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A. P. DURLIN & CO. PROPRIETORS.

B. F. SLOAN, Editor.

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Erie Nov. 22, 1851. 29 Corner of fifth & State-st.

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Poetry and Miscellany.

WORK TO-DAY.

BY SAMUEL M'NUTT.

Let us now be up and doing,
Let us work while it is to-day;
Soon the shades of night shall gather
O'er our dim, receding way.
Ere the silver cord is broken,
And our feeble life is o'er,
Let us work to-day in earnest,
For to-day shall come no more.

Our few years are swiftly passing,
And our hearts are growing old;
Voices of the ages tell us,
Life has labors manifold.
Here to each of us is given
Work on earth's wide harvest plain.
Work that we to-day must finish,
For to-day comes not again.

Gird thee for thy task, my brother,
Firmly meet the toil and strife;
It is death to sleep or waver
On the battle-field of life.
Raise thy faint and erring brother,
Guide him in the path of right;
Let thy kindness cheer the weary,
Guard the friendless in thy might.

Life is not the time for slumber,
Hate and danger mar the road,
Men yet dwell in sin and darkness,
In the vineyard of thy God.
Lift thy voice to wandering mortals,
Speak the truth that all may hear;
Nobly combat wrong and error,
Firm in purpose, without fear.

God is o'er thee! Truth is mighty—
Faith and love are wondrous strong;
Songs of triumph wait on labor,
All high deeds to her belong.
Nature works! True life is action;
Brother, wield this god-like power;
Live and act to-day in earnest,
Act and live thy little hour.

THE POINT OF HONOR.

One evening in the autumn of the year 1842, seven persons, including myself, were sitting and chatting in a state of hilarious gayety in front of Senor Arguellas's country-house, a mile or so out of Santiago de Cuba, in the Eastern Intendencia of the Queen of the Antilles, and once its chief capital, when an accident occurred that as effectually put an extinguisher upon the noisy mirth as if a bomb-shell had suddenly exploded at our feet. But first a brief account of those seven persons, and the cause of their being so assembled, will be necessary.

Three were American merchants—Southerners and smart traders, extensively connected with the commerce of the Colombian Archipelago, and designing to sail on the morrow, wind and weather permitting, in the bark Neptune—Starkey, master and part owner—for Morant Bay, Jamaica; one was a lieutenant in the Spanish artillery, and nephew of our host; another was a M. Dupont, a young and rich creole, of mingled French and Spanish parentage, and the reputed suitor for the hand of Donna Antonia, the daughter and sole heiress of Senor Arguellas, and withal a graceful and charming maiden of eighteen—a ripe one in that precocious clime; the sixth guest was Captain Starkey, of the Neptune, a gentlemanly, fine-looking English seaman of about thirty years of age; the seventh and last was myself, at that time a mere youngster, and but just recovered from a severe fit of sickness which a twelvemonth previously had necessitated my removal from Jamaica to the much more temperate and equable climate of Cuba, albeit the two islands are only distant about five degrees from each other. I was one of Captain Starkey's passengers, and so was Senor Arguellas, who had business to wind up in Kingston. He was to be accompanied by Senora Arguellas, Antonia, the young lieutenant, and M. Dupont. The Neptune had brought a cargo of sundries, consisting of hardware, cottons, &c., to Cuba, and was returning about half laden with goods. Amongst these, belonging to the American merchants, were a number of barrels of gunpowder, that had proved unsaleable in Cuba, and which, it is thought, might find a satisfactory market in Jamaica. There was excellent cabin-accommodation on board Captain Starkey's vessel, and as the weather was fine, and the passage promised to be a brief as well as pleasant one—the wind having shifted to the northwest, with the intention, it seemed, of remaining there for some time—we were all, as I have stated, in exceedingly good humor, and discussing the intended trip, Cuban, American and European politics, and the comparative merits of French and Spanish wines, and Havana and Alabama cigars, with infinite glee and gusto.

