LIFE'S MISERY.

We sow the glebe, we reap the corn,
  We build the house where we may rest:
And then at moments suddenly
We look up to the great wide sky,
Inquiring wherefore we were born—
  For earnest or for jest.

God keeps his holy mysteries
  Just on the outside of man's dream!
In diapason slow, we think
To hear their pinions rise and sink,
While they float pure beneath his eyes
  Like swans adown a stream.

And sometimes horror chills our blood,
  To be so near such mystic things;
And we wrap round us, for defense,
Our purple manners, moods of sense—
As angels from the face of God
  Stand hidden in their wings.

And sometimes through life's heavy swound,
  We grope for them — with strangled breath
We stretch our hands abroad and try
To reach them in our agony—
And widen so the broad life-wound,
Which soon is large enough for death.

The Bar Light-House.

Government had, for several years, been sadly neglecting a job of mending in the case of the Bar Light-house bridge. Here and there boards had begun to spring suspiciously beneath unwary footsteps; and then the wind had begun to tear them off, and the rain to rot and moulder them down. What was every man's business was nobody's, and no individual was disposed to interfere with the province of that abstract millionaire, the United States Government. To be sure, the keeper of the Bar Light, Jackson Reed, who was naturally more solicitous concerning the holding out of the sturcture than any one else, had wildly and fruitlessly patched some of the worst places, off and on, after a hard "northeaster," when he awoke more keenly to the exigencies of the case, and the hopeless dilatoriness of his taskmaster. But it had amounted to very little. Long neglect had made more than mere patching necessary. Now the quarter-mile bridge leading to the Bar Light-house, if not in an absolutely unsafe condition, was not calculated to inspire any degree of confidence in the unaccustomed crosser at least. It was not quite so bad at low tide, or on a mild still day. There was not much to fear then beyond a little fall and a ducking; that is, if one cleared one of those ragged apertures successfully. But on a dark night with the winds howling over it, and the ocean thundering beneath it, it was the sort of a bridge that only a disembodied spirit could be supposed to cross with any degree of nonchalence.

The lignt-house itself was only an ordinary dwelling house, strongly built. with a tower for the light. It stood on a massive pile of rocks, with little tufts of coarse vegetation in the clefts. Jackson Reed, who had an unfortunate love and longing for a garden spot, had actually wheeled enough earth over from the mainland for a little patch a few yards square, and when he was not engaged in a fruitless struggle with the broken bridge he was engaged in a fruittess struggle with his garden. A pottering old man was Jackson Reed, lacking in nervous force and quickness of intellect; but he had never let the light go out, and the only thing that is absolutely required of a light-house keeper is to keep the light burning for the sailors who steer by it.

The wonder was that his wife Sarah should have been his wife. She was a person not of a different mould merely, but of a different kind; not of a different species, but of a different genus. Nervous and alert, what her husband accepted in patient silence she received with shrill remonstrance and questioning. Her husband patched the bridge, crawling over its long reach on his old knees; she railed, as she watched him, at the neglect of the government. He uncomplainingly brushed the sand from his little puny struggling plants, and she set her thin face against the wind that cast it there.

In both, the religious element or cast of mind was strongly predominant, but Jackson Reed simply looked out on nature and into his own soul, and took in as plain incontrovertible facts the broken bridge, the tossing sea, his little wind-swept, sand-strewn garden patch, and God in heaven. Neither proved the other or nullified the other; they were simply there. But Sarah Reed, looking out on the frail, unsafe bridge which connected them with the mainland, and the wicked, senseless sea which had swallowed up her father and a brother whom she had idolized, and the poor struggling plants trying to live under the bleak winds, had seen in them so many evidences of neither God's love and mercy or his existence. She was a rheumatic old woman now, almost helpless, in fact, unable to step without the help of her husband. And she sat, day in and day out, at one of the sea windows of her sitting room, knitting, and holding her defiant old heart persistently against the pricks.

