

THE DESERTED ROAD.

To the mossy wayside tavern, Comes the noisy throno no more, And the faded sign complaining, Swings unnoticed at the door.

While the old decrepit tollman, Waiting for the few who pass, Reads the melancholy story, In the thickly springing grass.

Ancient highway! thou art vanquished, The usurper of the vale, Rolls in fiery iron rattle, Exultations on the gale.

Thou art vanquished and neglected, But the good which thou hast done, Though by man it be forgotten, Shall be deathless as the sun.

Though neglected, gray, and grassy, Still I pray that my decline May be through as vernal valleys, And as blest a calm as thine.

OLD ANDREW AND ST. LUKE.

Old Andrew Lickney lived in a little log house that seemed to cling to the mountain side. It was typical of its owner, for old Andrew held on to the rugged mountain side of life. He was a strange man. Years ago, when the wonderful enterprise of the Methodist church sent its circuit riders in advance of civilization, old Andrew, or rather at that time young Andrew, parted the rank cane with the vigorous hand of the gospel. He was never married. In latter years, when he had grown too old and feeble to longer engage in active work, his only household companion was a large shaggy dog, whose somewhat astounding cognomen, St. Luke, caused much comment, and on one occasion, it is said, conference requested the old man to change the animal's name, claiming that it was irrelevant to bestow on a dog so saintly a title. This request was not granted, and it was hinted that it had something to do with old Andrew's withdrawal from active warfare with the world, the flesh and the devil. St. Luke very much resembled his master. The old fancy is sometimes indulged even by practical people that men and animals can associate so long together that they finally partake of each others physical, not to say mental peculiarities. Old Andrew had but one good eye; St. Luke only had one. Old Andrew's chin shook; St. Luke's under jaw was unsteady. Old Andrew limped; so did St. Luke.

Several nights ago, while old Andrew sat by his fire, his nodding and the snoring of St. Luke were disturbed by a knock at the door. "Come in!" Steve Blue entered. Blue was a large, rough fellow, with thick, coarse-grained skin, heavy eyes which looked not from a soul, and with a general expression of brutality and lack of thought. Old Andrew arose and motioned the visitor to a chair. St. Luke lying in the corner near the fire, opened his effective eye a moment and slowly closed it, not without an air of suspicion. Although the old stage horse of the church, as Mr. Lickney was sometimes called, and Steve Blue lived in the same neighborhood, yet they knew very little of each other, for in the rough fellow, old Andrew, could find nothing attractive, and in the somewhat intellectual preacher the dull eyes of Steve could see nothing at all. This mutual lack of interest caused old Andrew to regard the visit with surprise. Steve sat down, and with his heavy gaze fixed on the fire, remained for some time in silence. The old preacher began to show signs of nervousness, but whether they were observed by the visitor, or whether he took secret pleasure in such exhibitions, the unwilling host could not divine. At last Steve, removing his gaze from the fire, and fixing it on old Andrew, said: "You was down to Little Rock 'tuther day, wasn't you?" "Yes, I went down on business."

"I 'lowed it was business," and Steve laughed in a sluggish way, like the murky slosh of swamp water. "Seed some o' them government men down thar, didn't you?" The old man started, as though seized by a sudden fear.

"Yes; for some of the officers, hearing that I was in town, had me summoned before the United States grand jury."

"An' you told 'em that several felers in this here community was makin' wild cat whisky, eh?"

The old man moved uneasily and replied: "I was placed under oath and was compelled to answer the questions which they asked me."

"An' I reckon you was mighty keen to do it, wasn't you?" "It was no business of mine, and I should have volunteered no information."

"You're a putty slick talker, old man. All you wanted was a chance to give us away. You want to see us drug off to jail an' see our wives an' chillun starve."

"The assertion is unjust, Mr. Blue. My mission on earth, and it is now closing, has been to alleviate suffering, instead of causing it. I did not know that you were an illicit distiller. I did not mention your name and only spoke of those whom I knew to be in that unlawful business."

"Unlawful business," repeated Steve, with a merciless grin. "What right has the government got to say that I shan't do what I please with my co'n an' ap-

plee? This here's a free country, old man."