The evening, too, was deliciously bright and clear. The breeze, pronounced by Captain Starkey to be rising to a five or six knot one at sea, only sufficiently stirred the rich and odorous vegetation of the valleys, stretching far away beneath us, gently to fan the heated faces of the party with its grateful perfume, and slightly ripple the winding rivers, rivulets, rather, which everywhere intersect and irrigate the island, and which were now glittering with the myriad splendors of the intensely-lustrous stars that diadem a Cuban night. Nearly all the guests had drunk very freely of wine—too much so, indeed; but the talk, in French, which all could speak tolerably, did not profane the calm glory of the scene, till some time after Senora Arguellas and her daughter had left us. The Senor, I should state, was still detained in town by business which it was necessary he should dispose of previous to embarking for Jamaica.

"Do not go away," said Senora Arguellas, addressing Captain Starkey, as she rose from her seat, "till I see you again. When you are at leisure, ring the *sonnett* on the table, and a servant will inform me. I wish to speak further with you relative to the cabin arrangements."

Captain Starkey bowed. I had never, I thought, seen Antonia smile so sweetly; and the two ladies left us. I do not precisely remember how it came about, or what first led to it; but it was not very long before we were all conscious that the conversation had assumed a disagreeable tone. It struck me that possibly M. Dupont did not like the expression of Antonia's face as she curtsied to Captain Starkey. The after-unpleasantness did not, however, arise, ostensibly, from that cause. The commander of the Neptune had agreed to take several free colored families to Jamaica, where the services of the men, who were reputed to be expert at sugar cultivation, had been engaged at much higher wages than could be obtained in Cuba. The American gentlemen had previously expressed disapprobation of this arrangement, and now began to be very liberal indeed with the taunts and sneers relative to Captain Starkey's "principles," as they pleasantly termed that gentleman's very temperate vindication of the right of colored people to their own souls. This, however, would, I think, have passed off harmlessly, had it not been that the captain happened to mention, very imprudently, that he had once served as a midshipman on board the English slave-squadron. This fanned M. Dupont's smouldering ill-humor into a flame; and I gathered from his confused maledictions that he had suffered in property from the exertions of that force. The storm of angry words raged fiercely. The motives of the English for interfering with the slave traffic were denounced with contemptuous bitterness on the one side, and as warmly and angrily defended on the other. Finally—the fact is, they were both flustered with wine and passion, and scarcely knew what they said or did—M. Dupont applied an epithet to the Queen of England, which instantly brought a glass of wine full in his face from the hand of Captain Starkey. They were all in an instant on their feet, and apparently sobered, or nearly so, by the unfortunate issue of the worthy tumult.

Captain Starkey was the first to speak. His flushed angry features paled suddenly to an almost deathly white, and he stammered out: "I beg your pardon, M. Dupont. it was wrong—very wrong in me to do so, though not inexcusable."

"Pardon! *Mille tonnerres!*" shouted Dupont, who was capering about in an ecstacy of rage, and whiping his face with his handkerchief. "Yes, a bullet through your head shall pardon you—nothing less!"

Indeed, according to the then notions of Cuban society, no other alternative save the duello appeared possible. Lieutenant Arguellas returned with a case of pistols. "Let us proceed," he said in a quick whisper, "to the grove yonder; we shall be there free from interruption." He took Dupont's arm, and both turned to move off. As they did so, Mr. Desmond, the elder of the American gentlemen, stepped towards Captain Starkey, who with recovered calmness, and with his arms folded, was standing by the table, and said: "I am not entirely, my good sir, a stranger to these affairs, and if I can be of service I shall"—

"Thank you, Mr. Desmond," replied the English captain; "but I shall not require your assistance. Lieutenant Arguellas, you may as well remain. I am no duellist, and shall not fight M. Dupont."

"What does he say?" exclaimed the lieutenant, gazing with stupid bewilderment round the circle. "Not fight!"

The Anglo-Saxon blood, I saw, flushed as hotly in the veins of the Americans as it did in mine at this exhibition of the white feather by one of our race. "Not fight, Captain Starkey!" said Mr. Desmond, with grave earnestness, after a painful pause; "you, whose name is in the list of the British royal navy, say this! You must be jesting!"

