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A. HARTER,

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AFTER.

After the showers, the tranquil sun;
After the snow, the emerald leaves;
Silver stars when the day is done;
After the harvest golden sheaves.

After the clouds, the violet sky;
After the tempest, the lull of waves;
Quiet woods when the winds go by,
After the battle, peaceful graves.

After the knell the wedding bells;
After the bud, the radiant rose;
Joyful greetings from sad farewells;
After our weeping, sweet repose.

After the burden, the blissful meed;
After the fight, the downy nest;
After the furrow, the waking seed,
After the shadowy river—rest!

'COON CATCHING.

It was one of those pleasant nights in August when the moon and the sun hold a contest as to which shall afford the morning's light by which the predatory huntsman may find watermelons and his 'coons. For it was in Kentucky that we were spending that month, at a quaint, oldtime Southern house, near Louisville—a square-built, plain brick house that had been enlarged as the exigencies of an increasing family demanded. Down is the dell below rippled a brook. The scene was suggestive, particularly because a small dog that formed an important member of the party was constantly hurrying hither and thither and "barking up a tree"—the favorite tree of course.

"Let's show these Yankees a coon hunt," said a broad-shouldered Kentuckian who had been following the movements of the dog with no little interest. The proposition was no sooner made than accepted. It was late, but who ever heard of a 'coon hunt when it was not late. So, without more ado, we set out. A darky was aroused from the cabin and, far from being unwilling, showed more eagerness than the misguided dog. Into a wagon we tumbled after the ebony attendant had provided himself with a long rope, an axe and a lantern, to say nothing of a particularly disagreeable dog that was patronized by every one, but submitted only to the suggestions of Peter. Peter drove us over a "pike" road and finally brought up at the gate of a very dilapidated house. "Hallo!" called the broad shouldered Kentuckian who had acted as guide.

"What is it?" was the reply of a feeble woman who appeared at the door of the dilapidated house with a weak yellow light from a candle weakly shining into a not very strong face.

"Where's Walker?" was the reply.

"He's down to the river at his house down there."

"Where's his dog?"

"His dog's with Walker, of course," was the disdainful reply, and the weak-looking woman with the faint light shut the door with a dilapidated bang.

"Who's Walker?" asked one of the Yankees.

"He's Walker Taylor, a nephew of old Zach Taylor, and the representative of the family in this part of the country. This is where Kentucky's only President lived, and there's where Kentucky lets him live," added the speaker, meditatively, as he pointed to a clump of shrubbery.

"Where?" was eagerly asked by the Yankees.

"Get down and see," said our guide, as he leaped from the wagon.

There in a mass of uncut weeds and bushes was a veritable vault, and there lay the bones of "Old Rough and Ready," the only son of Kentucky who ever sat in the highest seat of this land. And we were looking for his nephew and representative, the owner of the old homestead where the President and his father before him had lived: we were looking for Walker Taylor and his dog to help us hunt the coon! The spot was not without its romance and its tenderness as the moonlight streamed down into the unkept garden. Since then the dust of the old warrior has been removed to more hallowed ground. It has been taken to the cemetery at Louisville to await the erection of a monument at the Frankfort cemetery, where other great Kentuckians are buried in a sort of State cemetery.

But there in the sombre light the scene was sad and impressive. The tomb was only a brick structure, eaten away in places by the "consuming hand," and all overgrown with the Virginia creepers, or the five-leaf ivy, as it is called thereabouts, and made obscure in the mass of briers and weeds that filled up what gave evidence of having once been a cultivated garden. There was no line to say that there rested all that was mortal of the old hero whose battles had won him the soubriquet of "Old Rough and Ready." Rough enough it was, and there had been time enough for preparation, lying there, as the ashes did, in an undisturbed quiet, for the old house of the living was not more carefully tended than that of the dead. It had never been the scene of much adornment, for old Taylor had been as ready in his home as in his camp, and the scenes of his successes had lain in other parts; he learned to plan there, and perhaps to love there, and he had come back to rest in the long rest. There were no historic memories of fetes and gala times; but for all that there was an air of regret about all the scene, with the queer little gabled house just peering over the bushes and now drooping beneath the boughs of the large trees that surrounded it. Vines grew over the house, as they did over the little vault and over the fence. The place looked as though long years ago people had ceased to enter it and hopes and hearts there were dead. And yet this was the homestead of a President and here his descendants lived!

