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Original Poetry.

For the Altoona Tribune.

HARP OF THE MOUNTAIN.

BY J. A. H.

Farewell to my mountain home,
Where many a day I've passed
In sadness, grief and lonely thoughts,
Yet now I'm freed at last.

Though few there be who'll grieve for me,
When I from them depart,
For malice strong is made to burn
Within the cruel heart.

And envy bold, of color green,
A cruel monster, he
Still lurks within and 's plainly seen
With cruel hate to me.

Yet far from strife and cruel hate,
My bark shall move along,
And silent peace, a constant guest,
Be with me while I roam.

Yet some there be who show to me
True friendship in return;
With eye so meek and smile so sweet,
My heart for them shall mourn.

For friendship true I fain would grieve,
Though found in lonely cell,
Or mountain cot, or lonely spot,
Where sorrow 's made to dwell.

Select Miscellany.

THE MYSTERIOUS ORGANIST.

A LEGEND OF THE RHINE.

"Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood."

Years and years ago, at a grand old cathedral overlooking the Rhine, there appeared a mysterious organist. The great composer who had played the organ so long had suddenly died, and everybody from the king to the peasant, was wondering who could be found to fill his place, when, one bright Sabbath morn, as the sexton entered the church, he saw a stranger sitting at the crape shrouded organ.—He was a tall, graceful man, with a pale but strikingly handsome face, great black, melancholy eyes, and hair like the raven's wing for gloss and color, sweeping in dark waves over his shoulders. He did not seem to notice the sexton, but went on playing, and such music as he drew from the instrument no words of mine can describe. The astonished listener declared that the organ seemed to have grown human—that it wailed, and sighed, and clamored, as if a tortured human heart were throbbing through its pipes. When the music at length ceased, the sexton hastened to the stranger and said—

"Pray, who are you sir?"

"Do not ask my name," he replied; "I have heard that you are in want of an organist, and came here on trial."

"You'll be sure to get the place," exclaimed the sexton. "Why, you surpass him that's dead and gone sir!"

"No, no; you overrate me," resumed the stranger, with a sad smile; and then, as if disinclined to conversation, he turned from old Hans, and began to play again. And now the music changed from a sorrowful strain to a grand pæon, and the mysterious organist—

"Looking upward full of grace,
Prayed till from a happy place,
God's glory smote him on the face,"

and his countenance seemed not unlike that of St. Michael, as portrayed by Guido.

Lost in the harmonies which swelled around him, he sat with his "far-seeing" gaze fixed on the distant sky, a glimpse of which he had caught through an open window, when there was a stir about the church door, and a royal party came sweeping in. Among them might be seen a young girl, with a wealth of golden hair, eyes like the violet in hue, and lips like wild cherries. This was the Princess Elizabeth, and all eyes turned to her, as she seated herself in the velvet cushioned pew appropriated to the court. The mysterious organist fixed his gaze upon her, and went on playing. No sooner had the music reached her ears, than she started, as if a ghost had crossed her path. The bloom faded from her cheek, her lip quivered, her whole frame grew tremulous.—At last her eyes met those of the organist, in a long, long, yearning look, and then the melody lost its joyous notes, and once more wailed, and sighed, and clamored.

"By my faith," whispered the King to his daughter, "this organist has a masterhand. Hark ye, child, he shall play at your wedding!"

The pale lips of the Princess parted, but she could not speak—she was dumb with grief. Like one in a painful dream, she saw the pale man at the organ, and heard the melody which filled the vast edifices. Aye, full well she knew who he was, and why the instrument seemed breathing out the agony of a tortured heart.

When the service was over, and the royal party had left the cathedral, he stole away as mysteriously as he had come.—He was not seen again by the sexton till the vesper hour, and then he appeared in the organ loft, and commenced his task. While he played, a veiled figure glided in, and knelt near a side shrine. There she remained till the worshippers had dispersed, when the sexton touched her on the shoulder and said—

"Madam, everybody has gone but you and me, and I wish to close the doors."

"I am not ready to go yet," was the reply; "leave me—leave me?"

The sexton drew back into a shadowy niche, and watched and listened. The mysterious organist still kept his post, but his head was bowed upon the instrument, and he could not see the lone devotee. At length she rose from the aisle, and moving to the organ-loft, paused beside the musician.

"Bertram," she murmured.

Quick as thought the organist raised his head. There with the light of a lamp suspended to the arch above falling full upon her, stood the Princess who had graced the royal pew that day. The court-dress of velvet, with its soft ermine trimmings, the tira, the necklace, the bracelets, had been exchanged for a grey serge robe and a long, thick veil, which was now pushed back from the fair, girlish face.

