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211f

Poetical Selections.

SUNDAY READING.

HERE—THERE.

Here—are flowers that fade and perish,
Treasures, moth and rust consume;
Brightest hopes, our hearts can cherish,
Sinks at last in hope and gloom.

There—are plants forever vernal,
Blooming on that peaceful shore;
There the tree of life eternal,
There are pleasures evermore.

Here—we trill the sportive measure,
And we build our hopes so high;
But the sweetest song of pleasure
Bears the burden of a sigh.

There—no fears, no nights shall enter,
Where the nations glory bring;
There, alone, perfections centre,
And the chief is Christ, our King.

Here—we chase the gilded bubble,
Strange, deceptive dreams pursue;
Few our days and full of trouble,
Full of sin and sorrow, too.

There—the pure in heart and spirit
See their God, and near him stand;
There the ransomed soul inherit
Length of days at God's right hand.

Shall we longer grope, and grovel,
With our hearts by sin ensnared?
Still abide in wretched hovels,
When those mansions are prepared.

Shall we not, with souls awaking,
Strive to lay up treasures there,
And in earnest sins forsaking,
For those mansions now prepare?

Be Ye Always Ready.

A lady once asked Mr. Wesley, "Supposing that you knew that you would die at twelve o'clock to-morrow night, how would you spend the intervening time?" "How, madam?" he replied: "why, just as I intend to spend it now. I should preach in the evening at Gloucester, and again at five to-morrow morning, after that I should ride to Tewksbury, preach in the afternoon, and meet the societies in the evening. I should then repair to friend Martin's house, who expects to entertain me, converse and pray with the family as usual, retire to my room at ten o'clock, commend myself to my heavenly Father, lie down to rest, and wake up to glory."

The proper method of preparation for death is a life of faith in Christ and a hearty and faithful discharge of every duty. Persons so living cannot be taken unawares; they have living grace, and they will have dying grace whenever they shall need it.

"As thy days are, so shall thy strength be." They have strength in life to live to God, and in death to die in him.

"Blessed is that servant whom, when his Lord cometh, he shall find so doing."—Matt., 24, 46.

AWAKE?

Brethren! let us awake from sleep, and look out upon the ungodly world which lies around us. Is it not sufficiently startling and effecting to claim our Christian sympathies, to engage our continual prayers, and to energize our hearts in labors of love? Behold the mass of human life which rolls onward before our eyes, torrent-like, rushing with rapid speed to plunge itself into the dark and unfathomable abyss! Shall not the love of Christ constrain us to care for those who, in their headlong, mad career of destruction, care not for themselves? Shall we, by our worldliness and self-indulgence, cause the way of salvation to be evil spoken of and despised? Will God use us for the deliverance of souls, if we be not holy vessels, meet for the Master's use? Shall we know the awful doom of the unconverted, treacherously encourage them in the road to ruin, by our trifling with eternal realities? Are we "pure from the blood of all men?" Do we show, not only in word, but also in deed and in truth, that the Spirit which dwells in us is the Spirit of holiness and the Spirit of love? Are we faithful witnesses of the truth, that the God with whom we have to do is "a consuming fire" to sin, and "God of all grace" to sinners.

We may be sure of one thing that a man thoroughly and wisely in earnest for good or for evil will carry power in his shadow—for I choose to call unconscious influence by that name. It is the shadow of a great nature; and there is good or evil in it, just as there is in that which casts it.

It is not what we make, but what we save, that makes us rich.

THE SECRET ASSASSIN.

ONE DAY when the directory ruled France, the proprietor of a furnished hotel in the Rue de Universite, Paris, appeared before the Minister of Police, and informed that functionary that a murder had just been committed in his (the hotel-keeper's) house. On the previous evening, he said, a stranger had taken a room, stating his residence to be Melun, and his purpose to spend two or three days in Paris. After ordering his baggage to be carried to his apartment the newcomer went out, giving notice that he was going to the Odeon Theatre, and should not return to the hotel until the termination of the performance. Near midnight, he re-appeared, accompanied by a young and very pretty woman, dressed in male attire, who, he said, was his wife. The next morning, at an early hour, the pretended spouse left the house requesting that her husband might not be disturbed until her return, which would be in about an hour. At noon she was still absent, and hearing nothing stirring in the room occupied by the gentleman from Melun, the landlord began to feel uneasy, and rapped at the stranger's door. Receiving no answer from within, the hotel-keeper sent for a duplicate key to the apartment, upon entering which the unfortunate man was found lifeless in his bed.

