of the white men would compel his people to give up their roaming life, but as long as possible they would cling to the hunting grounds of the past of their race, and yield at last when necessity compelled it. It is evident that the leaders among the Indians recognize the fact that the time has come to give up and settle down to civilized habits. J. K. BRUSH.

THE WAR IN THE EAST.

The Eastern war will be watched and studied by us with deep interest. A very general sympathy is felt for the success of the Russians who, whatever may be their ambition to obtain conquests, are fighting for Christians against a race of people that are cruel in the extreme to all who will not accept the Koran. Russia's bold advance in Asia and European Turkey renders it probable that the conflict will quickly become a war for the liberation of the Holy Land in which the spirit of the crusades will be revived and once more electrify Europe. The immediate effect upon our country has been to advance the price of grain and all supplies that are required by armies. This must help restore our industries which have so seriously languished during these years of depression. So long as our country keeps out of the strife, and we are so far removed from the seat of war, our agriculturists and manufacturers can safely calculate that they will be called upon to furnish the supplies. Other interests also will be likely to feel the stimulating effect of an increased demand for ship building, &c.

J. E. BRUSH.

Looking over the wide, Paul, with the vision of a prophet, and with a comprehensiveness almost divine, declared that there abide three new graces, Faith, Hope, Charity, and although eighteen hundred years have passed since the award was made, years of unrivaled thought, and infinite joy and sorrow, there is no hand that would dare touch this sacred group. We add nothing, we take nothing away. These there will "abide" forever.

Selections.

LOOK UP AND ON.

BY LAURA SANFORD.

"KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE GREEN GRASS, MATTIE."

'Twas a bright September afternoon—one of those loveliest of days when summer and autumn meet together—and our stay in the country was almost ended. Our passage in fact had already been taken, at a city a few miles distant, on the morrow's night-boat for New York.

We were school children then, my cousin Mabel and I; and in the dear, old-fashioned farmhouse on happy "Creekside" had been enjoying our vacation, as she in her jubilant spirit would have told you "gloriously."

We wandered to the water-brink under the great elms on this September afternoon to say "Good-by" to the scene we had learned to love so dearly; or at least to say my "good-by" for Mabel was not going to the city with me. This was her home, this valley-farm in the midst of the wild and lofty hills—mountains almost—that on every side overlooked it.

The creek, as people in its region named the broad stream that is on the map a river, ran along at the foot of the bank but a few rods from the front-door of the homestead. Half a mile farther down the road, a substantial bridge crossed the current; but here the only passage was by a little foot-bridge, so narrow that venturers needed to be very careful of their steps; and I for one had never attempted it.

Beyond, lay a beautiful slope of meadow, hedged by the great hills. The road that bordered this meadow we could not, from our side of the creek, see; but we did see, on the bright afternoon of which I am speaking, a long row of gayly-decked carriages turning from the defile and passing rapidly along the edge of the green level.

A number of young friends belonged to this gay party, which had been improvised for the climbing of "Sunset Rock," and for a picnic supper in the forest. As soon as they descended us, they called to us to come over the water and join them. "Plenty of room for you," they cried, and two of the wagons waited.

Mabel, quick and light as a bird, had already flown halfway across the creek. The narrow foot bridge was a familiar path to her; and she had reached the other side before she turned to know how closely I had followed her.

I was then about midway, and the security which I felt at first over the shallow water by the shore, was fast vanishing. Here the stream was deep. The water rushed along tumultuously under the slender foot-path with a loud confusing sound, and flashed wildly in the light. My head grew dizzy and my limbs trembled. I felt a painful sensation of faintness, and a desire to fling myself into the waves.

Just then the clear ringing voice of my cousin Mabel reached me across the water; and seemed with its inspiring strength fairly to catch and clasp me: "Keep your eyes on the green grass, Mattie."

Beyond the puzzling, eddying stream lay the long soft pasture where she stood in safety. Happily I had not so far lost my senses, but that I could mind her. I lifted my eyes from the dazzling water and fixed them on the quiet land. My glance still wavered, and my steps hesitated; but presently the distracted nerves became more calm. "There is the green grass," I kept saying to myself, "I shall reach it very soon if I keep on." As indeed I did reach it in a few moments.

Mabel overwhelmed me with expressions of congratulation and affection. We joined the merry party, supped at "Sunset Rock," and had a delightful time.

It was not until we were home again at night that my cousin told me how seriously I had been in danger. Not many months before, a woman crossing the "upper bridge," a similar construction nearer the rapids, had become dizzy midway and fallen into the stream. She had a baby in her arms; and woman and child were both drowned.

And then Mabel embraced me again with the greatest affection. She was thinking, I suppose, how nearly she had lost me.

