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Select Poetry.



A HOUSEHOLD DIRGE.

BY R. H. STODDARD.

I've lost my little May at last;
She perished in the Spring,
When earliest flowers began to bud,
And earliest birds to sing;
I laid her in a country grave,
A green and soft retreat;
A marble tablet o'er her head,
And violets at her feet.

I would that she were back again,
In all her childish bloom;
My joy and hope have followed her,
My heart is in her tomb—
I know that she has gone away,
I know that she has fled,
I miss her everywhere, and yet
I cannot think her dead!

I sit within my quiet room,
Alone, and write for hours,
And miss the little maid again,
Among the window flowers,
And miss her with her feet beside
My desk in silent play;
And then I type and look for her,
But she has flown away.

I drop my idle pen, and hand,
And catch the faintest sound;
She must be playing hide-and-seek
In study books around;
She'll come and climb my chair again,
And peer my shoulders o'er;
I hear a stifled laugh—but no,
She cometh nevermore!

I waited only yesterday,
The evening service read,
And lingered for my idol's kiss—
But she went to bed;
Forgetting she had gone before,
I kissed a cushion soft and sweet,
A marble tablet at her head,
And violets at her feet.

Miscellaneous.

ALEXANDER GRANT;

The Man who Couldn't be Drowned.

We find an admirable likeness of Alexander Grant, in *Harpers' Weekly*, of the 17th inst., one of the few hands of the steamship Central America who were rescued from the fate which overwhelmed so many hundred human beings. Grant was a fireman, and was picked up, as every one knows, after nine days' exposure on the ocean.

His history is singular. He is a Bluenose; twenty six years ago, he was born in the Gut of Canso, in the British province of Nova Scotia. He was predestined to be a sailor.—As a child he was inordinately fond of the sea. He was the best swimmer of his acquaintance and absolutely lived in the cold, bracing water of the gulf no boy or man could remain so long in deep water as he.

When he was thirteen he went to sea, in a blind Nova Scotian fishing schooner, with cold nights, hard work, poor pay, bad fare, and every discomfort in prospect. He seems to have rather liked it than otherwise. He was, at all events, faithful to the sea, and three years afterward he was a deck hand on board the brigantine Atlas, from Windsor, Nova Scotia, bound for Fall River with a cargo of coal.

To the sad brigantine it befell that, at one hundred miles from Boston or thereabouts, a storm of frightful magnitude interrupted her voyage, and, after minor casualties, dismasted and crippled her. In the crash of falling masts the mate, like the ship, was crippled, and in that sea, the immediate prospect was death. Young Grant avows that he was "much surprised" by the wonderful nearness of Davy Jones. He wore up, nevertheless, & in the nick of time, the good ship Amazon, of Holland, sailed up and took him and his messmates on board. They were hardly enclosed in safety behind the bulwarks of the Amazon, when the brigantine gave a heavy lurch, and reeled downward to the bottom.

On the strength of this narrow escape from drowning, Alexander Grant went to sea again. Kept going to sea, in all kinds of vessels, in all sorts of weathers, until he rose to be a fireman on board the Arctic. Stuffed with fire, and smoked his pipe in her coal rooms, year after year; sometimes beguiling the heavy watch hours with the tale of his wonderful shipwreck on board the brigantine Atlas.

He was coming off his watch, one cold, misty day, and the Arctic was beating through icy water and fog at the rate of thirteen miles an hour, when bump—bump—the Arctic was surely on a rock. Up flew Grant—and his fellow firemen, and saw on the starboard bow, a sinking steamer, with "the bows knocked out of her." Over went the boat, and down went a few brave men—their only thought to save the crew of the vessel they believed they had murdered; and then, in the gazy fog, the shattered stranger slowly dissolved from view, and an agony of suspense as to her fate thrilled every heart on board the Arctic.

