

THE GOLDEN BRAWL

SAMUEL WRIGHT, Editor and Proprietor.

"NO ENTERTAINMENTS SO CHEAP AS READING, NOR ANY PLEASURE SO LASTING."

\$1.50 PER YEAR IN ADVANCE; \$2.00 IF NOT IN ADVANCE

VOLUME XXXIII, NUMBER 44.]

COLUMBIA, PENNSYLVANIA, SATURDAY MORNING, MAY 31, 1862.

[WHOLE NUMBER 1,658.

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY MORNING

Office in Carpet Hall, North-west corner of Front and Locust streets.

Terms of Subscription. One copy sent free of postage in advance. Single copies 10 cents. Three months 25 cents. Six months 50 cents. One year \$1.00. All payments in advance.

Advertisements. One square (10 lines) for one week 75 cents. Two squares 1.25. Three squares 1.75. Four squares 2.25. Five squares 2.75. Six squares 3.25. Seven squares 3.75. Eight squares 4.25. Nine squares 4.75. Ten squares 5.25. For longer periods and for larger advertisements, apply to the publisher.

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Poetry.

My Heart and I.

FROM MRS. BROWNING'S "LAST FORMS."

Enough, we're tired, my heart and I,
We sit beside the headstone thus,
And wish that names were carved for us;
The most reprints more tenderly
The hardy words to keep a knif,
As heaven's sweet life renews earth's life,
With which we're tired, my heart and I.

II.
You see we're tired, my heart and I,
We deal with books, we tread in fern,
And in our own blood dried the pen,
As if such colors could not die.
We walked too straight for former's end,
We loved too true to keep a friend,
As if we were tired, my heart and I.

III.
How tired we feel, my heart and I!
We seem of no use in the world;
Our faces hang gray and uncleaned
About men's eyes indifferently,
Our voice which thrilled you so will let
You sleep; our tears are only wet;
What do we here, my heart and I!

IV.
So tired, so tired, my heart and I!
It was not thus in that old time
When Belphegor's mouth was the lime
To watch the sunset from the sky.
"Dear love, you're looking tired," he said,
I, smiling at him shook my head;
"This now we're tired, my heart and I!"

V.
So tired, so tired, my heart and I!
Though now you take me on his arm
To fold me close and kiss me warm
Till each quick breath and in a sigh
Of happy languor. Now alone,
We lean upon this grave and stone,
Uncheered, unloved, my heart and I!

VI.
Tired not we are, my heart and I!
I suppose the world is full of sinners
To tempt us, craved with loose gems
Of powers and pleasures. Let it try,
We scarcely care to look at even
A pretty child, or God's blue heaven,
We feel so tired, my heart and I!

VII.
Yet who complains? My heart and I!
In this abundant earth no doubt
Is little room for things worn out;
Pleasin them, they're not a boy!
And if before the day's end
We once were loved, good-well enough,
I think, we've faced my heart and I.

Apart.

The homeless wind sweeps up the track
From the waste of turbid sea—
I shudder to think that dim-witted
Lies 'twixt thee and me—
Lies 'twixt thee and me;
And the dust earth through thy breast—
But I know the ventral grass and flowers
Are under at thy feet.

Heavily down on the eric wind
Beats the frozen winter rain—
It throws in the deep dark forest depths
Like a human heart in pain;
Like a human heart in pain;
As my own throbs on to-night,
Thinking of thee in the cold and dark,
And in the warmth and light.

Never a message come to me—
Oh, how cruel is our fate!
Never a word from the lost, lost one,
Not even in midnight dream—
Not even in midnight dream;
Oh, could it only be,
"Send me a token, waken a thrill
Of the old-time ecstasy!"

Yam it will hold it! I will be still!
Dead feet never come back!
Why should they haste to the world again,
Out of the heavenly track—
Out of the heavenly track—
Ah, sink me to the bottom, where my
Thou art resting in Paradise,
I am wandering alone!

Selections.

From the Cornhill Magazine.

A Strange Way to a Legacy.

The year after the general peace was the first of my travels. I was just twenty-two, and thought myself lucky when, early in the summer of 1841, my uncle sent me to his agent and representative in the house of Skinderkin & Co. The firm were fur merchants—part Russian, part German, and part English. It was indeed rather a company, and a very composite one. I do not remember half their names. They had partners in all the Baltic, Doeth and German towns, not to speak of London, where my uncle represented them in King William Street; but the fountain head of the house was in St. Petersburg, and thither he sent me.