"Oh! Elizabeth, Elizabeth?" exclaimed the organist, and he sank at her feet, and gazed wistfully into her troubled eyes.

"Why are you here, Bertram?" asked the Princess.

"I came to bid you farewell, and as I dared not venture into the palace, I gained access to the cathedral by bribing the bell-ringer, and having taken the vacant seat of the dead organist, let my music breathe out the adieu I could not trust my lips to utter."

A low moan was his only answer, and he continued—

"You are to be married on the morrow?"

"Yes," sobbed the girl. "Oh, Bertram, what a trial it will be to stand at yonder alter, and take upon me vows which will doom me to living death!"

"Think of me," rejoined the organist. "Your royal father has requested me to play at the wedding, and I have promised to be here. If I were your equal, I could be the bridegroom instead of the organist; but a poor musician must give you up!"

"It is like rending soul and body asunder to part with you," said the girl.—"To-night I may tell you this—tell you how fondly I love you, but in a few hours it will be a sin! Go, go, and God bless you!"

She waved him from her, as if she would banish him while she had strength to do so, and he—how was it with him! He rose to leave her, then came back, held her to his heart in a long embrace, and with a half smothered farewell, left her.

The next morning dawned in cloudless splendor, and at an early hour the cathedral was thrown open, and the sexton began to prepare for the brilliant wedding. Flame colored flowers nodded by the wayside, flame colored leaves came rushing down from the trees and lay in light heaps upon the ground; the ripe wheat waved like a golden sea, and berries drooped in red and purple clusters over the rocks along the Rhine.

At length the palace-gates were unclosed, and the royal party appeared, escorting the Princess Elizabeth to the cathedral where her marriage was to be solemnized. It was a brave pageant; far brighter than the untwined foliage and blossoms were the tufts of plumes which floated from stately heads, and the festal robes that streamed down over the housings of the superb steeds. But the Princess, mounted on a snow-white palfrey, and clad in snow-white velvet, looked pale and sad; and when, on nearing the church, she heard a gush of organ-music, which, though jubilant in sound, struck on her ear like a funeral knell, she trembled, and would have fallen to the earth had not a page supported her. A few moments afterwards she entered the cathedral. There, with his retinue, stood the royal bridegroom, whom she had never before seen. But her glance roved from him to the organ-loft, where she had expected to see the mysterious organist. He was gone, and she was obliged to return the graceful bow of the King, to whom she had been betrothed from motives of policy.—Mechanically she knelt at his side on the alter-stone—mechanically listened to the service and made the responses. Then her husband drew her to him in a convulsive embrace, and whispered—

"Elizabeth, my Queen, my wife, look up!"

Trembling in every limb, she obeyed. Why did those dark eyes thrill her so? Why did that smile bring a glow to her cheek? Ah? though the King wore the royal purple, and many a jeweled order glittering on his breast, he seemed the same humble person who had been employed to teach her organ music, and had taught her the lore of love.

"Elizabeth," murmured the monarch, "Bertram Hoffman, the mysterious organist, and King Oscar are one! Forgive my stratagem. I wished to marry you, but I would not drag to the alter an unwilling bride. Your father was in the secret."

While tears of joy rained from her blue eyes, the new-made Queen returned her husband's fond kiss, and for once two hearts were made happy by a royal marriage.

A Queer People.

Chambers' *Journal*, discussing a recent book of missionary travels in Africa, thus alludes to one of the tribes which are found in that *terra incognitia*.

But the strangest of all are the stories told of the Dokos, who lived among the moist, warm bamboo woods to the south of Kaffa and Susa. Only four feet high, of a dark olive color, savage and naked, they have neither houses nor temples, neither fire nor human food. They live only on ants, mice and serpents, diversified by a few roots and fruits; they let their nails grow long like tatons, the better to dig for ants and the more easily to tear in pieces their favorite snakes.

They do not marry, but live indiscriminative lives of animals, multiplying very rapidly, and with very little maternal instinct. The mother nurses her child for only a short time, accustoming it to eat ants and serpents as soon as possible; and when it can help itself it wanders away where it will, and the mother thinks no more about it. The Dokos are invaluable as slaves, and are taken in large numbers. The slave-hunters hold up bright colored clothes as soon as they come to the moist bamboo woods where these human monkeys live, and the poor Dokos cannot resist the attractions offered by such superior people. They crowd around them, and are taken in thousands.