The minister at Rye, a zealous young man, with an innocent confidence in his powers of holy argument, had visited her repeatedly, with the view of improving her state of mind. She had joined the church over which he presided, in her youth; indeed, it was the church nearest to the lighthouse, and that was three miles distant. The minister had heard from one of his parishioners, who was a connection of hers, that Mrs. Reed had lost her faith, and straightway he was fired with holy ardor to do something for her spiritual benefit. But even his tonguey confidence and ingenuousness could glean but little satisfaction from his interviews with the rheumatic and unbelieving old woman.

"No, Mr. Pendleton," she used to say, shaking a thin rheumatic hand, with an impressiveness which her hearer might have copied advantageously in the pulpit, "it ain't no use. You kin talk about seein' with the spirit, an' worshippin' with the spirit; anybody needs a little somethin' to catch hold on with the flesh; when it's all spirit it's too much for a mortal bein' to comprehend, an' the Lord knows I ain't never had much of anything but spirit. I ain't never had any evidence, so to speak; I ain't never had a prayer answered in my life. If I have, I'd jest like to know how. You say, mebbe, they've been answered jest the same, only in a different way from I asked for. Ef you call it answerin' prayer to give one thing when you ask for another, I don't. An' I'd rather not believe thar was any God than to believe He'd do a thing like that. That's jest contrary to what He said about Himself an' the bread an' the stone in the New Testament. It's worse to think He'd cheat anybody like that than to think He ain't anywhar, accordin' to my mind. No, Mr. Pendleton, a human bein' needs a little human evidence once in a while to keep up their faith, an' I ain't never had any. I'll jest let you know how it's been a leetle. Here I am, an old woman, an' me an' Jackson's lived here on this rock for forty year. An' thar's being things I've wanted different, but I ain't never had 'em—things that I've cried an' groaned an' prayed to the Lord for—big things an' little things—but I never got one. Ef the Lord had give me one of the little things, it seems to me that I might have got a feeling that He was here.

"Forty year ago, when Jackson an' me was jest married an' set up housekeepin' here, thar was an awful storm one night, an' my father an' brother was out yonder in it. I staid on my knees all night prayin'. The next mornin' their two darlin' bodies was washed ashore. My brother had only been married a few months—the sweetest, lovingest little thing she was. She began to pine. I prayed to hev her spared. She died, an' left her little baby."

"But you had him for your own, did you not?" interrupted Mr. Pendleton, desperately. "He has been a comfort to you. God has displayed His love and mercy in this case in sparing him to you."

"Mr. Pendleton"—and the rheumatic hand went up again—"I ain't never asked to hev him spared to me; ef I had it would hev been different. I ain't got through yet. Thar's been lots of other things, big ones, that I might jest as well not speak of, and little ones. Look at that bridge! I'll ventur' to say that you shook in your shoes when you came over it, an' wouldn't be sorry this minute ef you was safe back. Whenever Jackson goes over it my heart is still an' cold till he comes back, for fear he's fell through. I've prayed to the Lord about that. Then—you may think this a little thing—but thar is Jackson's garden. He set out a rosebush in it fifteen year ago. Well, it ain't died. Thar ain't ever been a rose on it, though. An' it seems to me sometimes that if thar should be jest one rose on that bush that I should believe that the Lord had been thar. You wouldn't think I'd been silly enough to pray about that. I hev. It's fifteen year, an' thar ain't never been a rose thar. No, Mr. Pendleton, it ain't no use. You mean well, but it lays with God, ef He's anywhar, to show Himself to me in a way I can get hold on."

So the pretty, rosy-faced young minister would go away, picking his way cautiously over the unstable bridge, after a somewhat nonplussed prayer, which Mrs. Reed, incapacitated from kneeling by her rheumatic knees, had sat and listened to grimly.

