

Birds of Passage.

The little birds trust God, for they go singing
From Northern woods where autumn winds
Have blown, with joyous faith their trackless pathway
To summer-lands of song, afar, unknown.
And if he cares for them through wintry
weather,
And will not disappoint one little bird,
Will He not be as true a Heavenly Father
To every soul who trusts His holy Word?
Let us go singing then, and not go sighing,
Since we are sure our times are in His hand,
Why should we weep, and fear, and call it
dying?
'Tis only fitting to a summer-land!

AN INNOCENT BURGLAR.

"Now do lie still, Aunt Martha, and don't fret and worry all day and all night. Aunt it is bad enough to be all aches and pains, but you must add fretting to them?"

The speaker was a tall, bony woman of some 45 or 50 years, with a hard face, that expressed far more annoyance than sympathy as she shook up the pillows and arranged the covers of the bed where an older woman lay. Not a very old woman, but one whose gray hair and wrinkled cheeks told of many years' sojourn in the world.

"Bertha," she said, in a low, plaintive voice. "I want Bertha!"

"How many times have I told you that Bertha can't be found?"

"She's down stairs."

"Well, if it wouldn't try the patience of a saint to hear you! Can't you remember Aunt Martha? Bertha ran away two years ago with that painting chap that said his name was Thornton. Goodness knows whether it was or not. But he made love to Bertha while he was painting her picture. I told you no good would come of letting her rig herself out like a play-actress, and stand up for hours, a smirking and smiling, while he took her picture and talked soft nonsense to her. He ran away with her and that was the end of it. Can't you remember?"

"Yes, I remember! He wrote to me, and sent me a copy of the marriage lines, so I'd know he loved her true and faithful. I remember it all, Hannah! And I was mad because they'd deceived me, and wrote back an angry letter. But I did not know I should miss her pretty face and sweet voice. She was so young, too, Hannah. Only sixteen! Not more than a child! I was too hard, too hard. But she is here, now. Let her come to me!"

All this was uttered in the faint, gasping voice of one whose journey of life was fast drawing to a close. But there was no pity in the hard face, no tenderness in the harsh voice of her niece.

"I tell you she is not here!" she said, roughly, "and I'm tired of your eternal whining for her. Go to sleep!"

"I can't sleep! I never sleep now! And I heard her. I heard Bertha down stairs!"

"I wonder, now, if she did hear her," Hannah muttered uneasily. "It's bad luck to cross the dying. If she would only tell me where she's put her money. Six thousand dollars in United States bonds, Lawyer Brown says he's bought for her, and never sold one; and they're in the house, too. I've ransacked as much as I dare, but she sleeps so little that I can't do much in the room. And there's the doctor coming every day, so I haven't time to make her mad, or she'll send and change her will."

Partly muttering, partly thinking all this, the woman tidied the room for the night, and set the lamp on the hearth, before she went to her own room. Sitting up to watch was hard work, and Hannah Graves kept a little stimulant where she could drink unobserved. To do her justice, she seldom took much, and nodded in the arm chair beside the sick-bed pretty faithfully. But on this night she was troubled with an uneasy conscience, and exceeded her usual allowance, falling into a deep sleep in her own room, where she had only intended to change her dress for a loose wrapper.

Earlier in the evening, before the early darkness of a December night had closed in, there had been a suppliant at the door, whose low, sweet voice had vainly pleaded for admission. The granddaughter who had run away with the artist had heard from a farmer, who went weekly to the city, of her grandmother's illness, and had hoped for one word of forgiveness.

The farmer was a kindly man, who had before carried tidings from the cottage to the city "fat," where Marcus Thornton and his young wife lived, as poor people in great cities so often live struggling bravely for daily bread, but sweetening the toll by strong mutual love.

Sometimes in the future the little wife was sure the paintings, that were to be her dreams of fairy land, would bring to her husband wealth and fame. She trusted him utterly, believing his genius unequalled in the wide world's array of artists. And while she waited for that genius to be recognized, she was well content to take in sewing to save and economize what he earned by the occasional sale of a small picture, or the filling of an order to decorate some rich man's panels or walls. They were often compelled to dine on porridge, but they ate it cheerfully, and furnished the sauce by building grand castles in the air, as they handled their pewter spoons.