Dear, bright, loving Cousin Mabel! How little I thought then of losing her. Yet we were at that moment very near our parting, and this was

the last summer we ever spent together. When next I visited Creekside Mabel was sleeping under the green grass and the waters were singing along by her grave.

But those words of hers were never forgotten. More than once I have seemed to hear them since in the same clear, ringing tones in which that summer afternoon they were wafted over the water.

After we had parted, and I had returned to New York with my mother and my brother, there came to my life many sad changes. My father died suddenly, and his estate was so involved that we were obliged to give up our home. My brother a year later, went to India, and my mother's health failed.

It was then that my duty lay clearly before me—to shelter and solace my mother. An opportunity was offered by which we could enjoy a quiet home together, and the steady employment of my time would make us both comfortable. Just as I had decided upon this course there came a dazzling counterplan, a very shining path opened to me. Perfect it would have been had it included, as it certainly did not, the happiness of my mother.

I must confess that I wavered, and that I almost yielded to the temptation. In the midst of my indecision, while I stood dazzled and trembling as once upon the narrow footbridge crossing the dangerous current, I heard the voice of my cousin Mabel, "Keep your eyes on the green grass, Mattie."

I did lift my eyes then, and fixed them away from temptation upon duty; and years afterward I learned from what bitter misery that brief act saved me.

Last night I heard the haunting little sentence once again. I was sitting by the bedside of a dying friend; one so gently good, so always kind even to enemies, it seemed that her last hours should have known no sad reproaches. But instead of peace all was dark and troubled. Her mistaken ways, her neglected duties, all the puzzling possibilities of her life glided before her distracted vision, and the promises she had trusted in vanished altogether. How could I help her in this hour of mortal trembling?

I brought to her bedside that little Book which one might almost wish to carry into the grave, it is so precious, and read the verse, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" read that one verse over and over again, until she fixed the fading eyes of her faith upon it and became calm.

For—but this I did not tell her—I had seemed to see again a midsummer scene, vanished years ago, and to hear the clear, ringing voice of my cousin Mabel reaching me from "green pastures" beyond the fleeting river: "Keep your eyes on the green grass, Mattie!"—*Illustrated Christian Weekly.*

A THRILLING SCENE.

The London Standard recently published the following beautiful and thrilling incident:

"The following incident occurred during a general review of the Austrian cavalry a few months ago. Not far from 30,000 cavalry were in line. A little child, a girl of not more than four years, standing in the front line of spectators, either from fright or some other cause, rushed out into the open field just as a squadron of hussars came sweeping around from the main body. They made the detour for the purpose of saluting the empress, whose carriage was drawn up in that part of the parade ground. Down came the flying squadron charging at a mad gallop, down directly on the child. The mother was paralyzed, as were others, for there could be no rescue from the line of spectators. The empress uttered a cry of horror, for the child's destruction seemed inevitable, and such terrible destruction! the trampling to death by a thousand iron hoofs. Directly under the feet of the horses was the little one. Another instant must seal its doom, when a stalwart hussar, who was in the front line, without slackening speed or loosening his hold, threw himself over by the side of the horse's neck, seized and lifted the child and placed it in safety upon his saddle-bow, and this he did without changing his pace or breaking the correct alignment of the squadron. Ten thousand voices hailed with rapturous applause the gallant deed, and other thousands praised heaven, they knew. Two women there were who could only sob forth their gratitude in broken accents—the mother and the empress. And a proud and happy moment it must have been for the hussar when his emperor, taking from his own breast the

richly enameled cross of the Order of Maria Theresa, hung it upon the breast of his brave and gallant trooper."

Christian workers, who are laboring to snatch the little children from the iron hoofs of sin and temptation, remember you are working under the eye of the Master; that the smallest deed of kindness done to one of these little ones Christ reckons as done to himself, and those who are instrumental in saving them shall be honored at last, not by the cross of Maria Theresa or of the Legion of Honor, bestowed by the hands of an earthly monarch, but by the King immortal, who shall deck the brows of his faithful servants with a crown of glory that fadeeth not away.

MAY I DANCE?

Do you mean a round dance or a square dance? If you mean a round dance, stop and think a while first.

1. Is the round dance consistent with the refined delicacy of a true woman or a true man? Is there not involved in it an undue degree of freedom and familiarity? If any gentleman should offer to take the same liberties with a lady while sitting in the parlor, that he does take in dancing, it would be regarded as an offence. This undue freedom becomes the more objectionable because it is used at a time when the excitement of the music and of the occasion tempts one to forget the bounds of decorum.