Minute after minute, quarter after quarter, half hour after half hour, elapsed, and no news of the luckless vessel; and then news came that the Arctic was the worse for the shock, and was making water rapidly. Nautical manoeuvres were—*which all of us remember—*designed to lighten the ship forward, and throw the weight of her on the "hale part"—the stern.—Grant worked manfully with the others. But as the day wore on, and two and three o'clock came in that "deadly, cruel fog," the doomed steamer sank lower and lower in the waves; and everybody knew that death was approaching. The agony culminated as four o'clock drew near; and Grant, with the experience of one shipwreck in his mind, prepared for the worst. With "one of his messmates he seized the fore hatch and threw it overboard a few moments before the Arctic sank. Happily, it struck the water in advance of the ship, and thus avoided the whirlpool of the final catastrophe. Grant and his companion found themselves, a few minutes after water, alone on the ocean, in bitterly cold water and a heavy sea. They could see fragments of the wreck floating at a distance, and they fancied human beings were clinging to them; but the waves ran so high that they were soon alone with the waters around and heaven above them.

They were obliged to stand in the fore hatch with the water up to their waists, and the sea constantly breaking over them; they held on by a rope which they had fastened for their purpose. That night they managed to maintain their hold without difficulty. Shortly after morning broke they saw a sail; to their inexpressible delight she was bearing down upon them; they watched her, minute by minute, with an anxiety which cannot be pictured. Before noon she shifted her course, and their hearts died away as they watched her gradually diminishing, till she disappeared altogether. Oh, what a despairing moment that was! But before sunset on that day another sail was in sight. They watched her intently; she too was bearing down upon them; in an hour or two, at most, she would be near enough to see them. They comforted each other. They talked of their providential escape. They watched the stranger as her topmasts, her mainmast, and even her hull came into view. They addressed her. They were ready to shout to her. They forgot the icy coldness of the water, and the agonies of long-suppressed hunger.

Another night of standing in that cold water, without food or drink, with the bleak Newfoundland blowing over them, well nigh exhausted Grant's strength. Neither he nor his companion talked much next morning. They scanned the horizon silently, and saw nothing. Hunger and thirst and fatigue were doing their work; a heavy wave came and washed them

off their frail support. It tasked their strength to the utmost to regain their place. Hour after hour wore on, and their clutch of the rope grew more and more feeble. Their legs were suffering with the cold.

At noon they saw a sail. They had been so cruelly disappointed that they hardly dared to hope. But they looked earnestly and steadily at the stranger. She too was bearing down upon them. Every quarter of an hour they could perceive her increase in size.

It seemed doubtful whether at best, she could help them, for the sea was running very high, and Grant and his companion were being constantly washed off the hatch. Eight times that day Grant was swept into the sea.

When the strange ship was a mile or so distant she hoisted a flag. What a thrill it sent to the hearts of the poor fellows! They knew what it meant. That piece of stuff told them in plainest language that there was help near.

They were washed off again and again, but the nearness of salvation gave them strength to regain their hold. It was six in the evening—six hours after Grant had first seen her—that the Cambria sailed up and took them on board. I thought then," says Grant, "that I had suffered as much as mortal man could." He had been fifty hours in the water. Captain Lucr was on board, and they were well cared for till their arrival at Quebec, whence they made the best of their way to New York.

Having been thus rescued twice, almost by a miracle, from the jaws of death, Grant married a pretty young girl of his acquaintance and went to sea again. There was evidently a fatality about it.

He sailed in the Crescent City as a fireman. One day he was below, at his post, when bump, bump—the old, familiar sound—and Grant ran on deck to find the ship fast on the reef off the Little Bahamas. There was one comfort—the steamer seemed to enjoy being on the reef, true should she happen to change her mind, there were the sharks in abundance all around, and very evidently there was no chance for any one who got overboard there. Happily the water was fair, and before a storm came on, wrecking vessels from the Bahamas came sailing out and took everybody safely off. So this was an improvement in the shipwrecking way. Grant felt as though he was falling off in the way of adventure.

He was not doomed to suffer long under his disappointment. He left Havana in high spirits, eager to meet his young wife and little child, who live here, when the Central America was overtaken by the gale, and being either unseaworthy or in charge of an unfaithful engineer, foundered at sea.