"I am perfectly serious—I am opposed to duelling, upon principle."

"A coward, upon principle!" fairly screamed Dupont, with mocking fury, and at the same time shaking his clenched fist at the Englishman.

The degrading epithet stung like a serpent. A gleam of fierce passion broke out of Captain Starkey's dark eyes, and he made a step towards Dupont, but resolutely checked himself.

"Well, it must be borne! I was wrong to offer you personal violence, although your impertinence certainly deserved rebuke. Still, I repeat, I will not fight with you."

"But you *shall* give my friend satisfaction!" exclaimed Lieutenant Arguellas, who was as much excited as Dupont; "or by heaven I will post you as a dastard, not only throughout this island, but Jamaica!"

Captain Starkey, for an answer to this menace, coolly rang the *sonnette*, and desired the slave who answered it to inform Senora Arguellas that he was about to leave, and wished to see her.

"The brave Englishman is about to place himself under the protection of your aunt's petticoats, Alphonse!" shouted Dupont, with triumphant mockery.

"I almost doubt whether Mr. Starkey is an Englishman," exclaimed Mr. Desmond, who, as well as his two friends, was getting pretty much incensed; "but, at all events, as my father and mother were born and raised in the old country, if you presume to insinuate that"—

Senora Arguellas at this moment approached, and the irate American with some difficulty restrained himself. The lady appeared surprised at the strange aspect of the company she had so lately left. She however, at the request of the captain, instantly led the way into the house, leaving the rest of her visiters, as the French say, *plantes la*.

Ten minutes afterwards, we were informed that Captain Starkey had left the house, after impressing upon Senora Arguellas that the Neptune would sail the next morning precisely at nine o'clock. A renewed torrent of rage, contempt and scorn broke forth at this announcement, and a duel at one time seemed inevitable between Lieutenant Arguellas and Mr. Desmond, the last named gentleman manifesting great anxiety to shoot somebody or other in vindication of his Anglo-Saxon lineage. This, however, was overruled, and the party broke up in angry disorder.

We were all aboard by the appointed time on the following morning. Captain Starkey received us with civil indifference, and I noticed that the elaborate sneers which sat upon the countenance of Dupont and the lieutenant did not appear in the slightest degree to ruffle or affect him; but the averted eye and scornful air of Donna Antonia, as she passed with Senora Arguellas towards the cabin, drawing her mantilla tightly around her as she swept by, as if—so I perhaps wrongfully interpreted the action—it would be soiled by contact with a paltroon, visibly touched him—only, however, for a few brief moments. The expression of pain quickly vanished, and his countenance was as cold and stern as before. There was, albeit, it was soon found, a limit to this, it seemed, contemptous forbearance. Dupont approached him, gave his thought audible expression, exclaiming loud enough for several of the crew to hear, and looking steadily in the captain's face, "*Lache!*" He would have turned away, but was arrested by a grip of steel.

"*Ecoutez*, monsieur," said Captain Starkey: "individually, I hold for nothing whatever you may say; but I am Captain and king in this ship, and I will permit no one to beard me before the crew, and thereby lessen my authority over them. Do you presume again to do so, and I will put you in solitary confinement, perhaps in irons, till we arrive at Jamaica." He then threw off his startled auditor, and walked forward.

The passengers, colored as well as white, were all on board; the bows of the ship fell slowly off, and we were in a few moments running before the wind, though but a faint one, for Point Morant.

