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LARRIMER & WARD.

SELECT POETRY.

THE SEA SHELL.

BY B. C. PRUESS.

How is it with thee, oh lone sea shell?
Why utter this ceaseless moan?
Art yearning again
For thy home in the main
Where the sunlight hath never shone?

Like the muffled throb of a broken heart,
The music is sounding to me:
Art mourning thy love
In some far coral grove
Which blossoms down under the sea?

They say that the voice of the native waves
This melancholy dirge doth keep;
Which, though far away,
Doth ever betray
Thy birth in the wild ocean deep.

And is it not thus with that mystical voice
Which speaks to the children of earth,
And often unfolds,
To God-imaged sou's,
Some trace of their heavenly birth?

Ah! many a spirit like thee, lone shell!
Now mourns in its prison of clay,
While it catches faint gleams,
In soul-thrilling dreams,
Of the ocean that's far away.

RETIREMENT.

BY G. W. WHITTIER.

'Tis sweet at the closing of day,
From the w arisome turmoil of life,
To wander disencumber'd away,
From its scenes of confusion and strife.

Away to the lonely retreat,
Where no jarring or discord invade,
But concord and harmony sweet,
The beauties of nature pervade.

Where the floweret inhales the last ray
Of the sun, as he sets in the west,
And mournful to part with the day,
Drops its head on its mother's fond breast.

To heart-cheering pleasures like these,
In solitude let me repair;
To the weary of life they give ease,
And drive away sorrow and care.

The Great Maryland Black-Cat Case.

"If you meet a black cat, shave him to the tail."

This tremendous case is now pending before a judicial tribunal of the State of Maryland, and presents many remarkable features of the ingenuity and speculative capacity of the defendants in the case.—For the benefit of the legal profession and gentlemen generally who may wish to enter a new field of speculation. I will give a short history of the case as I heard it.

Some years ago a gentleman of Maryland conceived the idea that an immense fortune could be realized by the rearing of black cats for the sake of their skins. The principal obstacle to the plan was the impossibility of keeping the animals together, and prevent them from wandering off, as their activity, assisted by the penetrating qualities of their claws, would enable them to defy any enclosure; and at last, after much thinking, the idea suggested itself to his mind that water was the only barrier that cats would not pass. Being in possession of an island that appeared to be just suited for the experiment, he found all obstacles the success of his plan removed, and set about organizing the affair.

He employed an agent, and put out a circular, in which he stated that he would give so much a head for every black cat that could be got. This advertisment was was circulated through all the counties bordering on the Chesapeake bay, and all the negroes got hold of it. In a very short time all the black cats through these counties were stolen by the negroes and sold to the agent, who had depots established at different points. Old ladies missed their favorite black cats, and mourned them as dead—but the negroes, incited by the price spared none. In this way one hundred and fifty black cats were collected and transported to the island: and the agent took up his abode there like another Robinson Crusoe, as superintendent and guardian of the cats. Those animals after they found themselves vastly at home on the island, and spent their time in either playing with each other, or hunting birds or ground mice: but at last their game failed them, and having no other supply of food, they became hungry and desperate, and roamed around the island in large bands, yelling for food. They at last became dangerous, and the agent wrote to his employer a statement of these facts, accompanied by a request to know to do with them. He wrote back to the agent to get a couple of negroes to catch and open oysters for the cats, which order was carried out. The cats, having the alternative of oysters or starvation before them, very naturaly chose the former; but, not being accustomed to such unnatural food, a species of cholera broke out among them, and one-half died.

This calamity drove the survivors mad, and the either committed suicide, or, in a fit of desperation, swam to the main land. At any rate, they disappeared, and were never heard of more.

The agent then wrote again to his employer to acquaint him with the result of this new treatment, which news was accompanied by the modest request for the payment of his wages—for this cat experiment occupied a space of upwards of a year.—The latter was so indignant at the conduct of both the agent and the cats that he flatly refused, and the consequence of the refusal was a suit brought by the agent for his wages. This suit has been defended for some two years, and during its progress I have become acquainted with the facts.

