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Select Poetry.

THE OLD CHURCH BELL.

From the Home Journal.

I rather hear that dear old bell
In reckless discord ring,
Than music's most harmonious swell
Though Manville Lind should sing.

There is a language in its sound—
A magic in its tone—
Calling bright images round—
Restoring pleasures gone.

It falls on my long-quiet ear,
And makes the dead alive;
Friends, kindred, early loves appear,
And early hopes revive.

Not Orpheus, he whose magic lyre
Gave breath to rocks and stones,
Could half so wondrously inspire
As that old bell's beloved tones.

A child, once more, in Sunday suit,
I press my mother's side,
Holding my boyish prattle mute,
Lest God and she should chide.

A youth, with glowing fancies fraught,
The long-lost thoughts arise,
As when, in well-known haunts, I caught
Some fair first love's soft eyes.

A man, I looked for aged worth,
The fathers of the race,
And busy memory calls them forth
To take their honoured place.

But father, mother, early love,
And early hopes are dead,
The friends who saw my heart-strings move
Address me from the dead.

And change has come, on me, on all;
The very bow of prayer
Has nought but thy familiar call
To tell me it is there.

Ring out, old bell! Thy noisy chime
Is music to my heart;
Ring, ring, and down the voice of Time,
Lest dreams and all depart.

Choice Miscellany.

THE CHAMPION.

A ROMANTIC INCIDENT IN SPANISH HISTORY.

From Harper's Magazine.

THE clang of arms and the inspiring notes of martial music resounded through the courtyard of the palace of Navarre; the chivalry of Arragon, Castile, and Navarre had assembled at the summons of their sovereigns, to fight under his banner against the infidels, and now waited impatiently for the moment when the monarch should mount his gallant steed, and lead them to battle and victory. Sancho the Fourth was at that moment bidding farewell to his queen the gentle Donna Nana, who clung to her lord in an agony of tears.

"Be comforted, my beloved," he said to her; "I shall return to you with added laurels to my kindly wreath. Do not fear for me, nor let your sweet face grow pale by brooding over the dangers and chances of war. For my own part I never felt more exulting anticipations of success, and am persuaded that triumph and victory will crown our undertaking."

"Alas! it is not so with me," said Nana sadly. "A presentiment of approaching evil weighs heavily on my heart."

"You shudder at the thought of our separation, Nana, more like a timid young bride parted from her newly wedded lord, than a matron who has shared her husband's joys and sorrows for nearly twenty years."

"You are now far dearer to me, Sancho, than when I gave you my hand. Have I not to thank you for the love and tenderness which has made those long years so blissful and happy?"

"In sooth, I believe, Nana, it is even so; and you love me as warmly as ever. Receive my assurance in return, dear wife, that your face is as dear to me, and the gift of your true heart as fondly prized, as when I first led you to these halls, my youthful and beautiful bride. But suffer me now to bid you farewell, or my smiles will be impatient. I have you to the society of our son, and the guardianship of my trusty Pedro who will attend to your behalf. One word more. I trust to your safe keeping my beautiful, stolid Idorim. You know how I value the noble animal, my first capture from the Moor. See that he is carefully tended in my absence. I shall receive it as a proof of your regard for my wishes. And now, adieu, dearest wife. Think of me, and supplicate heaven that I may be speedily and safely restored to your arms."

So saying, Sancho the great, tenderly embracing his wife, and mounting his charger, placed himself at the head of his gallant army. "The clatter of the horse's hoofs soon died away in the distance, leaving the courtyard of the castle in silence and gloom."

Three days after the king's departure, Don Garcia entered the courtyard of the palace of Navarre.

"Pedro Seo, Pedro Seo!" he cried, "my noble Arab, El Toro, lies dead in a clasp of the recks. I have returned to seek another steed for the chase. Such a bear hunt has not been among the forests of Navarre since the Pyrenees echoed to the horns of Roland; give me forth black Idorim, Pedro, my friend; saddle me my father's charger, for there is no other steed in the king's stable worthy of the host of to-day."

