

Poetry.

A QUAIN OLD BALLAD.

[Dwight says he finds the following in the "Carlisle" collected for the Philadelphia Bulletin, by "Meister Karl," who says of it: "The following eccentric ballad is somewhat modernized from one given in the "Songs and Carols," printed from a MS. in the Sloane Collection." It was written about the year 1450?]

I have a young sister Far beyond the sea, Many are the presents That she sends me. She sent me a cherry Without any stone, She sent me a pigeon Without any bone; Without any thorns, She sent me a briar, She made me love my lover, And that without desire.

How can a cherry Be without a stone? How can a pigeon Be without a bone? How can a briar Be without a thorn? And who e'er lov'd without desire? Since true love was first born?

When the cherry was a blossom, Then it had no stone; When the dove was in the egg, Then it had no bone; When first the briar sprouted, Never a thorn it bore; And when a maiden has her love, Oh then she longs no more?

Original Article.

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PROMETHEUS BOUND.

An ancient fable gives an account of the penalty inflicted by wrathful Jupiter upon Prometheus who had laid roguish hands on the fire of heaven. Don't get alarmed at our classical opening and go to rummaging your brain for all the disjointed scraps of classical literature that some freak of fortune has thrown there. We are a little shy of the neighborhood ourselves and will tarry here as briefly as possible. We go back to the olden time merely as the parson to his upturned barrel—to procure a text. And having got it we will levy on modern things for the material of the discussion. Close application to Butler has imparted a keen relish for analogies, else we would never perhaps have detected resemblances through the vista of a score or two of centuries. But I dare say that any one of you, though he may not have enjoyed this wholesome discipline can lay his finger upon modern things the exact counterpart of this high-handed plunder of the god. Ah! many a gifted soul plays Jupiter, and many an ass plays Prometheus now-a-days. Under two aspects we see this farce constantly enacting. The first and more sorrowful case is when genius forgetful of its high commission stoops to prop the vanity or imbecility of fools with its heaven-born resources; when its mighty energies start into action at the clank of gold instead of the whispering of lofty sentiments. Witness the Milford Bard. Daily were his resources taxed by such applications as this: "Dr Sir, I hev to inform you that I am quaranting Saly Graham and how that I want to rite her a love-letter and cant. Will you be so obligeing as to send me a raul affecting one by next mail?" Many a time doubtless did Sallie's heart flutter over the impassioned page. For had not genius touched it and left a spell that must linger there forever!—genius putting its God-given dowry under the hammer—genius feeding on the husks and trash of earth while angel voices vainly importuned it to return and seize its birth-right in the skies.

Ill starred son of song! with melancholy haste he ran the too frequent erratic career of the gifted. In the hey-day of life he stands on Pisgah and feeds his ravished eye on the Canaan that fancy has mapped out before him—it's towering domes—it's magnificent piles rising to greet the morning sky—it's "milk and honey"—but looming stately and grand above them all Fame's temple stands, glittering in the sun light. With bounding foot he starts upon the highway of glory, intent to realize the gorgeous visions of his young ambition. Soon the sparkle of the wine-cup flashed across his path—he should have known it was the deadly glance of the "evil eye" and sped with hot haste on. He stayed his foot—thinking to find nepenthe in the voluptuous wave—did he not know it was the smirk of the arch fiend and not an angel's smile that trembled on its rosy crest? Enough, that in that hour, the tosy rang into the startled ear of the world, the knell of another murdered hope.