As far as the theory of the speculation went, it was a magnificent idea. The skin of the black cat is worth in Boston 50 cents. The cats, I am told, cost the agent just that sum. It was supposed they would increase exactly ten fold per annum. Then say, first year, number of cats, 150; second year, 1,500; third, 15,000 from which there could be obtain 5,000 toms for sale, bringing $2,500, and leave 10,000 stock cats remain, which, at the above ratio of increase, would give the enormous sum of 100,000 cats upon the island, after which all the surplus, over and above the last number, were to be caught in box traps and the skins sold to Boston furriers. This stock of 100,000 cats were to produce 1,000,000 per annum, and the revenue instantly to be derived from the island would be in the neighborhood of five hundred thousand dollars per annum.

The principal drawback to the enterprise was the utter inability of the cats to organize or band together for the purpose of assisting each other, and thus facilitating their hunting operations; so, after deep reflection upon the subject, it was determined to import a couple of wild cats from South America, whose admixture with his cats would not only add strength to the body and value to the fur, but whose executive qualities might be brought to bear in organizing the original settlers into hunting packs—and thus enable them to successfully pursue the squirrels and ground mice with which the island abounded—and, in fact, to teach these unfortunate animals, who, torn from the comfortable fireside, were, of course, ignorant of the necessity of savage life, the mysteries of the chase. He readily found a friend willing to procure him the new cats, I am afraid this friend regarded the whole matter as a joke, but at any rate he was faithful to his promise, and as soon after his arrival in Rio Janeiro as possible, he set some native hunting, who caught two young tigar cats of extraordinary ferocity which he placed in a cage and shipped to Baltimore.

When he had almost forgotten the matter he was surprised by by the receipt of a letter apprising him of the arrival of these wild beasts, and was requested "to come forward, pay charges and take them away." He hurried to town and found these young tigers about the size of a medium setter dog, and a bill of charges of several hundred per cent. more than he anticipated. He paid it and ordered two negroes to convey the beasts in a cart to his country home, for he wished to exhibit them before he sent them down down to take command of the island cats.

On the road out to his place the cats glared and spit at the negroes in such a fiendish manner that, to get rid of them, they turned the cage over on the far side, whereby one of the cats was smothered.

The survivor, being deprived of his mate became more ferocious than ever, and it became a question whether it be safe for the cats upon the island to turn it loose among them. The owner was very much worried until his negro man suggested that they should try the experiment by putting a tame cat into the cage.

The idea was the very thing. A cat was procured and introduced into the cage. In about two minute it was torn into shreds and utterly devoured. Of course it would have been madness to turn the beast loose on the island—so the idea was abandoned and it has been kept ever since as a small menagerie attached to the gentleman's house, with the exception of a periodical visit to the agricultural fair in Baltimore, when it is placed among the poultry, and causes the hearts of the chichens to die within them. This is a short history of the great black-cat scheme and the suit arising from it. Whether there is legal ability in the State sufficent to settle the latter is more than I am able to say.—*Correspondence of the Washington Union, Annapolis, Md., May 3, 1858.*

VALUABLE INFORMATION.—The width of the United States is 2,650 miles.

Its length 2,600 miles.

Area of square miles, 2,936,167.

Coast line of rivers and lakes 15,204.

It has thirty two States, of which 17 are free and 15 slave States; and seven Territories.

Its population is 23,189,876, of which there are 13,279,, free at the North; [illegible] 9,221,513, and 3,204,313 slaves. There are also 434,495 free persons of color.

The area of square miles of the St. Lawrence basin is 130,000.

Atlantic slope, basin of square miles, 410,000.

Pacific slope, basin of square miles, 280,000.

Utah slope, basin of square miles, 280,000.

Red River of the North, basin of square miles, 20,000.

Area of the North in square miles, 600,000.

Area of the Territories in square miles, 1,500,925.

Number of miles of Railroad, 22,000

River and Lake navigation, 19,720.

TOUCHING INCIDENT.

The following extract, taken from an account written by the Rev. James Miller, and quoted by the author of "Old Redstone," will give the reader some idea of the pecuniary embarrasements of early ministers and of the general state of the Western country, and also of the remarkable interposition of Divine Providence for the relief of those ministers.