For some hours before she went down, Grant, who must have been good authority on shipwrecks, foresaw her fate; and though he disdained the use of a life preserver, wrought hard to provide an escape for himself and a few others by cutting loose a portion of the hurricane deck. About five minutes before she sank he was below. Feeling her rise on the side of a heavy sea, he foresaw that the last moment had probably come, and rushed on deck. There he found that his raft had already been lunched from the bows of the steamer, and that men were leaping on board. He instantly jumped, and was ordered by an officer to cut the raft loose. "This done, the Central America went down. Grant and his companions being almost the only persons of her crew and passengers who were not submerged by the vortex she created in sinking.

When the first shock was over they found themselves, ten in number, on a raft—part of the hurricane deck—some twelve feet square. The weight of so many persons sank the raft a couple of feet in water, so that all hands had to stand up. It was a dark night, and they could not see a hundred yards before them; but they heard despairing cries for help during the whole night.

Next morning there were but few persons in sight, and those too far off to offer them a place on the raft. Mr. Dawson, however, who was swimming on a plank, made his way to the raft, and obtained standing room on it. Vacant places enough were made during the day.—Before noon one poor fellow became delirious from drinking salt-water and fell off, and before night three more died, partly from fever brought by drinking salt-water and partly from exhaustion. Toward evening another passenger was picked up. During that night four more of the tenants of the raft perished—when and how the survivors hardly knew. The sea incessantly washed over them, and they only noticed the deaths by perceiving, after a heavy wave had swept over the raft, that there was a vacant place. When Monday had dawned there were but four persons on the raft.

Monday passed, dull and dreary; hunger and thirst telling severely on Grant and his companions. The raft was now so light that they could kneel, the water being barely a foot deep, and in this kneeling position they contrived to sleep. On Tuesday they fell in with a passenger who was in part of the captain's room.—They offered him a place on their raft, but he declared that he was better off as he was, as he could paddle himself around, and pick up any thing he saw. So they part-d—perhaps never to meet again. Next day two of the four tenants of the raft became deranged and fell off, leaving now only two persons on it—Grant, the sole survivor of the original ten, and Dawson, the passenger who had been picked up.

"On Thursday, the fifth day," says Grant, "I saw a boat about three miles off, but could not tell whether there was any one in it or not, but thought there was. I resolved, however, to reach it if possible, and accordingly, I dived myself off all but my under clothes, and tying a life preserver around me, I jumped into the sea and swam toward the boat with all my might. I cannot say how long it was before I finally reached the boat; but before I got to her I discovered a man sitting down and trying to scull the boat toward me. On reaching the

side of the boat, the man (who proved to be Mr. Tice) helped me in. The boat, which, when secured by Mr. Tice, was full of water, had been bailed out by him through the aid of a bucket and tin pan which he had found in it, in addition to three oars in good order which had remained in the boat after being swamped. The hole in the bottom of the boat for allowing the water to drain out on being taken on board ship, and which was open when discovered by Mr. Tice, had been plugged up by him by a thole-pin, so that when I got into her she was in line trim. Mr. Tice and myself immediately pulled the boat as fast as possible to the hurricane deck, and took Mr. Dawson in. He was as strong as either of us, as we had all been without food from twelve o'clock at noon of the Saturday before and were completely exhausted, as we had been incessantly at work for some thirty-six hours before the ship went down, in trying to save her, and none of us had cared to eat but a very little during the whole of that time. After taking Dawson on board we allowed the boat to drift with the wind to seaward, not being able to help ourselves if we had wished, and not knowing which way to pull."

On Sunday—the eighth day of the shipwreck—a sail was seen; but after tantalizing the sufferers for a couple of hours, she disappeared. It was not until Monday—the ninth day—that the brig Mary, of Greenock, Scotland, in sight, discovered the boat and took Grant and his comrades on board.

We believe that Grant's escape is unparalleled. Passing over the fact that he had taken little or nothing for thirty six hours before the steamer went down, he had been nine days without food or water, during four days of which he was in the sea. He himself describes his sufferings as unsurpassable. He suffered but little from hunger after the second day. Indeed, when some of the party secured a dog fish which had stranded itself on the raft, he found himself incapable of swallowing any of it. For days after his escape his stomach was unable to bear anything but gruel. But for water he would have given worlds. He had strength of will enough to resist drinking salt water; and the only liquid he tasted during his agony was a little rain water which fell the day before the party was rescued. He thinks that he imbued a certain quantity of water through the pores of the skin—being constantly wet—and thus saved himself from the fever which a week's thirst would naturally produce.

