

Poetry.

COURTSHIP.

From little signs like little stars,
Whose faint impression on the sense
The very looking straight at Mars,
Or only seen by consequence;
From instinct of a mutual thought,
Whence sanctity of manners flow'd;
From chance unconscious and from what
Concealment over conscious show'd;
Her wrist's less weight upon my arm;
Her lowlier mien; that matched with this
I found and felt with strange alarm,
I found committed to my bliss.

I grow assur'd before I ask'd,
That she'd be mine without reserve,
And in her unchain'd graces ask'd,
At leisure till the time should serve;
With just enough of dread to thrill
The hope, and make it trebly dear;
Thus loath to speak the word to kill,
Either the hope or happy fear.

Till once, through lanes returning late,
Her laughing sisters lag'd behind;
And ere we reach'd her father's gate,
We paused with one prescient mind;
And, in the dim and perfumed mist,
Their counting stayed, who, by the and free,
And very women, loved to assist
A lover's opportunity.

Twice rose, twice did my trembling word;
The faint and frail cathedral chimed
Spoke time and music, and we heard
The chimes rustling in the lines.
Her dress that touch'd me where I stood:
The warmth of her confided arm;
Her bosom's gentle neighborhood;
Her pleasure in her power to charm;
Her look, her love, her form, her touch,
The least seemed most by blissful turn,
Blissful but that it pleas'd too much,
And taught the wayward soul to yearn.
It was as if a harp with wires
Was traversed by the breath I drew;
And, oh, sweet meeting of desires,
She, answering, said that she loved too.

Select Tale.

THE CRIMINAL WITNESS.

In the spring of 48, I was called to Jackson to attend court, having been engaged to defend a young man accused of robbing the mail. I had a long conference with my client, and he acknowledged to me that on the night when the mail was robbed, he had been with a party of dissipated companions over to Tapham, and that on returning, they met the mail carrier on horseback coming from Jackson. Some of his companions were very drunk, and they proposed to stop the carrier and overhaul his bag. The roads were very muddy at the time, and the coach could not run. My client assured me that he not only had no hand in robbing the mail, but that he tried to dissuade his companions. But they would not listen to him. One of them slipped up behind the carrier and knocked him from his horse. Then they bound and blindfolded him, and having tied him to a tree they took the mail bag and made off to a neighboring field, where they overhauled it, finding some five hundred dollars in money in various letters. He went with them but in no way did he have any hand in the crime. Those who did it fled, and as the carrier had recognized him in the party, he had been arrested.

The mail bag had been found as well as the letters from which money had been taken, were kept by order of the officers, and duplicates sent to the various persons, to whom they were directed. These letters had been given to me for examination, and I had returned them to the prosecuting attorney.

I got through with my private preliminaries about noon, and as the case would not come up before the next day, I went into the court to see what was going on. The first case which came up was one for theft, and the prisoner was a young girl not more than seventeen years of age, Elizabeth Madworth. She was very pretty and bore that mild, innocent look, which we seldom find in the culprit. She was pale and frightened, and the moment my eyes rested upon her, I pitied her. She had been weeping profusely, for her bosom was wet, but as she found so many eyes upon her she became too much frightened to weep more.

The complaint against her was set forth that she had stolen one hundred dollars from Mrs. Naseby; and as the case went on, I found that Mrs. Naseby was her mistress, a wealthy widow, living in town. The poor girl declared her innocence in the most wild terms, and called on God to witness that she would rather die than steal. But circumstances were hard against her. A hundred dollars in bank notes had been stolen from her mistress's room, and she was the only one who had access there.

At this juncture, while the mistress was upon the witness stand, a young man came and caught me by the arm. He was a fine fellow, and big tears stood in his eyes.

"They tell me you are a good lawyer," he whispered.

"I am a lawyer," I answered.

"Then—O!—save her! You can certainly do it, for she is innocent."

"Is she your sister?"

The youth hesitated and colored.