There was no thought of her grand-

mother's six thousand dollars in Bertha Thornton's mind, as she thankfully accepted the farmer's offer to take her home and see the old lady before she died. Just one word of forgiveness was all she craved, for she knew that she had been undutiful and ungrateful when she left her home in secret to follow her lover's fortunes. She was not aware that Hannah Graves had quietly burned, unopened, the many letters she had written begging forgiveness, but that they were all unanswered convinced her that her grandmother was still angry.

She was a timid little woman, easily led, easily frightened, and Hannah Graves had kept her outside the door without difficulty, where the farmer left her to drive to his own home.

She begged in vain to see her grandmother, her sweet voice raised in her earnestness till it must have penetrated to the sick-room, from which she was so resolutely shut out.

As the door closed upon her and she heard the heavy bolt drawn it flashed upon her for the first time that she had made no provision for her night's shelter. It was winter weather, but not intensely cold, and her dress was warm, but it was not a pleasant prospect to think of wandering about all night till she could take the city train early in the morning.

She shivered as she drew her shawl closer and listened to the sounds in-doors that told her how carefully every door and window was being barred against her. The porch was deep and sheltered from the wind, and when she wearied of walking up and down she crouched into a corner to rest.

Just over her head was the window of her grandmother's room, and Hannah, setting this window a crack open for the night, let out the sound of her own harsh voice. Just a murmur of her own grandmother's faint utterances reached Bertha as she listened intently, but what Hannah said came to her clearly and distinctly. It convinced her that the story she had told of the old lady's continued anger was untrue, and the threat that the sight of her would have fatal results another fiction.

"She wants me! I am sure she will forgive me!" Bertha thought, as the faint accents reached her, conveying no words, but pleading in every tone. "I will see her!"

Again she listened intently, until she was sure by the silence that the invalid was alone. She was young, and light, and country bred. It was no great feat to scramble by the twisted vines on the porch pillars, to its roof, and gain the window. Very cautiously the sash was raised, the muslin curtain pushed aside, and by the dim light Bertha could see that the only occupant of the room was the old woman on the bed, who murmured incessantly:

"Oh, Bertha! I was too hard dear child! Come to your old granny before she dies!"

Softly still, for Hannah might be near. Bertha crept over the window-sill into the room, and to the door. This she locked, whispering to herself: "I will speak to grannie, and if anybody tries to put me out, she must first break the door in."

But there was no sound in any other part of the house as she drew near the invalid, whose large, eager eyes had by that time discovered her.

"Bertha! You have come! Bertha!"

"Yes, grannie, dear, dear grannie!" said Bertha, caressing her tenderly. "I am here."

"But you must not stay, Hannah will kill you. She will think you want the money."

"Oh, grannie, never mind money now. Only say you forgive me for leaving you."

"With all my heart, dear child. God bless you ever, and bless the man you love if he is good to you."

"He is, grannie, the kindest, best husband in the world. He shall come to you to-morrow."

"Yes, dear! yes! But now listen. Go to the clothes press and pull out the lower drawer. Quick! Now," as Bertha obeyed, "do you see on the floor, underneath where the drawer was, a package, sewed up in strong muslin? Bring that to me, and put the drawer back."

Bertha obeyed, and stood again beside the bed.

"Put it in your bosom. Button your dress over it. So!" said her grandmother, eagerly watching her follow her instructions. "Don't tell Hannah. Don't tell anybody but your husband. Promise me!"

"I promise, grannie."

"It is my savings for years; saved for you before I made that cruel will. It is yours, yours, darling. Hannah will have the cottage and everything else, because I have not taken the will away from Mr. Brown. Bertha, go away, dear, now. Go. But come to-morrow with your husband, to protect you. Go, dear. Hannah may come. Good night. God bless you, Bertha."

