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NO. 49

POETRY:

Father's Growing Old.

Our father's growing old, John;
His eyes are growing dim;
And years on his shoulders laid,
Heavy weigh for him,
And you and I young and halo,
And each a stalwart man,
And we must make his load as light
And easy as we can.

He used to take the brunt, John,
At cradle and the plow,
And earned our porridge by the sweat
That trickled down his brow,
Yet never heard my complain.

What's his toll might be,
Nor wanted o'er a welcome seat,
Upon his solid knee.

And when our boy strength came, John,
And sturdy grew each limb,
He brought us to the yellow field,
To share the toll with him,
But he went foremost in the swath,
Tossing aside the grain.

Just like the plow that heaves the soil
Or ships that sheer the main.

Now we must lead the van, John,
Through weather foul and fair.
And let the old man read and doze,
And tilt his easy chair,
And he'll not mind, John, you know,
At eve to tell us o'er

Those brave old days of British times,
Our grandfathers and of the war.

* * * * *

Yes; father's growing old, John,
His eyes are getting dim;
And mother's treading softly down
The deep descent with him.
And you and I are young and halo,
And each a stalwart man;

And we must make their path as smooth
And level as we can.

AN EARLY POEM.

By JON. JOT. JR.

Evening just at noon in May
I sat on horseback, testing gait;
My parasol, you see,
Saw the moon from melting me;
Atmosphere was stirring not;
In the calm the wind blew hot.
Limb to limb, all in the sun,
The little before us;
And the song of voices fills
My old babbler up the hills;
Hanging their stakes up to a limb,
In the water took a swim.

Summer fields so deep in snow,
Green with verdant grass, and oh,
Deepest rain I can recall!

In occasion didn't fall!

My horse up with a frown,
My umbrella I put down.

Right for gambled with the kid,
After chased the katydid;

At improved the shining hours

Bearing honey from the flowers;

Kicks loaded down the oak,

On tree with ant-hoppers broke.

The sky was quite full of clouds,

Under lit them up like shrouds;

Stealing roared incessantly—

Illness I did never see.

Right blue heavens beneath my feet

Had never seemed so sweet.

Father all that August day

The meadow chapping hay,

Hair-torn hat, and straw made gown.

My hand as I rode down,

Lied a drink, she calmly said—

A spring a mile ahead!

select Tale.

Woman's Sacrifice.

I might do better, John."

Williams spoke fretfully, as
news told to her by her only
son was not pleasant for her to

utter, mother!"

A ringing, clear voice it was

ringing and hearty, as if to match

the stalwart figure, the bright

eyes, and handsome, sunny

John Williams.

John, she is only a shop-

won't be a shop-girl when

my wife, I am not a rich

man my salary will make a com-

home for all of us."

will turn me out of doors,

ugh."

"cried John, with a

anger running through the

reproach of his voice, "you won-

told her of his engage-

ment," she said, after John

had for his daily routine of

work John might aspire to

go higher than a mere shop-

girl.

Hannah worked faithfully at her

old post until Mrs. Williams was taken very ill.

Sorrow and anxiety began to have physical as well as mental effect, and the mother bowed down, aged more in one year of separation from her son than she had ever been in ten of their loving companionship.

It was impossible to leave her alone, the situation was resigned.

Nearer and nearer crept the gaunt gout, poverty. Little articles of furniture that could be spared were sold; little comforts were denied; extra hours were given to the poorly paid sewing that replaced Hannah's work, and yet actual hunger was staring them in the face.

Nearly two years had John Williams slept in a convict's cell, when one morning Hannah Coyle, leaving her self-imposed charge sleeping, went to one of the fashionable hair-dressers.

"I have come to sell my hair," choking back her tears, and thinking—"it will grow out again before John comes home."

The story he told of its possession was so improbable that it still further injured him, and gave personal revenge an additional motive for his punishment. He said that Gerald the son of the partners of the firm, had sent him to the bank with the check.

It scarcely needed the young man's indignant denial to contradict this story.

A friend in the same employ had gone to the mother and told the news as kindly and gently as possible.

A fierce anger and stony pride had kept the old lady up during that trying interview, but once she was alone, she crouched in the cushions of her chair and moaned out in the utter misery of her heart.

There was no strong arm to lift her to her own room that night.

There was no hearty, ringing voice to bid her good-morning.

Still the feeble voice, freighted with its burden of anguish, moaned its sad refrain, when the door opened and Hannah Coyle came in.

No friend had broken the news gently to the young girl.

But the shock came suddenly on her from the columns of the daily papers.

It was not in one hour, or two, that she could conquer her own grief so as to leave the house. But when the first battle was over in her heart, she went at once where she knew John would have her go.

So when, faint with her long night of misery, the mother lay moaning, a kind hand was laid upon her shoulder, and a voice clear and strong, but sweet with womanly tenderness, spoke the dearest words of earth.

"Mother!" She looked up with haggard, blood-shot eyes, and saw bending over a face that loves pity, and deep, unutterable tenderness had transformed into positive beauty.

"Mother," the sweet, clear voice said, "this is not what John would wish."

The mother's tears, the first she had shed, flowed fast at the sound of her son's name.

"Oh, Hannah!" she said "you do not believe John is guilty!"