But not always does genius thus cast aside the insignia of its royalty, and play the beggarly panderer to the pockets of fools. Nor do the latter class always ask for what they want, but take it, Prometheus like, per-force: And what is accomplished? It is as if a broad sheet of lightning should play around some unsightly object which otherwise would have remained hid in the bosom of night. The subdued glimmer of the moon-beam gives

grandeur to objects whose imperfections stand vividly forth in the glare of mid-noon. So the inferior mind is graceful and dignified when moving in its own sphere and clothed in its own weaknesses. The world has an observant eye and rarely fails justly to measure a man's dimensions. And the world is reasonably too in the main. It asks but one talent at the hand of him who has but one and will not connive at rogues by receiving more. Literary pirates might reap instruction from the sad fate of the monkey who attempted to use his master's razor, and in the ill judged effort cut his throat; for literary suicide is the inevitable doom of literary monkeys. In the words of "the Preacher," it is all "vanity and vexation of spirit." The decree has been spoken.—The world is pushing on in pompous and magnificent procession towards its destined perfection. The giant mass must move right on—no diversion—no loitering. But Heaven hath spoken it, giant minds must lead. Every grade of intellect has its own commission in its hand and its own duties on its conscience. Therewith it should be content. From age to age the bustling crowd moves on and age after age supplies the master minds that shall direct its march. And when at least the stupendous task is done, and the world's great destiny is achieved—when that hour dawes upon humanity upon which the rapt seen of prophecy has feasted—when "the lamb and the lion lie down together and a young child leads them"—and when angels chant the harvest home of redeemed humanity, and garner up the trophies of ages—reward shall crown the humblest deserts, but the diadem glitters alone for the brow of Genius.

Women of Different Nations.

That the women of different nations are different in their mental and affectionate constitution is apparent to the most casual observer. They are as various in their natures as are the climates and physical characteristics of the several countries of their nativity. All human beings are indeed the creatures of circumstances surrounding and developing them. The following on the English, French, Italian and American women is ingenious, and we have no doubt many of our readers will consider it discriminating and just: "The English woman is respectful and proud; the French woman is gay and agreeable; the Italian is passionate; the American is sincere and affectionate. With an English woman, love is a principle; with a French woman it is caprice; with an Italian it is a passion; with an American it is a sentiment. A man is married to an English woman; is united to a French; cohabits with an Italian, and is wedded to an American. An English woman is anxious to secure a lord; a French woman a companion; an Italian a lover; an American a husband.—The Englishman respects his lady; the Frenchman esteems his companion; the Italian adores his mistress; the American loves his wife. The Englishman at night returns to his house, while the Frenchman goes to his establishment, the Italian to his retreat, and the American to his home. When the Englishman is sick his lady visits him; when a Frenchman is sick his companion pities him; when an Italian is sick his mistress sighs over him; when an American is sick his wife nurses him. The English woman instructs her children; the French woman teaches her pupils; the Italian rears her young, while an American nurses her child."

A WINTER LANDSCAPE IN RUSSIA.—Nothing more interesting itself, we traveled on winter roads through towns and villages, and over a snow-covered country, rendered many times more so by the season. All around was a vast wintery flat; and frequently not a vestige of man or cultivation was seen, not even a solitary tree, to break the boundless expanse of snow. Indeed, no idea can be formed of the immense plains we traversed; unless you imagine yourself at sea, far, far from the sight of land. The Arabian deserts cannot be more awful to the eye than the appearance of this scene. Such is the general aspect of the country during the rigors of a winter, with now and then an exception of a large forest skirting the horizon for a considerable length of way. At intervals as you shoot along, you see openings among its lofty trees, from which emerge picturesque groups of natives and their one horse sledges, whereon are placed the different articles of commerce, going to various parts of the empire. They travel in vast numbers and from all quarters, seldom fewer than one hundred and fifty in a string having a driver to every seventh horse. The effect of this cavalcade at a distance is very curious; and in a morning, as they advance toward you, the scene is as beautiful as striking. The sun then rising, throws his rays across the snow, transforming it to the sight into a surface of diamonds. From the cold of the night every man and horse is encrusted with these frosty particles; and the beams falling on them, too, seem to cover their rude faces and rugged habits with a tissue of the most dazzling brilliants. The manes of the horses, and the long beards of the men, from the quantity of congealed breath, have a particularly glittering effect.

Miscellaneous.

CROSSING THE FORD.