Leaving the somber scene, we drove rapidly to the river to Taylor's "other house." It was a fisherman's hut floating on the water's edge. The unlocked door swung open at our bidding, but there was no sign of man except a few lines and nets and a pair of oars. "He's running his trout line," said our Kentuckian, "and we will have to row up the river for him."

He took the pair of oars and we, dogs and all, got into a boat built with a square keel and bow, and with labored stroke we made our way up the Ohio, occasionally hallooing for "Wal-ker!" At last there was a response, and making our way out into the stream we found a little old man sitting in the stern of a boat made of the trunk of a tree and familiarly known as a "dug-out." He was running a "trout line." The President's nephew was paddling along this line, lifting up hook after hook and finding very few fish.

Our guide said that "Walk. Taylor" was one of the morst farmers in the country, but one of the best fishermen, and that he owned a hound famous all about for her exploits in hunting the treacherous 'coon. Very little sufficed for Taylor's wants; he required only a quantity of whisky and a little to eat, and the fish served well enough for both. His friends supported the hound. Taylor's appearance bore testimony to the truth of all this; he was little, his hair grew thinly all over his face, and had that straggling appearance that, together with a blossoming nose, a full, weak mouth, a coat that did not fit and trousers tucked into his boots, gave to Mr. Taylor altogether a rakish air. He looked good-natured, generous but conscious that he had nothing but his own good nature to be generous with.

Such was Walker Taylor. His hound was his counterpart on four legs. She had an appearance of melancholy happiness. As we rowed to the bank she looked less melancholy and more happy; and when once put ashore, she was all life, and her eager step had something spirited in it.

Then from the bank the hunt began, the hound taking the lead, the terrier following, and the disagreeable dog in the rear. Then came Walk Taylor, his hands in his pockets, and the rest of us straggled along as best we could. The brush on the bank of the river was beaten through; the hound gave short, quick cries that told how anxious she was to find something. Presently we left the river bank and got into the interior. Then the march was over field and fence—a long, fruitless march. Suddenly the hound gave a cry; she led straight up to a farm-yard, through the yard to a number of buildings that stood at a little distance from the dwelling-house. Undaunted Walker led the way, treading under foot corn, tomatoes and vine, just as they came in his way. Straight to a chicken-house he marched, and there, outside the door, we found the three dogs, all much excited. The lantern was lighted, the staple on the door was forced, and in we marched. It was the work of an instant for the terrier to rush up the side of the wall and to tumble down again engaged tooth and nail with a young coon. It was the work of another instant for the bulldog to help the terrier, and in a very few minutes there was such a dust on the chicken-house floor as was never seen there before. There was also some noise, enough to attract the attention of the people of the house, who, armed with night-gowns, lanterns, sticks and shot-guns, came to make an investigation. But it took some adroitness and good lungs to explain amid the confusion, that an act of charity was doing; but when the lifeless body of the predatory coon was exhibited the service rendered was gratefully acknowledged.

It was after this exploit, when we had walked a mile further, that our guide said, Peter what have you in that bag?"

"I'se got de coon, sah," responded Peter.

"Feels very hard," said the master, prodding the bag with a stick, "and it looks heavy."

"Yes, sir, he's the awfullest, heaviest coon ever dis child toted. He's a old coon, shuah: but Snide was too much for him—ha, ha! Land a massy, what a dus' dat pup raised."

"What else is there in the bag?" asked our friend, not thrown off by this oration of the darkey.

"Dey ain't nuffin else, sah," said Peter, very seriously.

"Let's see?" said the other.

"I'se got de rope in dah," said Peter, apparently oblivious of the fact that another member of the party was carrying the rope.

Finally he was convinced of his error in this respect, and on opening the bag out rolled a large watermelon.

