



THE BEDFORD GAZETTE

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POETRY.

MAY.

May! thou month of ruby beauty! Month when pleasure is a duty; Month of maids that milk the kine—

If the rains that to us wrong, Come to keep the winter long, And deny us thy sweet looks,

Miscellaneous.

THE MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH.

BY EDGAR A. POE.

The "Red Death" had long devastated the country. No pestilence had ever been so fatal, or so hideous. Blood was its Avenger, and its seal—the horror of blood.

But the Prince Prospero was happy and dauntless and sagacious. When his dominions were half depopulated, he summoned to his presence a thousand hale and light-hearted friends from among the knights and dames of his court, and with these retired to the deep seclusion of one of his castellated abbeys.

It was a voluptuous scene, that masquerade. But first let me tell of the rooms in which it was held. There were seven—an imperial suite.

stained glass whose color varied in accordance with the prevailing hue of the decorations of the chamber into which it opened. That at the eastern extremity was hung, for example, in blue—and vividly blue were its windows.

It was in this apartment, also, that there stood against the western wall, a gigantic clock of ebony. Its pendulum swung to and fro with a dull heavy monotonous clang; and when the minute hand made the circuit of the face, and the hour was to be stricken, there came from the brazen lungs of the clock a sound which was clear and loud and deep and exceedingly musical, but of so peculiar a note and emphasis that, at each lapse of an hour, the musicians of the orchestra were constrained to pause, momentarily, in their performance, to hearken to the sound; and thus the waltzers per force ceased their evolutions; and there was brief disconcert of the whole gay company; and while the chimes of the clock yet rang it was observed that the giddiest grew pale, and the more aged and sedate passed their hands over their brows as if in confused reverie and meditation.

But, in spite of these things, it was a gay and magnificent revel. The tastes of the duke were peculiar. He had a fine eye for color and effects. He disregarded the decorum of mere fashion. His plans were bold and fiery, and his conceivings glowed with bacchic lustre. There are some who would have thought him mad.—His followers knew that he was not. It was necessary to hear and see and touch him to be sure that he was not.

He had directed, in great part, the movable embellishments of the seven chambers, upon occasion of this great fete; and it was his own guiding taste which had given character to the masquerades. But sure they were grotesque. There were much glare and glitter and piquancy and phantasm much of which has since been seen in "Hernani."

But these other apartments were densely crowded, and in them beat feverishly the heart of life. And the revel went whirling on, until at length there commenced the sounding of midnight upon the clock. And then the music ceased, as I have told; and the evolutions of the waltzers were quieted; and there was an uneasy cessation of all things as before.

whispering around, there arose at length from the whole company a buzz, or murmur, expressive of disapprobation and surprise—then, finally, of terror, of horror and disgust.

In an assembly of phantasms such as I have painted, it may well be supposed that no ordinary appearance could have excited such sensation. In truth the masquerade license of the night was nearly unlimited; but the figure in question had out Herodod Herod, and gone beyond the bounds of even the Prince's indefinite decorum. There are cords in the hearts of the most reckless which cannot be touched without emotion. Even with the utterly lost, to whom life and death are equally jests, there are matters of which no jest can be made.

When the eyes of Prince Prospero fell upon this spectral image (which with a slow and solemn movement, as if more fully to sustain its role, stalked to and fro among the waltzers) he was so taken to be convulsed, in the first moment, with a strong shudder either of terror or distaste; but in the next his brow reddened with rage.

"Who dares?" he demanded hoarsely of the courtiers who stood near him—"who dares insult us with this blasphemous mockery? Seize him and unmask him—that we may know whom we have to hang at sunrise, from the battlements!"

It was in the eastern or blue chamber in which stood the Prince Prospero as he uttered these words. They rang throughout the seven rooms loudly and clearly—for the Prince was a bold and robust man, and the music had become hushed at the waving of his hand.

It was in the blue room where stood the Prince with a group of pale courtiers by his side. At first, as he spoke, there was a slight rushing movement of this group in the direction of the intruder, who at that moment was also near at hand, and now, with deliberate and steady step, made closer approach to the speaker. But from a certain nameless awe with which the mad assumptions of the murderer had inspired the whole party, there were found none who put forth hand to seize him; so that unimpeded, he passed within a yard of the Prince's person; and while the vast assembly, as with one impulse, shrank from the centres of the rooms to the walls, he made his way uninterrupted, but with the same slow and measured step which had distinguished him from the first, through the blue chamber to the purple—through the purple to the green—through the green to the orange—through this, again to the white—and even thence to the violet, ere a decided movement had been made to arrest him. It was then, however, that the Prince Prospero, maddening with rage and the shame of his own momentary cowardice, rushed hurriedly through the six chambers, while none followed him on account of a deadly terror that had seized upon all. He bore aloft a drawn dagger, and had approached, in rapid impetuosity, to within three or four feet of the retreating figure, when the latter, having attained the extremity of the velvet apartment, turned suddenly and confronted his pursuer. There was a sharp cry—and the dagger dropped gleaming upon the sable carpet, upon which, instantly afterwards, fell prostrated in death the Prince Prospero. Then summoning the wild courage of despair, a throng of the revellers at once threw themselves into the black apartment, and seizing the murderer, whose tall figure stood erect and motionless within the shadow of the ebony clock, gazed in unutterable horror at finding the grave cements and corpse-like mask which they handled with so violent a rudeness, untenanted by any tangible form.

