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Death of the Flowers.

BY BRYANT.

The melancholy days are come,
The saddest of the year,
Of wailing winds and naked woods,
And meadows brown and sere;
Heaped in the hollows of the grove,
The withered leaves lie dead,
They rustle to the eddying gust,
And to the rabbit's tread;
The robin and the wren has flown,
And from the shrub the jay,
And from the wood-top calls the crow,
Through all the gloomy day.

Where are the flowers, the gay young flowers,
That lately sprung and stood
In brighter light and softer airs,
A beauteous sisterhood?
Alas! they all are in their graves,
The gentle care of flowers,
And laying in their lowly bed,
With the fair and good of ours.
The rain is falling where they lie,
But cold November rain
Calls not from the gloomy earth
The lovely ones again.

The wild flower and the violet,
They perished long ago,
And the wild rose and the orchid died
Amid the Summer's glow;
But on the hill the golden rod,
And the aster in the wood;
And the yellow sunflower by the brook,
In Autumn's beauty stood,
Till fell the frost from the clear, cold heaven,
As falls the plague on men,
And the brightness of their smile was gone
From upland, glade and glen.

And now when comes the calm midday,
As still such days will come,
To see the squirrel and the bee
From out their wintry home;
When the sound of dropping nuts is heard,
Though all the trees are still,
And twinkle in the smoky light
The waters of the rill;
The south wind searches for the flowers
Whose fragrance late it bore,
And sighs to find them in the wood
And by the stream no more.

And when I think of one who in
Her youthful beauty died—
That fair meek blossom that grew up
And faded by my side;
In cold moist earth we laid her,
When the forest cast the leaf,
And we wept that one so lovely
Should have a life so brief;
Yet not unmet it was that one
Like that young friend of ours,
So gentle and so beautiful,
Should perish with the flowers.

THE BALL AXLE TREE.—This is the simplest of all contrivances, and in its very absence of complexity, it becomes a matter of wonder that it should so long have escaped the ingenuity of others of our host of inventors. A groove is turned in the axle, and a corresponding groove in the box, into which groove are dropped one or two steel balls so contrived that one-half of the ball is always in the groove of the box, and the other half in the groove of the axle—thus preventing the possibility of the wheel coming loose, and in a considerable degree removing the friction. The box is perfectly air-tight, and contains a considerable quantity of oil, and the process of removing the wheel when necessary is reduced to the very extreme of simplicity.

Whose son are you, my little boy?
I ain't nobody's son just now, I'm Mr. Thompson's nephew, sir.

Nature and Propagation of Cholera.

Among the official documents received at Washington from the U. S. Consulate in London, are reports of investigations at St. Petersburg that serve to relieve the public mind of the fear of contagion. A report by Dr. Adler Crawford, who has had abundant opportunity for forming an opinion on the subject, says:—
"With reference to the much disputed question whether the Asiatic Cholera is infectious or not, I think, on an impartial consideration of the circumstances by which its irregular, and rapid progress over large regions of the globe have been attended, that it is difficult to draw any other conclusion than that disease originates from some latent influence of the atmosphere on the functions of animal life. The peculiarities in the condition of the atmosphere which exert this influence, have hitherto escaped detection; but they are of a similar nature to those by which blights are produced in the vegetable kingdom. That it is an epidemic propagated by atmospheric causes, and not by infection, seems now to be very generally admitted. This is the opinion of the members of the medical profession in Russia, so that all attempts to check its progress by quarantine regulations have been given up, more especially since, in 1831, they were found perfectly unavailing. A quarantine of ten days was recently imposed by Sweden on the appearance of the Cholera in St. Petersburg; but the disease has, notwithstanding, broken out in that country, showing how utterly useless are all such measures. One of the circumstances, which strongly favored the opinion that the disease spread by infection, was the fact of its following the course of rivers on which there was much traffic; but I have shown that this circumstance can be satisfactorily accounted for by other causes besides infection.