"I shall not enter into a discussion of individual rights. You may entertain one idea and I may hold another. I grant you the right and you should not withhold it from me."

"Never mind your high-strung talk. I ain't got time to palaver. This here's a business visit, old man."

"What business can you have with me, Mr. Blue?" "Lemme tell you a little story."

"Thought this was a business visit."

"Well, airer the story the business comes. One time thar was a feller what was a quiet sort o' man. One o' the neighbors killed his son. He didn't say much an' didn't do nuthin'."

After a while another one o' the neighbors caused his wife to leave him. He didn't do nuthin'. Some time arterwards his brother told the deputy marshals that he was makin' wild cat whisky."

Old Andrew waited for a moment to hear the conclusion of the recital. Steve sat with his gaze fixed on the fire.

"Well, what did he do with his brother?" "Killed him," and again there was a sluggish laugh like the murky slosh of swamp water.

"What, killed his brother for so little what for great offences he allowed others to escape!"

"Zackley. The greatest sin what a man can do in this world is to repo' on a wild cat 'stiller."

The old man looked around nervously, and then began to search the visitor's face. He might as well have studied a shovelfull of earth.

"This evenin'," said Steve, "a deputy marshal came to my house. I poked my gun through the window and killed him. Then I left, an' as I was passin' here, I thought I'd stop an' tell you good-bye, fur I've got to leave the country. How old are you?"

"Seventy-eight." "It's bad that you've got to die so young," turning with a murderous leer.

"My God, man, you don't mean to kill me?" "Oh, no, wouldn't kill you. A man would never kill a snake what tries to bite him."

Steve took a short rope from his pocket. He made a loop at one end and sat for a time turning the hemp round and round.

"For the love of God, do me no violence. I am an old man with only a few more days left."

"A few more minutes, you mean." "I am unable to defend myself, and am at your mercy."

"Don't reckon I want you to defend yourself, do you? I ain't the man to give a feller a stick an' tell him to bite him."

"Will you let me pray?" "No, you've prayed enough in your life time, an' sides that, you might pray for the marshals to ketch me."

"No, I will only pray for myself. Ah, Mr. Blue, life is sweet even to an old man. The young, with bright hopes, can die quite as willingly as the old man who has walked far along the dusty road. I did you no intentional harm, and I implore your forgiveness. Let me live?"

"Old man, life is as sweet to me as it is to you. 'Cause you've read books an' preached, don't think that your life is worth more to you than mine is to me."

"Yes, but I would not take yours for the world. If you had but one hour to live, and I knew that by robbing you of that short time I would gain years, and years, I would not lift a finger against you. You are yet a free man. You can escape. You may take my horse."

"I will take your horse—" "Thank you." "After I have took your life."

"Oh, Lord, save your—" Steve threw the loop over the old man's head and with a jerk pulled him from the chair. He fell on his knees and with his palsied hands, struggled to loosen the rope. Steve stood regarding his victim with brutal fondness. He allowed the rope to slacken, for he seemed to take a fenshish delight in hearing the old man's tones of agony.

"For Christ's sake spare me!" catching the rope. "Spare me, and I will pray unceasingly for you. Oh, do you not know that there is an awful hell where the murderer's soul cries out in the deepanguish of unbearable torture!"

"You'd better draw up a bench, old man, an' let me be a mourner!" "Oh, then you'd be a mourner?" "An' then you'd have the heels on me, eh? To throw aside foolishness an' come down to business, you've got to die. I'm going to drag you 'round this room till the life's choked outen you."

He gave the rope a jerk, and the old man fell on his face. Around the room Steve dragged him. The old man's tongue came out, and catching on a sharp nail, was almost torn from his mouth. The old dog arose and was gazing at the horrible performance. Steve, in turning to drag the lifeless body back toward the fireplace, stumbled over a stool and fell. The old dog's chance had come. He sprang upon the fallen man, seized him by the throat, and with a strength that had long been slumbering, pressed him to the floor. Steve struggled desperately.

but his hands becoming entangled in the rope, he was soon in a helpless condition. His groans were awful. The old man's life was but a mere breath. Steve's life was a storm. Old St. Luke relaxed with exertion, but he did not relax his hold.