"No sir," he said. "But—but"

Here he hesitated again.

"Has she no counsel?" I asked.

"None—that's good for anything—nobody that'll do anything for her. O, save her, and I'll pay you all I've got. I can't pay you much, but I can raise something."

I reflect for a moment. I cast my eyes toward the prisoner, as she was at that moment looking at me. She caught my eye, and the volume of humble, and prayerful entreaty I read in those large tearful orbs, resolved me in a moment. In my soul I knew the girl was innocent; or at least I firmly believe so—and perhaps I could help her. I arose and went to the girl, and asked her if she wished me to defend her. She said yes. I then informed the court that I was ready to enter into the case, and was admitted at once. The loud murmur of satisfaction which ran through the room, quickly told me where the sympathies of the people were.

I asked for a moment's cessation, that I might speak to my client. I went and sat down by her, and asked her to state to me candidly the whole case. She told me she had lived with Mrs. Naseby nearly two years, and that during all that time she had never had any trouble before. About two weeks ago, she said her mistress lost a hundred dollars.

"She missed it from the drawer," the girl told me, "and she asked me about it, but I know nothing of it. The next thing I knew, Nancy Luther told Mrs. Naseby that she saw me take the money from the drawer—that she watched me through the key hole. They then went to my trunk, and they found twenty-five dollars of the missing money there. But O, sir, I never took it—some one else put that money there!"

I then asked her if she suspected any one.

"I don't know," she said, "who could have done it but Nancy. She has never liked me, because she thought I was treated better than she was. She is the cook, and I was chambermaid."

She pointed Nancy Luther out to me. She was a stout, bold-faced girl, about two and twenty with a low forehead, small gray eyes, a pug nose, and thick lips. I caught her glance at once as it rested upon the fair young prisoner, and the moment I detected the look of hatred which I read there, I was convinced that she was the rogue.

"Oh, sir, can you help me?" my client asked in a fearful whisper.

"Nancy Luther, did you say that girl's name was?"

"Yes sir."

"Is there any other girl of that name about here?"

"No sir."

"Then you may rest easy. I'll try hard to save you."

I left the court room, and went to the prosecuting attorney, and asked him for letters I had handed him—the ones that had been stolen from the mail bag. He gave them to me, and after having selected one, I returned the rest, and told him I would see that he had the one I kept before night. I then returned to the court room and the case went on.

Mrs. Naseby resumed her testimony. She said she entrusted her room to the prisoner's care and that no one else had access there but herself. Then described the missing money, and closed by telling how she had found twenty-five dollars of it in the prisoner's trunk. She could swear it was the identical money she had lost, it being two tens and one five dollar bill.

"Mrs. Naseby," said I, "when you first missed your money, had you any reason to believe that the prisoner had taken it?"

"No sir," she answered.

"Did you ever before detect her in dishonesty?"

"No sir."

"Should you have thought of searching her trunk had not Nancy Luther advised you and informed you?"

"No sir."

Mrs. Naseby then left the stand, and Nancy Luther took her place. She came up with a bold look, and upon me she cast a defiant glance, as much as to say "trip me if you can!" She gave evidence as follows:

"She said that on the night when the money was stolen, she saw the prisoner going up stairs and from the manner in which she went up she suspected that all was not right. So she followed her up."

"Elizabeth went into Mrs. Naseby's room and shut the door after her. I stooped down, looked through the key hole, and saw her at her mistress's drawer. I saw her take out the money and put it in her pocket. Then she stooped down to pick up the lamp, and as I saw she was coming out, I hurried away. Then she told how she had informed her mistress of this and proposed to search the girl's trunk."

I called Mrs. Naseby back to the stand. "You say that no one, save yourself, and the prisoner, had access to your room," I said. "Now could Nancy Luther have entered that room if she wished?"

"Certainly, sir. I meant no one else had any right there."

I saw that Mrs. N. though naturally a hard woman, was somewhat moved by poor Elizabeth's misery.