No one could be many hours on board the Neptune without being fully satisfied that, however deficient in duelling courage her captain might be, he was a thorough seaman, and that his crew—about a dozen of as fine fellows as I have ever seen—were under the most perfect discipline and command. The service of the vessel was carried on as noiselessly and regularly as on board a ship of war; and a sense of confidence, that should a tempest or other sea peril overtake us, every reliance might be placed in the professional skill and energy of Captain Starkey, was soon openly or tacitly acknowledged by all on board. The weather throughout happily continued fine, but the wind was light and variable, so that for several days after we had sighted the blue mountains of Jamaica, we scarcely appeared to diminish the distance between them and us. At last the breeze again blew steadily from the northwest, and we gradually neared Point Morant. We passed it, and opened up the bay at about 2 o'clock in the morning, when the voyage might be said to be over. This was a great relief to the cabin passengers—far beyond the ordinary pleasure to landfolk of escaping from the tedium of confinement on shipboard. There was a constraint in the behaviour of everybody that was exceedingly unpleasant. The captain presided at table with freezing civility; the conversation, if such it might be called, was usually restricted to monosyllables; and we were all very heartily glad that we had eaten our last dinner in the Neptune. When we doubled Point Morant, all the passengers, except myself, were in bed, and a quarter of an hour afterwards Captain Starkey went below, and was soon busy, I understood, with papers in his cabin

For my part, I was too excited to sleep, and I continued to pace the deck fore and aft with Hawkins, the first mate, whose watch it was, eagerly observant of the lights on the well known shore, that I had left so many months before with but faint hopes of ever seeing it again. As I thus gazed landward, a bright gleam, as of crimson moonlight, shot across the dark sea, and turning quickly round, I saw that it was caused by a tall jet of flame shooting up the main hatchway, which two seamen, for some purpose or other, had at the moment partially opened.—In my still weak state, the terror of the sight—for the recollection of the barrels of powder on board flashed instantly across my mind—for several moments completely stunned me; and but that I caught instinctively at the rattlings, I should have fallen prostrate on the deck. A wild outcry of "Fire! fire!"—the most fearful cry that can be heard at sea—mingled with and heightened the dizzy ringing in my brain, and I was barely sufficiently conscious to discern, amidst the runnings to and fro, and the incoherent exclamations of the crew, the sinewy, athletic figure of the captain leap up, as it were, from the companion-ladder to the deck, and with his trumpet-voice commanded immediate silence, instantly followed by the order to batten down the blazing hatchway. This, with his own assistance, was promptly effected, and then he disappeared down the forecastle.

The two or three minutes he was gone—it could scarcely have been more than that—seemed interminable; and so completely did it appear to be recognised that our fate must depend upon his judgment and vigor, that not a word was spoken, nor a finger, I think, moved, till he reappeared, already scorched and blackened with the fire, and dragging up what seemed a dead body in his arms. He threw his burden on the deck, and passing swiftly to where Hawkins stood, said in a low, hurried whisper, but audible to me, "Run down and rouse the passengers, and bring my pistols from the cabin locker. Quick! eternity hangs on the loss of a moment." Then turning to the startled but attentive seamen, he said in a rapid but firm voice—"You well know, men, that I would not on any occasion, or for any motive deceive you. Listen, then, attentively. Yon drunken brute—he is Lieutenant Arguellas's servant—has fired with his candle the spirits he was stealing, and the whole is a mass of fire which it is useless to waste one precious moment in attempting to extinguish."

A cry of rage and terror burst from the crew, and they sprang impulsively towards the boats, but the captain's authoritative voice at once arrested their steps. "Hear me out, will you? Hurry and confusion will destroy us all, but with courage and steadiness every soul on board may be saved before the flames can reach the powder.—And remember," he added, as he took the pistols from Hawkins and cocked one of them, "that I will send a bullet after any man who disobeys me, and I seldom miss aim. Now, then, to your work—steadily, and with a will!"

It was marvellous to observe the influence his bold, confident and commanding bearing and words had upon the men. The panic and terror that had seized them gave place to energetic resolution, and in an incredibly short space of time the boats were in the water. "Well done, my fine fellows! There is plenty of time, I again repeat. Four of you"—and he named them—"remain with me. Three others jump into each of the large boats, two into the small one, and bring them round to the landward side of the ship. A rush would swamp the boats, and we shall be able to keep only the gangway clear."