2. The etiquette of the ball-room or the dancing assemblage contains one very objectionable feature. Suppose that Miss A. be introduced in such a company, to Messrs. B., C. and D. Suppose that B. and C. are perfect gentlemen, and that D. is a man with whom it were prudent for her merely to exchange civilities and avoid intimacy. If he asks her to dance and she refuses, he becomes offended. Therefore the etiquette of the room compels her to treat with the intimacy of the dance, a man who is not worthy of her confidence. As the lady has probably had no control of the invitations issued, if she attend she is forced into intimate relations with unworthy men.

3. The high excitement and over-fatigue this amusement does very often injure the health.

4. I have many times had testimony from those who formerly danced, that they had found it decidedly injurious to them. And we have no right as Christians to lead fellow-men into temptation.

If you mean the square dances, then let us think awhile. Is it best for me to engage in them?

1. I may engage in this kind and not go to the excess of the other kind. But in so doing I may start my brother, who has little self-control, on a down-hill track, and he may go into the excesses described above. For his sake I will refrain.

2. Dancing has a bad name. For the sake of the honor of Christ, I will avoid associating the name of a disciple with that which the world does not consider worthy of a Christian.

3. Dancing does lead to dissipation, especially to the dissipation of serious thought about our own soul. It is fascinating, and I fear it may make me (or my brother) cold and formal in religious duties.

These considerations may fail to carry weight with some sincere inquirers. The fascination of the amusement may have given a little unconscious bias to their minds. Many men will say that it was once so with them. What then?

The grand test of duty in all cases, is to carry the question to God. Carry this question, "Shall I dance or not?" upon your knees to the Saviour. Ask Him whether it will add to his honor, or promote his kingdom, whether he would rather you should go or stay. Stay upon your knees, and keep on asking him till you feel his answer in your heart; then with a good conscience follow that answer. And what thou doest, whether thou eat or drink, do with thy might, as unto the Lord.—*Jeffersonian Republican.*

THERE is only one thing that makes it worth while to live—it is love. Not the wild passion that plagues us in our youth, but the tranquil happiness, the solid peace to which that is but the tumultuous prelude—the joy of living with people whose more presence rests, cheers, improves and satisfies us. He who achieves that needs no catechism to tell him what is the chief end of man.

MEN'S lives should be like the days, more beautiful in the evening; or like the spring, aglow with promises; and like the autumn, rich with golden sheaves, where good works and deeds have ripened on the field.

GREAT THINGS AND LITTLE THINGS.

Little and great are to the human mind merely relative. Of magnitude, quality, or size, *absolutely*, we know nothing. Of numbers, used in computing magnitudes, our conception is clear and absolute, but our faculties are too limited to comprehend any very large number. What conception has any man of a million? A single hundred, unit by unit, we can get into our heads with tolerable distinctness, but a million has ten thousand separate hundreds and no head was ever large enough to hold all these hundreds, side by side, in plain view.

Prof. Croll, in his treatise on "Climate and Time" felt the need even in addressing scientific men, of artificial aid to enable them to realize how enormous a period of time was included in a single million of years.

This much preliminary to an attempt to gather into one view a few things great and small.

We speak of the vast ocean, of boundless deserts, of mountains grand and sublime, of our stupendous globe. If the sun were a hollow sphere and the earth placed at its center, the moon, at its present distance, could revolve with 200,000 miles of space to spare, and our "stupendous globe," with its mountains and seas, becomes insignificant.

The earth is distant from the sun more than ninety millions of miles. Proceeding outwards from planet to planet, at thirty times this distance we reach Neptune on the verge of our system—a distance so great, that at a railroad speed of thirty miles an hour, the journey could not be made in ten thousand years. Beyond Neptune, astronomers tell us there is a "vast vacant space." How vast?

We have had this word before—the ocean was vast. From our outward planet to the next resting place there is more than twenty millions of millions of miles of blank space. At the end of this line is the nearest fixed star. We know these figures are correct, and yet what meaning do they have to faculties that utterly break down on the first million? Of two incomprehensible quantities we only know that one is enormously greater than the other. Nevertheless, by the use of some diminutive scale to accommodate our feeble powers, we can get the relative differences of these distances clearly in mind.

With a kind of stupid wonder we have been looking up to the sun as a huge affair vastly too big to get inside the moon's orbit; but as we shall soon see how really insignificant the sun is, let us reduce him at once to the size of a pea, and place a millet seed five feet distant to represent the earth. This scale will bring Neptune within one hundred and fifty feet, and we have the entire solar system on a two acre lot. Our nearest star is now two hundred and fifteen miles away.

As one hundred and fifty feet is to Neptune's distance, so is two hundred and fifteen miles to that of Alpha Centauri from the sun.