"Our story," says Mr. Miller, "will carry the reader back to the period when all north of the Ohio river was almost an unbroken wilderness—the mysterious red man's home. On the other side, a bold hardy band from beyond the mountains had built their log cabins, and were trying to subdue the wilderness. To them every hour was full of peril. The Indians would often cross the river, steal their children and horses, kill and scalp every victim that came in their way. They worked in the field with weapons at their side, and on a Sabbath met in a grove or rude log church to hear the Word of God, with their rifles in their hands. To preach to these settlers, Mr. Joseph Smith, a Presbyterian minister, had left his parental home, east of the mountains. He, it was said, was the second minister who had crossed the Monongahela. He settled in Washington county, Pennsylvania, and became the pastor of Cross Creek and Upper Buffalo congregations, dividing his time between them. He found them a willing and united people, but still unable to pay him a salary which would support his family. He, in common with all the early ministers, must cultivate a farm.—He purchased one on credit, promising to pay for it with the salary pledged to him by the people. Years passed away. The pastor was unpaid. Little or no money was in circulation. Wheat was abundant, but there was no market. It could not be sold for more than twelve and a half cents, in cash. Even the salt, which had to be brought across the mountains on packhorses, was worth eight dollars per bushel, and twenty-one bushels of wheat had often to be given for one of salt. The time came when the payment must be made, and Mr. Smith was told he must pay or leave his farm. Three years salary was now due from his people. For the want of this, his lands, his improvements upon it, and his hopes of remaining among a beloved people must be abandoned. The people were called together, and the case laid before them, and they were greatly moved; council from on high was sought;—plan after plan was proposed and abandoned: the congregation was unable to pay a tithe of their debts, and no money could be borrowed. In despair they adjourned to meet again the following week. In the meantime it was ascertained that a Mr. Moore, who owned the only mill in the County, would grind for them wheat on reasonable terms. At the next meeting it was resolved to carry their wheat to Mr. Moor's mill, some gave fifty bushels, some more. This was carried from fifteen to twenty-six miles on horses to mill. In a month word came that the flour was ready to go to market. Again the people were called together. After an earnest prayer the question was asked, "Who will run the flour to New Orleans?" This was a startling question. The work was perilous in the extreme; months must pass before the adventurer could hope to return, even though his journey would be fortunate;—nearly all the way was a wilderness, and gloomy tales were told of the treacherous Indians. More than one boat's crew had gone on that journey and had come back no more. "Who then could endure the toil and brave the danger?" None volunteered; the young shrank back, and the middle aged had their excuse. At length a hoary headed man, an elder of the church, sixty-four years of age, rose, and to the astonishment of the assembly said, "Here I am; send me." The deepest feeling at once prevaded the whole assembly. To see their venerated old elder thus devote himself for their good, melted them all to tears. They gathered around Father Smiley to learn that his resolution was indeed taken; that rather than lose his pastor he would brave danger, toil and even death. After some delay and trouble, two young men were induced by hope of a large reward, to go as his assistants.—A day was appointed for starting. The young and old, from far and near, from love to father Smiley and deep interest in the object of his mission, gathered together, and with their pastor at their head came down from the church, fifteen miles away, to the bank of the river, to bid the old man farewell. Then a prayer was offered up by their pastor, and a parting hymn was sung. Then said the old Scotchman, "Untie the cable, and let us see what the Lord will do for us." This was done and the boat floated slowly away. More than nine months passed and no word came back from Father Smiley. Many a prayer had been breathed for him, but what was his fate was unknown. Another Sabbath came; the people came together for worship, and there, on his rude bench, before the pulpit, composed and devout, sat Father Smiley. After service the people were required to meet early in the week to hear the report. As came again. After thanks had been returned to God for his safe return, Father Smiley rose and told his story: That the Lord had prospered his mission; that he had sold his flour for twenty-seven dollars a barrel, and then got safely back. He then drew a large purse and poured upon the table a larger pile of gold than most of the spectators had ever seen before. The young men were paid each one hundred dollars. Father Smiley was asked his charge. He meekly replied, that he thought he ought to have the same as one o the young men, though he had not done quite as much work. It was immediately proposed to pay him three hundred dollars. This he refused till the pastor was paid. Upon counting the money it was found there was enough to pay what was due Mr. Smith, to advance his salary for one year to come, to reward Father Smiley with three hundred dollars, and then have a large dividend for each contributor.—Thus their debts were paid, their pastor relieved, and while the lasted he broke for them the bread of life. The bones of both pastor and elder repose in the same church yard; but a grateful posterity still tells this pleasing story of the past."