Out again in the night air, reluctant as she was to go, Bertha sped away to the railroad station, two miles away. She had unlocked the door and drew the window down before she left the house, and hurried on, only anxious to gain her home and bring her husband to receive the blessing already bestowed on herself.

There was a train at daybreak and the station was warm and light, but

the hours dragged slowly, until she was on her way to the city.

The day-dawn awakened Hannah from her heavy sleep, and, conscience stricken, she hurried to her aunt. Nothing, to her eyes, had been disturbed in the room, no confusion told of the midnight visitor, but the form on bed was rigid and pulseless, and no voice answered her frightened call.

It was too late for any spoken words of forgiveness when Marcus Thornton stood with his wife beside the still, cold form, but Bertha knew that she was pardoned, and she kept her promise made to the dead.

Hannah Graves lives in the cottage she has inherited, and has periodical attacks searching for the six thousand dollars in bonds, but she has never found them, although she truthfully declares "there is not one inch of the cottage that has not been ransacked."

Dogs That Showed Good Sense.

[From the New York Tribune.]

A little crowd of seedy men were gathered the other night about one of the ugly furnaces that defaced City Hall Park, while the contractors were covering the plaza with asphaltum. They were warming their bodies in the tarry smoke that streamed out of it, and had deserted the seats under the trees where they had slept most of the summer.

"I saw a queer thing happen here yesterday," said one of them. "A big Newfoundland dog, with a muzzle on him, was following a boy along Mail street, when a little bull terrier made a dash for him and got a death grip on one of the big fellow's long ears. It was all done so quick that the Newfoundland was being well chewed before he knew what had struck him. He gave a howl and a snap at the little brute, but his muzzle would not allow him to open his jaws, and the bull terrier chewed away like mad. All he could do was to turn tail and run, but the terrier did not loosen his grip and went along too. They dashed through the crowd, past the fountain, and out on the plaza here, where the big fellow nearly ran over a pair of smoking hot tar that was standing for a moment by the side of a workman, who had stopped to light his pipe."

"Quick as a flash the big dog stopped and threw his head as high in the air as he could. This dragged the little terrier well off his feet, and nearly tore the ear from the head of the Newfoundland, but when the little brute came down again he lit plump in the pail of burning tar. He let go of the ear quick enough then, you bet, and as the big fellow trotted off, shaking his head, I felt like giving him a cheer for his smartness."

"Oh, give us a rest," said another man, "you don't suppose it was anything but an accident, do you? Dogs ain't got half the sense they get credited for."

"Well, I ain't so sure of that," said another. "I ain't got no love nor no use for dogs anyway, but some of them has certainly got more sense than others. I was tramping in Pennsylvania last July and was crossing a field full of green corn when suddenly two big dogs take after me that I hadn't seen before and wasn't prepared for. They were ugly looking brutes, and I thought the best thing for me to do was to make for a tree, about a dozen rods away across a little gully. I'm a good sprinter and soon reached the gully, but in crossing it I slipped, twisted my ankle badly and fell flat, howling with the pain and unable to go a step further."

"In half a minute the two brutes were at the top of the gully, barking like mad and ready to tear me to pieces. I thought my goose was cooked sure, but I did not seem to care, for I could only hug my ankle and fairly cry with the pain. The smallest dog of the two, a big collie, reached me ahead of the other, but, to my great surprise, instead of sinking his long, sharp teeth in my flesh, stopped and looked me all over for a second, and when the other dog, a huge mongrel brute, came and made a dive for me the collie shoved himself between us and pushed him off. The mongrel could not understand this and evidently resented it. He gave a snap at his companion and made another dive for me, but the collie got him by the ear and dragged him off. Then the mongrel turned on the collie, but he had no show there at all, and soon withdrew a little way and looked at us in growing amazement."

"The collie sniffed at me a little, evidently seeing that I had hurt myself badly, and then went over and apparently consulted with the mongrel, for they both disappeared over the edge of the gully, and presently came back at the heels of a man, the farmer who owned them. He was not much better than the mongrel, however, though he let me lie there in peace for an hour or two, and by-and-by I was able to limp away with a whole skin and no more rage than I brought, thanks to the collie."