"Golly, Mars' Henry, I meant to s'prise you. I thought when you wuz tired maybe a piece watermillion go mighty good, so I jes' fetch it 'long when we came through de ole man's place up dah. Is you ready for the watermillion now?" he asked innocently. Having turned the theft to such good account, "Mars' Henry" was not disposed to quarrel over the wrong, and Peter escaped easily.

After this diverting incident we lay down upon the ground and Walker Taylor went to sleep and snored. We did not. After this rest another start was made in the direction of the river and our wagon. We reached the bank just as the sun began to tinge the clouds and the hills in the east. A steamboat laden with freight and passengers plowed its way toward Cincinnati, and came near us just as the hound opened a cry that she had "treed" the 'coon. Taylor had gone off to "run his trout line," and while we waited for him the dog sat quietly under the tree, and Peter threw his rope over the lowest limb and proceeded to climb into the boughs. Once there, he sprang nimbly from limb to limb looking for the game. At last he found it, and announced in an exultant tone that it was an "ole 'un." The 'coon was clinging tightly to a large limb and could not be shaken down. Then Peter began to cut with his ax. The limb came to the ground with a crash. The 'coon took to his feet, but his run was a short one. Soon the dogs had him.

"Fair play's a jewel," and fair play, more than fair play, was given his 'coonship in the fight that ensued. He and the small bulldog were put to it, the other dogs being restrained. Soon the animals caught a death-hold; the dog had the coon by the throat, the coon had the dog by the neck. There was no let go in that struggle. While the two held each other in this way one of us caught the dog, another the coon. With three swings they were thrown out into the river where the water was deep. That made things more nearly equal. A coon fights better in the water than a dog. The struggle was severe, sickening in its ferocity. The water about the animals was in a foam and bloody. Soon the fight was over. The 'coon gave up, the dog shook him unresisted and the 'coon floated. It was dead. The dog tried to swim ashore, but he sank; he, too, had expended all his powers in the battle. Peter was ready for the emergency. Without wasting time to trip he plunged into the water and the dog was rescued, though he lay for several minutes lifeless upon the bank while we did what we could to revive him. Finally he was himself again, and, with never a look back, he walked quietly to the wagon. Then in the broad light of day we concluded our chase, a hunt more wearisome but hardly less exciting than the run after an anise-seed bag.

Chewing Gum.

Forty thousand dollars' worth of chewing gum is gathered in the State of Maine every year. In Oxford county is a man who makes it his business to collect spruce gum. Every year he buys from seven to nine tons. The gum is found chiefly in the region about Umbagog Lake and about the Rangely lakes. A number of men do nothing else in the winter season except to collect gum. With snowshoes, axe, and a shebogan, on which is packed the gum, they spend days and nights in the woods. The clear, pure lumps of gum sold are in their native state, the best bringing one dollar a pound. Gum not immediately merchantable is refined by a peculiar process. Sieve-like boxes are covered with spruce boughs, on which is placed the gum. Steam is introduced underneath. The gum is melted, is strained by the boughs, and then passes into warm water, where it is kept from hardening until the packer takes it out, draws it into sticks, and wraps it in tissue paper, when it is ready for market. The gum then meets with ready sale. There is not a village, town or city in Maine where it is not in demand. One dealer last year sold fourteen hundred dollars' worth. In the large mill cities gum has a free sale. In Biddeford, Lewiston, Lawrence, and Lowell, the factory girls consume large quantities. It is said that in the lumber camps gum is used as a means of extending hospitality. After meal time the host fills his own black clay pipe, and hands it to his guests. Later, clear lumps of spruce gum are placed before the visitor, and he is asked to take a chew. Maine produces forty thousand dollars' worth of gum in a year, some of which finds its way to this market, from which it is distributed to the various outlying factory villages, where, as stated before, it is in good demand. Spruce gum is adulterated, and those who adulterate take the trouble to fashion the pieces of gum to appear like those taken in a pure state from the trees. The ingredient of adulteration is supposed to be the gum of the pine tree.