The passengers were by this time rushing upon deck half clad, and in a state of the wildest terror, for they all knew there was a large quantity of gunpowder on board. The instant the boats touched the starboard side of the bark, the men, white as well as colored, forced their way with frenzied eagerness before the women and children—careless, apparently, whom they sacrificed; so that they might themselves leap to the shelter of the boats from the fiery volcano raging beneath their feet. Captain Starkey, aided by the four athletic seamen he had selected for the duty, hurled them fiercely back.

"Back, back!" he shouted. "We must have funeral order here—first the women and children, next the old men. Hand Senora Arguellas along; next the young lady, her daughter; quick!"

As Donna Antonia, more dead than alive, was about to be lifted into the boat, a gush of flame burst up through the main hatchway with the roar of an explosion; a tumultuous cry burst from the frenzied passengers, and they jostled each other with frightful violence in their efforts to reach the gangway. Dupont forced his way through the lane of seamen with the energy of a madman, and pressed so suddenly upon Antonia that, but for the utmost exertion of the captain's herculean strength, she must have been precipitated into the water.

"Back, unmanly dastard! back, dog!" roared Captain Starkey, terribly excited by the lady's danger; and a moment after, seizing Dupont fiercely by the collar, he added: "or, if you will, look there but for a moment"—and he pointed with his pistol-hand to the fins of several sharks plainly visible in the glaring light at but a few yards' distance from the ship. "Men," he added, "let whoever presses forward out of his turn fall into the water."

"Ay, ay, sir!" was the prompt mechanical response.

This terrible menace instantly restored order; the colored women and children were next embarked, and the boat appeared full.

"Pull off," was the order; "you are deep enough for safety."

A cry, faint as the wail of a child, arose in the boat.—It was heard and understood.

"Stay one moment; pass along Senora Arguellas.—Now, then, off with you, and be smart!"

The next boat was quickly loaded; the colored lads and men, all but one, and the three Americans, went in her.

"You are a noble fellow," said Mr. Desmond, passing an instant, and catching at the captain's hand; "and I was but a fool to"—

"Pass on," was the reply; "there is no time to bandy compliments."

The order to shove off had passed the captains' lips, when his glance chanced to light upon me, as I leaned, dumb with terror, just behind him, against the vessel's bulwarks.

"Hold on a moment!" he cried. "Here is a youngster whose weight will not hurt you;" and he fairly lifted me over, and dropped me gently into the boat, whispering as he did so: Remember me, Ned, to thy father and mother, should I not see them again."

There was now only the small boat, capable of safely containing but eight persons; and how, it was whispered amongst us—how, in addition to the two seamen already in her, can she take off Lieutenant Arguellas, M. Dupont, the remaining colored man, the four seamen, and Capt. Starkey? They were, however, all speedily embarked except the Captain.

"Can she bear another?" he asked, and although his voice was firm as ever, his countenance, I noticed, was ashy pale, yet full as ever of unswerving resolution.

"We must, and will, sir, since it's you; but we are dangerously overcrowded now, especially with you ugly customers swimming round us."

"Stay one moment; I cannot quit the ship whilst there's a living soul on board." He stepped hastily forward, and presently reappeared at the gangway with the still senseless body of the lieutenant's servant in his arms, and dropped it over the side into the boat. There was a cry of indignation, but it was of no avail. The boat's rope the next instant was cast into the water. "Now pull for your lives!" The oars, from the instinct of self-preservation, instantly fell into the water, and the boat sprang off. Captain Starkey, now that all except himself were clear of the burning ship, gazed eagerly, with his eyes shaded with his hand in the direction of the shore. Presently he hailed the headmost boat. "We must have been seen from the shore long ago, and pilot-boats ought to be coming out, though I don't see any.—If you meet one, bid him be smart; there may be a chance yet." All this scene, this long agony, which has taken me so many words to depict very imperfectly from my own recollection, and those of others, only lasted, I was afterwards assured by Mr. Desmond, eight minutes, from the embarkation of Senora Arguellas till the last boat left the ill-fated Neptune.

