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13 ly 1864.

THE WELL-DIGGER.

AN OWER-TRUE BALLAD.

BY JOHN G. SAXE.

Come, listen all, while I relate
What recently befel
Unto a farmer down in Maine,
While digging of a well.

Full many a yard he dug and delved,
And still he dug in vain;
"Alack!" quoth he, "e'en water seems
Prohibited in Maine!"

And still he dug and delved away,
And still the well was dry;
The only water to be found
Was in the farmer's eye.

For by the breaking of the bank
That tumbled from its station,
All suddenly his hope was dashed
Of future liquidation!

And now his sands were running fast,
And he had died, no doubt,
But that just when the earth caved in,
He happened to be out!

"Aha!—I have a happy thought!"
Exclaimed the wicked man—
To dig anew this cursed well
I see a pretty plan:

"I'll hide me straight, and when my wife
And e'en my neighbors know
What's happened to my digging here,
They'll think that I'm below!

"And so to save my precious life,
They'll dig the well no doubt,
E'en deeper than t'was dug at first,
Before they find me out!"

And so he hid him in the barn
Through all the hungry day,
To hide the digging of his well
In this deceitful way.

But list what grief and shame befel
The false, ungrateful man,
The while he slowly watched to see
The working of his plan:

The neighbors all with one accord
Unto each other said.
"With such a weight of earth above,
The man is surely dead."

And then his wife with pious care,
All needless cost to save,
Said "Since the Lord hath willed it so
E'en let it be his grave!"

THE ROYAL WAGER.

"The bell for vespers has just rung, and the Empress will pass around the corridors in the course of ten minutes. She will be attended by the princess Hortense and two ladies in waiting, but you will readily recognize her, for she is taller than the others, and will walk a little in advance."

Thus spoke the tall and fierce looking *gendarme*, a good natured look of concern upon his honest face as he glanced down upon the slight form at his side, whose youthful face gleamed out still and pale from the shadows that were thickly gathering, and whose singular beauty was rendered more conspicuous by a pair of dark, lustrous eyes, which had a sad, beseeching expression, more eloquent than words.

The pale lips moved, as if to express her thanks, but they gave forth no audible sound.

"Hist! she is coming!" exclaimed the guard, as his quick ear caught the sound of approaching footsteps.

"Courage, *mon enfant*," he added, as the young girl leaned up against the corners of the corridor, trembling in every limb, "the good Empress is like a mother to her people."

As he said this, he hastily resumed his post, and when the Empress made her appearance, was pacing backwards and forwards with his monotonous tread, a stolid look upon his countenance, as though he was the mere machine that the discipline to which he was subjected was intended to make him.

Josephine, then in the zenith of her charms, was attired with her usual elegance in a robe of black velvet, whose heavy folds swept the floor; rubies gleamed upon her bosom, and in the heavy braids of her dusky hair: a costume which well accorded with her rich tropical beauty, and she moved along with that graceful, undulating motion peculiar to the French creole.

As she reached the spot opposite to where the girl stood, she stepped out from the shadow, and sinking down upon one knee, laid her hand upon Josephine's robe, as if to arrest her progress.

Poor Marie! during her long and lonely walk she had said over and over again the little speech, by which she had hoped to win the kind heart of the Empress to pity and aid her, but as she knelt there, every word of it vanished from her mind. But those white, quivering lips, the imploring expression in those lifted eyes spoke volumes, and when Josephine looked down upon them, she understood all she would say.

Signing the other ladies to proceed, she took the roll of paper from her hand. But as her eye glanced over it, her countenance fell.

"I fear that I can do nothing for you, my good girl," she said, turning to the suppliant; "desertion is an offence that the Emperor never pardons."

"O! say not so, royal lady!" exclaimed the young girl, imploringly. "The good Emperor's heart is ever open to you! It was to see his dying mother, and after every other means had failed!"

Still the Empress shook her head. "It is a hard case," she said, "but it will be useless for me to attempt to obtain his pardon."

As Josephine said this, a stifled moan escaped from the poor girl's lips, the convulsive grasp upon her robe relaxed, and she lay still and pale at her feet.

Alarmed, the Empress beckoned the *gendarme* to approach.

"She has fainted," he said, as he bent over her. "And no wonder; she has walked from the village of L—— full eight leagues, since the break of day."

"Do you know her?"

"Yes, Madame; she is Marie Duval, the betrothed of Henri Laferve, who is to be shot to-morrow morning for desertion."

"Poor child!" said the Empress, compassionately. "Take her away, good Jonna," she added, as the girl began to show signs of consciousness, "and see that she has rest and refreshment, and if she be sufficiently recovered, bring her an hour hence to my private apartment."