"Don Garcia," replied the master of the horse, "black Idorim is only for the king's mounting; I dare not saddle him for any other."

"But the Infante commands it—the king that he is!"

"Chafe not with a faithful servant, Don Garcia: it is but yesterday I refused the same request to the bastard of Arragon."

"What! dost thou compare me with the base-born Ramiro? Insolent! I shall beat my complaint to my mother, the queen."

"The queen Don Garcia bore his complaint and his petition: 'Oh, my mother, wouldst thou see me dishonored by a mortal? Am I not thine only son, the rightful heir of Arragon, Castile and Navarre? Who may command here, if I may not? Assert my authority, then, and order false Pedro Seo that he give me forth black Idorim.'"

"Pedro Seo has faithfully discharged his duty to my lord the king, who enjoined on him and on me the safe keeping of his favorite horse," said Donna Nana. "The Royal stables are open; take any other steed, but leave black Idorim till thy father's return."

"Nay, by heaven and by the saints, I will have black Idorim or I will have vengeance."

The headstrong youth returned to the courtyard, and again demanded black Idorim, again the master of the horse refused. Don Garcia, pale with contracted rage, sprang on another of the king's chargers, and galloped from the palace. Instead, however, of returning to the plain, he urged his horse into the *dehesa*, or open pastures, lying to the south of the castle, and disappeared on the road to Burgos.

Time passed heavily in her lord's absence, with the gentle Nana. At first she received frequent and joyful tidings of the successes which crowned his arms, and the brilliant victories gained by his forces over the Moslem army. Of late, and since the departure of Garcia from the castle, Sancho's affectionate despatches had ceased;

FORWARD.

and Nana, now writhed from the wayward perversity of her son, and from uncertainty as to her husband's fate, had prepared to rejoin him at any risk, and share the perils to which he might be exposed.

Her resolution was no sooner formed than it was carried into effect; she summoned to her aid the trusty Pedro Seo; and, protected by a small escort under his command, bade adieu to Navarre, and commenced her long and perilous journey towards the theatre of war.

The little caravan had reached Najara, when, to their surprise and joy, they beheld a gallant band of horsemen rapidly approaching; the united banner of Arragon, Castile, and Navarre floating proudly before them, announced to all beholders that Sancho the Fourth led his knights in person.

Nana's heart beat quick and tumultuously; in a few moments the leg about one would clasp her closely to his breast. She looked up to Pedro Seo and urged increased speed. They moved briskly forward; and the advancing knights who formed the king's body guard became more distinctly visible. Sancho, as we have said, headed them; but as soon as they arrived within a short distance of the queen's followers, the monarch advanced a few paces, and in tones of thunder called on them to halt. His brow was darkened by evil passions, his countenance flushed with anger.

"O perils of thy allegiance!" he shouted, rather than spoke, "seize the traitress, I command you! My heart refused to hearken to the tale of her guilt, even when spoken by the lips of her son; but I have seen it. I have lived—wretched that I am—to witness her infamy. But the adulteress, and the companion of her crime, shall not escape my righteous vengeance. See to it that the queen and Pedro Seo remain your prisoners."

If a thunderbolt had fallen at the feet of the miserable Nana, she could not have been more horror-struck, or more confounded. Her life-long dream of happiness was dissipated; the husband of her youth recoiled from her as from the veriest reptile that crawls on the face of God's earth; and the work of her woe and ruin was her own child—her own flesh and blood—her son Garcia! Who would believe her to be pure and innocent when such logic pronounced the tale of her guilt? Unhappy wife! still more unhappy mother! In the deepest dungeons of the Castle of Najara she was left to mourn over her unparalleled misery. Alone, unfriended, solitary, Nana—who so lately had seen herself a beloved and cherished wife, a fond mother, and a mighty sovereign—struggled with her bitter and mournful reflections. She could not reproach her husband, for she felt that his ear had been deceived by the insinuations of her son, confirmed—as she deemed them to be—by the evidence of his senses, when he met her so unexpectedly traveling under the escort of Pedro Seo.