Consumption of Oleomargarine.

There has been quite an increase in the oleomargarine trade since the enforcement of the law requiring it to be sold by its proper name. People find it more palatable than 20 cent dairy butter, and it can be kept much longer without the offensive smell. It is rapidly taking the place of lower grades of butter in private families, as well as in cheap boarding houses and restaurants.

ASTORY OF TWO ORPHANS.

By Gertrude Garrison.

The romances of New York will never be all written. Every day brings a new one to light, and everyone differs from preceding ones. "The short and simple annals of the poor" are here not always short and simple, but often strangely sad.

Mrs. L. told one the other day that was both short and simple, and had in it a touch of sweetness not always to be found in the annals of either rich or poor.

"You know," she said, "that I advertised for a seamstress to go out to mother's in the country, and stay several weeks, perhaps all the time, if mother liked her."

I engaged the first one who applied, partly because she seemed willing to go to the country—which is rare—and partly because she looked like the reduced gentlewoman in books and had a manner that corresponded with her appearance. If she had been gotten up for this character in a play she could not have fitted it better. I have a weakness for that kind of thing, and I warmed toward her at once.

"She was intelligent and refined, and so we came to terms without delay, and I sent her out to mother's that afternoon. Mother liked her, too, and she proved as efficient as she was pleasing. I go out quite often, you know, and so I grew used to seeing her about the house, where she adapted herself to the situation with much quiet grace."

"I was pleased to see that her air of reduced gentlewoman still enveloped her, though it was worn with so happy a combination of dignity and humility that it was never offensive, nor absurd, as that kind of thing always is with pretenders, because it does not fit them properly. And then, you know, they were always ready to chatter about it, and in their chatter they reveal their true characters. I have had considerable experience with seamstresses who posed as having seen better days."

"They are very amusing, and are proverbially weak in grammar. I think I can tell them at a glance now. But this girl—Grace Bell is her name—always seemed to be genuine. Besides, she never opened her mouth to talk about herself—never said she had ever been anything more than a sewing girl; yet she made me feel that she had been something more—in short, that she was a lady."

She wore the conventional plain, soft gray gown so much affected by the stage governess, and which tells the story of ruined fortunes so eloquently; and the scrupulous neatness of her attire was very effective, I assure you. As the weeks went by and she still sustained the good impression she had made, our interest in her increased, and, without being rudely inquisitive, we contrived to make her understand that we would like her to talk about herself. It required many hints and even some polite solicitation to induce her to break her reserve. At last she told her story, and this was the substance of it:

"Her father, whom she did not even remember, had died when she was four years old. He had been a physician, but being young, had scarcely made a fair financial start when he died, and so left his widow and two little children in poverty. Grace's sister was three years younger than herself. She says she remembers her mother as a delicate, woe-worn woman, struggling to keep herself and her children from starvation by doing fine needlework. Those were days of such gloom that Grace says she has never outgrown the sadness cast upon her spirit by her mother's lonely struggle."

"When Grace was 6 years old, her mother, always delicate, fell ill and died, and Grace and her sister, Milly, found themselves in an orphan asylum. They remained there until Grace was 9 and Milly 6, when Milly was adopted by somebody and from that day Grace had neither seen nor heard of her, though she had never ceased to look for her wherever she went on the street, in church, in the cars, everywhere—hoping against odds that some day she would again see the child's bonny face, which Grace was sure she would instantly recognize."

"A short time after Milly left the asylum, Grace was taken by a lady and gentleman who had lost their own child. She was adopted by them, and was happy with them; but when she was sixteen they were killed in a railroad accident, and their kindred managed to get hold of all their property, leaving Grace penniless. She learned to make dresses and do other sewing well, and by means of her needle has supported herself ever since, and is now 22 years old."

"Throughout all these years Grace held to a belief that some day she would find Milly, though she could do nothing in the way of searching but look and look at the face of every young girl she saw. Wasn't it pitiful? And wasn't it remarkable, too, that she never lost hope?"