I thought I was going to see the world and he a great deal, indeed, having little acquaintance with the world, I entertained secret designs of lordling it over the Russian and German clerks, for all the company had their national representatives in the chief house; and I was appointed to the English department. I got a great deal of good advice, and a large supply of congratulations on the position which I occupied; and my uncle's counsel was to conduct myself properly; my grandmother recommended me not to grow too proud; and the curate of their church in Hampstead gave me serious ad-

monitions against being perverted to the Greek Church.

I set out with all the weight of my own importance and these sage commands. I arrived safely, though a voyage to St. Petersburg was no joke in those days, and got regularly located in the house of Skinderkin. It was large enough to satisfy my fondest expectations, and stood close on the Neva, that oldest and outstraggling part of St. Petersburg, said to have been the site of an Indian village, the whole of whose inhabitants perished in the adjoining marsh, when the city had to be built at any cost of life or labor, and Peter the Great wielded at once the sword and the knout for his subjects' encouragement. The nobility had built their palaces there in Peter's time; but partly the moving habits of the Russians, partly the foundations to which it was particularly subject, made them abandon the quarter early in the reign of Catherine II. Merchants and traders of the first class then took possession of the palaces, and built their stores and warehouses, from which the noble proprietors drew considerable additions to their incomes, in the shape of rent; and in one of the largest and grandest Skinderkin & Co. had located themselves. In such noble rooms, galleries, and corridors, was business never before done. Such quantities of furs, from the Lapland, Siberia, and Kamchatka, as came there to be stored, booked, and shipped, I had never dreamed of. Nevertheless, the proverb, that far-off fowls have fair feathers, was strikingly illustrated in the matter of my St. Petersburg appointment. In the first place, the establishment was disciplined after the old Russian fashion, in which the Tartar fines, which every merchant a sort of military freemason. We all worked and boarded on the premises, but the work and the boarding were carried on in a dreary, penitential style—silent, secret and systematic—a happy mixture of the house of correction, the monastery, and the harem. The hours were kept with regularity. The meals were announced by the tolling of a great bell, which might have served for anybody's funeral. Every desk and stool was partitioned off its neighbor; sub, and superior sat like so many prisoners in solitary confinement, except that they could partly see, and all watched each other. Then, as to lordling it over the Russian and German clerks, not one of them could speak English. I knew nothing of Russian or German—it is not easy lordling it without speech—but somehow I discovered that every soul in them cordially despised me, because my uncle was known to have the most stable stake in the firm.

I think that fact was first made plain to me by my senior in the English department, who had been a customer and ally of mine and myself. He had come from Yorkshire, and his name was Hardstaff—a title which sounded so aristocratic in the ears of the Russians that they entertained a general respect for him. But had the Fates so willed it, Hardstaff would have been a more suitable appellation, for he never spoke a word of English, and he had been a very pretty woman, but also that I had seen the same face some days before looking out at a window of one of the great palaces in the wide and windy square of the Admiralty. The lady looked at me now most graciously, and when I acknowledged her presence with my best bow, said, in very good English for a foreigner:

"I am sorry, sir, to be the cause of giving you so much trouble."

I had not heard my native English for two months, except for the dry, disagreeable Hardstaff, and could have danced for joy on the spot to hear it uttered from the rosy lips of a woman so lovely and so kind. "I thought you would be glad to hear me," she said, "and I am glad to hear you speak English so well."

"No trouble at all," said the lady.

"Might I ask if you have been long in St. Petersburg?"

"Only two months," said I.

"How do you like it?"

"I have scarcely had time to know."

"Well, it is true you English are sensible people, and do not make up your minds in a hurry. I have a great respect for the English—how well she spoke our language!"

"I had a governor of your nation," she said, "and he was a very good man. What trouble she took to teach me the little English I know!"

"Her trouble was well bestowed, madame," said I, having by this time got up my courage and my manners; "you speak it like a native."

"I did not know that Englishman could flatter, and before I had time to rebut the charge, she added: "But tell me how you like the society here?"

"I have seen very little as yet, madame."

"Ah, perhaps you have no friends or relations in the city?"

"None, madame; I am quite a stranger."

She looked at me so kindly, so sympathizingly, that I could have sworn to give her the most confidential information, but she was very serious, saying, with his accustomed first: "It is all right; and as I was expected to retire to my desk, I did so with another bow, to which the lady made a polite acknowledgment, talked a few minutes more in Russ with Hardstaff, and went out as noiselessly as she had entered.

From that hour Hardstaff grew more familiar and communicative with me, as if he had found out that I might be considered somebody. His society was about as pleasant as the fruit of a crab-tree; but I had no choice of company, and wanted to hear what he knew regarding the lady. For once in his life Hardstaff appeared willing to give his confidential information, and he told me that Countess Rozenki, a widow, rich, childless, and belonging to one of the first families in Esthonia. He further explained her coming to these warehouses, by letting me know that it had been the Countess's plan, and that she had come from an estate in the government of Archangel. "It is not exactly her own," said Hardstaff; "but properly belongs to her husband's nephew. She is his guardian, however, and that is nearly as good as ownership in Russia."