A doctor was hastily summoned, who, after a brief examination of the body declared that death had been produced by a blow on the left temple, inflicted by means of a blunt instrument.

It was evident that the assassination had been committed by the woman in male attire, and every effort was made by the police to discover her whereabouts but ineffectually. A month subsequently another murder was perpetrated under similar circumstances, except that on this occasion the victim, also a traveller, had gone to his room quite alone. At a later hour, however, an effeminate-looking young man came down stairs, and was let out by the porter of the hotel, who remembered the fact on the following morning, when the crime was discovered. This affair caused great excitement in Paris, and redoubled exertions were made by the police to ferret out the mysterious assassin, but still without result. Eleven days afterward, a third victim perished in precisely the same manner as the preceding two; and in the course of a few months, no less than twenty men lost their lives by means so exactly identical, that no doubt was entertained that the murderous blows were all inflicted by the same hand.

Stung to the quick, Fouche, the Minister of Police, set all his spies to work, and offered a large reward for the discovery of the author of these unparalleled crimes.

One evening a certain B., a member of the Secret Police, but who had the appearance of a provincial gentleman, was passing through a narrow street of the City, when he encountered a handsome equivocal-looking youth B. stopped, turned, and said to himself, "That's a woman in male garb. If it should be she!"

At the same moment the handsome stranger also turned, and smiled encouragingly.

"That settles the question," murmured the delighted spy. "Now, if I manage things cautiously, my fortune is made." And, retracing his steps, he accosted the unknown.

"I have something very particular to say to you," whispered B., with a knowing leer, "but it is not possible for us to talk freely in the public street. Might I not invite you to accompany me to my hotel?"

"I suppose you take me to be a woman?" was the reply, in a soft voice.

"You are quite mistaken, my good sir I don't mind having a chat with you, however; where are you staying?"

"In the Rue de l'Universite!"

"Indeed! I am too well known to go there."

"I am on the right track," thought the spy. "Well, then," he said aloud, "we will go wherever you like."

"Come replied the other.

tion at the Central Police Station nearby, at once assented to this suggestion, and declared that he would go himself pay his bill, and bring a box of silks he had at the other hotel. After an hour's absence he returned, accompanied by two porters, carrying on their shoulders a large and apparently heavy box, containing a police officer, which they deposited in the corner of a room. The supper previously ordered was now served!

"Your walk must have made you thirsty," said the young woman, pouring out a glass of wine for her companion. "But, before you sit down, have the kindness to give me my handkerchief, which I have left over there on the sofa."

Suspecting some trick, B., while crossing the room, watched his new acquaintance closely, and saw her throw a powder into the glass of wine, which instead of swallowing, he dextrously managed to spill on the carpet. In a few moments he showed signs of drowsiness, and began to murmur incoherent words. Drawing the syren near him, he felt something in her pocket which excited his curiosity.

Upon asking what it was, she produced the object—a beautiful little hammer.

"This," she said, "is an opiate of the most powerful description. I'll show you presently how it puts people to sleep."

B. had fallen to the floor, in an apparent state of complete unconsciousness. Stooping over him, the murderess raised her anticipated victim's head, placed it in the most favorable position to render the intended blow effective, and had already raised the pretty little hammer, when suddenly the box in the corner flew open with a loud noise, and a grip of iron seized her uplifted arm.

On the trial, which took place shortly afterward, the female assassin alleged, in her defence, that she had been ruined by a villain, and had sworn to be revenged upon the entire male sex. This romantic story, however, did not prevent her conviction and subsequent death on the scaffold.

A Curious Lake.

A California paper says:—All who have attempted to swim in the waters of Lake Tahoe must have been startled by their strange lack of buoyancy. Good swimmers launch forth into the lake with the utmost confidence in their skill and at once find themselves floundering and only able to keep afloat by the most strenuous exertions. Going into Lake Tahoe after swimming in the generality of lakes—the lakes and streams of the valleys—is like attempting to swim in fresh water after having learned the art in salt water, or even more trying. The bodies or persons drowned in the lake are never seen after they have once sunk.

On the five white persons drowned in the lake, not a single body has ever been recovered or even seen. The bones of all are still in the lake. How many Indians may have been lost in its waters in times past no one knows. Pine logs float in the lake but a short time, then sink never again to rise. In places far down through the crystal fluid are to be seen resting upon the bottom great quantities of slabs, logs and lumber. The specific gravity of the water we do not know though we believe it has been more than once analyzed. It certainly can hold in solution but a very slight per cent. of minerals of any kind.