And now was acknowledged the presence of the Red Death. He had come like a thief in the night. And one by one dropped the revellers in the blood-bedewed halls of their revel, and died each in the despairing posture of his fall. And the life of the ebony clock went out with that of the last of the gay. And the flames of the tripods expired. And Darkness, and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all.

Good Humor.—Keep in a good humor. It is not great calamities that embitter existence; it is the petty vexations, small jealousies, the little disappointments, the minor miseries, that make the heart heavy and the temper sour.—Don't let them. Anger is a pure waste of vitality; it is always foolish, and always disgraceful, except in some very rare cases, when it is kindled by seeing wrong done to another; and even that noble rage seldom mends the matter. Keep in good humor.

No man does his best except when he is cheerful. A light heart makes nimble hands, and keeps the mind fair and alert. No mistletoe is so great as one that sours the temper.—Until cheerfulness is lost, nothing is lost!—Keep in good humor! The company of a good humored man is a perpetual feast; he is welcomed everywhere—eyes glisten at his approach, and difficulties vanish in his presence. Franklin's indomitable good humor did as much for his country in the old Congress as Adams' fire, or Jefferson's wisdom; he clothed wisdom with smiles, and softened contentious minds into acquiescence. Keep in good humor! A good conscience, a sound stomach, a clear skin are the elements of good humor! Get them, and—be sure to keep in good humor!

WE REAR NO WAR-DEFYING FLAG.

BY R. STORY. We rear no war-defying flag, Though armed for battle still; The feeble, if he like, may brag— The powerful never will.

NOVEL COURTSHIP.

Three months since, a young Parisian was travelling per railroad, in Germany, from Augsburg to Berlin. The cars, unlike those here, are divided into compartments, like the inside of a coach, the passengers sitting facing each other.

"Hist, Bertha," said the other, with a sort of affront. "Why, he does not understand a word of German. We can talk freely. How do you find him?"

"I understand that Frederick is engaged to you, but I, who am without a lover, am free to exercise my opinion, and to say that this young man has beautiful eyes."

"You do not know. I am sure he has spirit; it is a pity he does not speak German; he would chat with us."

"The learned Professor and Principal of the Academy of Saumur, used to spend five hours every morning in his study, but was very punctual at dinner. One day, on his not appearing precisely at the dinner hour, his wife entered his study, and found him still reading."

BURSTS OF ELOQUENCE.

One of our exchange papers gathered up the following "bursts of eloquence," which it says were delivered before a court of justice in Pennsylvania:

"Your honor sits high upon the adorable seat of justice, like the Asatic rock of Gibraltar; while the eternal streams of justice, like the cadaverous clouds of the valley, flow meandering at your feet." "This reminds us of the commencement of a speech of a lawyer in New Jersey—"Your honors do not sit there like marble statues, to be wated about by every idle breeze."

"OLD HUNDRED."

CAN you find a tomb in the land where sealed lips lie that have not sung that tune? If they were grey old men they had heard or sung "Old Hundred." Sinner and saint have joined with the endless congregations where it has, with and without the pealing organ, sounded on the sacred air.

FIGHT ON A HOUSE TOP—MAN KNOCKED OFF.—The Detroit "Free Press" says—"Two men named Mike Welsh and John Boyle, were engaged in putting a new roof on the two story house of Mr. Geo. Pattison, when a misunderstanding arose in regard to some part of the work, in which Boyle refused to obey Welsh's orders. Welsh thereupon struck Boyle on the head with a shovel, and then, gave him a kick which pitched him headlong from the roof."

RESPECTABILITY.

The popular mode of estimating the respectability of an individual or family is very pointedly hit off in the following street dialogue of two "gemmen of color," which we clip from an exchange:

"Cato, does you know dem Johnings up dar in Congo Place is going to be berry 'spectable folks?" "Wall, Scipio, I thought dey war getting along berry well, but I doesn't know how 'spectable dey is."

"The learned Professor and Principal of the Academy of Saumur, used to spend five hours every morning in his study, but was very punctual at dinner. One day, on his not appearing precisely at the dinner hour, his wife entered his study, and found him still reading."

"I don't say, Mr. Judge, that the defendant was drunk; no, not by any means. But this will say, when I last seen him he was washing his face in a mud-puddle, and drying it on a door-mat. Whether a sober man would do this, in course I can't say."