The Bar Light-house was three miles from Rye. A sandy, desolate road, almost us billowy as the sea, stretched between. The only house in the whole distance was a little brown one just at the other side of the bridge. They supported themselves by sewing for a shop in Rye. Jackson Reed's nephew, William Barstow, had been engaged to marry the daughter—Abby her name was; but a month ago he had brought a wife home from the city. He had rented a pretty little tenement over in Rye, and gone to housekeeping. Abby Weaver had tied up a few little notes and keepsakes in a neat parcel, and put them away out of sight. Then she went on with her work. She was a plain, trustworthy looking girl, with no show about her, as different as possible from the one her recreant lover had married. She was pretty, with an entrancing-little air of style about everything she wore. Abby had seen her go by a few times in a jaunty velvet jacket and kilted petticoat, with the fair round face with its fringe of fluffy blonde hair smiling up at her husband out of a bewitching little poke. Then she had gone and looked at herself in her poor glass, taking in the old black alpaca, the plain common face with the dull hair combed back from her forehead.

"No wonder," said she, "an' I'm glad it's so, for I don't think the Lord can blame him."

Sarah Reed had found a double trial in the breaking of the engagement. In the first place, she had liked Abby. In the second place, this new matrimonial arrangement had taken the darling of her heart from under her immediate supervision. If he had married Abby Weaver, he would have lived either in the light-house, as he had done all his life, or in her mother's cottage. But nothing could suit his pretty city lady but to live in Rye. The bare idea of the light-house terrified her.

Sarah Reed's frame of mind had not improved since the marriage.

One afternoon, a few weeks after the young couple had set up for housekeeping, an unexpected deficiency in some household stores sent Jackson Reed to Rye, where the nearest markets were. It was the middle of the afternoon when he went, and there was a storm coming.

"Don't worry, Sarah," his last words were, "an' I'll be back by five to light the lamp. It'll be pretty near dark enough for it then, I reckon, ef it keeps on this way, ef it is June."

She sat at her window with her knitting after he had gone, and watched the storm roll up. She had taken a fancy lately to a landward window, the one with the poor little garden patch under it, and the rosebush which never blossomed. The bush really looked wonderfully thrifty, considering its many drawbacks to growth. But it was in a sheltered corner, and had all the warmth and mildness that could be had in the bleak place. It was three feet high or so, a hardy little Scotch rose. There certainly seemed no reason in nature why it should not blossom, but blossom it never had. Mrs. Reed never looked at it now for buds. She never even glanced at it today; she only looked out uneasily at the darkening sky, and knit on her stocking. She was always knitting stockings; in fact, it was all the kind of work she could do, and she had never been an idle woman with her brain or her fingers. So she knit stout woolen stockings for her husband and William Barstow from morning till night. Her husband kept the house tidy and did the cooking, and he was as faithful at it as a woman. No one looking at the room in which Mrs. Reed sat would have dreamed that it was not the field of action of a tidy housewife. It was a plain, rather cheerless kind of a room. There was a large figured, dull colored ingrain carpet on the floor, there was a shiny table, and some flag bottomed chairs, and a stiff hair cloth sofa. A few shells on the mantelshelf, a lamp mat that Abbey Weaver had made, and a framed wreath which had lain on William Barstow's father's coffin were all the ornaments. Take a room like that and set it on a rock in the ocean, with the wind and the waves howling around it, and there is not anything especially enlivening about it.

Mrs. Reed had been rather good-looking in her youth; was even rather good looking now. She had bright alert blue eyes, and pretty soft gray hair. But there was an air of keen unrest about her which could jar on nerves like a strident saw. In repose she would have been a sweet old woman. Now, she looked and was, as people say, hard to get along with. Jackson Reed's light burning meant more to the Lord, perhaps, than it did to the sailors.

At five o'clock the storm was fairly there, and the old light-house keeper had not come home. A heavy tempest twilight was settling down, and it was almost time the lamp was lit.