THE MAN IN LOVE.—Thackery says that "When a man is in love with any woman in a family, it is astonishing how fond he becomes of every person connected with it. He insinuates himself with the maiden he is bland with the butler, he interests himself with the footman; he runs on errands for the daughter; begives and lends money to the young son at college; he pats little dogs which he would kick otherwise; he smiles at old stories which would make him break out in yawns were they uttered by any one but papa: he hears with the old maiden, he beats time when darling little Fanny performs her piece on the piano, and smiles when wicked, fleein little Bobby upsets the coffee over his shirt."

LETTER OF A DYING WIFE.

The following most touching fragment of a letter from a dying wife to her husband, was found some months after her decease, which she was not permitted to [illegible] Oregon. The letter which was written [illegible] the weeks of her illness, [illegible] of the consecrated love [illegible] the sorely bereft husband [illegible] born of her wife, who died at the age of 27:

"When this shall reach your eye, dear George, some day when my ashes are turning over the relics of the past, I shall have past away forever, and the cold white stone will be keeping us lonely watch over the lips you have often pressed, and the sod will be growing green that shall hide forever from your sight the dust of one who has often nestled close to your warm heart. For many long and sleepless nights, when all but my thoughts were at rest, I have wrestled with the consciousness of approaching death, until at last it has forced itself upon my mind: and although to you, to others, it might seem but the nervous imagining of a girl, yet, dear George, it is so. Many weary nights have I passed in the endeavor to reconcile myself to leaving you, whom I love so well, and this earthly world of sunshine and beauty; and hard indeed is it to struggle on silently and alone with the sure conviction that I am about to leave all forever, and go down into the dark valley.—"But I know in whom I have believed, and leaning on His arm, I fear no evil."

"Do not blame me for keeping even all this from you. How could I subject you of all others, to such sorrow as I feel at parting, when time will make it apparent to you? I could have wished to live, if only to be at your side when your time shall come, and pillowing your head upon my breast, wipe the death damp from your brow, and usher your departed spirit into its Maker's presence, enshrined in woman's holiest prayer. But it is not to be—and I submit. Yours is the privilege of watching, through long and dreary nights, for the spirit's final flight, and of transferring my sinking head from your breast to my Saviours bosom. And you shall share my last thought, and the last faint pressure of the hand, and the last feeble kiss shall be yours until glazed in death; and our spirits shall hold one last communion until gently faded from my view—the last of earth—you shall mingle with the first bright glimpses of the unfading glories of the better world, where partings are no more.

Well, do I know the spot, my dear George, where you will lay me. Often we stood by the place, and as we watched the mellow sunset, as it glanced in quivering flashes through the leaves, and burnished the grassy mound around us with stripes of burnished gold, each, perhaps, has tho't that some day one of us would come alone and whichever it be, your name would be on the stone. But we loved the spot, and I know you will love it none the less when you see the same sunlight linger and play above the grass that grows over your Mary's grave. I know you will go there, and my spirit will be with you then, and whisper among the waving branches: 'I am not lost, but gone before.'"

Nebuchadnezzar's Hunting Diary.

It is to be hoped, says the New York Evening Post, that the following remarkable corroboration of Scripture may not meet with the fate of Professor Maury's defence of it, based on the words "round world," which unhappily were not used by Job, or any inspired writer.

"A correspondent of the *Northern Eagle* says that a book is shortly to be published by Col. Rawlinson upon the further discoveries he has made. He found Nebuchadnezzar's hunting diary, with notes, and here and there a portrait of his dogs, sketched by himself, with his name under. He mentions in it having been ill and while he was delirious he thought he had been cut to grass like the beasts of the field. Is not this a wonderful corroboration of scripture? Rawlinson also found a pot of preserves, in an excellent state, and gave some to the queen to taste. How little Nebuchadnezzar's cook dreamed, when making them, that twenty-five centuries after, the queen of England would eat some of the identical preserves which figured at her master's table."

Musical Taste in Italy and America.