"John guilty!" the girl cried, her voice singing like a trumpet-call, her eyes flashing, and her cheeks growing crimson: "mother, how can you put the words together? you know—I know—that he is innocent."

"But he is in prison. He will be tried!"

This was the first conversation that drew the hearts of the two women together, but the bond that knit them during the months that followed was that of suffering and sorrow, that would have torn the heart of the man whom they loved and trusted during his darkest hours.

For the trial only separated them more surely and terribly.

Twelve intelligent men, after hearing all the evidence, pronounced a verdict of guilty, and John Williams was sentenced for ten years.

It is not in the power of our pen to describe the desolate home to which this news was carried.

They never doubted him, even in the face of all the overwhelming evidence that had condemned him, but Heaven seemed to have deserted them when they knew the result of the trial.

Hannah Coyle was not pretty. Her features were plain, her eyes soft brown, and she had a sweet mouth that could smile bravely and light her face for the invalid's eyes in their darkest hours. But she had one great beauty in long, heavy masses of hair, of a rich dark brown, and of which she was fond and proud because John admired it.

"It is my only beauty," she would say, when old Mrs. Williams or claimed at its profession, "and I must keep it glossy and pretty for John's sake."

She thinks so still, and John agrees with her, though he has been married four years and Hannah's hair is as superb as ever.

This short prayer from an Italian may find responsive minds in any clime: "I pray that, I may never be married. But if I marry, I pray that I may not be deceived. But if I am deceived I pray that I may not know of it. But if I know it, I pray that I may be able to laugh at the whole affair."

Fortunately the old lady owned the little home in which she lived, her sole legacy from her dead husband; but as the weary months crept slowly along, poverty showed its ugly face in the humble home.

Hannah worked faithfully at her

Poofed Again.

For three long hours, the other forenoon, a stranger sat on a horse-block on Woodward avenue, near the parks, in the old north wind, closely watching vehicles and pedestrians, and acting as if he expected something of importance to occur. His long hair, cadaverous face and seedy dress, at length attracted the attention of a policeman to him, and the officer asked why he sat there.

"Say," replied the man, as he rose up and reached out to shake hands, "I believe I've been foiled again. It's long enough after 10 o'clock, and she hasn't happened yet."

"What's that? What is to happen?"

"Say, maybe you'll think I'm green, but I honestly believed the world was to come to an end at 10 o'clock today. So did dad; so did ma'am; so did Hannah. A fellow came through our neighborhood in January, and gave us the date, and told us to be ready. The old folks wanted to go up from the front yard, but I preferred to come to town. I walked seven miles this morning, and was half past nine. Say, why didn't she end, as advertised?"

"What's the use of fooling a fellow?"

"Are you nimpy enough to believe such things?" asked the officer.

"Well, kinder. This is the third time I've been ready, and it seems I'm fooled again. Say, perhaps it was postponed on account of the weather."

"Like enough."

"I guess not, though. I guess we got the date wrong. Say, wouldn't this be a bully place to stand and see the performance. Crackly I but when the earth began to heave, the trees to fall, the waters to rise, and the heavens to flame, wouldn't you be here looking sick?"

"You'd better go home."

"Yes, I suppose so. If she was to come off to-day, she'd been on time, you don't go much on the word coming to an end pretty soon, do you?"

"Not a cent."

"Well, I do. So does the old man. So does ma'am. So does Hannah. We ain't going to miss it if we know ourselves. The old man will feel worse than I do, for he's got to pay a note of \$80 tomorrow. Hannah won't care much for she's been engaged eight times, and is used to disappointments. Say, how do you suppose the performance will commence when it does come off?"

"Haven't any idea."

"Haven't, eh? Be a high old time, wont they? Sugar and tea and such stuff will come down over half, and you police won't feel much like knocking man down and jumping on 'em. Say, the performance is off isn't it?"

"I guess so."

"Well, I'll go home. Kinder mean to fool a fellow this way, but I can stand it if the old world can. Maybe she's going to wait for warm weather. Say, did."

"You'd better go."

"Yes, I know; but it's kinder funny to think of dad and ma'am sitting out in the front yard, all packed up and ready to go, and Hannah in the front bed-room up stairs, singing, 'I want to be an angel, through her nose! Ha! ha! ha!' Kinder flat on me, too, eh? Hoofed it seven miles to be fooled on the string game. Say, don't!"

The officer was moving away.

"Say, you!"

But the officer wouldn't, and, after a lingering look around, the young man took his way up Woodward avenue, walking between the car tracks, and looking for cracks in the pavement.

James Somers kept his word.

He was an upright man, and sacrificed the name of the dead to right that of the living.

He would not take John back.

The sight of his face was too excruciatingly painful, but he paid him his full salary for the time of his absence, and found him a lucrative position.

It was the day of the homecoming.

Mrs. Williams in her own chair was smiling upon John as he caressed Hannah's crooked hair.

Very grave and pale his sunny face had become, but he smiled as mother said:

"It was for me, John, she sacrificed her splendid hair. I can never tell you all she sacrificed for me, but that speaks for itself."

Clasping Hannah in a close embrace he asked:

"Do you think now, mother, I might do better?"

Not if you could marry an ou-

press."

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Procrastination.

"Procrastination