"Could your cook have known, by any means in your knowledge, where your money was?"

"Yes sir; for she had often come to my room when I was there, and I have given her money with which to buy provisions of market-men, who happened to come along with their wagons."

"One more question; have you known of prisoner's having had any money since this was stolen?"

"No, sir."

"I now called Nancy Luther back, and she began to tremble a little, though her look was as bold and defiant as ever."

"Miss Luther," said I, "why did you not inform your mistress at once of what you had seen, without waiting for her to ask you about the lost money?"

"Because I could not make up my mind at once to expose the poor girl," she answered promptly.

You say you looked through the key hole and saw her take the money."

"Yes, sir."

"Where did she put the lamp while she did so?"

"On the bureau."

"In your testimony, you said she stooped down when she picked it up. What do you mean by that?"

The girl hesitated, and finally said she "didn't mean anything, only that she picked up the lamp."

"Very well," said I. "How long have you been with Mrs. Naseby?"

"Not quite a year, sir."

"How much does she pay you a week?"

"A dollar and three quarters."

"Have you taken up any of your pay since you have been there?"

"Yes sir."

"How much?"

"I don't know, sir."

"Why don't you know?"

"How should I? I've taken it at different times just as I wanted it, and have kept no account."

"Now if you had any wish to harm the prisoner couldn't you have raised twenty-five dollars to have put in her trunk?"

"No sir," she replied with virtuous indignation.

"Then you have not laid up any money since you have been there?"

"No sir—only what Mrs. Naseby may owe me."

"Then you didn't have twenty-five dollars when you came there?"

"No sir; and what's more the money found in the girl's trunk was the money that Mrs. Naseby lost. You might have known that, if you'd remember what you hear."

This was said very sarcastically, and was intended as a crusher upon the idea that she could have put the money in the prisoner's trunk. However, I was not overcome entirely.

"Will you tell me if you belong to this State?" I asked next.

"I do, sir."

"In what town?"

She hesitated, and for an instant the bold look forsook her. But she finally answered:

"I belong to Somers, Montgomery county."

I next turned to Mrs. Naseby:

"Do you ever take a receipt from your girls when you pay them?" I asked.

"Always," she answered.

"Could you send and get one of them for me?"

"She told the truth, sir, about my payments," Mrs. Naseby said.

"O, I don't doubt it," I replied; "but occur a proof for the court room. So, if you can, I wish you'd procure me the receipts."

She said she would willingly go, if the court said so. The court did say so, and she went. Her dwelling was not far off, and she soon returned, and handed me four receipts which I took and examined. They were all signed in a strange straggling hand by the witness.

"Now, Nancy Luther," said I, turning to the witness, "and speaking in a quick, startling tone, at the same time looking her sternly in the eye, 'please tell the court and the jury, and tell me, too, where you got the seventy-five dollars you sent to your sister in Somers?'"

The witness started as though a volcano had burst at her feet.

"She turned pale as death, and every limb shook violently. I waited until the people could see her emotion, and then repeated the question."

"I never sent any money!" she fairly gasped.

"You did!" I thundered, for I was excited now.

"I—I didn't!" she faintly uttered grasping the rail for support.

"May I please your honor and gentlemen of the Jury," I said as soon as I had looked the witness out of countenance, "I came here to defend a youth who had been arrested for helping to rob the mail, and in the course of my preliminary examinations, I had access to the letters which had been torn open and rifled of money. When I entered upon this case, and heard the name of the witness pronounced, I went out and got this letter which

I now hold, for I remember to have seen one bearing the signature of Nancy Luther. The letter was taken out of the mail bag, and contained seventy-five dollars, and by looking at the post mark, you will observe it was mailed on the very next day after the money was taken from Mrs. Naseby's drawer. I will read it to you if you please."