If from this flying journey to the stars we return to our millet seed with an oppressive feeling of humility, there are considerations sufficient to restore our mental and spiritual equipoise. There is an infinite range in the other direction—there is an infinity of the descending scale. The disparity of measurements and magnitudes is as great on the earth, as in the infinite space beyond.

An ocean cable and ocean steamship are standing wonders of human handiwork, but not more so than the feat of marking sixteen millions of exact squares on one inch of surface, or writing distinctly with a diamond point on glass the Lord's Prayer, in letters so minute, that every word in the Bible could be inherited twenty-two times on one square inch. This inch of glass to the eye or touch would be perfectly smooth—under a microscope of great power every word and letter would be plain and legible.

Let us instance a few things in the organic world comparatively great and little.

At St. Helena there was discovered in the ooze at the sea bottom, the remains of a fish, so small that the bodies of 50,000 of them would be held in one cubic inch of space—the unassisted eye could scarcely perceive that this was a fish. Near Charleston, S. C., there is a stratum of phosphate rocks composed of animal remains containing, with numerous other specimens, a great number of teeth of sharks that exceeded a hundred feet in length. The bulk of the body of such a shark, would be at least 6,000 cubic feet. Here are two organic beings of the same class and order (*vertebrates*), and it hardly means anything to the finite mind to

say that one is more than five hundred thousand million times larger than the other. Imagine the scene when the huge, hungry shark, demanding for its breakfast half a hundred fish as large as the human body, chases its prey through the foaming waters; and imagine, if you can, the scene where the little fellow, ravenous for his meal, is foraging the water with a multitude of living creatures fleeing from the pursuit of the devouring monster.

There are fossil ammonite shells, and, I believe, shells of existing species of mollusks, as large as cart wheels. The stratum of rocks forming the basin in which the city of Paris stands is almost entirely composed of numulite shells, a large portion of which are less than mustard seeds. A large extent of country around the cities of Richmond and Petersburg, in Virginia, has a formation averaging twenty feet in thickness, of marl consisting exclusively of almost silicious or flinty shells ranging from one hundredth to one thousandth of an inch in diameter—of course visible only under the microscope. Each of these shells has been the house or shield of an animal. One species has a saucer like shape, and, under a magnifying power of several hundred diameters, is richly ornamented with markings much like the geometric curves on watch cases, each curve not a simple line, but a row of hexagonal indentations.

It is as impossible to conceive the minuteness of shells that were the abodes of living beings as it is to comprehend the distances of the stars. A lady's tumbler will hold hundreds of thousands of millions of individual shells or shields that can be examined only by experts who have trained their eyes to the use of powerful magnifiers. Of such remains a large portion of the crust of the globe is made. Mountain ranges, as the Andes, and strata, as chalk, that cover or underlie whole countries, are masses of fossil animalcules.

Of living infusoria, a drop of water will have numbers equal to the population of a city; and a glass of water more than the entire human population of the earth. When we consider that the waters of all oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, and rivulets are filled with these invisible beings, each grade of which are monsters to lower ones, and that when we get to the limit of microscopic vision, we have no reason to suppose we are at the end of the descending series, we are overwhelmed in wonder, and bankrupt, a thousand times over, in imagination, as we were in the immensity of space.—*Ch. Standard.*

WHAT IT IS COSTING US.

According to the census and the internal revenue reports, the evil results of drinking intoxicating liquors may be summed up as follows:

It is costing our people a yearly expenditure of over \$1,500,000,000, all of which might be spent for far more useful purposes.

It is making yearly 130,000 confirmed drunkards.

It is sending yearly about 150,000 persons to drunkards' graves, and reducing to want and beggary 200,000 children.

It is sending yearly to prisons 100,000 persons, and is causing a large proportion of the loss of life on land and sea.

It is converting millions upon millions of bushels of grain, which God has given as food to preserve life, into vile stuff that destroys life.

It is endangering the fair and rich inheritance left us by our fathers, and fixing a foul blot on the fair name of America.

The above sum of money would pay off our National debt in two years, or it would furnish to the starving poor 220,000,000 barrels of flour at \$7 a barrel.

It would build 50,000 miles of railroad at \$30,000 per mile.

It would send a Bible to every inhabitant of the globe.

It would build 150,000 dwelling houses or churches at \$10,000 each.

It would furnish 150,000,000 suits of clothing at \$10 each.

There are 140,000 saloons in the country, against 128,000 schools and 54,000 churches. Manufacturers and sellers of strong drinks, 500,000—twelve times the number of clergymen, four times that of teachers, nearly double all the lawyers, physicians, teachers and ministers combined.

In a word, if intoxicating liquors were abolished entirely from our land, crimes, poverty and misery of all kinds would be greatly reduced, and our people sober, industrious and economical, would soon become the most happy, wealthy and intelligent of any in the world.