"Madame," said old Roger to his boarding-house keeper, "in primitive countries beef is often a legal tender; but, madame," said he, emphatically, thrusting his fork into the steak, "all the law in Christendom couldn't make this beef tender."

A beggar was arrested in Bognor, Eng., who had on his person \$40 in specie, was wearing three shirts, three waistcoats, three pairs of trousers, a jacket, a coat, a neck tie, a large blanket, and had several shirts and stockings in his pack.

"My German friend, how long have you been married?" "Vel, dat is a ting vat I seldom don't like to talk about, put ven I does it seems to be so long as it never vas."

"My character," said an alderman, who had cleared himself from a charge of bribery; "my character, sir, is like my boots—all the brighter for blacking."

No woman should paint except she who has lost the power of blushing. A father called his son into a crowded stage—"Ben-jam-in!" Greatness supported by goodness, is hard to be overthrown.

CHINESE SUGAR CANE.

A COMMITTEE of the United States Agricultural Society, who recently met at Washington, made a report upon the subject of Chinese sugar cane, of which the following is a synopsis:

1. The soil and geographical range of the Chinese sugar cane, correspond nearly with those of Indian corn. It produces the best crop on dry lands, but the most luxuriantly in rich bottoms or moist loams.

2. It endures cold better than corn, and experiences no autumnal frosts. It will also withstand excessive drought. Ripens its seed in September in dry warm soils, in many parts of the New England States; at the extreme south it may be planted as late as the 20th of June.

3. Its cost and culture are about the same as Indian corn.

4. Height of plant when fully grown varies from six to eighteen feet, and stalks vary from half an inch to two inches in diameter. The weight of the entire crop when fully grown, taken before drying, is from ten to forty tons.—Of seed the amount reported from fifteen to sixty bushels.

5. During the early stages of its growth it makes but little progress, so slow, indeed, as to have discouraged many cultivators; but the approach of warm weather imparts to it a wonderful rapidity. The period of growth varies from ninety to one hundred and twenty days.

6. The yield of juice was about 50 per cent. The number of gallons required to make a gallon of syrup varies from 6 to 10; in New Brunswick 10 to one; in Indiana and Illinois, 7 to 1.

7. A palatable bread was made from the flour ground from the seed.

8. By accounts from all parts of the country this plant is universally admitted to be a wholesome food for animals; all parts of it being greedily devoured in a green or dried state, by horses, cattle, sheep and swine, without injurious effects; the latter, especially, fattening upon it as well as upon corn.

9. Paper of various qualities has been manufactured from the fibrous parts of the stalk, some of which appears to be fitted for a special use.

SALT FOR PLUM TREES.

It is almost impossible to cultivate any kind of plums in this climate, unless salt enter liberally as an ingredient upon the compost applied to them. When this article is used in conjunction with house ashes there appears rarely to be much difficulty in producing good and healthy trees which ultimately prove highly productive of fair and well developed fruit. When trees are set in situations in which application of compost is not feasible, or where it would subject the operator to considerable fatigue or expense, salt, in its crude state, may be applied; or it may be dissolved and poured around the roots.

If plum trees were carefully washed down once or twice a year in whiskey ley and supplied with two or three quarts each of salt—care being taken to retain the soil around the roots light and free from weeds, we should hear far fewer complaints of want of success in this department of pomological enterprise. No fruit commands a more ready sale or a higher price in the market. Good plums are present so scarce as to render them a luxury, and those who have valuable trees in good bearing are realizing a heavy profit from them. Let those who have trees profit by the above suggestion, they indicate the only legitimate cures to be pursued.—New Eng. Farmer.

CANADA THISTLES should be kept down either by hoeing or plowing. A plant, weed, or tree, can no more live without lungs; therefore, if no leaves are permitted to grow, they must die. This I know from experience, having killed several patches on my farm. If a hoe is used, they should be cut off as deep in the ground as you can strike the hoe; and don't leave it for the boys and hired men to do, but do it yourself, and see that no green thing is left. If a plow is used, once in two or three weeks will be often enough. One summer will use them up, if it is thoroughly done. Be sure to attend to them during the months of July and August, for Nature will make powerful efforts during this time to produce seed for the propagation of the species, for that is her great object, and this effort on the part of Nature will draw hard upon the roots, and weaken them so much that if they are cut at this season of the year they are pretty sure to die. I once cut a patch of them regularly once a week. They continued to sprout up all through the season, without any diminution, until the latter part of August, when I cut them for the last time and sowed the ground in wheat. Not a thistle has shown itself there since.—Genesee Farmer.

CURE FOR THE AGUE.—A gentleman recently from Central America—a great place for shakes—informs us that he has seen many obstinate cases cured by wearing finely pulverized rock salt between the feet and the stockings. We cannot vouch for the value of this remedy, but consider it worthy of trial.—Genesee Fur.