The next morning two deputy marshals entered the house. A shocking picture. The old man lay on his back with his hands clasped. Steve's face was blue and his eyes protruded in a ghastly stare. They were all dead. The dog's eyes were closed, and in death he still retained a strong hold on the assassin's throat.

Cromwell and the Boy.

There is no doubt but that Oliver Cromwell, the Protector, resided for a time in Glasgow, about 1658. He had his dwelling in "Silvercraig street," on the east side of the Saltmarket, opposite the Bridgegate. A number of strange stories lingered in the last century and the beginning of the present, as to the sayings and doings of Oliver. It was said that he was in frequent communication with one of the city clergymen, and had many a tough argument as to the respective advantages and merits of Presbyterianism contrasted with independency, or, as they were at that time called, Separate Secularies. The clergyman who had the fortitude to meet the Protector in dispute was said to be Mr. Patrick Gillespie, then minister of the Outer High Kirk. The Protector maintained that under the system then prevailing in Scotland the lower classes were left ignorant of Scripture truth. To test the accuracy of this, one day the Protector and his ministerial friend took their position in the Old Saracen Inn, at the east of the Gallowgate. It was agreed that one of the many lads who drove little carts laden with coals for the supply of the citizens from the coal-fields of Monklands should be called in unprepared, and that the Protector should put any question to the carter lad from the Scriptures. The lad was brought in, and the question put was: "Tell me who was the father of Adam?" Promptly the carter referred to the third chapter of Luke's Gospel, and, beginning at the twenty-third verse, he proceeded: "From the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli," up each successive link until he reached the climax at the thirty-eighth verse, "which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the Son of God." Oliver was struck at the accurate memory of the lad, and rewarding him with a golden piece, was begged to become in his turn the interrogator, and asked: "Since I have thus answered your questions, would you be pleased to answer mine. It is one not so ancient; it is only, tell me who was my father?" The Protector was somewhat overcome with ire, which was still intensified when on inquiry at mine host at the Saracen's Head he was informed that the carter was a foundling from the Monklands, and that his parentage was hid under a veil of impenetrable obscurity.

A Bachelor's Bower.

A dapper young man with laughing eyes and a captivating moustache glided smoothly and swiftly skyward in the smooth-running elevator of the big building at Fifth Avenue and Twen-y-second street N. Y. and stopping somewhere near the roof, stepped daintly out: fitted a polished key in a richly penciled walnut door, and suddenly opened to view the interior magnificence of two fairy-like apartments where a well known young Wall street broker dwells in sumptuous single blessedness. A beautifully modeled Cupid, naively dressed in a tiny pair of bronze wings, kissed both hands amorously at the visitor from his perch on a circular sofa of damask satin and velvet in the center of the room. Just above his curly head a large crystal chandelier shed a soft light upon the rich furniture and costly bric a brac that were artistically grouped about the sofa. Gold-framed paintings off-set the heavy lambrequins and embroidered portieres that draped the doorways and windows. Other bronze figures filled the spaces between the ebony sideboards, whose treasures of silver ornaments and curiosities duplicated and reduplicated in the bewildering reflection of polished French mirrors of the mantel and alcove. Adjoining the parlor and entered through a curtained doorway is the sleeping apartment to the aforesaid young bear, with another collection of paintings and bric a brac and bronze scattered about. The bed is rosewood, the pillows of cambric and real old lace, and the coverlid soft old gold satin, superbly embroidered and lined with swan down. The dapper young man with the captivating moustache sank in the luxurious carpet at every step as he moved hither and thither exhibiting the treasures of the two rooms. This apartment and another, and even more elaborate one, containing \$50,000 worth of art furniture, are reported to be the handsomest bachelor quarters in the city since Mr. William Henry Hurlburt broke up his bower of art and editorial comfort at the University building. It is estimated that it cost the gay young bear of Wall street something like \$40,000 to indulge his artistic whims.