In slavery they are docile, attached obedient, with few wants and excellent health. They have only one fault—a love for ants, mice and serpents, and a habit of speaking to Yer with their heads on the ground, and their heels in the air. Yer is their idea of a superior power, to whom they talk in this comical nature when they are dispirited or angry, or tired of ants and snakes, and longing for unknown food.—The Doko seem to come nearest of all people yet discovered to that terrible cousin of humanity—"the ape."

One of the ordinances of the city of Paris fixes the legal weight of a passenger at 150 pounds. All who weigh over that have to pay double fare. We have always thought that some distinction ought to be made between fat people and lean ones, in our public conveyances. A bullock weighing 1,000 pounds always pays twice as much freight as one weighing only 500. Now, there is no more reason why an omnibus or car should carry a 300 pound passenger for the same fare as one who weighs only 100, than that the freight should be carried at a uniform rate per package, without regard to size or weight.

We find the following in a late number of the St. Louis *Democrat*:

"We learned last evening from reliable sources that the State of California has offered the Government 50,000 troops, and that the War Department has accepted them. The first order from the War Department went out last night by the pony express. It directs four regiments of infantry and one of cavalry to proceed to Western Texas. It is stated in official quarters that the 50,000 men will reach the Mississippi valley within forty days."

An English lady, who went to make purchases in Jamacca, accompanied by her black maid, was repeatedly addressed by the negro shopman as "massa;" whereupon her sable follower exclaimed, with a look of infinite contempt, "Why for you speak such bad grammar Sabby? Why for you call my missus massa? Stupid fellah—him's a she!"

"India, my boy," said an Irishman to a friend on his arrival at Calcutta, "is jist the finest climate under the sun; but a lot of young fellows came out here, and they drink and they die, and thin they write home to their friends a pack o' lies, and say its the climate as has killed him."

As we stand by the sea-shore and watch the huge tides come in, we retreat, thinking we will be overwhelmed; soon, however, they flow back. So with the waves of trouble in the world; they threaten us, but a firm resistance makes them break at our feet.

A TALK ABOUT CATS.

Cats are ubiquitious! Every body has one. A household would be without one of its most important outfits if there were none to caper with the little folks. They have become a domestic necessity and a social blessing. In either aspect they may be regarded among the most interesting quadrupedal phenomena of the age. The gentle nature of the female commends her to the highest respect of the housewife, while the irrepressible warfare she wages with those pests of the house, rats and mice, makes her an invaluable treasure.—Among the inmates of the treasury she is an especial favorite, and the young misses are very apt to hug the little pets almost to death. There is something so sympathetic, so harmless and refreshing, in the frolics of a kitten, that no one can wonder at the hold they get upon childhood. A kitten in one hand and a doll in the other make the little girls happy beyond expression. Indulgencies of the social affections though in this small and comparatively insignificant direction, is attended with many advantages. The natural graces need cultivation as well as the intellectual, and whatever tends to enlarge and strengthen either, is worthy of consideration. The tenderness exhibited towards these cunning and lively creatures draws out and developes the characteristics of childhood, and becomes an element of more important moment in after years.—Surround the children with pictures, flowers, or even kittens, and you foster and strengthen the noblest traits of their nature. All these affinities are displayed, or brought out, by but one branch of the race. The male animal, however, posesses none of the attractive peculiarities that distinguish his more gentle companion.—He is a character of a far different type, and by no means so amiable. You find him an out door lodger, a sort of rover at large, regardless of all the laws that govern his feline partner, and a foe alike of all human and quadruped kind. His notes pitched in every key of the caterwauling gamut, ring out through all the hours of the night. They wont go home till morning folks generally retire at about the period when Grimalkin's howl has reached its culmination, and amid nocturnal schreechings, the yelling herd keep up, the let-to-bed gentry get no rest. If anathemas dire invoked upon their heads would exterminate the race, there would soon be no specimens of the genus alive. Lucky for them is it that curses generally return to afflict their authors, and in these instances, the more they are expostulated with, the more intense becomes their carnival. Gentleman Tom seems to possess a sort of highway commission. Having no home, he makes one wherever he can find a door open, or a larder unlocked.—Regardless as he is of the rights of others, it can be no wonder that every hand is raised against him. Hunted from society for his lawlessness he makes reprisals upon anything that falls in his way. He is an Ishmael among the brutes. When the poet penned those lines, "Night's silvery veil hung low," he never dreamed of the awful perversion of its quiet hours by the shocking cadences of a legion of the squalling, screaming, snarling crew that make night hideous by their unearthly sounds. The most effective antidote for them when thus robbing the night of its dreams for the weary, is the logic of a shower of brickbats; a single application of ten, suffices. The house-dog is no match for him, unless he be a huge mastiff, for the cat's superior agility enables him to keep the most active cur at bay. He needs but a fence to separate him from his foe, and at any advance of the latter, he is sure to give him a touch of his claws. The voice of Tom is like that of Sempronius, ever for war! His daguerreotype, taken at fever heat, would be the impersonation of all the furies. He is the concentration of a Bengal tiger in small clothes, and bears about the same relation to other quadrupeds of his weight, as does a pint of brimstone to a barrel of chaff. But it would require the pen of a Goldsmith or a Buffon to do justice to all the qualities of this *rara avis*—a few of them only being the burthen of this article.—*N. Y. Express.*