Poor fellow! He is sadly pulled down, and will not be able to resume work for some time. He was once a stout, muscular man. As he says, "I never had any illness, and never hurt myself by drink or other foolishness." His wife, who cries with joy when she looks at him, says she would hardly have known him.

When the writer called to see him at his boarding house, No. 36 Vandam street, he entered into conversation with him about his escape, and turning to a pretty young woman who was present, observed that she must have been agreeably surprised by the return of her husband.

She burst into a paroxysm of tears, and exclaimed: "Oh! I'm not so lucky. My husband isn't saved. I'll never see him again!"

Let us hope that her husband, and many of the other passengers and crew of the Central America, may yet be heard from. We believe that we shall yet hear of many more escapes.—Meanwhile, let us alone hope that this poor woman—whose misfortune can hardly be surpassed by any that the mind can imagine—may not lack friends in this great and Christian city.

THE SPHYNX.

Near the pyramids, more wondrous, and more awful than all else in the land of Egypt there sits the lonely sphynx. Conely the creature is, but the coneliness is not of this world; the once worshipped beast is a deformity, and a monster to this generation, and yet you can see that those lips, so thick and heavy, were fashioned according to some ancient mould of beauty—some mould of beauty now forgotten—forgotten, because that Greece drew forth Cytherea from the flashing foam of the Mægan, and in her image created new forms of beauty, and made a law among men that the short and proudly wreathed lip should stand for the sign and the main condition of loveliness, through all generations to come. Yet still there lives on the race of those who were beautiful in the fashion of the elder world; and Christian girls of Coptic blood, will look on you with the sad, serious gaze, and kiss your charitable hand with the big, pouting lips of the very sphynx.

Laugh and mock if you will at the worship of some idols, but mark ye this, ye breakers of images, that in one regard, the stone idol bears a wonderful resemblance of Deity—unchangeableness in the midst of change—the same seeming will and intent, forever and ever inexorable! Upon ancient dynasties of Ethiopian and Egyptian kings—upon Greek and Roman, upon Arab and Ottoman conquerors—upon Napoleon drawing of an Eastern Empire—upon battle and pestilence—upon the ceaseless misery of the Egyptian race—upon keen-eyed travellers—Herodotus yesterday, and Warburton to day—upon all these & more, this worldly sphynx has watched, and watched like a Providence, with the same earnest eyes, and the same sad, tranquil mien. And we, we shall die, and Islam will wither away; and the Englishman, leaning far over to hold his loved India, will plant a firm foot on the banks of the Nile, and sit in the seats of the faithful, and still that sleepless rock will lie watching and watching the works of the new, busy race, with those same sad, earnest eyes, and the same tranquil mien everlasting. You dare not mock at the sphynx.—*Eothen.*

WITTY BUT WICKED.—A sour fellow says that he always looks under the marriage head for the news of the week.

ASPECTS OF OUR LARGE CITIES.

When mendicancy, corruption commonly begins after death, but when nations die, it always begins before it. And, as in that man's gangrened extremities, and swollen feet, and slow circulation, I see the heralds of death approaching—in these godless masses sunk in ignorance, lost to the profession of religion, and even to the decent habits of civilized society, I see the most alarming signs of a nation's danger—unless remedies are promptly applied, the unmistakable forerunners of a nation's death. Unless early, active, adequate measures are employed to arrest the progress of our social maladies, there remains for this mighty empire no fate but the grave—that grave which has closed over all that have gone before it. Where are the Assyrian and Egyptian monarchs? Where is the world wide power of Rome? Egypt lies entombed amid the dust of her catacombs.