Six o'clock came and it was darker yet, and still she sat there alone; her knitting dropped in her lap. Seven o'clock, and her old husband had not come. It was quite dark now, and a terrible night, hot and pitchy, and full of mighty electric winds and fires and thunders. A conglomerate roar came from the ocean as from a den of wild beasts. Suddenly an awful thought struck the wretched old woman at the light-house window, and swift on its track rushed another still more awful. The first was, her husband had had a "turn" somewhere on that lonely road from Rye. "Turns," as she called them, Jackson Reed had had once or twice before, but they had never interfered with his duty. He had fallen down insensible, and lain so for two or three hours. This was what had happened to him now. And the second thought was her darling. William Barstow was out on that dreadful sea, and there was no light to guide him to port. Strange that she had not thought before. Yes, it was Tuesday. Was it Tuesday? Yes, the very day he was going to Lockport with Johny Sower. He was out on that sea somewhere in a boat, which could not live in it a minute. Yes, it was to-day he was going. He and his pretty little wife were talking it over Sunday night. She was lamenting, half in sport and half in earnest, over the lonesome day she would have, and he promised to bring her home a new bonnet to console her. Yes, it was Tuesday, and Jackson Reed had told Abby Weaver about it yesterday—that was Monday. He had forgotten that she was no longer so interested in Willie Barstow's movements. And when he told his wife what he had done she scolded him for his thoughtlessness.

Yes, it was Tuesday, and he was out on that sea, and there was no light lit. Nothing to keep him off these terrible rocks that the light had been set there to show. In the morning he would be thrown dumb and cold where she could almost see him from her window. It would be with him as it had been with his father and grandfather, and mebbe with his wife as it had been with his poor young mother. All the strong, baffled, but not suppressed nature of the woman asserted itself with terrible force.

"Oh, my darling! my darling! my darling!" she shrieked, in a voice which was in itself both a prayer and a curse. "You out thar, an' all the love in your mother's heart can't light ye home! Oh, the black water rollin' over that beautiful face, an' those laughin' blue eyes that looked at me when you was a baby, an' those black curls I've brushed, an' those lips I've kissed—puttin' out that lovin' soul! O, Lord! Lord! Lord!

"He's been a good boy," she went on in a curious tone, as if the mighty ear of the inexorable God she had half believed in was become now a reality to her, and she was pouring arguments, unavailing though they might be, into it—"he's been a good boy; never any bad habits, never any little mean actions. There's Abby Weaver, I know; but look at the face of the girl he's married. O Lord, love is the same behind a homely face an' a handsome one. But while you keep on makin' folks that think roses is prettier than potatoes, an' pearls than oysters the love that looks out of a pretty face will hold the longest an' the strongest. He wa'n't to blame. Abby was a good girl, but you made this other one as pretty as a picture. He wa'n't to blame, Lord, he wa'n't to blame. Don't drown him for that. It ain't right to drown him for that. O Lord! Lord! Lord!"

She sat there shrieking on in a strained, weak voice, half in prayer, half in expostulation. The wind rose higher and higher, and the sea thundered louder and longer. A new terror seized her. If her husband should recover from the bad turn which she suspected he had had, and attempt to cross that bridge now, he would be killed too. God knew what new rents might be in it. When her sitting room clock clanged out nine, above the roar of the storm, she went into a fury of despair. Down she sank on those old rheumatic knees that had not bent at her bidding for the last five years, and prayed as she had never done before.

In the midst of her agony a great calm fell suddenly over it.

"I will go an' light the lamp myself," she said in an awed voice, "an' He will go with me! Slowly Sarah Reed arose on her feet that had not borne her weight for five years. Every movement was excruciating torture, but she paid no heed to it; she seemed to feel it and yet be outside of it. She realized, as it were, the separateness of her soul and her spiritual agony from all bodily pain.

She walked across the floor, went out into the entry, and groped her way up the narrow stairs leading to the tower. She dragged herself up the steep steps with terrible determination. She slid apart the slide at the top, and a blaze of light almost blinded her. *The lamp was lit.*

Sarah Reed might have floated down those stairs, upborne on angels' wings, for all she knew. Somehow, she was back in her sitting room, on her knees. Her husband found her there, a half hour later, when he staggered, as pale as death, and drenched to the skin into the room.

"Good Lord, Sarah, who lit the lamp?" his first words were.

"The angel of the Lord," she answered, solemnly raising her gray head.

"I hed a turn over thar on the road, 'bout a mile out of Rye. I've jest come to an' got home. Seemed to me I should die when I thought of William. The bridge is pretty well broke up, but I hung on to the side. An' Lord! when I saw that light burnin' I could ha' come over on a cobweb. Who came to light it, Sarah?"