In the Italian war, it is said, officers went into the army armed like privates; this being deemed necessary, on account of the introduction of rifles, to prevent the commanders from being picked off. Why should not this practice be initiated with us?

—The greatest pleasure of life is love; the greatest treasure, contentment; the greatest possession health; the greatest ease sleep; and the best medicine, a true and faithful friend.

You lost two legs in the army, you say "what did you gain by it?" asked a gentleman of a Chelsea pensioner. "Single blessedness, sir," he replied; "for after that, no woman would marry me."

If a servant will lie for his master, his master need not be astonished if the servant lies for himself.

HOW IT HAPPENED.

Some of our exchanges have revived the following old but good story:

A number of politicians, some of whom were seeking office under the Government, were seated on a tavern porch talking, when an old toper named John D———, a person who is very loquacious when corned but exactly the opposite when sober, said, that if the company had no objection he would tell them a story. They told him to "fire ahead," whereupon he spoke as follows:

A certain king—I don't recollect his name—had a philosopher upon whose judgment he always depended. Now it so happened that one day the king took it into his head to go a hunting, and after summoning his nobles, and making the necessary preparations, he summoned the philosopher and asked him if it would rain. The philosopher told him it would not, and he and his nobles departed.—While journeying along they met a countryman on a jackass. He advised them to return, "for it will certainly rain," said he. They smiled contemptuously on him and passed on. Before they had gone many miles, however, they had reason to regret not having taken the countryman's advice as a heavy shower coming up, they were drenched to the skin.—When they had returned to the palace the king reprimanded the philosopher severely and said—

"I met a countryman and he knows a great deal more than you, for he told me it would rain, whereas you told me it would not."

The king then gave him his walking papers and sent for the countryman, who soon made his appearance.

"Tell me," said the king, how did you know it was going to rain?

"I didn't know," said the rustic, "my jackass told me."

"How, pray, did your jackass tell you?" asked the king.

"By pricking up his ears, your magesty," replied the rustic.

The king sent the countryman away, and procuring the jackass of him he placed him (the jackass) in the office the philosopher had filled. "And here, observed John, looking very wise, is where the king made a very great mistake."

"How so?" inquired the auditors eagerly.

"Why ever since that time, *every jackass wants an office!*"

A RECEIPT FOR CONTENTMENT.—Try to compute your artificial wants—the number of things which you fancy come under the list of "must haves" merely because other people possess them, and not because you would not be quite as well off and as happy in their absence. Try it for one week whenever your fingers are tempted to dally with your purse strings. Record in your memorandum book what in view of this, you sensibly resolve not to buy, and see what a nice little sum will be left you for real necessaries. It is seldom by these last that one is hampered and annoyed. Make the experiment, and see if it is not see. A just economy is not niggardliness; and need not be a miser in avoiding the extravagance of a spendthrift.

It is said that while Senator Wilson was making his masterly retreat in Virginia, on being repulsed by a teamster whose wagon he sought to occupy, he protested in plaintive accents, that he was Henry Wilson of Massachusetts. The response of the teamster was to the point—"Henry Wilson be d—d. I have kicked him off this wagon six times already."—*Boston Post.*

A wag says he knows only one thing better than love, and that is to be thrown into a pond of mush and milk with the privilege of eating your way to share. Our *devil* says "ditto."

In most quarrels, there is a fault on both sides. Both flint and steel are necessary to the production of a spark; either of them may hammer on wood forever, and no fire will follow.

—The less a man knows, the wider he wears his mouth open. It is as impossible for a fool to keep his jaws shut as it is for a sick oyster to keep his shell closed.

—Dr. Holmes tells of "men so utterly mean, that if the archangel should offer to save their souls for a sixpence, they would give a sixpence with a hole in it!"

There are two classes of disappointed lovers, those who are disappointed before marriage, and the more unhappy ones who are disappointed after it.

It must somewhere be written that the virtues of mothers shall continually be visited upon the children, as well as the sins of the father.

What is the difference between a hen with a wing and a hen without one? A mere difference of a pinion.