"Oh, I tell you, you can't abolish the jury system. It's one of the abutments upon which rests the structure of freedom and equity, and all those things. If you were to abolish it, just see how much you'd have to abolish also three-card monte and other games of chance. I tell you Americans will not be denied this kind of mental relaxation. It's about all the fun we have."

Wonderful Strength of Insects.

"If you want to see muscle," a naturalist said, " take a glance through this glass," pointing to a seat before a powerful microscope. The drop of Croton water was fairly alive with little round or oval bodies. There was nothing specially remarkable about them; but soon a wonderful creature rolled upon the scene from a distant part of the drop. In appearance it resembled a crystal bell. The edges were ornamented with a delicate fringe, and the entire mass was as transparent as glass. The mouth of the bell was evidently the mouth of the animal, because the observer saw it rush along like a scoop, and turning down, fasten its edges to the bottom, as if to secure some minute animal that was resisting, and a second later some object could be seen passing up into the body.

"If you had the strength of that animal," the naturalist said, "in proportion to your size, you could take Trinity Church by its steeple and toss it over into New Jersey. There are animals in this drop that we can't see with this powerful glass. Suppose there was this same difference in size among the higher animals. Elephants would be as large as the state of Rhode Island. If this bell animal was as much larger than man as it is than these little creatures it is eating, we would see a gigantic scoop of jelly larger than the Forty second street reservoir coming down upon us, whirling in the water and causing such a suction that a regiment of men would, if in the water, be hurled and twisted and then encompassed by it. The strength of the creature can be imagined when it is known that the smallest section of the finest hair that could be cut seemed like a mountain beside it; yet the microscopic creature moved the end of an entire hair placed over the glass. In moving about it threw aside bits of algæ and mud. That could be compared to the act of a single man striking down one of the giant trees of California or kicking over a block of houses. I am devising an instrument to measure the power of these microscopic giants. You see, among the lot there are always a number that seem, from no special cause, to be in great terror, rushing about wildly, stopping at nothing, passing through masses of weed and mud in direct lines. Now, the force with which they bring up against a barrier is certainly the maximum of their strength; so I arranged a machine after the plan of one that I have seen to measure the velocity of a shot, the latter striking a frame, and the force of the blow being recorded on a scale. For my partition I took what was evidently the egg shell or cover of some microscopic animal. I attached it by one end to a larger body, and the whole thing stood over a delicate scale that was cut on the glass slide, and as the animals rushed along they struck the partition or hand and pushed it around the scale."

"What was the result?"

"Well, to tell the truth, the first one that came along broke down the partition, and I haven't been able to adjust it again. When I do I'll let you know. I haven't sold any stock yet, and haven't even applied for a patent, so the general public won't suffer. I have in hand another instrument, with which I intend to measure the movements of the wings and legs of insects per minute and second, and I think they can be photographed as well as the feet of a trotter while in motion. This will be fine work, as with a simple instrument I have shown that the wings of a common house-fly move more than 200 times per second, and the machine lost more than half the vibrations. I have watched a fly for five minutes hanging almost in one spot under a chandelier, kept up by the continuous movement of its wings, and estimated that the operation required over 100.000 beats of the wings, or over 400 a second, or 800 simple oscillations; the house fly is not as lively as some others of the tribe. I have in following wild bees to find their nest, found that they are often on the wing thirty minutes in forty-five, the allowance being for the time in which they were on flowers, and during that period they must have bea their wings 342,000 times. A spider can bind a fly securely, winding twenty or thirty cables of silk about it, in less than a second and a half. These rapid movements show the wonderful physical powers of small animals. Here are some contrivances to measure the strength of beetles and large insects."

One was a long box, sanded on the bottom, with glass sides. At the end was a small friction wheel, over which ran a silk thread. On one end was attached a tissue-paper receptacle for weights, and the other was tied in a slip noose. A large black ant was taken from a flask, the noose caught around his body, and, on being released, rushed away up the miniature street, hoisting the scales and three grains of corn with the greatest ease. A small red ant was then brought out, and, after several false starts and showing evidence of a decidedly mulish disposition, it ran off, hoisting a very heavy pea.