"The angel of the Lord," she said again. "Don't you ever say it ain't so, Jackson; don't you ever dare to try to make me stop thinking it's so. I've been askin' the Lord all these years for something to show me that he was anywhar, an' He has give it to me. I crawled up them stairs—"

"*You* went up them stairs, Sarah?"

"Yes; I went up to light the lamp, an' it was lit. The Lord hed been thar. It's true about Him."

The pale old man went up to his kneeling wife and kissed her tenderly.

"Don't you believe his angel lit it?" she asked, looking at him with anxious intensity.

"Yes, Sarah, I do," replied Jackson Reed. The thought was steadily recurring to his half-dazed brain, "Abby Weaver, Abby Weaver lit the lamp; but Sarah—Sarah need not know."

The next morning Sarah Reed, looking out of her window, saw a little pure white rose on the bush beneath it.

"Yes, I meant to have told you it had budded," said her husband, when she exclaimed, "I found it thar yesterday. Thar's another one, too."

It was a lovely clear morning. Abby Weaver, looking out of her window, saw William Barstow pass by on his way to the light house to tell the old folks of his safety.

Health Hints.

HOT MILK AS A STIMULANT.—If any one is fatigued the best restorative is hot milk, a tumblerful of the beverage as hot as can be sipped. This is far more of a restorative than any alcoholic drink.—*Demorest's Monthly.*

A spoonful of lime water and a spoonful of sweet oil beaten well together and applied with a feather directly to a burn, relieves the smart and prevents blistering. When this remedy is not at hand, common baking soda put directly on the burn and moistened will give immediate relief.

The following remedy, when applied within six hours after a bite from a rabid animal, has been successful in preventing hydrophobia: Make a strong wash, by dissolving two tablespoonfuls of chloruret (chloride) of lime in a half pint of water, and instantly and repeatedly bathe the parts bitten. The poison will in this way be decomposed.

The following is recommended as a successful treatment for sties: With a fine camel's hair pencil paint the inflamed papilla with tincture of iodine. The lids should be held apart by the thumb and index finger of the left hand while the tincture is applied, and until the part touched is dry. A few applications in the twenty-four hours is sufficient.

How indigestion is affected by such condiments as vinegar and salt has been carefully studied by M. C. Hasson, and the results presented in a paper read before the Academy of Science, Paris. Taken in moderation these condiments are useful. They promote the formations of gastric juice. But if they are indulged in to excess they irritate the coats of the stomach and render the food more indigestible. The proportion of salt should not exceed 5 to 10 grains to 0 5 kilogrammes of meat, and of acid 1 to 4 per 1000.

CARE FOR THE EAR.—We do not think that most people sufficiently realize the importance of caring for the ear.

In another article we have referred to the life-long sufferings of the celebrated Dean Swift, due to a simple cold taken before his twentieth year. In his case there were ringing in his ears, deafness, nausea, vertigo or giddiness. But there are multitudes of cases in which the trouble is confined to simple deafness, slight at first and hardly noticed, yet steadily increasing with years. Every year thousands lay a foundation for it. The part affected is what is called the "middle ear."

It is sometimes inflamed by cold air striking continually on the outside, just behind and below the ear, or penetrating the open cavity. Fashion, which sends young children from over heated rooms into the winds of winter with the ears wholly unprotected, is responsible for many sad cases.

When there is "a cold in the head" (nasal catarrh) the inflammation often extends to the Eustachian tubes (the tubes that convey air to the middle ear), and then into the ear itself. Sometimes the throat and back of the mouth (pharynx) are inflamed, and the inflammation spreads upwards in the same way. An inflammation is often thus extended from the nostrils to the ear by an improper blowing of the nose. One nostril should be cleared at a time, the other remaining fully open.

As the results—not noticed for years—may be increasing discomfort for life, the ears of the young should occasionally be examined by a competent physician. The tendency to deafness may be checked if taken in time.