Never shall I forget the frightful sublimity of the spectacle presented by that flaming ship, the sole object, save ourselves, discernable amidst the vast and heaving darkness, if I may use the term, of the night and ocean, coupled as it was with the dreadful thought that the heroic man to whose firmness and presence of mind we all owed our safety, was inevitably doomed to perish. We had not rowed more than a couple of hundred yards, when the flames, leaping up everywhere through the deck, reaching the rigging and the few sails set, presenting a complete outline of the bark and her tracery of masts and yards, drawn in lines of fire! Capt. Starkey, not to throw away the chance he spoke of, had gone out to the end of the bowsprit, having first let the jib and foresail go by the run, and was for a brief space safe from the flames; but what was this but a prolongation of the bitterness of death?

The boats continued to increase the distance between them and the blazing ship, amidst a dead silence, broken only by the measured dip of the oars; and many an eye was turned with intense anxiety shoreward, with the hope of descrying the expected pilot. At length a distinct hail—and I felt my heart stop beating at the sound—was heard ahead, lustily responded to by the seamen's throats, and presently afterwards a swiftly-propelled pilot-boat shot out of the thick darkness ahead, almost immediately followed by another.

"What ship is that?" cried a man standing in the bows of the first boat.

"The Neptune, and that is Captain Starkey on the bowsprit!"

I sprang eagerly to my feet, and with all the force I could exert, shouted:—"A hundred pounds for the first boat that reaches the ship!"

"That's young Mr. Mainwaring's face and voice!" exclaimed the foremost pilot. "Hurrah, then, for the prize!" and away both sped with eager vigor, but unaware, certainly, of the peril of the task. In a minute or so another shore-boat came up, but after asking a few questions, and seeing how matters stood, remained, and lightened us of a portion of our living cargo. We were all three too deep in the water, the small boat perilously so.

Great God! the terrible suspense we all felt whilst this was going forward! I can scarcely bear, even now, to think about it. I shut my eyes, and listened with breathless palpitating excitement, fo the explosion, that should end all. It came!—at least, I thought it did—and I sprang convulsively to my feet. So sensitive was my brain, partly, no doubt, from recent sickness as well as fright, that I had mistaken the sudden shout of the boat's crew for the dreaded catastrophe. The bowsprit, from the end of which a rope was dangling, was empty! and both pilots, made aware, doubtless, of the danger, were pulling with the eagerness of fear from the ship. The cheering among us was renewed again and again, during which I continued to gaze with arrested breath and fascinated stare at the flaming vessel and fleeing pilot-boats. Suddenly a pyramid of flames shot up from the hold of the ship, followed by a deafening roar. I fell, or was knocked down, I know not which; the boat rocked as if caught in a fierce eddy, next came the hiss and splash of numerous heavy bodies falling from a great height into the water; and then the blinding glare and stunning uproar were succeded by a soundless silence and a thick darkness, in which no man could discern his neighbor. The stillness was broken by a loud, cheerful hail from one of the pilot-boats; we recognized the voice, and the simultaneous and ringing shout which burst from us assured the gallant seamen of our own safety, and how exultingly we all rejoiced in his. Half an hour afterwards we were safely landed, and as the ship and cargo had been specially insured, the only ultimate evil result of this fearful passage in the lives of the passengers and crew of the Neptune, was a heavy loss to the underwriters.

A piece of plate, at the suggestion of Mr. Desmond and his friends, was subscribed for and presented to Captain Starkey at a public dinner given at Kingston in his honour—a circumstance that many there will remember. In his speech on returning thanks for the compliment paid him, he explained his motive for resolutely declining to fight a duel with M. Dupont, half-a-dozen versions of which had got into the newspapers.—

"I was very early left an orphan," he said, "and was very tenderly reared by a maternal aunt, Mrs. ———." (He mentioned a name with which hundreds of newspaper readers in England must be still familiar.) "Her husband—as many here may be aware—fell in a duel in the second month of wedlock. My aunt continued to live dejectly on till I had passed my nineteenth year; and so vivid an impression did the patient sorrow of her life make on me—so thoroughly did I learn to loathe and detest the barberous practice that consigned her to a premature grave, that it scarcely required the solemn promise she obtained from me, as the last sigh trembled on her lips, to make me resolve never, under any circumstances, to fight a duel. As to my behavior during the unfortunate conflagration of the Neptune, which my friend Mr. Desmond has spoken of so flatteringly, I can only say that I did no more than my simple duty in the matter. Both he and I belong to a maritime race, one of whose most peremptory maxams it is that the captain must be the last man to quit or give up his ship. Besides, I must have been the veriest dastard alive to have quailed in the presence of—of—that is, in the presence of—circumstances which—in point of fact—that is——."