"An ant can carry a weight about seventy-five times its own," the naturalist said. If you had the muscle of one of these little creatures in proportion to your size you could lift about 11,000 pounds.

An English Army Story.

Our commanding officer, Col, Freeman—retired now these seven years—was a gentleman of very limited knowledge as regards regimental manoeuvers, and as the Onety-oneth had been stationed at N——— for more than a year, and was apparently forgotten by the authorities, he had no inducement to extend his acquaintance. Thus, from long practice, we would go through his half dozen movements with a precision and readiness that might have been envied by the smartest corps in the service. But there we stopped. Beyond those we knew nothing. You can imagine, then, our consternation when we heard that the officer commanding the district—Lord Pufferoo—was coming officially inspect us. Freeman, was at first overcome by the news but after a time we could see upon his face a look of stern resolve. He had evidently made up his mind to do something desperate. The fatal day came at last, as did also Gen. Lord Pufferoo, "attended by a brilliant staff," as the newspapers say. We were duly paraded and inspected, and put through the same old manoeuvers we had performed every day for the last twelve months. We deployed and marched. and marched and deployed, and then began all over again, till at last the General showed evident, signs of impatience. And then, when an aide-de-camp came galloping up to Freeman, we knew our fate was sealed. "Col Freeman," said the aid de-camp, suavely, "his lordship wishes me to express his satisfaction with the movements so far; nothing could have been done better. At the same time he would suggest that something fresh might be gone through with advantage. He has scarely, as yet had an opportunity to judge of your regiment's capabilities." "Tell his lordship," said the old Colonel, hoarsely, "that he shall be obeyed." We all wandered what was coming next. Judge of our astonishment, when, after getting us into line facing the staff, he rode behind us and called out: "Battalion—with ball cartridge, load! Ready! pre—!" Before he could get out "Present!" the General and his staff had turned tail and were flying over the field to get out of the range! Lord Pufferoo was back to his headquarters at once, and next week came an intimation to the Colonel that his resignation would be acceptable.

A California Trial.

Persons familiar with the early history of this country are well aware of the potent influence of eloquence on the uncultivated masses and how they were moved by the fervent oratory of Patrick Henry and Clay, and Webster and Corwin, and Crittenden and Tom Marshall and those old time men of the primitive bar, which had never been excelled in the annals of human pleading.

An episode of a similar nature occurred out in the early days of California mining, of which the writer was a spectator. The circumstances were as follows:

A miner had been caught stealing gold dust. That kind of business couldn't be permitted in the mines; forcible examples had to be made of all such offenders. Murder regulated itself; there was a rough code of honor recognized and based upon public sentiment. If the man who killed another had justifiable provocation, he went unmolested; but if he had killed his man without sufficient cause, he probably paid the penalty with his own life the first time a relative or friend of the murdered man "got the drop on him." The only other public offence was theft; that was so contemptibly mean and so vitally affected the interests of the miners and their sense of safety, that they rarely ever failed to string up the offender even after rough courts were established and trial by jury granted.

On this special occasion a bag of gold dust had been taken from under a miner's bunk by one of his working companions and he had been captured with it on his way to San Francisco and brought back for a quick and effective trial.

"Have you any counsel?" asked the judge.

"No, I ain't got no friends nor anybody to talk for me; so you might as well cut the chinnin' short and pull me up."

"If you will allow me to act as counsel for the prisoner, I'll say a few words for him," replied a tall ungainly miner, who was a stranger at that particular "diggin's."

"All right, there's the jury. Bring up your client and let him plead to the charge."

The prisoner stood up and admitted the theft, and at the request of the stranger stated the circumstances which had tempted him to take the dust. He had just gotten a letter from his wife in the States, in which she wrote that her mother and one of his children had died and she begged him if he loved her to come home, even if he had to borrow the money of some of his friends, and she would help him to work and pay it back. He also stated that as he had been unable to borrow the money, he had taken the dust with the intention of paying it back when he returned home.