The court nodded assent, and I read the following, which was without date save that made by the post master's stamp on the outside. I give it here verbatim:

Sister Dorcas:

I send you here seventy-five dollars, which I want you to keep it for me till I can hum, I can't keep it here coz I'm afraid it'll git stole, dont speke wun word to a livin soul bout this, coz I dont want nobodi to know I hav got enny monney. Yu wont, will yu. I am first rate heer, only that gude fur nuthin snipe of Liz Madworth is heer yit—but I hope to git rid uv her now, you know I rote yu bout her. giv my luv to awl enquired frendz, this is from yur sister, til death,

"Now, your honor," I said, as I handed him the letter, and also the receipts, "you will see that the letter is directed to Dorcas Luther, Somers, Montgomery county. And you will observe that one hand wrote the letter and signed those receipts. It is plain how the hundred dollars were disposed of. Seventy-five were in that letter and sent away for safe keeping, while the remaining twenty-five were placed in the prisoner's trunk for the purpose of covering the real criminal. Of the tone of the other parts of the letter, I leave you to judge. And now gentlemen of the jury, I leave my case in your hands, only I will thank God, and I know you will also, that an innocent person has been thus strangely saved from ruin and disgrace."

The case was given to the jury immediately following their examination of the letter. They had heard from the witness's own mouth that she had no money of her own, and without leaving their seats, they returned a verdict of—"Not Guilty."

The youth who had first asked me to defend the prisoner, caught me by the hand but he could not speak plainly. He simply looked at me through his tears, for a moment, and then rushed to the fair prisoner. He seemed to forget where he was, for he flung his arms around her, and she laid her head upon his bosom and wept aloud.

I will not attempt to describe the scene that followed; but if Nancy Luther had not been arrested for the theft, she would have been obliged to seek the protection of the officers; for the excited people would have surely maltreated her, if they had done no more.

Next morning, I received a note, handsomely written, in which I was told that the within was but a slight token of gratitude due me for my efforts in behalf of a poor, defenceless but much loved maiden. It was signed, "several citizens," and contained one hundred dollars. Shortly afterwards, the youth came to pay all the money he could raise. I simply showed him the note I had received, and asked him to keep his hard earnings for his wife, when he got one. He owned he had intended to make Lizzy Madworth his wife very soon.

Next day, I succeeded in clearing my other client from conviction of robbing the mail; and made a considerable handle of the fortunate discovery of the letter which had saved an innocent girl on the day before, in my appeal to the jury; and if I made them feel that the finger of Omnipotence was in the work, it was because I sincerely believed the young man was innocent of all crime; and I am sure they thought so too.

A CHARACTER.—"Old Bumblebee" (says an exchange paper) was the cognomen of Mr. T., of Newburyport. He gained the title from the fact of his catching a bumblebee one day as he was shingling his barn, and in attempting to destroy the insect with his hatchet, cut off the ends of his thumb and forefinger, letting the insect go unharmed. Other mishaps happened to the same old coddler in the same barn. In one of his abstractions he shingled over his spare hatchet; and cutting a small aperture in the building to let a little daylight in, this man actually set in a wooden pane as being economical and not likely to be broken! Uncle T., in one of his obvious freaks, nailed his left arm so firmly betwix two boards of a fence he was putting up, that he had to call help to get extracted from his self-imprisonment. He once put a button on the gate instead of the post. But the rarest freak of all was when he ran through the streets with his hands about three feet asunder, held before him, begging the passers not to disturb him, as he had got the measure of a doorway with him.

Mrs. Parlington thinks there will be such facilities for travelling, bimby, that you can go anywhere for nothing, and come back again.

The Welch have a saying, that if a woman was as quick with her feet as with her tongue, she would catch lightning enough to kindle fires in the morning.

An Alliterative Tale.