But a short space was left to Nana for agonizing thought. Death, a shameful death, was the punishment of the adulteress. Sancho, more merciful than she had dared to hope, had granted her one loophole for escape—one slender chance for proving her innocence. The lady was to be open to any champion believing in the lady's guiltlessness, who should venture his life in her defence. If any such should proffer his services he might do so in a single combat with her accuser. God—according to the belief of those days—would give victory to him who maintained the truth.

The fatal day approached, and had well-nigh passed. Garcia, unopposed, bestrode his war steed, the redoubtable black Idorim, whose possession he had so eagerly coveted, and purchased at so fearful a price. The assembled knights—in conformity with custom—were placed within sight of the arena, tied to stakes, surrounding what would prove her fatal pile if no champion appeared in her behalf, or if her defender should suffer a defeat.

Who could paint the agitation of Donna Nana, placed within view of the lists, when the previous hours passed, one by one, and a champion stood forth to defend her purity and truth? She was about to resign herself hopefully to inevitable fate, when the sound of a horse's tramp was heard, approaching rapidly, and a knight, in complete armor, and mounted on a charger, whose foaming mouth and reeking sides told that he had been ridden at a fearful pace, dashed into the lists, sang down his gambol of defiance, and announced that he was come to do battle in defence of the falsely-accused, but stainless and guiltless queen.

There was an involuntary movement among the assembled multitude, when Garcia prepared for the inevitable encounter. Nana knew or could guess who his knight might be. No device nor emblem by which his identity would be discovered, could be traced on his helmet or on his shield, but the one with which he announced his steed, and his graceful and gallant bearing, evinced that he was an accomplished warrior.

In a few seconds, the preliminary arrangements were complete, and, with lances in rest, the opponents approached. In the first encounter, to the amusement of all, Garcia was unhorsed, and fell heavily to the ground.

"She is innocent! She is innocent!" shouted the multitude.

"God be praised! though I have lost a son," was the subdued ejaculation of the king.

"I am prepared, in defence of the much injured lady, to do combat to the death," said the stranger knight.

"Base and dastardly villain! confess thy unnatural crime or prepare to meet me once more, when I will not let thee escape so lightly."

Garcia hesitated; he was evidently torn by conflicting emotions. Conscience guilt—fear of the just retribution of Heaven, executed by the stranger's avenging sword—urged him to confess his villainy. On the other hand, apprehensions of the execrations of the multitude, and the indignation of his injured parents, restrained him from making a frank avowal of his crime.

"Rameat, rameat, and make ready for another encounter, or confess that you have lied in your throat," exclaimed the stranger, sternly.

Before Garcia could reply, an aged and venerable ecclesiastic thrust himself between the opponents.

"In the name of heaven I command you to withhold from this unnatural strife," he exclaimed, addressing them; "brothers are ye; the blood of a common father flows in your veins, Ramiro—forget. Garcia, the combat this day has testified to your guilt; make the only atonement in your power, by a full confession."

Ejaculations of astonishment and pity burst from all the spectators. "Long live the noble bastard! The base-born has made base the well-born! The step-son has proved the true son! Praise be to the Virgin, the mother of the people has not been left without a godson to fight for her!" And all the matrons, and many even of the hardened warriors among the multitude, wept with tenderness and joy.

In a few moments the agitated queen found herself in her husband's arms. He implored her forgiveness for the sorrow she had endured; nor could she withhold it for a moment, when she listened to the avowals of the degraded Garcia, who confessed how slowly he had persuaded his father's mind by tales of her infidelity, in revenge for her refusal, and that of Pedro Seo, to entrust him with Sancho's favorite charger, black Idorim.

Nana turned from her absent son, and addressed her young champion to approach. He knelt at her feet.

"Ramiro," she softly said, as she uncloaked the helmet and the visor which concealed the features of Sancho's illegitimate son, "child of my affections, for whom I have ever felt a mother's love, though I have not borne thee a mother's pains; how shall I thank thee? Thy heart this day more than repaid the tenderness I

LIFE'S SUNNY SPOTS.

BY THE LATE WILLIAM LEGGERT.