I began life by running away from home.—Boileau, we are told, was driven into his career by the hand of fate and the peck of a turkey. Attila started in life with no other cause and capital than an old sword, which he was adroit enough to palm off for the divine weapon of Mars, and Robespierre owed his political career to wetting his stockings aforesaid and there heard the words which burn, which fired his soul, and determined his course in life. My running away from home arose from a minor mortification caused by carrying a pretty girl over a brook.

Donald Lean and myself were good friends at fourteen years of age, and we both regarded with a little more than friendship, pretty Helen Graham, "our eldest girl" at school.—We romped and danced together, and this lasted for such a length of time, that it is with a feeling of self-derision that I look back on the mystery of two lovers continuing friends. But a time came as come it must, when jealousy lit her spark in my boyish bosom, and blew it into a consuming flame.

Well do I remember how and when the "green-eyed" perpetrated this incendiary deed. It was on a cold October evening, when Helen Donald, and myself were returning with our parents from a visit to a neighboring hamlet. As we approached a ford where the water ran somewhat higher than ankle-deep, we prepared to carry Helen across as we were accustomed to do with hands interwoven "clair fashion," we took our pretty passenger through the brook. Just as we were in the middle of the water—which was cold enough at the time to have frozen anything like feeling out of a boy less hairy than myself—a faint pang of jealousy nipped my heart. Why it was I knew not, for we had carried Helen fifty times across the brook ere now, without emotion, but this evening I thought, or fancied, that Helen gave Donald an undue preference by casting her pretty arms around his neck, while she steadied herself on my side by simply holding the "scuff" of my jacket.

No flames can burn so quickly or with so little fuel as jealousy. Before we had reached the opposite bank, I was wishing Donald at the bottom "o' the sea." Being naturally impetuous, I burst out with— "You need no haud sae gingerly, Helen, as if ye feared a fa." I can ye carr ye lighter than Donald wad half of ye!

Surprised at the vehemence of my tone, our queen interposed with an admission that we were both strong, and that she had no idea of sparring my powers. But Donald's ire was kindled, and he utterly denied that I was at all qualified to compete with himself in any feats of carriage. On such topics boys are naturally emulous and by the time we had reached the opposite bank, it was settled that the point should be determined by our singly bearing Helen again across the ford, in our arms.

Helen was to determine who had carried her most easily, and I settled with myself privately in advance, that the one who obtained the preference would really be the person who stood the highest in her affections! The reflection stimulated me to resolve to exert every effort, and I verily believe to this day, that I could have carried Donald and Helen on either arm like feathers. But I anticipate.

We suffered all the rest of the party to pass quietly along, and then returned to the ford I lifted Helen with the utmost ease and carried her like an infant to the middle of the water. Jealousy had also inspired a warmer love, and it was with feelings unknown before, that I embraced her beautiful form and I felt the pressure of her cheeks against mine. All went swimmingly, or rather wadingly for a minute. But then—alas! in the very deepest part of the ford—I trod on a treacherous bit of wood, which rested I suppose on the smooth stone. Over I rolled, bearing Helen with me, nor did we rise until fairly soaked from head to foot.

I need not describe the taunts of Donald, or the more accusing silence of Helen. Both believed I had fallen from mere weakness, and my rival illustrated his superior ability, bearing her in his arms for a long distance on our homeward path. As we approached the house, Helen, feeling drier and better humored, attempted to conciliate me. But I preserved a moody silence—I was mortified beyond redress.

That night I packed up a few things, and ran away. My boyish mind, sensitive and irritated, exaggerated the vexation it had received, and prompted me to a course which fortunately led me to better results than usually attend such irregularities. I went to Edinburgh, where I found a maternal Uncle—a kind-hearted, childless man—who gladly gave me a place in his home, and employed me in his business. Wealth flowed upon him. I became his partner—went abroad—resided for years on the Continent, and finally returned to Scotland, rich, educated—in short everything but married.