The same report gives the following important information concerning the disregard of Diet, &c.
"Several persons fell victims to the Cholera in St. Petersburg, in consequence of having transgressed the rules of diet essential during such a season. An elderly lady, having eaten salad at supper, was taken ill next morning, and died of the Cholera in eighteen hours.—Gen. Chambeau, private secretary to the Emperor, a gentleman advanced in life, having caught a chill by incautious exposure to a cold wind on board a steamer, was seized with diarrhoea and symptoms of sinking the same evening, and died in about eighteen hours. A lady of high station setting at defiance the cautions against fruit, indulged freely her wish for strawberries; she was suddenly taken very ill of the cholera, and her life was in the greatest danger, tho' hopes were entertained of her recovery when I left St. Petersburg. I frequently heard of persons being attacked, and losing their lives after committing some imprudence in diet. It is important to remember that many things which agree with a person in ordinary times, may disgrace during the prevalence of such a disease as the cholera, in consequence of the increased susceptibility of the bowels. The disease was brought on in others by fear; the son of a respectable bookseller returned from college to his family in good health for the vacation in June; he became so panic-struck on the breaking out of the cholera, that he could not be prevailed on to go out of the house, and objected even to the windows being opened, for fear of letting in the contaminated air. After some time he was suddenly seized with the disease in its most malignant form, and died in about twelve hours.

New and Interesting Discovery—the Horse Chestnut used as Food.

Some ingenious Frenchman has discovered a very simple process of extracting the bitter oil from the meat of the horse chestnut, which then leaves it a palatable food, quite as agreeable to the taste, and as nutritious as corn meal or potatoes. Chemistry has not yet been able to change stones into bread, but it now makes sweet bread from horse chestnut. The process is as follows:—First take the skin off the chestnut, then grate or (if dried) grind the meats into meal; throw into the meal a little carbonate of soda, or pulverized sal. soda; mix the mass well, and put in a little water if it is too dry. After this is well mixed, place the mass under a stream of water until all the bitter oil is rinsed out, leaving the meal to settle to the bottom. This bitter oil is a green substance, and when it has thus been abstracted from the meal, it is found to be a fine nutritious paste, of brilliant whiteness and vastly agreeable to the taste. It is said that two or three horse chestnut trees will give as much palatable food as a whole field of potatoes; and for pigs and cattle, it is unsurpassed.

ODD COMPARISON.—A pious but odd clergyman in New Hampshire, while endeavoring to impress on his hearers a sense of the all-seeing power of God, said—"God is like a striped squirrel in a stone-wall—he can see you, but you can't see him."

The cost of cigars smoked every day, in New York, is estimated at \$10,000.

The Humble Happy Man.

Oh pass not by yon lonely man,
With haughty look and proud,
Though sunburnt is his brow, and though
His back with toil is bowed.

His simple cup and daily bread,
By industry are gained,
And calm each night he sinks to rest,
His hand with fraud unstained.

Within his humble, whitewashed cot,
This lesson Kings might learn,
"How happy virtue can make those,
Who toil their bread to earn."

No glittering crest shines on his wall,
Which tells of lineage high,
But there's a hope within his breast,
The proudest may envy.

An honest heart, a life well spent—
A hope beyond the tomb,
Aye crowns his board with sweet content,
Mid poverty and gloom.

An Opium Debauch.

One of the objects at this place that I had the curiosity to visit, was the opium smoker in his heaven; and certainly it is a most fearful sight, although perhaps not so degrading to the eye as the drunkard from spirits, lowered to the level of the brute, and wallowing in his filth. The idiot smile and deathlike stupor, however, of the opium debauchee, has something far more awful to the gaze than the beastiality of the latter.

The rooms where they sit and smoke are surrounded by wooden coaches, with places for the head to rest upon, and generally a side room is devoted to gambling. The pipe is a reed of about an inch in diameter, and the aperture in the bowl for the admission of the opium is not larger than a pin's head. The drug is prepared with some kind of conserve, and a very small portion is sufficient to charge it, one or two whiffs being the utmost that can be inhaled from a single pipe, and the smoke is taken into the lungs as from the hookah in India. On a beginner one or two pipes will have an effect, but an old stager will continue smoking for hours. At the head of each coach is placed a small lamp, as fire must be held to the drug during the process of inhaling; and from the difficulty of filling and properly lighting the pipe, there is generally a person who waits upon the smoker to perform the office. A few days of this fearful luxury, when taken to excess, will give a pallid and haggard look to the face; and a few months, or even weeks, will change the strong and healthy man into little better than an idiot or skeleton. The pain they suffer when deprived of the drug after long habit, no language can explain; and it is only when under its influence that their faculties are alive.