"When Grace had finished her story mother suddenly said, 'Why, Miss Bell, there is a young girl in the family of a friend of mine who has a history similar to yours, and now that I think of it, she resembles you very much.'

Grace clasped her hands tight and breathed hard. More than ever did she look like the reduced gentlewoman of the play hearing unexpected good news. Oh, it was all intensely interesting, I can assure you.

"How can you identify your sister?" mother asked.

"I should know her without any proofs, I am sure; but I can also prove my claim to others. While we were still with mother, Milly fell against a stove one day, and was so badly burned that two letters on the stove were distinctly printed on her left arm after the burn healed. They were the letters A. O."

"Mother and Grace went that very day to see the supposed Milly, and she proved to be the real Milly, with the letters on her arm and every part of her history corresponding to Grace's story."

"Her name isn't Milly now, of course. She remembered something about her life in the asylum, and knew that she was the adopted daughter of the family whose name she bears. She has always longed for a sister, and now that fate has sent her one—particularly so lovely a one as Grace—she is almost overpowered with happiness. Yes, and Milly is to be married next month, and will have a home of her own, to which Grace has already been invited and to which she has promised to go. Now isn't it delightful that Grace's faith in finding her sister has been so sweetly rewarded? You remember one of our noble poets says:

"There is nothing sweet in the city
But the patient lives of the poor."

Coinage.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT.

Forbearance is attended with profit. The loftiest building arises from small accretions. Suffering is the surest means of making us truthful to ourselves. Everything, even piety, is dangerous in a man without judgment. He who wisely uses his wealth need not leave it for his tombstone. A discontented man is like a snake who would swallow an elephant. We always take credit for the good, and attribute the bad to fortune. He lives long who lives well; and time mispent is not lived, but lost. No man can afford to set his chronometer by anything except the sun. Flattery is a false coin which only derives its currency from our vanity. A man is not necessarily of heavy calibre because he has a large mouth. Whatever you or your friends do is never wholly right. Ever notice that? After all, the joy of success does not equal that which attends the patient working. You cannot do good or evil to others without doing good or evil to yourself. To persecute the unfortunate is like throwing stones on one fallen into a well. Two things a man should never be angry at: what he can help, and what he cannot. Years cannot be weighed on scales, but the weight of them bends the backs of all men. Kind feeling may be paid with kind feeling, but debts must be paid with hard cash. Hear both sides and all will be clear; hear but one side and you will still be in the dark. What we call life is a journey to death, and what we call death is a passport to life. Why is it easy to get in an old man's house? Because his gait is broken and his locks are few. The heart is like the tree that gives balm for the wounds of man only when the iron has pierced it. There are many dogs that have never killed their own mutton, but very few that having begun have stopped. It is astonishing how soon the whole conscience begins to unravel—a single stitch drops; one sin indulged in makes a hole you could put your whole head through. Power and liberty are like heat and moisture; where they are well mixed everything prospers, where they are single they are destructive. Many who sit and wall over the ashes of a "blasted life," might improve their digestion and condition by walking five miles a day. The ambition of youth looks forward to the triumphs of age, while sated age turns back a wistful eye along the rosy path of youth. Too much reading, and too little thinking, has the same effect on a man's mind that too much eating and too little exercise has on his body. Life is made up of greetings and farewells, of good-mornings and good-nights. What we call "experience" is only the yale between sunrise and sunset. If a man wants his wife to believe that he is a genius his wisest plan is to persuade her of it before he gets married. He will generally find it easier then. In this life a heap depends on knowing the truth when you find it. The lie is fond of wearing bright ribbons, while the truth is often contented with brown jeans. It is impossible to incorporate the soundest business principles into love. Affection always has to be taken on trust. How can we ever expect to find a perfect person in this world, when we can't even find one who is half as good as he can be. When a man laughs immoderately all the time, decide that he has some trouble on his mind, and is trying to do away with it. Nothing is more wearing on a sensitive nature than to be made a sort of safe deposit where people can leave their secrets. The highest rate of interest we pay is on borrowed trouble. Things that are always going to happen never do happen. If a man has a right to be proud of anything, it is of a good action done as it ought to be, without any base interest lurking at the bottom of it. Nature is upheld by antagonisms. Passions, resistance, danger, are educators. We acquire the strength we have overcome. Each man is a walking coal mine, and it is for him to decide whether it will send forth heat and light, or only soot and smoke. When a man ventures an opinion he will find some one who opposes it. Hence a man without opposition is a man without opinions. He who is unconsciously selfish is not as dangerous as he who is consciously so; the former betrays his selfishness, the latter conceals it. Duty is sure; results are God's. We are not sharp-sighted enough to see how much good we may be doing when we undertake to do anything. Sincerity is an opening of the heart. We find it in very few people; and that which we generally see is nothing but a subtle dissimulation to attract the confidence of others. The roses of pleasure seldom last long enough to adorn the brow of him who plucks them, and they are the only roses which do not return their sweetness after they have lost their beauty. It never was in the power of any man or community to call the arts into being. They came to serve his actual wants, never to please his fancy. These arts have their origin always in some enthusiasm—as love, patriotism, or religion.