Through life's dark and stormy path,
He goes the silent tomb,
To some spot of sunshine bath,
That smiles amid the gloom;
The friend who weal and woe partakes,
Unchanged whatever his lot,
Who kindly soothes the heart that aches,
Is sure a sunny spot.

The wife who half our burden bears,
And utters not a moan;
Who rosy hand wipes off our tears,
Unheeded at her own;
Who treasures every kindly word,
And brushes every kindly word,
Each harsher one forgets,
And carols blithely as a bird,
She's too, a sunny spot.

The child who lifts at morn and eve,
In prayer his tiny voice,
Who grieves whene'er his parents grieve,
And joys whene'er they rejoice;
Who brightens every gloomy hour,
Whose heart beats with a lot
Of truth and joy as summer's rose,
That child's a sunny spot.

There's yet upon life's wearied road
One spot of brightness,
Where sorrow half forgets his load
And tears no longer flow;
Friendship may wither, love decline,
Our child his honor blot;
But still undimmed that spot will shine,
Religion's haloed spot.

A Picture for Bachelors.

If in that chair yonder—not the one you feel to be seated, but the other beside you—closer yet—were upon a sweet-faced girl, with a pretty foot lying upon the hearth, a bit-face running round the throat, and the hair parted to a charm over a forehead fair as any in your dreams, and if you could reach an arm through the chair-back without fear of giving offence, and suffer your fingers to play idly with those curls that escape down the neck, and if you would clasp with your other hand those little white taper fingers of hers, which lie so temptingly within reach, and so talk softly and low in the presence of the blaze, while the hours slip without knowledge and the winter winds whistle unheeded for—if, in short, you were no bachelor, but the husband of such a sweet image—dream call it, rather—would it not be far pleasanter than a cold, single night sitting counting the sticks, reckoning the length of the blaze and the height of the falling snow? Surely imagination would be stronger and purer if it could have the playful fancies of dawdling womanhood to delight it. All toil would be torn from mind labor, but another heart grew into this present, soul quickening it, warning it, cheering it, bidding it, over God-speed. Her face would make a halo, rich as a rainbow spot of such ethereal things as we lonely souls call trouble. Her smiles would illumine the blackest of crowded cares, and darkness that now seats you despondent in your solitary chair, for days together, weaving bitter fancies, dreaming idle dreams, would grow light and thin, and spread, then melt away, chased by that loved smile. Year friends, poor fellow! die—never mind; that gentle clasp of her fingers, as she steals behind you telling you not to weep—it is worth his friends!

Your sister, sweetest, is dead—buried. The worms are busy with all her hair. How it makes you think earth nothing but a spot to dig graves upon! It is more. She says she will be a sister; and the waving curls as she leans upon your shoulder, touch your cheek, and your wet eyes turn to meet those other eyes—God has sent his angel surely! Your mother, alas for it, she is gone. In her any bitterness to you, alone and alone, homeless, like this? You are not alone; she is there; her smiles softening yours, her grief killing yours, and you live again to amuse that kind narrow of hair. These—these children, your fair-haired, no they do not disturb you with prattling now, they are yours. Tom away there on the green awning—never mind the hyacinths, the snow drops, the violets, if so be they are there; the perfume of their beautiful lips is worth all the flowers of the world.

No need now to gather wild bouquets to love and cherish; flowers, trees, grass are all dead things; things livelier hold your soul. And she, the mother, sweetest and friend of all, watching, tending, caressing, loving till your own heart grows pained with tenderest jealousy. You have no need now of a cold lecture to teach thankfulness; your heart is too full of it. No need now as once, of burning blossoms of trees taking leaf, and greenness, to turn thought kindly and thankfully; for ever beside you there is fruit, for which eye, heart and soul, are full of unknown, unspoken because unexpressed thank-offering.—*It. Marsd.*

Good Breeding.

The following anecdote is related by Mr. Walker, in his amusing and instructive publication, "The Original," as affording a fine instance of the value of good breeding, or politeness, even in circumstances where it could not be expected to produce any personal advantage.