The Empress passed along, but the kind hearted soldier noticed, with a feeling of satisfaction, that she held closely in her hand the little roll of paper, while her countenance had a thoughtful aspect.

Napoleon was seated alone at the table covered with papers and maps. A courier had just left him, who was evidently the bearer of good news, for his countenance had a pleased, almost exultant look.

The door opened, and Josephine entered.

She paused a moment upon the threshold, giving his countenance a furtive look, whose ever varying mood she had learned so well to read.

"Welcome, my good Josephine," said the Emperor, holding out his hand to her.

Josephine saw that this was a propitious moment, and playfully sinking down upon one knee, she kissed his hand, saying:

"I have a petition, sire."

Napoleon took the paper she held out to him, but as he understood its purport, the smile died from his lip, and he handed it back to her, saying:

"If it was for any other offense, it should be granted; but as it is, it is impossible."

"But there are extenuating circumstances in this case," pleaded Josephine; the poor fellow had just received news that his mother was at the point of death."

"That was no excuse. The soldier has no mother save France; he owes his first duty to *her!*"

"Ah, if you could only see his betrothed wife, sire, I know your heart would relent. She has traveled on foot from the village of L—— since daybreak, to plead for her lover's life. Poor girl! I fear that she will not survive it!"

The Emperor shrugged his shoulders.

"We must try to console her," he said, dryly; "by seeing if we cannot grant her another husband."

"She would never accept one!" said Josephine, with indignant emphasis.—"She would sooner die with her lover!"

Napoleon again shrugged his shoulders and took a pinch of snuff.

"My dear friend, such things may be found in romances; but not in real life. I'll wager most anything you like that she would much prefer living with some young, good-looking man; and which I should find little difficulty in persuading her to do."

Josephine whispered a few words in her royal husband's ear:

"Let it be so," he said, smiling. "And now suffer your young *protege* to be summoned, and I will soon put the truth of my assertion to the proof."

The Emperor listened attentively to the touching plea, broken by tears and sobs that Marie poured out at his feet. Then bidding her rise, he said gravely, but kindly, for he was touched by the artless beauty of the suppliant, no less than by her unfeigned sorrow:

"I am sorry, my daughter, that I cannot grant your petition. But I will provide you with another lover, and bestow upon you a bridal dowry beside; which will do just as well, if not better."

"Surely you jest, sire," said the young girl, casting upon him a look of sorrowful surprise. "No one can take Henri's place in my heart. For the love of mercy, spare his life!"

"He has committed an unpardonable offence," was the stern reply; "the penalty of which is death. He must die! Unless, indeed," he added, in a lower tone, "some substitute be found to suffer in his stead."

Marie caught eagerly at the hope conveyed by these last words. Again she threw herself upon her knees, bathing the Emperor's hand with her tears.

"Would your majesty indeed accept a substitute?" she exclaimed. "Let *me* take his place, then, and suffer for him!"

"What! would you take his place to-morrow, and be shot in his stead?" inquired Napoleon, looking steadily into her face.

"If there is no other way to save his life, willingly, gladly, sire!" was the fervent response.

The Emperor's stern, impassible face gave no token of the feelings that filled his heart, as he looked upon the countenance of the speaker, every feature of which was instinct with the fervor of her heroic soul.

"If you desire it, certainly," he said, after a moment's pause. "But remember that I am not trifling with you! One of you must die! You will have ample time between now and the dawn of day to decide which it shall be."

The next morning rose clear and cloudless. At the first streaks of dawn, the large square in front of the palace was alive with soldiers, while outside of the paling, and in every available place were crowds of spectators, eager to view what is so dear to every Frenchman's heart, the pomp and circumstance of a military execution; and in this instance, rumors that had reached the people, that it was not the real offender that was to be executed, but his affianced wife, who by her own free choice was to take his place, made the crowd unusually large.

Circumstances indicated that it was to be the scene of more than usual display. The Emperor himself was present, attended by his staff. His tried and faithful body guard were drawn up in long array, together with the whole regiment to which the culprit belonged.

At the appointed hour, Marie made her appearance, attended by a priest, and escorted by a guard of six soldiers. A murmur of mingled pity and admiration ran through the crowd as they noted her extreme youth and beauty. Every eye expressed sympathy, excepting, indeed, the platoon of soldiers detailed to fire the fatal volley; they alone regarded the scene with an air of indifference.

Marie's beautiful countenance was pale but composed, and she walked to the fatal spot with a light firm step. Yet, as her eye fell upon the coffin, that was arranged so that it would receive her body as it fell, a visible shudder convulsed her frame. But it quickly passed away, and her countenance regained its former expression of holy serenity.