The letter was produced in court to substantiate the truth of his statement, and it evidently weakened some of the jury, but there were stern, unmoved men in the crowd, all belted round with knifes and pistols, who knew that any letting up on theft would render gold dust too unsafe; besides they spoke up right and left, saying that they got just such letters from home as well; that the same kind of sorrow in their own domestic life came up every day or week to some of them, and the very mutual condition of deprivation and toil should establish a code of honesty above everything else. Of course, said they, the fellow can have his counsel to chin for him, but we must graft him to a hub all the same,

It happened however, that this tall, ungainly old miner who had undertaken the defence was an old Methodist camp-meeting revival preacher, and although he began very quietly, and. cautiously treading on the dangerous ground of talking in the prisoner's defence, the first thing that judge, jury and spectators knew, he had got warmed up to his old work, and, although he had the sing-song style of delivery of those old revivalists, his words rang out with all the thrilling eloquence of Clay and the fervid devotional oratory of a Wesley or a Bascom. One by one the human icicles began to melt around him; one by one they began to turn back on their early lives, to their old homes, their father, mother, brothers and sisters, the old church and Sunday school, and all such tender influence. Many a one of them was carried back by that peculiar voice and style to his old camp-meeting days. It was no longer a mining camp; it was no longer a court room, no longer a trial; it was a camp-meeting, and the old preacher was leading them by still waters; he was reaching down and lifting them up out of the mire and clay; and when he closed and solemnly said. "Let us pray for the soul of the man whom we that are innocent are going to slay," there was not a dry eye in the court room, the writers included. And that prayer! who can repeat or describe its fervent words for the soul going to its maker, for the wife and little children waiting in their distant home with love and hope and tremulous expectation for him who would never return, listening to every footstep, responding to every sound?

Never before or since have been such a trial and such a defence in the mines of California. The judge, jury and audience rose to a man and cleared the prisoner. They did more: they made up a purse and sent the poor fellow home to his wife and children, and he did just what he intended to do—returned the money to them in six months after his arrival at home.

What the Wires Said.

"Baby is dead!" Three little words passed along the line; copied somewhere and soon forgotten. But after all was quiet again I leaned my hand upon my head and fell into a deep reverie of all that those words mean.

Somewhere—a dainty form, still and cold, unclasped by mother's arms to-night; eyes that yesterday were bright and blue as skies of June drooped to-night beneath white lids that no voice can ever raise again.

Two soft hands, whose rose leaf fingers were wont to wander lovingly around mother's neck and face loosely holding white buds, quietly folded in confine rest.

Soft lips, yesterday rippling with laughter, sweet as woodland break falls, gay as trill of forest birds; to, night unresponsive to kiss or call of love.

A silent home—the patter of baby feet forever hushed—a cradle unpressed little shoes half worn—dainty garments, shoulderknots of blue to match those eyes of yesterday. folded with aching heart away.

A tiny mound snow covered in some quiet graveyard.

A mother's groping touch in uneasy slumber for the fair head that shall never again rest upon her bosom. The low sob, the bitter tear, as broken dreams awake to said reality. The hope of future years wrecked, like fair ships, that suddenly go down in sight of land.

The watching of other babies, dimpled, laughing, strong, and this one gone. The present agony of grief, the future emptiness of heart, all held in those three little words: "Baby is dead."

Crank.

Whence the term? A reference to the anthorities show that two hundred years ago it ment "a cheat," "an imposter," but it became obsolete, perhaps from the dying out of cranks. If it died out and disappeared from general use, however, it did not die out with that grand old veteran of literature, Carlyle. He has used the term repeatedly, and brought it down to the present day as meaning "dim of vision, violent of temper," and the meaning is further developed by the following description: "A headstrong, very positive, loud, dull and angry kind of man. "This is Carlyle's notion, and it gives a pretty good idea. It must be admitted that the word is not like so many of our latter words of Yankee birth or origin, but comes form a royal stock. It was born in the old Scandinavian days and had an existence before the Saxons went into Eugand. Primarily it meant a "twist" and as good to-day as ever.