In such cases there is a thickening of the membrana tympani (ear-drum), which thickening tends to increase with every new cold; or some of the inner inflamed surfaces grow together, and the action of the ear is interfered with, or the Eustachian tube becomes closed. Sometimes the ear-drum is perforated, the inflammation giving rise to suppuration.

Companionable People.

In every society, we find that people who are called companionable are those who have the knack of making light of their tribulations and vexations and a habit of putting them out of sight; who do not entertain their acquaintances with a recital of bad baking, a leaky pipe, the children's measles, the shortcomings of the servants; who know how to keep their melancholy, if they have any, out of the conversation; whose nerves do not furnish them with material for a morning call; who are not always on the lookout for a draught, or a change of weather, or a slight; who do not lament their poverty aloud, and make us feel responsible for it, and uncomfortable amidst our poverty. The companionable people never seek to make us dissatisfied with ourselves or our belongings; they talk about the things we like to hear, and are silent upon the subjects on which we disagree; they do not differ from us for the sake of differing, and do not announce their opinion as if there was no appeal therefrom. They do not talk you blind, as the saying is, neither do they offend by their taciturnity; they do not have to be drawn out, but develop their talent as generously and charmingly as the plant develops its blossoms; neither do they pump or catechise us about our own affairs, but show a genuine interest in whatever we may choose to impart of a personal nature; and although they never force their confidence upon us, they have none of that frosty reserve which never allows a glimpse of their hearts. There are some people who are out of sorts at every hand's turn for no legitimate reason—because the sun is under a cloud, because they slept badly or ate too heartily; but the companionable person makes the best of every situation. She is not fidgety or fussy, and her prejudices are not, as with some, her chief characteristics. When she arrives, she brings another atmosphere with her, and common things, seen with her eyes, become wonderful. She is a person of ideas, and bestows them with prodigality; she is not so often a wit as the occasion of wit in others, which is a far more popular being than the mere wit can hope to be; and although she may only have traveled "a good deal on Cape Cod," yet she has seen and understood more than many who have ransacked christendom.

A Patient Pair of Lovers.

As the British Crown swung up to the American Line dock one morning recently an old woman, who had been walking the deck since sunrise, leaned over the taffrail, ejaculated ungrammatically, "That's him," waved her hand and disappeared in the cabin. At the same moment a still more elderly man on the dock shrieked "That's my Benedicta," and gamboled up the gangplank of the steamship, followed by a body-guard of friends, and rushed after the retreating woman into the cabin. Twenty-eight years ago a scene as sad as this was joyous was enacted by the same pair on the Cunard dock at Liverpool, when Thomas Barbour bid farewell to Benedicta Price and set out to find his fortune amid his kin beyond the sea. Kin at home had made the union of the couple an impossibility for the time being and although their ages were then respectively 42 and 35 years they concluded to await the removal by time of the family obstructions to the course or true love. Time took nearly a third of a century to the task, meantime upsetting most of the institutions of the year '55, except the ocean mail, whose expeditions hardly kept time with the epistolary ardor of the lovers, and so a month previous to their meeting the strain on the postal service was lightened by a letter from Miss Benedicta, announcing that she at last was free to redeem the pledge she had kept so well. The result was the reunion and demonstration on the British Crown. The happy old couple took a carriage and were driven to Frankford, where they were married in the evening. Barbour owns a cooper shop and has several thousand dollars invested in real estate.—*Phila. Ex.*

Capturing a Sawfish.

While Professor Williams was giving swimming exhibitions in Lake Ponchartrain, he saw moving upon the top of the water, in a direct line, and within two feet of him, what he supposed at the time was an alligator. He grasped the jaw with both hands, and with a sudden wrench broke it. In the contest for the mastery Professor Williams was twice carried under the water before he succeeded in landing the monster upon the wharf, where it was accertained that he had captured a saw fish 3 feet 2 inches in length, with a body 2½ feet in circumference. In the saw were forty-two teeth.

England's lords won't have marriage with a deceased wife's sister. It is also recorded that the monkey kissed the baboon's sister. Thus history goes on accumulating.—*Wheeling Intelligencer.*