Show respect for old age. Youth does not always last.

Is Life Growing Longer?

To be told that under proper conditions we ought to live 100 years, and that the discouraging doctrine of the influence of heredity in shortening life is only true in a limited sense, is interesting to most people. So, also, is the circumstance that we are living longer than we used to live, and the assurance that much may yet be done to prolong our lives. The late Dr. Farr in his description of the march through life of 1,000,000 children, has given the following results: Nearly 150,000 will die in the first year, 52,000 in the second, 28,000 in the third year, and less than 4,000 in the thirteenth year. At the end of 45 years 500,000, or one half, will have died. At the beginning of 60 years 370,000 will still be living. At the beginning of 80 years, 90,000; at 85 years, 38,000; and at 95 years, 2,100. At the beginning of 100 years there will be 223, and at 108 years 1. The mean lifetime of both sexes in England was calculated some years ago to be 49,558, or nearly 41 years. Mr. Humphreys has shown, however, that in the 5 years, 1871 to 1880, the mean age of death was 43 5/6 (females 45 3/4), being a gain of nearly 2 1/2 years. Thus within 20 years, notwithstanding an increased birth rate, density of population, and the unsanitary condition of towns suddenly grown large, more than 2 1/2 years have been added to the life of every inhabitant of England.

"What is the kind of life which is increasing? Are we young longer, or mature longer, or old longer? Do we live longer, or are we only a little slower in dying?" I am bound to admit that some of the gain in early life is lost in middle life; that while the expectation of life at birth is 25 or more, the expectation from 35 to 50 is a fraction less. But notwithstanding the slight increase of mortality at 35 and upward, a large portion of the additional survivors live on to the higher ages. Of 1,000 born, the additional number of survivors is thirty-five at the age of 45, twenty-six at 55, nine at 65, three at 75 and one at 85. The increase is much greater among females. By far the larger proportion of the increased duration of human life in England is lived between twenty and sixty." It is interesting to ascertain what is the natural limit of existence. Dr. Farr says the natural lifetime of a man is a century. That is the length of time the body will live under the most favorable conditions. Another most interesting question is: "When does old age come?" Dr. Farr has divided life as follows: Boyhood, 10 to 15 years; youth, 15 to 25; manhood, 25 to 35; maturity, 35 to 45; ripeness, 45 to 55; old age, 55 to 75; and old age, 75 to 85, and old age, 85 and upward.

In taking the period of 65 to 75, and still following the fortunes of the million children born, we find that 309,026 enter this age and 161,124 leave it alive. Disease of the brain, heart and lungs are the most common; 31,400 die of old age. The number that enter the next decennial—75 to 85—are 161,124 and the number that leave it alive are 38,565. About 125,500 die, chiefly of lung, brain, heart and other local diseases. Nearly 59,000 die of atrophy, debility and old age. Some writer says he has met few or no cases of death from old age, everybody dying of some recognized disease. It is true that the symptoms of disease become obscure in old age, many cases of pneumonia and other inflammations escaping recognition. But it is also true that many deaths attributed to disease are mainly due to old age; slight injuries, cold, heat, want, or attacks which in early years would have been shaken off. Of the million with which we started, 2,135 live to the age of 95—223 to 100. Finally at the age of 108 one solitary life dies.

Railways in the Desert.

General Meigs, the greatest authority on military railway construction in the United States, shows that the Mexican Central Railway has been laid at the rate of nearly a mile a day, and asks why the British Government cannot do as well, or even better, between the Red Sea and the Nile. They would have to do much better than this in order to rescue Gen. Gordon. The distance from Suakin to Berber is 250 miles, and General Gordon cannot be expected to hold his ground 250 days. One thing, however, must not be forgotten. The news that the British were building such a railway would travel fast. Before the first section of fifty miles could be completed, the Sudanese on the Nile would be convinced that the British were in earnest, and they might be disposed either to declare for General Gordon or to disperse quietly.