One evening while at a ball in Glasgow, I

was struck by a young lady of quite unpretending appearance; but whose remarkable beauty and high toned expression indicated a mind of more than ordinary power. I was introduced, but the Scottish names had long been unfamiliar to my e. r, and I could not catch hers. It was Helen something, and there was something in the face, too, that seemed familiar—something suggestive of mixed pleasure and pain.

But we became well acquainted that evening. I learned without difficulty her history. She was from the country, had been well educated, her parents had lost their property, and she was now governess in a family in the city.

I was fascinated with her conversation, and was continually reminded by her grace and refinement of manner, that she was capable of moving with distinguished success in a far higher sphere than that which fortune seemed to have allotted her. I am naturally neither talkative nor prone to confidence; but there was that in this young lady which inspired both, and I conversed with her as I had never conversed with any. Her questions of the various countries with which I was familiar, indicated a remarkable knowledge of literature, and an incredible store of general information.

We progressed in intimacy, and as our conversation turned on the causes which induced so many to leave their native land, I laughingly remarked that I owed my own travels to falling with a pretty girl in a ford.

I had scarcely spoken the words ere the blood mounted to her face, and was succeeded by quite as remarkable paleness. I attributed this to the heat of the room—laughed—and at her request proceeded to give the details of my ford adventure with Helen Graham—which I did, painting in glowing colors the beauty and amiability of my young love.

Her mirth during the recital became almost irrepressible. At its conclusion she remarked:

"Mr. Roberts is it possible that you have forgotten me?"

I gazed an instant—remembered—and was dumb-founded. The lady with whom I had become so intimate, was Helen Graham herself!

I hate—and so do you reader—to needlessly prolong a story. We were soon married—Helen and I made our bridal tour to "the old place." As we approached it in our carriage, I greeted a stout fellow working in the field, and who seemed to be a better sort of laborer, or perhaps a small farmer, by inquiring some trifling particular relating to the neighborhood. He answered promptly enough, and I was about to give him a sixpence, when Helen stayed my hand, and cried in the old style: "Hey, Donald mon, dinno ye ken ye'r auld fren's?"

The man looked up in astonishment.—It was Donald Lean. His amazement at our appearance was heightened by its style; and it was with the greatest difficulty that we could induce him to enter our carriage, and answer our numerous queries as to old friends.

Different men "start life," in different ways. I believe, however, that mine is the only instance on record of a gentleman who owes wealth and happiness to rolling over with a pretty girl in a stream of water.

C. G. L.

A JOCLAR CANDIDATE FOR SPEAKER.—Mr. Pennington, of New Jersey, replied in the House of Representatives, on Monday, to the inquiry of Mr. Kennett, whether each of the candidates believed in a future state, and if so whether he believed it would be a free or a slave State. Mr. Pennington said he was somewhat versed in the Westminster Catechism, and he had learned from that that there is a future state in which he believed. He also understood that there were two states in that future state—one the beautiful, and the other the damned—the free and the slave, [laughter.] The free state was on one side and the slave state on the other side; he believed it was not exactly a compromise line, [renowned laughter.] but had always understood that the damned side was the hottest, and therefore that must be the southern side. [Great laughter.]

It was held by some that there is a third state—the state of purgatory. Now, he had no acquaintance with this state, except such as he had learned from the course of purgation going on in this House. He knew of certain gentlemen who had been in a state of purgatory here, [laughter,] and (placing his hand on his heart) he knew one gentleman past praying for. [Shouts of laughter.]

FOUR GOOD HABITS.—There were four habits a wise and good man earnestly recommended in his counsels and also by his own example, and which he considered essentially necessary for the management of temporal concerns. These are punctuality, accuracy, steadiness, and despatch. Without the first of these time is wasted; without the second mistakes the most hurtful to our own credit and interest and that of others may be committed; without the fourth opportunities of great advantage are lost which it is impossible to reach.

In how Cold Weather can Animal Life be Sustained?