The gold dollar of the United States weighs 25.8 grains. The silver dollar weighs 412 1/2 grains. These weights are based on the assumption that 16 pounds of silver are equal in value to one pound of gold.

The smaller silver coins are of less weight than the dollar in proportionate value, two half dollars, four quarters or ten dimes weighing but 384 grains. The purpose of this difference is obvious. It is desirable to prevent the exportation of these subsidiary coins as bullion. They are really only counters, and are legal tender for small amounts only.

The silver dollars and the gold coins are legal tender for any amount. As things now are, however, there is little probability that the gold coins will be used to make tender. The statute, indeed, has fixed the weights of the gold and silver dollars on the theory that the ratio of their respective values as bullion is sixteen to one, but the facts are quite otherwise. In the present state of the markets it takes about twenty-three pounds of silver to buy one pound of gold. Silver "dollars" are therefore much cheaper than gold dollars, and debts will always be discharged in the cheapest lawful currency. The law has made the silver dollar a legal tender for its nominal value in all transactions between the citizens of the United States, or between such citizens and the United States Government. But no law can make the silver dollar discharge debts due to foreign residents to any further extent than the commercial value of the silver contained in the coin. A debt of one hundred pounds sterling, due to a London merchant, can be discharged by the payment of about 456 1/2 gold dollars. It will require at the present time about 695 silver "dollars" to pay such a debt.

The merchant who imports coffee from Brazil must pay for it in gold or its equivalent. When he sells it for silver dollars in the United States he must make the price such as to produce as much gold value as the coffee cost him and his proper profit. He pays a gold price; the American consumer must pay a gold price, though he may not know it. If the importer pays for it by exported merchandise, it brings the same result, for such merchandise is sold at gold prices. In spite of the Bland act or any other statute, a "dollar" has come to have a definite meaning in the commerce of the world, and that meaning is the value of 25.8 grains of standard American gold, that is, gold nine-tenths pure. No less, no greater value is recognized as the value of a dollar. If we should authorize the coinage of a piece of gold weighing 20 grains, and by statute affix to such a coin the name "dollar," nobody would receive it as of equal value with the present gold dollar. The quantity of other commodities purchasable with it would be in the same proportion less than the quantity purchasable with the present gold dollar as its weight of gold is less.

Likewise the value of the silver coin authorized by the Bland act and called a "dollar" can by no possible legerdemain be made to stand as a dollar in the markets of the world, nor to buy a real dollar's worth of other commodities in the United States until the ratio of the commercial values of gold and silver become 16 to 1.

Riches have made more men covetous than covetousness hath made man rich. It is to live twice when you can enjoy the recollection of your former life. If men will have no care for the future they will soon have sorrow for the past. We sometimes hear of the spirit of hope—but hope is no spirit, it's an expecter.