General Meigs says nothing about the climate of the Soudan, which would probably prove a greater obstacle to railway construction than the engineering difficulties. Major Clarke, who has had great experience in railway building in India, ridicules in the London press the idea that the project is impracticable on account of the heat. He has built railways with a mean monthly temperature of 92 degrees Fahrenheit, night and day, and laughs at the excuse that it will be too hot during the summer to proceed with this work in the Soudan. Well-informed experts in England are confident that such a line would not only prove of the utmost importance in a military sense, but would ultimately be a profitable enterprise, since 100,000 tons of freight already finds their way down the Nile

Boers and Bushmen.

The Bushmen are the lowest type of aborigines in South Africa, and in their wild condition are a curse to the farmers, by their thefts of stock and their aversion to work. Consequently there is an open enmity between Boers and Bushmen, the farmers shooting the latter when they get a chance, and the Bushmen retaliating by firing, sometimes with fatal results, their poisoned arrows at the Boers. The government maintains a force of mounted police, which patrols the districts, but owing to its enormous extent and the nature of the country; it is very difficult for the police to act either in restraining Boers or arresting the Bushmen. One Saturday evening in last June, a Bushman, with his wife, niece and a little child, were seen in the neighborhood of land occupied temporarily by three brothers of the name of Steyn. This was about 30 miles from a place called Kanhardt. They made a fire and encamped by it for the night. Before daybreak Sunday morning shots were heard, the man and the two women were found killed by bullet wounds, the child's head giving the appearance of having had it dashed against a rock. There was strong evidence against the three prisoners, the Steyn brothers. They had been out that morning with their guns, the cartridges picked up corresponded to those used by them, and it was sworn that they had made admissions proving their guilt. It was, however, also proved that there were four other Boers out that very morning close to the scene of the murder with their guns. The witnesses for the crown were Bushman or Hottentots, whose evidence was much shaken in cross-examination; and the result was that, after a careful investigation of two days, the jury decided that the charge had been brought home to the prisoners in the dock. The verdict was received with great enthusiasm both in and outside the crowded court. The case had been removed from the circuit court of Victoria West to Cape Town, because it was feared that a fair trial could not be insured in the district where the prisoners lived, so strong is the feeling of sympathy among the Dutch farmers with those who suffer from deprivations of Bushmen. Even in Cape Town the feeling seemed to be hardly less strong, and this incident will probably lead to the government taking more active measures towards the establishment of law and order on the northern border. In this case, although there can be no little doubt that a foul crime was committed by some among the seven farmers present at the scene, the three prisoners were rightly acquitted upon the evidence presented to the court.

Caliker and Flat-Irons.

In January last a good old-fashioned dealer in dry goods, groceries, hardware, and pretty much everything else, in the central portion of the State decided to take an inventory for the first time in twenty-one years. About the time it was completed a commercial traveler for a house in the city happened along and asked him how he came out. "Well, it's kinder dubious," was the reply.

"How?" "Why, I fell short of my estimate of stock by about \$3,000."

"And you don't know how to make your figures come out even?" "I confess I don't."

"Well, all you have to do is to mark everything up 20 per cent."

"General Jackson!" gasped the old man; "but I kicked around in bed for three straight nights and never thought of that. That's the way, of course and up goes the price of caliker and flat-irons."

Substitutes for Matches.

Countless accidents, as every one knows, arise from the use of matches. To obtain light without employing them, and without the danger of setting things on fire, an ingenious contrivance is now used by the watchmen of Paris in all the magazines where explosive or inflammable materials are kept. Any one may easily make a trial of it. Take an oblong vial of the whitest and clearest glass and put into it a piece of phosphorus about the size of a pea. Pour some olive oil heated to the boiling point upon the phosphorus; fill the vial about one-third full and then cork it tightly. To use this novel light remove the cork, allow the air to enter the vial and become luminous, and the light obtained will be equal to that of a lamp. When the light grows dim its power can be increased by taking out the cork and allowing a fresh supply of the air to enter the vial. In Winter it is sometimes necessary to heat the vial between the hands in order to increase the fluidity of the oil. The apparatus thus made may be used for six months.

Damp Walls.