An American sojourning at Rome, writes to Dwight's Journal of Music, as follows:

"Perhaps the only thing in which I am disappointed in Italy, is in its music, and the musical cultivation of its inhabitants. It is true that even the smallest towns have opera houses, but the style of performance is poor. Then, like many other people, I had expected that in Italy music was in the domestic circle brought almost to professional perfection, and that every other young man, was a Mario, and almost every young woman a Grisi. But I find myself much mistaken. As a general thing there appears to be no more real taste for music here than in the United States; certainly there are not a half or a quarter so many piano fortes or hand organs in proportion to the population, if that is to be taken as an index."

ANCIENT DEXTERITY.

One of the early kings of Egypt being desirous to secure his riches, commanded a treasure house to be built; but the architect, intending to have some share of the treasure, hastened of finishing the building completely, placed one of the stones in so artful a manner, that it could be taken out and put in again by one man. As he was prevented by death from accomplishing his designs, on his death-bed he gave full instructions to his son how to execute it. After they had for some time plundered the king who observed the gradual diminution of his wealth without being able to discover how the thieves got access to it, finding his seal upon the door always whole, ordered several strong traps to be left in the treasury. By this means one of the brothers was at last taken that escaped it impossible to escape, he pressed on in a moment of his head, and [illegible] to be seen or discovery.

The next morning [illegible] the [illegible] people, finding a [illegible] in the greatest alarm and confusion, but recovering himself, he offered the body to be exposed on the outside of the wall of the building to the public view, charging the guards placed around it to observe the countenances of the spectators, and to seize those who appeared sorrowful. The surviving brother, urged by his mother's entreaties and threats of exposure, formed the design of carrying off his brother's body. Accordingly driving his asses thither laden with skins of wine, he found means, by the stratagem of letting his wine run out, to intoxicate and stupefy the guards. While they were in deep sleep, he shaved the right cheek of each of them by way of derision, and in the middle of the night carried off the body on one of the asses.

This action still more astonished the king, who being now more earnest to discover the thief, ordered his daughter to receive addresses of all suitors promiscuously, on condition that each should previously confess to her the most ingenious action he had ever committed. The young man, resolving again to perplex the king, went to the palace to his daughter, and confessed to her that he had cut off his brother's head, and afterwards carried off the body. When she then offered to lay hold of him, he stretched out to her the arm of a dead man, which he had carried in under his cloak, suspecting the intentions of the king, and while she supposed she had detained the culprit he made his escape. The king's resentment being now converted into admiration, he promised a pardon and reward to the person who robbed the treasury, if he would discover himself. The young man upon this proclamation, immediately made himself known, and the king thereupon accounting him superior in dexterity to any man then living, gave him his daughter in marriage.

A Story of Female Heroism.

In the course of a recent speech in Congress, by the Hon. Joseph Lane of Oregon, he related the following incident which occurred in the Indian war of Oregon.

While in Oregon last summer I took occasion to inquire of the chief who was mainly instrumental in getting up this war, to learn the fate of our people who disappeared in the war of 1855, and of whom we had been able to learn nothing.

When I suggested to the agent, in the council, that I proposed to inquire into the fate of Mrs. Wagner, Mrs. Haynes, and others, he was inclined to think it would raise the bitter feelings of the Indians, but said that he could make the inquiry. I told him that I had passed through the country where these people had lived, and that their friends were anxious to learn their fate. We inquired in relation to Mrs. Wagner, who was a well educated and handsome woman from New York, who had lived long in the country, and spoke the Indian tongue fluently.

She kept a public house by the roadside, and the good cheer which she always furnished made it a place where travelers always delighted to stop. The Indians informed us that on the 9th of October they came in sight of the house, where they met some teamsters, a portion of whom they murdered, destroying the wagons and cargoes, as well as the animals, while she was standing in the door.

As soon as they had murdered the people outside, they came towards the house, which was strongly built of hewn logs, and had a heavy door, which fastened with crossbars. When she saw them running towards the house, she shut the door and dropped the bars to prevent their coming in. They came to the door and ordered her to come out, and bring her little girl. She said "no."

Her husband was absent—and, by the way, he was the only man on that road who escaped. They said that if she did not come out they would shoot her. She declined, and after some deliberation they determined to set the house on fire. The house was directly enveloped in flames, and the chief who watched her through a little window, told me that he saw her go to the glass and arrange her hair, then take a seat in the middle of the room, folded her little girl in her arms, and wait calmly until the roof fell in, and they perished in the flames together. And the statement was confirmed by the people who found their remains lying together in the middle of the house.