"An Englishman making the grand tour towards the middle of the last century, when travelers were more objects of attention than at present, on arriving at Turin, happened to see the place. He happened to meet a regiment of infantry returning from the parade, and taking a position to see it pass, a young Captain, evidently desirous to make a display before the stranger, in crossing one of the numerous water-courses, with which the city is intersected, missed his footing, and in trying to save himself lost his hat. The exhibition was truly unfortunate—the spectators laughed and looked at the Englishman, expecting him to laugh too. On the contrary, he not only retained his composure, but promptly advanced to where the hat had rolled, and taking it up, presented it with an air of unaffected kindness to its owner. The officer received it with a blush of surprise and gratitude, and hurried to rejoin his company. There was a murmur of surprise, and the stranger passed on. Though the scene of a moment, and without a word spoken, it touched every heart—not with admiration for a mere display of politeness, but with a warmer feeling for a proof of that pure charity which never faileth."

On the regiment being dismissed, the Captain, who was a young man of consideration, in glowing terms related the circumstance to his Colonel. The Colonel immediately mentioned it to the General in command; and when the Englishman returned to his hotel, he found an Aide-de-Camp waiting to request his company to dinner at headquarters. In the evening, he was carried to court—at that time, as Lord Chesterfield tells us, the most brilliant court in Europe—and was received with particular attention. Of course, during his stay at Turin, he was invited everywhere; and on his departure he was loaded with letters of introduction to the different States of Italy. Thus a private gentleman of moderate means, by a graceful impulse of Christian feeling, was enabled to travel a foreign country, then of the highest importance for its society, as well as for the advantage it still possesses, with more real distinction and advantage than can ever be derived from the mere circumstance of birth and fortune, even the most splendid.

At a late trial, somewhere in Vermont, the defendant, who was not familiar with the multitude of words which the law employs to make a trifling charge, after stating a while to the reading of the indictment, jumped up and said: "them 'ere allegations is false, and that 'ere allegator knows it!"

NEWSPAPER COLLECTING.

My Dear Sir:—I have just returned from a tour through this State, and proceed to furnish you with an account of my labors and their success. I have been gone for three months, and assure you, in all sincerity, I am fully satisfied. You furnished me with a list of one hundred and seventeen new subscribers, as you will recollect. I have called upon you for your order three dollars twelve & a half cents, being the amount to which you are entitled. I return you the list, numbered 1 to 117, and now give you the reply of each.

No. 1—Is a minister. He says in the first place, he never got one half of the numbers, (a lie according to the account of the Post-master,) and in the next place, your joker's column was too scurrilous. He can't think of asking to sustain a paper that advertises horse races and gander pullings. Besides, he knows from a tone of your editorials that you drink, and paying you, would only be the means of ending your days in the lunatic. He was averse at your impudence in sending him his bill after paying. Having the account of the great prize fight between Left Handed Smoke and Battering Bill. He wants nothing to do with you—never wants to hear from you again.

No. 2—Is in jail for debt. He has not seen a half dollar for a year. Says he would pay with the utmost cheerfulness, if he only had the money, but had to borrow a shirt to put on last Sunday. Admire your paper wonderfully, and hopes you will continue sending it to him. He wishes you to take a bold stand in favor of the abolition of imprisonment for debt, as he thinks it would be a very popular move with a gentleman in his situation.—If you send him any more papers he hopes that you will see that the postage is paid, otherwise he will be unable to enjoy your publications. Sends his best respects.

No. 3—Is a young doctor. Says your paper is beneath the notice of a gentleman. Wouldn't give a—
for a cart load. Says you inserted an article reflecting on the profession. Only wishes he would catch you here—would make you small.—Is going to persuade every body that takes your paper, to stop it. Care's your bill, and says you may recollect it in the best way you can.

No. 4—Is an old Maid. Says you are always taking a fling at single ladies of an uncertain age, wouldn't pay you if she was rolling in wealth, and wouldn't cash enough to buy a crust of bread. Sent all the papers she had back month ago, and says now that she sent them back, she don't owe you anything. Says she is even with you, and intends to keep so until the day of judgment. Asked me not to forget to tell you that you are no gentleman, or you wouldn't undertake to slander so large and respectable a class of the female population of the country.