Assyria is buried beneath the mounds of Ninevah. Rome lives only in the pages of history, survives but in the memory of her greatness, and the majestic ruins of the "Eternal City." Shall our fate resemble theirs? Shall it go to prove that Providence has extended the same law of mortality to nations that lies on men—that they also should struggle through the dangers of a precarious infancy, grow up into the beauty, and burn with the ardor of youth, arrive at the vigor of perfect manhood, and then, slowly sinking, pass through the blindness and decay of old age, until they drop into the tomb? Under God, it depends upon ourselves whether that shall, or shall not, be our fate. Matters are not so far gone but it may yet be averted. A great French general, who reached the battle-field at sun-down, found that the troops of his country had been worsted in the fight; unskillful arrangements had neutralized Gallie bravery, and offered the enemy advantages which they were not slow to seize. He acceded the unfortunate commander; having rapidly learned how matters stood, he pulled out his watch, turned his eyes on the sinking sun, and said—"There's time yet to gain the victory." He rallied the broken ranks, he placed himself at their head, and launching them, with the arm of a giant in war, upon the columns of the foe, he plucked the prize from their hands—won the day.—"There is no time to lose. To our case, perhaps, may be applied the words, which would leave a solemn warning to every worldly, careless, Christian man,—"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation!"—*Dr. Guthrie.*

GOOD.

A capital story is told of a young fellow who one Sunday strolled into the village church, and was electrified and gratified by the sparkle of a pair of brilliant black eyes, which were riveted upon his face. After service, he saw the possessor of the witching orbs leave the church alone, and emboldened by her glances, he ventured to follow her, his heart aching with rapture. He saw her look behind, and fancied she evinced some emotion at recognizing him.—He then quickened his pace, and she actually slackened hers, as if to let him come up with her—but he would permit the young gentleman to tell the rest in his own way:

"Noble young creature!" thought I—"her warm and artless heart is superior to the bonds of custom."

"I reached within a stone's throw of her.—She suddenly halted, and turned her face towards me. My heart swelled to bursting. I reached the spot where she stood. She began to speak, and I took off my hat as if doing reverence to an angel."

"Are you a peddler?"

"No my dear girl; that is not my occupation."

"Well, I don't know," continued she, not very bashfully, and eyeing me very stately, "I thought, when I saw you in the meeting house, that you looked like the peddler who passed off a pewter half dollar on me about three weeks ago, and so I was determined to keep an eye on you. Brother John has got home, now, and he says if he catches the fellow, he'll wring his neck for him; and I ain't sure but you're the good-for-nothing rascal after all."

Professor Doesticks.—Doesticks is immortalized and he did it himself. He has gone in to the Patent Medicine business, and become a Professor. His fortune is made. He is a great man, and a universal benefactor. Hear him tell how it was done:

"Bought a gallon of tarr, a cake of beeswax, and a firkin of lard, and in twenty-one hours I presented to the world the first batch of Professor Doesticks' Patent Self-Acting Four-Horse Power Balsam, designed to cure all diseases of mind, body, or estate; to give strength to the weak, money to the poor, bread and butter to the hungry, boots to the bare-foot, decency to the blackguard, and honor to the politician. It acts physically, morally, psychologically and geologically, and is intended to make our sublunary sphere a blissful paradice."

The Poor Boy.—Don't be ashamed, my good lad, if you have a patch on your elbow. It is no mark of disgrace. It spraks well for your industrious mother. For our part, we would rather see a dozen patches on your jacket than hear one profane or vulgar word escape from your lips, or smell the fumes of tobacco in your breath. No good boy will slay you because you cannot dress as well as your companions, and if a bid boy sometimes laughs at your appearance, say nothing, my good lad, but walk on.—We know many a rich and good man who was once as poor as you. Fear God, my boy, and if you are poor, but honest, you will be respected—a great deal more than if you were the son of a rich man, and were addicted to bad habits.

An editor, who was short of travelling funds, sat upon a horse—saw for an imaginary journey in the country, and wrote letters home for his paper.

An indirect way of getting a glass of water at a boarding house, is to call for a third cup of tea.

Humorous.

CONUNDRUM.

The following appeared, a few days ago, in the Charleston Courier:

"Why's D like marriage?" asked the maid
Whose troth to me is pledged,
I blushed in sooth and hung my head,
While she seemed quite delighted.