In the houses devoted to their ruin, these infatuated people may be seen at nine o'clock in the evening in all the different stages, some entering half-distracted, to feed the craving appetite they had been obliged to subdue during the day; others laughing and talking wildly under the effects of a first pipe; while the coaches around are filled with their different occupants, languid, with an idiotic smile upon their countenance, too much under the influence of the drug to care for passing events, and fast merging to the wished-for consummation.

The last scene in this tragic play is generally a room in the rear of the building, a species of dead house, where lie stretched those who have passed into the state of bliss the opium smoker madly seeks—an emblem of the long sleep to which he is blindly hurrying.—[Six months in China, by Lord Jocelyn.]

Mind your own Business.

Yes, mind your own business! What need it concern you if Joe Snooks is courting Mary Dobbs? They are undoubtedly rational beings, and can conduct their love affairs in a becoming manner, without any of your interference. What if Caroline Short has got a new dress or shawl? It is probably paid for, and cost you nothing.—Therefore why need you interest yourself so deeply about it? What if Bill Swift, the merchant, has become insolvent? You are not among his creditors; and why can't you let the man have a little enjoyment? Suppose Kitty Nimble does dance; it costs you nothing, and as she has a frail constitution, a little exercise of this kind will benefit her general health. This intermeddling with the affairs of others, to the utter neglect of their own, is becoming a great deal to prevail with a certain class in small villages. There are none of us who escape misfortune, or are free from error, but to be made the butt and by-word of a set of gossiping, intermeddling simpletons, merely on account of inevitable misfortune, of a single error committed, or for no fault at all, is far from being agreeable. If this class of beings have any business of their own, we hope that out of shame for themselves, and for the credit of their relatives, they will attend to it.

The Dead Letter Office.

The story of Adele Barron, published in a recent number of the Knickerbocker, which turns on some missing letter, has brought to mind an incident related by Frank Granger, as having occurred when he was at the head of the post office department. A letter was one day received from a postmaster of a town in New Jersey, enclosing a letter very old and dingy, and covered with fly specks in every part, except a tape had passed over it, indicating that it had been for a long time placed in the paper or card rack of some bar room or shop. The superscription, if there ever had been any, had entirely faded away. The postmaster wrote that he had found it in his letter-box, and had tried in vain to discover who had deposited it there, in order that it might receive a proper direction, as it apparently contained money. As it had not been advertised, it was not in strictness a dead letter; but he sent it to the department in order that he might dispose of it. The Postmaster-General took the responsibility of opening it, and found that it was dated at Philadelphia, in the year 1821, (twenty-one years before,) and enclosed a twenty dollar bill of the United States Bank. It was addressed by a man to his wife, at a small village not far from the post office where the letter was found, informing her that he (the writer) should start for home in two or three days; but that, as his brother was about to leave for home, he took advantage of the opportunity to send her by him the enclosed sum of money, wherewith to make preparations for the approaching wedding.

The Postmaster-General caused a letter to be written to the address of the writer informing him of the circumstances. In the course of a week a reply was received from a female, who stated that the writer of the letter was her father, and the one to whom it was addressed was her mother, both of whom were dead; that 20 years before on the eve of her own wedding, she remembered that her father and uncle had quarrelled, the former having been led, from suspicious circumstances, to discredit the latter's assertion that he had lost the letter containing money entrusted to his care, and to insinuate that he had appropriated the amount to his own use. The consequence was, that all intercourse between the two families had from that time been suspended, and that she should immediately write to her uncle and cousins, who still lived at a distance, to beg that the intercourse and friendship so long interrupted might be resumed; the discovery of this letter having satisfied her of what she so long expected, that her father was wrong, and relieved her mind from a weight of painful anxiety.

Whether any further clue to the manner in which the letter had arrived at the office at so late a period was ever ascertained, is not known; the probability is that the letter had been picked up at or near some country tavern on the road, and was placed with the variety of business cards and miscellaneous papers which usually fill the tapes over the mantle-piece of such a place, and there it had remained from year to year, perhaps concealed from notice by other papers and letters, until, by a change of landlord, or an improvement of the house, the landlord had disposed of it by depositing it in the nearest post office.

A Yankee Eclipsed.