Pictures hanging against a damp wall should be packed with lead paper such as is found in tea chests, or they should be held clear of the wall by affixing a cork at each corner of the frame. Either of these means will protect the pictures from the bad effects of the dampness. Silence never yet betrayed any one.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT.

We consider the man undone who is insensible to shame. Before condemning search for condoning circumstances. Say as little as possible of yourself and those near to you. Never indulge in levity when people are engaged in worship. Our true acquisitions lie only in our charities; we gain as we give. Every man has 240 bones except the minstrel end-man, who has 244. The rays of happiness, like those of light, are colorless when unbroken. The generous heart should scorn a pleasure which gives another pain. Men of few faults are the least anxious to discover those of others. A good surgeon must have an eagle's eye, a lion's heart and a lady's hand. Too great refinement is false delicacy; and a true delicacy is solid refinement. Beauty is worse than wine—it intoxicates both the holder and the beholder. There is no beggar so destitute as he who can afford nothing to his neighbor. The certain way to be cheated is to fancy one's self more cunning than others. As charity covers a multitude of sins before God, so does politeness before man. Old age has deformities enough of its own; do not add to it the deformity of vice. The company in which you will improve most will be the least expensive to you. Every base occupation makes one sharp in its practice, and dull in every other. Try to be happy in this very present moment; and put not off being so to a time to come. How many people live on the reputation of the reputation they might have made. In character, in manners, in style, in all things, the supreme excellence is simplicity. Never let your zeal outrun your charity. The former is but human, the latter is divine. Take care to be an economist in prosperity; there is no fear of your being one in adversity. There is a class of men ever ready to pump you to any extent, if you only give them a handle. Honest and courageous people have very little to say about either their courage or their honesty. How noiselessly the snow comes down. You may see it, but never hear it. It is true charity. As a great body is not without a like shadow, neither is eminent virtue without eminent detractor. If there be a crime of deeper dye than all the guilty train of human vices, 'tis ingratitude. Often the world discovers a man's moral worth only when its injustice has nearly destroyed him. Perfect valor consists in doing without witnesses all we should be capable of doing before the world. Live on what you have; live if you can on less; do not borrow, for vanity will surely end in shame. Nobody is perfect; but forbearance and love do much to soften the irritable hard edges of existence. The weakest living creature, by concentrating his powers on a single object can accomplish something. As no man can expect a continual train of prosperity, he ought not to apprehend a constant adversity. Where the people are well educated, the art of piloting a state is best learned from the writing of Plato. Good counsels observed are chains to grace, which, neglected, prove halters to strange, unprofitful children. Nature loves truth so well that it rarely admits of flourishing. Conceit is to nature what point is to beauty. The repentance that is delayed till old age, is but too often a regret for the inability of committing more sins. Good breeding is benevolence in trifles, or the preference of others to ourselves in the daily occurrences of life. Take away from mankind their vanity and their ambition, and there would be but few claiming to be heroes or patriots. The firm without pliancy, and the pliant without firmness, resemble vessels without water and water without vessels. Good nature is the very air of a good mind; the sign of a large and generous soul, and the peculiar soil in which virtue prospers. "Improve your opportunities," said Bonaparte to a school of young men; "every hour lost now, is a chance of future misfortune." As ceremony is the invention of wise men to keep fools at a distance, so good breeding is an expedient to make fools and wise men equals. A modest person seldom fails to gain the good will of those he converses with, because nobody envies a man who does not appear to be puffed with himself. Good breeding is the art of showing men, by external signs, the internal regard we have for them. It arises from good sense, improved by conversing with good company. A cottage will not hold the bulky furniture and sumptuous accommodations of the mansion, but, if God be there, a cottage will hold as much happiness as might stock a palace. The chief secret of comfort lies in not suffering trifles to vex us, and in prudently cultivating our undergrowth of small pleasures, since very few great ones, alas! are let on long leases. These men who destroy a healthful constitution of body by intemperance and an irregular life do as manifestly kill themselves as those who hang, or poison, or drown themselves. He that visits the sick in hopes of a legacy, let him be never so friendly in all other cases, I look upon him in this to be no better than a raven that watches a weak sheep only to pick out its eyes.