ANSWER.

"Come, answer me," continued she,
"And don't be long about it:
You stupid fellow, can't you see,
We can't be wed without it."

The Boston Post is entitled to the credit of the following exquisite "pome": "On Lake Ontario?"

Green are the waters, green as bottled grass,
Behold them stretched that;
Fine mackinogles and Oswego bass
Are chiefly ketch'd there;
Want the red loins that tuck that delights,
Fisht, fit, and bled;
Now most of the inhabitants is whites,
With nary red.

A Dissatisfied Man of War.—John Fitzgerald enlisted on Saturday in the United States Army, for the purpose of putting down them ere saints of Utah." On Monday afternoon Mr. Fitzgerald appeared at the New York police office to enter complaint against the United States for "obtaining soldiers under false pretences." Mr. Fitzgerald was slightly inebriated.

"What do you want?"

"A warrant (hiccup) against States of Meri-ty."

"For what?"

"False (hiccup), false pretences. For obtaining soldiers by false (hiccup) pretences."

"In what respect?"

"They agreed to give me 'eight dollars a month and a first rate suit of clothes (hiccup). Call that a suit of clothes? Look at that coat—so short waisted in the back, it lifts you off the ground (hiccup). Look at them pants (hiccup). So long waisted in the seat, might use the slack (hiccup) for a back room to sleep in."

"And for that you want a warrant for false pretences against the government?"

"I don't want nothing else (hiccup). I'm not to be done by such a pair of trowsers no day."

The Justice refused to grant a warrant, whereupon Mr. Fitzgerald left the office promising to write to the President, and have "another pair of trowsers, or blood." The moment President Buchanan's letter is received, we shall publish it, as a matter of course.

"You have testified, Mr. Doty, that in your opinion my client is a blackguard."

"I have."

"What reason have you, sir, for such an opinion?"

"The company he keeps."

"Whose company, sir?"

"Yours."

"Don't insult me, sir."

"Are you ashamed of the character and conduct of your client?"

"You are a blackguard."

"Your associations enable you to be a good judge of the article."

"You may go, sir. May the court please call the next witness."

An Old but Good One.—A Frenchman who had deposited a sum of money for safe keeping with a friend, hearing the latter was about to fail, called upon the man and said, "Sure, I want my money." "Certainly, sir," replied the other, drawing out his check book, from which he was about to fill up a check, when the Frenchman said, "stop, save, you got de monie?" "Why, of course," said his friend; "I will give you a check for it immediately." "No, no," said the Frenchman, "if you got de monie, I no want him, but if you no got him den, I want him."

Not so Bad.—The Georgia papers tell the following with characteristic unctious:—A lady, formerly a resident in Georgia, very much discontented with Mississippi life, and longing to return to her native land, was shouting at camp-meeting last year, and became so exceedingly happy that she exclaimed "Glorry to God, I feel like I was in Georgia!"

At Dieppe, in France, a famous bathing place, there is a police to rescue persons from danger. The following notice was recently issued to them: "The bathing police are requested, when a lady is in danger of drowning, to seize her by the dress, and not by the hair, which oftentimes remains in their grasp."

An Irishman remarked to his companion, on observing a lady pass, "Pat, did you ever see so thin a woman as that before?" "Thin?" replied the other; "sotherashun! I seen a woman as thin as two of her put together, I have."

There is a capital story told of some one who prayed that the Lord would "bless the potato crop, which seemed to have been smitten in his displeasure, and regard 'with special smiles' the few planted in our back garden."

A member of the Lazy Society was complained of for running. His defence was that he was going down hill, and that it was more labor to walk than run. Complaint dismissed with expenses.

MAKING A GHOST OF A TUNE.—Footie once asked a man without a sense of tune in him, "Why are you forever humming that tune?" "Because it haunts me," was the reply. "No wonder," said Footie, "you are forever intruding it."

BUSINESS AND BUUFF.—Our musical critic says that it is a great proof of Rossini's financial tact that he made Figaro a barber, as he doubtless intended that character to shave the notes of the music.

A great cry and little wool.—An Ethiopian infant just born.