Some days after this, one afternoon when Hardstaff, by a most unusual chance, was out at his desk, I was sitting with the pen in my fingers, and the account book before me, wondering if she would come again in my time, when there was a slight creak of the door, a light rustle of silk, the prettiest thing on the brass rail of the stove, and there stood Madame Rozenki.

"Ah, my English friend," she said, uni-

ling with accustomed sweetness as I presented myself, "how glad I am to see you once again! Shake hands; they always shake hand-in-your-country, don't they? My goodness told me so. How I long to visit England!"

It is to be hoped that I shook the small delicate hand, covered with lemon-colored kid, as fashion then required, with becoming grace and ardor. I knew that I was interested her mind for the English. I remembered that her business was not very important or her time precious. I of course waited for her to speak, but she did not wait to speak, and we got into conversation.

As far as my memory serves me it was regularly opened by her ladyship inquiring once again how I liked the society of St. Petersburg. As we had shaken hands, and I had said such a respect for the English, I recalled my mind to telling her the truth—that I knew nobody, and nobody knew me; that I had not a soul to speak to but Hardstaff, and was heartily tired and sick of my situation. The lady seemed to enter into my feelings to a degree which enchanted me, young as I was.

"For your relations, and without friends in a strange city," she said, "with no associate but the old man who sits at that desk—it is a hard trial. And you can't return to England without your uncle's permission, of course?"

"No," said I; "and he is a man to whom I should not wish to complain of anything; he would not mind my business."

"Ah, these money-making old men think of nothing but business," said the countess.

"But tell me now, should you like to see society? I mean first-class company—the world of fashion in St. Petersburg."

"Your ladyship is not accustomed to fashionable life; I have never been anything but a merchant's clerk."

"Yes; but you have a genteel air, and might be made presentable," she said, surveying me from head to foot with a look of the most candid and kindly patronage; "and as you are so lonely, if you will be a good boy, and will let me see you, I will give you a letter to my best friends. It is only quatrilles, cards and supper."

Was I dreaming, or did a Russian countess actually invite me out of Skinderkin & Co.'s counting-house to quatrilles, cards and supper? Then what appeared had I to appear in as the Countess's guest, and to be invited to her dinner by a lady who had never been counted among the requisites of my existence, and in the confusion of these thoughts I could only stammer out: "Much obliged to your ladyship, but—"

"You are thinking of your dress, young man," said the countess, laying her small hand on my arm, and looking me gently in the face; "do not disturb yourself about that; we can do fairer work at the Rozenki palace, and you shall be my Cinderella."

"Just step around to the tea-shop in the back behind your warehouse, about seven o'clock tomorrow evening; you will find a carriage waiting there, step into it, and I will bring you to my dressing-room where you will find everything requisite for a gentleman's toilet: then ring the bell, and the footman will conduct you to my saloon."

I do not remember what I said by way of thanks and acknowledgment for this, but as I was not used to English, and as I was so far out of the common course; yet where was the young man in my position who would have refused?

"Oh, never mind," said the countess, cutting me short with another light pat on the arm; "you will be kind to some Russian, perhaps, and will be kind to me, as I have inherited your uncle's business, and become a great merchant. You won't forget I be at the tea-shop at seven. I can't wait for that old man any longer."

"Good-bye."

She shook hands with me once more, and was going, when a sudden thought struck her. "Do not forget to speak French; you will speak French?"

"No, madame," said I, blushing to the roots of my hair, as I remembered that that was the language of good society in Russia; but my school-days had been in the time of the long war, when French was neither so common nor so requisite as it has since become to men of business."

"Do you understand it at all?" and her look grew kindly inquiring.

"Not a word, madame."

"That is unfortunate; everything of fashion speaks French here, and very few understand English; besides, nothing could convince them that you had not been brought up in a French family, and I might bring you to speak French; but there is an expedient which has just occurred to me; you will pretend to be dumb. I know you are clever enough to act a part; it will be no loss, as you cannot understand what is spoken; but, remember, not a sound before my guests or servants; it might bring you to speak French; but there is an expedient which has just occurred to me; you will pretend to be dumb. I know you are clever enough to act a part; it will be no loss, as you cannot understand what is spoken; but, remember, not a sound before my guests or servants; it might bring you to speak French; but there is an expedient which has just occurred to me; you will pretend to be dumb. 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