Here Captain Starkey blushed and boggled sadly: he was evidently no orator; but whether it was the sly significance of Senor Arguellas's countenance, which just then happened to be turned towards him, or the glance he threw at the gallery, where Senora Arguellas's grave placidity and Donna Antonia's bright eyes and blushing cheeks encountered him, that so completely put him out, I cannot say; but he continued to stammer painfully, although the company cheered and laughed with great vehemence and uncommon good humor, in order to give him time. He could not recover himself; and after floundering about through a few more unintelligible sentences, set down, evidently very hot and uncomfortable, though amidst a little hurricane of hearty cheers and hilarious laughter.

I have but a few more words to say. Captain Starkey has been long settled at Havana; and Donna Antonia has been just as long Mrs. Starkey. Three little Starkeys have to my knowledge already come to town, and the captain is altogether a rich and prosperous man; but though apparently permanently domiciled in a foreign country, he is, I am quite satisfied, as true an Englishman, and as loyal a subject of Queen Victoria, as when he threw the glass of wine in the Cuban creole's face.—I don't know what has become of Dupont; and, to tell the truth, I don't much care. Lieut. Arguellas has attained the rank of major: at least, I suppose he must be the Major Arguellas officially reported to be slightly wounded in the Lopez expedition. And I, also, am pretty well, now, thank you!

From Ik Marvel's "Dream Life."

CHEER AND CHILDREN.

* * * "Dear Madge!"

"Dear Clarence!"

———And you pass your arm now, unchecked, around that yielding, graceful figure; and fold her to your bosom, with the swift and blessed assurance, that your fullest, and noblest dream of love is won!

* * * What a glow there is in the sun! What warmth yet—yet it does not oppress you; what coolness—yet it is not too cool. The birds sing sweetly; you catch yourself watching to see what new songsters they can be;—they are only the old robins and thrushes;—yet what a new melody is in their throats!

The clouds hang gorgeous shapes in the sky—shapes they could hardly ever have fashioned before. The grass was never so green, the butter-cups were never so plenty; there never was such a life in the leaves. It seems as if the joyousness in you, gave a throb to nature, that made every thing green and buoyant.

Faces too are changed: men look pleasantly; children are all charming children; even babies look tender and lovable. The street beggar at your door is suddenly grown into a Belisarius, and is one of the most deserving heroes of modern times. Your mind is in a continued ferment; you glide through your toil—dashing our sparkles of passion—like a ship in the sea. No difficulty daunts you; there is a kind of buoyancy in your soul, that rocks over danger or doubt, as sea waves lave calmly and smoothly over sunken rocks.

You grow unusually amiable and kind; you are earnest in search of friends; you shake hands with your office boy, as if he were your second cousin. You joke with the stout washerwoman; and give her a shilling over change, and insist upon her keeping it; and grow quite merry at the recollection of it. You tap your hackman on the shoulder very familiarly, and tell him he is a capital fellow, and don't allow him to whip his horses, except when driven to the post office. You even ask him to take a glass of beer with you, upon some chilly evening. You drink to the health of his wife. He says he has no wife;—whereupon you think him a very miserable man; and give him a dollar by way of consolation.

You think all the editorials in the morning papers are remarkably well written, whether upon your side or upon the other. You think the stock market has a very cheerful look,—even with Erie—of which you are a large holder—down to seventy-five. You wonder why you never admired Mrs. Hemens before, or Stoddard, or any of the rest.