While we are waiting for Dr. Kane's official report of his last expedition to the Arctic ocean, there are some scientific results, the publication of which we may be permitted to anticipate. The first of these is the conditions of animal and vegetable life in a high northern latitude.

Dr. Kane's party succeeded in reaching latitude 80 degrees, a higher northern point upon the coast of Greenland than had yet been attained by any previous navigator. He found inhabiting this inhospitable region the Esquimaux Indian, the reindeer, and many varieties of the floral world, principally of the Alpine species. The latter were numerous, diminutive. How far north the human race and animals exist, is not known; but Dr. Kane's observations clearly establish the fact, that the extreme cold of latitude 80 degrees is not the limit to their northern migration.

The habits of the Esquimaux are peculiar. They are essentially a migratory people, and with sledges drawn by dogs, undertake journeys of hundreds of miles in extent, depending for their subsistence upon such nourishment as chance throws in their way. This little party under Dr. Kane found to be sufficiently abundant to meet their own wants.

During the whole cruise they were never seriously in want of food but on one occasion near Melville bay. Here, fortunately, a fine fat seal presented itself stretched at length on the ice. A boat was manned to go in pursuit of it, and Dr. Kane describes the excitement of the chase as so intense, that one of the most experienced gunners of the party could hardly command himself sufficiently to fire at it until the boat had neared within a few yards, and it was in the very act of escaping.

The temperature at which the explorations were conducted, was between 70 and 80 degrees below zero. So intense was the cold, that the alcoholic thermometer failed to indicate accurately the temperature, and even chloroform and the essential oils, which resist low temperatures, became thick and turbid. It was only by a careful observation and comparison of many instruments, that they were enabled to attain to any accuracy in regard to the extent of the cold.

An opportunity had thus been given of testing the ability of the human body to resist a temperature of seventy degrees below zero, for several months together. The Doctor and his party were enabled to do this by an immense consumption of animal food, the ordinary daily allowance to each man being six or eight ducks, or an equivalent in several pounds of fat seal.

Shortly after the discovery of the compound nature of the atmosphere by Priestley, Crawford broached the theory that the animal heat of the body is maintained at an uniform temperature of 98 degrees, by means of a liberal consumption of food containing carbon in excess, as animal food, where the cold is severe. The most beautiful and brilliant series of experiments presented by Liebig, were those intended to establish this theory, which they do most successfully.

In this connection, the experiment of Dr. Kane and his party, in showing the amount of food required to enable the human body to resist the depressing influence of a continued low temperature, for a period of time longer than any other recorded, is of the highest practical value.

We have in physical geography, as the results of this cruise, a newly discovered land, flanked by lofty mountain ranges, a wide and iceless open sea, clearly pointing to an undiscovered region of large extent towards the North Pole, and immense glaciers, before which those of Cyr and Chamouni dwindle into insignificance.—N. Y. Evening Post

IS THERE ANY FORGETTING.—Dr. Rush tells us that when called upon to attend those on their death beds, who for forty, fifty, or sixty years, had lost the use of their native tongue, the long suspended faculty will be recalled in approaching death, and they would talk, pray and sing in Swedish. Dr. Johnson also, when it came his turn to die, spoke not in the march of his own majestic rhetoric—passed by even the cadence of those Latin hymns on which he so much loved to dwell—but was heard with his sinking voice, muttering a child's prayer which he had learned on his mother's knee. Strange, indeed, is the providence, and yet so wisely illustrative of the evidence of time, an element in the divine economy, which thus brings together in mystical association, the two extreme points of human history—birth and death.

Do you know the prisoner, Mr. Jones? "Yes, to the bone." What is his character? "Didn't know he had any." "Does he live now?" "So near that he has only spent five shillings for fire wood in eight years." "D he ever come into collision with you in a matter?" "Only once, and that was when I was drunk and mistook me for a lamp post." "From what you know of him would you have him under oath?" "That depends upon circumstances. If he was so much intoxicated that he did not know what he was doing I would. If not, I wouldn't."