No. 5—Is a gambler—a sporting gentleman. Says he got completely cleaned out last week at the races.—Couldn't accommodate his grand-mother with a half-dime if she was starving. Likes your paper tolerably—would like it better if you published more races, and would occasionally give an account of a cock-fight.—Liked the description of the prize fight amazingly—it doomed a multitude of your faults. Hopes you won't think hard of his not paying you now—but has got a prospect of soon having some loose change, as he'll after a rich young greenhorn who arrived here last week. Will pay your bill out of the pickings.

No. 6—Is an old drunkard. Hasn't got anything and never expects to have. Gathered up all the papers he had and sold them for a half-pint of rum, to the doggerly-keeper to wrap groceries in. Wished you would send him a pile, as they cost him no postage, his brother-in-law being post-master, and permitting him to take out his papers for nothing. Winked at me when I presented your bill, and inquired if I wasn't distant relation to the man that lusted the ball off the bridge.

No. 7—Is a magister. Swore he never owed you a cent, and told me I was a law rascal for trying to swindle him in such a barefaced manner. Advised me to make tracks in a little less than no time, or he would get out a warrant against me as a common cheat, and have me sent to prison. Took his advice. I, by all odds, the meanest man I have seen yet. Will never go near him again.

No. 8—Is a politician. Says although you profess to publish a neutral paper, it is not so. Thinks he has seen considerable squinting towards the side to which he is opposed. Meant to have told you a year ago to stop his paper, but forgot it. Tells you to do so now, and thinks you are getting off very cheaply in not losing any more by him. Believes you to be a rascal, and is too honorable to have anything to do with you, as it might compromise him and injure his prospects.

No. 9—Paid up like a man. The only one. Like your paper first rate, and means to take and pay for it as long as you publish it, or he lives. Asked me to dinner and treated me like a king. An oasis in the desert! A man fit for heaven!

No. 10—Is a merchant. Expects to break shortly, so must save all his small change. Offered me a pair of breeches and a cotton handkerchief for the debt. Refused him with scorn. Had along jaw. Threatened to break my head. Dared him to do it. Threw a hatchet at me. I dodged it and put out.

No. 11 to 117—Mean as rot. Had no money—wouldn't pay—didn't owe. I swore I'd owe. Said I might owe and be hanged. Carried all the little ones and buried from the big. Never got the first red cent from one of them.

The foregoing is a true extract from my note-book.—I have not succeeded a whit better with the patrons of the other publications for which I am agent, so it is impossible to collect of those who are determined not to pay. I have said I have been away three months. I have expended in that period two hundred and ten dollars travelling, and my entire commission amount to eighty-two dollars and forty-five cents. I am very willing to do my share towards the propagation of news, but more than that no reasonable man could ask.—This business don't exactly suit me—I can't stand it.

Please accept my resignation and strike my name from your list agents. Admire your paper very much myself, but it would be a queer looking sort of concern that would come fully up to the requirements of every body.—One wants independence in an editor—another don't want any. One wants all slang—another wouldn't touch a journal that contained an irrelevant line with a too-foot post. One wants sentimental, lachrymated Miss in pantaloon wadded evening ball levity poetry, another never reads anything but the marriage.

All kinds of abuse I have to bear, too. I wouldn't mind it so much if they only called you and your paper, but they abuse me too! Swindler, rascal, villain, blood-sucker. These are some of the names they think proper to bestow upon me. I tried fighting for a while, and threatened several of 'em patriots like blazes, but occasionally I got licked like thunder myself. Once I was put in jail for assault and battery, and only escaped by breaking out.

Send me a receipt for three dollars twelve and a half cents, and believe me, yours in despair.

AARON SWATWELL.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

At a late trial, somewhere in Vermont, the defendant, who was not familiar with the multitude of words which the law employs to make a trifling charge, after stating a while to the reading of the indictment, jumped up and said: "them 'ere allegations is false, and that 'ere allegator knows it!"