A famous fish factor found himself father of five flirring females—Fanny, Florence, Fernanda, Francisca and Fenella. The first four were flat featured, ill favored, forbidden fops; frocked frumps, fretful, flippant, foolish and flouting. Fenella was a fine featured, fresh fested fairy, frank, free and full of fun. The fisher failed, and was forced by fickle fortune to forego his footman, forfeit his forefathers' fine fields, and find a forlorn farm house in a forsaken frightful forest. The four fretful females, fond of figuring at feasts in feathers and fashionable finery, fumed at their fugitive father. Forsaken by fulsome, flattering fortune-hunters who followed them when fish flourished, Fenella fondled her father, flavored their food, forgot her flattering followers, and frolicked in frieze without founces. The father finding himself forced to forage in foreign parts for a fortune, found he could afford a farthing for his five fondlings. The first four were fain to foster their frivolity with fine frills and fans, fit to finish their father's finances; Fenella, fearful of flooring him, formed a fancy for a full fresh flower. Fate favored the fish factor for a few days, when he fell in with a fog; his faithful filly's footsteps faltered and food failed. He found himself in front of a fortified fortress. Finding it forsaken, and feeling himself feeble and forlorn with fasting, he fed on the fish, flesh and fowl. He found, fricasseed and fried and when full, fell flat on the floor. Fresh in the forenoon, he forthwith flew to the fruitful fields, and not forgetting Fenella, he fished a fair flower; when a foul, frightful, feudish figure flashed forth: "Felonious fellow, fingering my flowers, I'll finish you! Go, say farewell to your fine felicitous family, and face me in a fortnight!" The faint-hearted fisher fumed and faltered, and fast was far in his flight. His five daughters flew to fall at his feet, and fervently felicitate him. Frantically and fluently he unfolded his fate. Fenella, forthwith fortified by filial fondness, followed her father's footsteps, and flung her fustiness, form at the foot of the frightful figure, who forgave the father, and fell flat on his face, for he had fervently fallen in a fiery fit of love for the fair Fenella. He feasted her, till fascinated by his faithfulness, she forgot the ferocity of his face, form and features, and frankly fixed Friday the fifth of February, for the affair to come off. There was festivity, fragrance, finery, fireworks, fricasseed frogs, fritters, fish, flesh, fowl and fermentry, frontignac, flip and fare fit for the fastidious; fruit, fuss, flambeaux, four fat fiddlers and fifers, and the frightful form of the fortunate and frumpish fiend fell from him, and he fell at Fenella's feet, a fair favored, fine, frank freeman of the forest. Behold the fruits of filial affection!

Life is a library.—Life is a library composed of several volumes. With some, these volumes are richly gilt; with others quite plain; of its volumes, the first is a child's book full of pretty pictures; the second is a school book, blotted, inked and dog eared; the next is a thrilling romance, full of love, hope, ruin and despair, winding up with marriage, and the most beautiful heroine that ever was; then there is a housekeeping book, with the butcher's and baker's bills increasing every year; after that comes the day-book and ledger, swelling out into a series of volumes, presenting a rare fund of information, and jingling like a cash box with money; these are followed up with the grave history, solemnly travelling over the events of the past, with many wise deductions and grave warnings, and last of all comes the child's book again, with its pages rather soiled, and its pictures by no means so bright as they used to be.

To the above library is sometimes added the banker's book, thick with gold, but it is a very scarce work, and only to be met with in the richest collections.

Digging for Money.—What are you digging for?"

"I am digging for money."

"The news fled—the idlers collected."

"We are told that you are digging for money?"

"Well I ain't digging for anything else!"

"Have you any luck?"

"First rate luck!—pays well—you had better take hold."

All doffed their coats, and laid hold most vigorously for a time. After throwing out some cart loads, the question arose:

"When did you get any money last?"

"Saturday night last."

"Why how much did you get?"

"Four dollars and a half."

"Why, that's rather small?"

"It's pretty well—six shillings a day is the regular price for digging cellars all over town."

The spades dropped and the leavers vanished.

If you would learn to bow, watch a mean man when he talks to a gentleman of wealth. A narrow minded soul can no more stand upright in the presence of a money bag than he can throw a semibreve over the moon.