Some time, as Mr. Jeremiah Higgins from the town of Litchfield, Connecticut, was leisurely strolling along Broadway, he was accosted by a very gentlemanly looking individual, who very politely inquired if he would like to see the eclipse of the moon a little in advance of the rest of the people of Gotham. Mr. Higgin's eyes opened remarkably at this announcement, and, as a matter of course, he consented to be shown the wonderful curiosity. The stranger took Mr. Higgin's arm, and they marched together to Sherwood's, on the corner of Park Place and Broadway where they indulged in sundry plates of oysters, and numerous "private drinks," for which the resident of Litchfield, Connecticut, made himself responsible. After reaching the pavement, the stranger asked Mr. Higgins if he was prepared to look at the eclipse, and receiving a reply in the affirmative, they proceeded, arm in arm, to an opposite corner, where the proprietor of a mammoth telescope was stationed with his apparatus, which was open to the inspection of all at the remarkably low sum of six and a quarter cents per head. Mr. Higgins "planked the dough," but having previously indulged in several glasses of the genuine article, he was unable to see the moon in consequence of the telescope becoming refractory, and not keeping its position long enough for him to bring matters to a focus. "How creation long it is getting right," ejaculated Mr. Higgins, bringing his right foot before his left with commendable dexterity. "I never saw such a one on earth."

"Have patience," said the stanger, "you must not expect to see it in an instant. Remember it has thousands of miles to travel. Have patience."
"I tell you afore and I tell you agin, I would have patience, but she won't have anything to do with me."

Hyperbole.

"Talk about yer darned fast lines," said a Yankee to a Cockney, who was so impudent, as in the natural way of his countrymen, to commence bragging on English rail-roads, while the couple were progressing at the rate of forty miles per hour on the Birmingham railway. "Why, Mister, this ere road is purty considerable for England, but it won't do for 'Meriky. We ride a straddle of telegraphs there, when we're in a hurry, but when we ain't, we take the railroad. Now them roads ain't slow, as I tell you. I was comin' from Philadelphia to York, when I sees to a feller sittin close by me, who on airth owns this big garden with white palins around it!"

"I don't see no white palins," ses he.
"I don't see nothin' else," ses I, "and a mighty tall fence it is, too."
"The feller bust out a jaffin." "Why, you darned fool," ses he, "Them's the telegraphic posts."—And sure enough, when the engine feller stopped, I saw them posts a hundred yards apart, and we had been going so all-fired fast, they looked for all the world like white palins."

At this moment the bell rang as a station signal, before the Cockney had fully recovered from Jonathan's last dose.
"What's that bell ringin' fur?" inquired the latter of his English friend.
"We are approaching D—"

"Well them kind of bell fixins does for these ere slow cars, but we can't use 'em in 'Meriky."
"Ah, why not?"
"Travel too fast—fact, beat sound all to smash. We would slap through a village before the sound of a bell was in the neighborhood."
"You don't say so!" exclaimed the astonished Cockney.
"Fact again, by thunder! Why, I was on the York cars when them ere steam whistles was first tried. Maybe you've heard of the terrible accident!"

"No."
"Well, sir, we were going it strong. Harrykanes were no whar—all natur seemed shakin' to pieces—when several miles off, something was seed on the track. The whistle was let loose, and she did scream awfully—but it was no manner of use, for after tumbin' over a span of smart horses, and a big market wagon, I was just raisin' from a pond, when along came the whistler's holler, mixed up with some big cusses I mind to have heard the engine man rip out when he first saw the wagon. But the poor man was dead when his voice arrived. Fact—got the documents."
"Extraordinary!" exclaimed the horror-struck Cockney; "and do you use whistles yet?"

"Bless your soul, no. Congress stopped them right off; and now we acts on the philosophic principle that light travels an all-fired sight faster than sound, which will do perhaps for this generation. We now tell 'em we're comin' by bustin out a light that does astonish animal creation, and I reckon rather surprised the planetary system at first. When it was first tried at night, the roosters on the road commenced crowing, and the chickens all got down from their roosts, thinking it was daylight."

The cars suddenly stopped, when Jonathan having arrived at the point of debarkation, looked around at the bewildered Cockney, nodded his head, and with a little carpet bag chucked under one arm, and an umbrella under the other, took his leave, sober as a deacon.

Fashionable Wives.

"As well might the farmer have the Venus de Medici's placed in his kitchen for a wife," says the Rev. Henry Colman, in one of his agricultural lectures, "as some of our fashionable women. Indeed it would be much better to have Lot's wife standing there, for she might answer one useful purpose—she might salt his bacon."

The funniest article yet is a patent iron shirt with percussion collars. The shirt never wears out, and by touching a spring a new collar springs up until a half a dozen are exhausted. A patent sheet-iron neck-cloth accompanies it!