How Horace Greeley was Sold.

Horace had received a letter from Ill., asking him to lecture before a society, and answered it in his peculiar hand writing, as follows:

DEAR SIR:—I am overworked and growing old. I shall be 60 next Feb. 3. On the whole, it seems I must decline to lecture henceforth, except in this immediate vicinity, if I do at all. I cannot promise to visit Illinois on that errand—certainly not now.

Yours truly,
HORACE GREELEY.
M. B. Castle, Sandwich, Ill.

This letter was duly received, and was evidently not read correctly, judging from the following reply, which shows the importance of writing so strangers can read it:

Sandwich, Ill., May 12th.—Horace Greeley, New York "Tribune":—Dear Sir: Your acceptance to lecture before our association next winter came to hand this morning. Your penmanship not being the plainest, it took some time to translate it, but we succeeded, and would say your time—3d of Feb.—and terms—\$60—are entirely satisfactory. As you suggest, we may be able to get you other engagements in this immediate vicinity, if so, we will advise you.

Yours Respectfully,
M. B. CASTLE.

The Plantations of the Davis Family.

A correspondent of the Chicago Tribune says:

I have talked with a gentleman from Warren county, Mississippi, the county of Vicksburg, and of Jeff Davis, who informs me that the great renegade is now at Memphis, living in poor health, and that not only his property, but that of Joe Davis, his richer brother, is, almost entirely lost in them. Joe Davis' plantation is now owned by Ben. Montgomery, formerly a negro slave in the family, who was taught to read by white people in New Orleans, Washington, and other places which he visited as a body servant, and who finally became the chief overseer and accountant of his master. After the investment of Vicksburg, when the Davises were refugees, Montgomery had a chance to plant, three full crops of cotton, and he made enough money to pay the first instalment, viz.: \$50,000; he has made several payments since, and he is now esteemed among the ablest planters in Mississippi.

The Davis plantation is now cut off completely from the mainland, the Mississippi having changed its course between New Carthage and the big black river, and created a large island there. The Davises are as near ruined as any planter's family in Mississippi, every thing having gone wrong with them, while some of the neighboring plantations are in better condition than ever before.—The city of Jackson, the State capital, is now rebuilt in better style than formerly, and except a few caves which remain in the bluffs, Vicksburg has completely recovered from the war. Free labor has proved a great success, and all the plantations are now cultivated on shares, the black laborers receiving half and being provided with seed; while almost all well-regulated plantations offer an annual prize of \$100 for the best ten acres of cotton, and \$50 for the best ten acres of corn. Good order and fair political intelligence, and a remarkable love of money pervade the enfranchised population.

Flies.

The following from an exchange is quite appropriate at the present time: The naturalists recognize many hundred kinds of flies in this country: but in our household economy we reduce them mainly to three sorts—house flies biting-flies, and blue bottle or blow flies. The latter is readily distinguished: the two former are frequently confounded, although easily known apart by the naturalist or an acute observer. They may be however, always identified at a glance by the position they assume on the wall. A common house fly almost invariably rests with its head downward, and however it may light, works its way round until this direction is assumed. The biting-flies, on the contrary, as universally rest with the head pointing upward, acting in this respect precisely like the equally blood-thirsty mosquito.

The brother of an eminent Russian entomologist, now residing in the United States, observed a peasant in his own country killing some of the flies on the wall of his hut without disturbing others; and, on being questioned, he gave as a reason that those with the heads up were "biters," and the others were not. A careful examination of the facts by the entomologist himself proved the accuracy of the generalization thus made by an ignorant but observant man.

An Open Bar in a Cornfield.

Here is a California story, told to illustrate the cunning of the crows in that region: A hired man on a Napa farm was detailed to keep watch on the cornfield, and not let the black marauders invade the premises; but like many other men in a similar situation, he tried to plan a method whereby so much labor would not have to be performed; so he hit upon the plan of soaking some corn in whiskey and placing it in the field, so that the crows would surely get drunk, and then he would have a sure thing on them and could kill them easily. He tried to shoot them with a shot gun, but crows can smell powder a long way. After soaking some corn over night, he put a bountiful supply in the field the next morning, and in about two or three hours he went out to see how things were progressing, and mark you what follows. One of the crows, a little larger than the rest, had taken possession of nearly all the corn, and had built himself a bar out of clods of earth, and was retailing the whiskey-soaked corn to the other crows, charging them three grains of sprouted corn for one soaked grain. Our hired man had not the heart to kill any of the creatures that seemed in their action so like-mankind.