You give a pleasant curl to your fingers, as you saunter along the street, and say—but not so loud as to be overheard—"She is mine—she is mine!"

You wonder if Frank ever loved Nelly one half as well as you love Madge? You feel quite sure he never did. You can hardly conceive how it is that Madge has not been seized before now, by scores of enamored men, and borne off, like the Sabine women in Romish history.

You chuckle over your future, like a boy who has found a guinea, in groping for sixpences You read over the marriage service—thinking of the time when you will take *her* hand, and slip the ring on *her* finger; and repeat after the clergyman—"for richer—for poorer; for better—for worse!" A great deal of worse there will be about it, you think!

Through all, your heart cleaves to that sweet image of the beloved Madge, as light cleaves to day. The weeks leap with a bound, and the months only grow long, when you approach that day which is to make her yours.—There are no flowers rare enough to make bouquets for her; diamonds are too dim for her to view; pearls are tame.

———And after marriage, the weeks are ever shorter than before; you wonder why on earth all the single men in the world do not rush tumultuously to the Altar; you look upon them all as a traveled man will look upon some conceited Dutch boor, who has never been beyond the limits of his cabbage garden. Married men, on the contrary, you regard as fellow voyagers; and look upon their wives—ugly as they may be—as better than none.

You blush a little at first telling your butcher what "your wife" would like; you bargain with the grocer for sugars and teas, and wonder if he *knows* that you are a married man? You practice your new way of talk upon your office boy; you tell him that your wife expects you home to dinner; and are astonished that he does not stare to hear you say it!

You wonder if the people in the omnibus know that Madge and you are just married; and if the driver knows that the shilling you hand to him, is "for self and wife?"

You enter your name upon the hotel books as "Clarence —— and Lady;" and come back to look at it, wondering if anybody else had noticed it—and thinking that it looks remarkably well. You cannot help thinking that every third man you meet in the hall, wishes he possessed your wife;—nor do you think it very sinful in him to wish it.

Your home, when it is entered, is just what it should be:—quiet, small—with everything she wishes, and nothing more than she wishes. The sun strikes it in the happiest possible way;—the piano is the sweetest toned in the world;—the library is stocked to a charm;—and Madge, that blessed wife, is there—adorning and giving life to it all. To think even of her possible death, is a suffering you class with the infernal tortures of the inquisition.

So, a year or more wears off, of mingled home-life, visiting and traveling. A new hope and joy lightens home—there is a child there.

———What a joy to be a father! What new emotion crowd the eye with tears, and make the hand tremble!—What a benevolence radiates from you toward the nurse—towards the physician—towards everybody! What a holiness and sanctity of love grows upon your old devotion to that wife of your bosom—the mother of your child!

The excess of joy seems almost to blur the stories of happiness which attach you to heaven. You are now joined, as you were never joined before, to the great family of man. Your name and blood will live after you; nor do you once think, (what father can?) but that it will live honorably and well.

With what a new air you walk the streets! With what a triumph you speak in your letter to Nelly,—of "your family!" Who, that has not felt it, knows what it is—to be "a man of family!"

How weak now, seem all the imaginations of your single life; what bare, dry skeletons of the reality they furnished? You pity the poor fellows who have no wives and children—from your soul; you count their smiles as empty smiles, put on to cover the lack that is in them.—There is free masonry among fathers that they know nothing of. You compassionate them deeply; you think them worthy objects of some charitable association; you would cheerfully buy tracts for them, if they would but read them,—tracts on marriage and children.

——And then "the boy"—such a boy!

There was a time when you thought all babies much alike:—alike? Is your boy like anything, except the wonderful fellow that he is? Was there ever a baby seen, or even read of, like that baby!

There was a time when you thought it very absurd for fathers to talk about their children; but it does not seem at all absurd now. You think, on the contrary, that your old friends who used to sup with you at the club, would be delighted to know how your baby is getting on, and how much he measures round the calf of the leg! If they pay you a visit, you are quite sure they are in agony to see Frank, and you hold the little squirming fellow in

[CONCLUDED ON THE FOURTH PAGE.]