THE END OF GREAT MEN.

Happening to cast my eyes upon a printed page of miniature portraits, I perceived that the four most conspicuous places were Alexander, Hannibal, Cæsar and Bonaparte. I had seen the same unnumbered times before, but never did the same sensation arise in my bosom as my mind glanced over their several histories.

Alexander, after having climbed the dizzy heights of ambition, and with his temples bound with chaplets dipped in the blood of countless nations, looked down upon a conquered world, and wept that there was not another world for him to conquer, set a city on fire, and died in a scene of debauch.

Hannibal, after having, to the astonishment and consternation of Rome, passed the Alps—after having put to flight the armies of this "mistress of the world," and made her very foundations quake—fled from the country, being hated by those who once exultingly united his name to that of their god, and called him "Hanni Bal"—and died a last by poison administered by his own hands, unwept, in a foreign land.

Cæsar, after having conquered eight hundred cities, and dyed his garments in the blood of one million of his foes; after having pursued to death the only rival he had on earth, was miserably assassinated by those he considered his nearest friends, and in that very place the attainment of which had been his greatest ambition.

Bonaparte, whose mandate Kings and Popes obeyed, after having filled the earth with the terror of his name—after having deluged Europe with tears and blood, and clothed the world in sackcloth—closed his days in lonely banishment, almost literally exiled from the world, yet where he could sometimes see his country's banner waving over the deep but which would not bring him aid.

Thus, these four men, who, from the peculiar situation of their portraits, seemed to stand as the representatives of those whom the world called *great*—those four who each in turn made the earth tremble to its very centre by their simple tread, severally died—one by intoxication, or, as some suppose, by poison mingled in his wine—one a suicide—one murdered by his friends—and one a lonely exile! How are the mighty fallen!

GOOD HITS.—In the trial of "Jim" Lane at Lawrence, Kansas, for the murder of Jenkins, the attorneys indulged in a good deal of pungent wit and sarcasm. One hit that passed between the counsel was so pointed and opportune that it is worthy of note.

Col. Young insisted that, in law, the man slain is supposed to be wrongfully slain.

Mr. Coe—That is the law of England, not of America.

Col. Young—If there is any book on God's earth that contains any other doctrine, I'll agree to eat it without greasing.

"Mr. Coe—Then you'll have more law in your stomach than you ever had in your head!

☞ We once heard an ignorant but devout convert, at a camp meeting, telling his experience, in which, after speaking of the great mercy of the Lord, he said:—"My brethern, I have crossed the great Atlantic Ocean, I've crossed the Hudson at Albany, and the Oriskany Creek at Oriskany: and I've often thought, if the Lord had only been a little *mean* about it, how he could have destroyed me."

An up hill Business.

Walk up.
Roll up.
Tumble up.
Step up.
Jump up.
Climb up.
Run up.
Skate up.
Ride up.
Rush up.
Swim up.
Fly up.
Crawl up.
Fire up.

ANY WAY SO YOU GET UP and SETTLE UP your Subscription Bills.

WHAT HAS GOT INTO THE BARBERS.—At Chicago a few weeks ago, a jealous barber hanged his mistress, quartered her, packed her up in a barrel and consigned her to New York. At St. Louis three barbers strangled a customer, and after robbing him, threw his body into a cellar-way. In Philadelphia another jealous hair-dresser shot a "false one," then committed suicide. At Green Island, opposite Troy, a few nights since, another barber killed his wife, and then killed himself.

☞ May is considered an unfortunate marrying month. A down east editor says a girl was asked not long since to unite herself in the silken tie to a brisk lad, who named May in his proposal.—The lady tenderly intimated that May was an unlucky month for marrying.

"Well, make it June, then," honestly replied the swain, anxious to accommodate.

The damsel paused a moment, cast down her eyes, and said with a blush:—"Would'nt April do as well?"

"WILL you please to permit a lady to occupy this seat?" said a gentleman to another, the other day, in a railroad car. "Is she an advocate of woman's rights?" asked the gentleman who was invited to "vacate." "She is," replied he who was standing. "Well, then, let her take the benefit of her right and stand up."

A Western editor expresses his delight at having been nearly called "honey" by the girl he loves, because she saluted him, as "old beeswax," at their last meeting.