Closing her eyes, her lips moved a few moments in voiceless prayer, then she signified that she was ready.

Just then one of the Emperor's aides rode up and beckoning to the priest, said a few words to him.

Father Godfroy immediately returned to his patient. "Daughter," he said "our good Emperor sends thee word that if thy courage fails thee, there is, even now, time to retract."

"Tell the Emperor that I thank him, father," returned Marie calmly; but that it is easier for me to die for my betrothed than to live without him!"

"But bethink thee, daughter," persisted the good priest, "this is a terrible fate. Life is sweet, especially to the young. The Emperor empowers me to offer to thy acceptance another lover, equal, in every respect, to the one thou wilt lose, and a bridal dowry. Rush not from so fair a prospect to so cruel a death."

"Urge me no more, holy father," was the firm reply; my resolution is immmovable. Neither distract by vain and worldly thoughts the soul, that is fixed steadfastly upon that country it is so soon to enter."

The priest drew back, and one of the soldiers approached to bandage her eyes. At first Marie demurred, but on being told that it was indispensable, quietly submitted.

During these proceedings a profound silence reigned throughout that dense crowd of people, and when the signal to fire was given, every heart stood still; even the rough, stern soldiers accustomed to view death in its most cruel forms, involuntarily turned their eyes away from the pitiful sight.

There was a sharp report of musketry; and when the smoke cleared away it was discovered that Marie had fallen forward upon her face.

The Emperor, who had been a passive but attentive spectator of all this, instantly spurred his horse to the spot where she lay.

"*Mon Dieu!*" he exclaimed, as he threw himself hurriedly from the saddle, "can it be that those stupid fellows have blundered!"

"She has only fainted, your majesty," said father Godefroy, bending over her, laying his hand upon her wrist as he spoke.

Yet, though the muskets were loaded with blank cartridges, so that not a hair of her head was injured, for some minutes Marie lay as still and deathly as though life had indeed departed. When she unclosed her eyes she looked up bewildered into the face that she had never thought to see again in life.

"Marie, my good angel! my savior!" exclaimed Henri; "look up, all our sufferings are over! The Emperor was but testing your love. He has pardoned me, and father Godefroy is even now waiting to make us one."

And before Marie could hardly realize this happy change in her prospects she was a wife.

As soon as the priest had pronounced the benediction, the Emperor approached them. Overcome with gratitude and joy, they would have knelt at his feet, but he prevented them.

"No thanks are due me," he said, addressing Henri. "You owe your life neither to your own deserts, nor" he added, his eyes resting kindly upon Marie's happy face, "to any clemency, but to the heroic courage and devotion of her you have just called wife. Endeavor, in all your future conduct, to prove yourself worthy of her! I give you a month's furlough, in which to enjoy your honeymoon; to which the Empress adds five thousand francs, as a dowry to your bride. At the expiration of that time, return to the service of your country; and remember, hereafter, that the brave soldier never leaves his post of duty."

The meaning of this scene was not long in passing from lip to lip through the excited throng of people; and as Napoleon ceased speaking, the air rung with shouts of "*Viae'l Empereur!*"

But Napoleon quickly withdrew to the little alcove, where, secure from observation, Josephine had witnessed the triumph of her *protege*.

"You have won," he said, smiling.—"But how is it," he added, "that you read the heart of this simple maiden so much better than I?"

"I judged her by my own heart sire. This lovely peasant girl has done nothing that I would not gladly do for thee!"

"My good Josephine!" said the Emperor, pressing affectionately her hand in his, "I believe it!"

A few years hence, when upon a lonely island, forsaken by all his summer friends, save whom he had ejected from his heart and throne, wrote to him for permission to share his exile, did Napoleon receive another proof of that self-sacrificing devotion that is seldom found save in the heart of woman.

A FEMALE GUISE.

About two months ago a young girl of pleasing looks and address came here from New York city. At first she did duty as a hotel waiter, and after, through some means or other, got a situation at the varieties, where she presided over the cigar stand. There her good looks and winning ways obtained her numerous customers, and she drove a brisk business. In many cases her fascinated patrons refused to take any change, and thus "Miss Addie"—for that was her name—throve apace in her own right, and managed to pick up any amount of pin money.—Addie's admirers, from the first were numerous; but eventually they began to besiege her in droves, so that often the cigar stand would draw better than the stage itself. She was an accomplished coquette, and thus had a smile for each and every one of the crazy crew at her feet. Her smiles were by no means confined to the young, for gray hairs were found worshiping at her shrine, as often as the fair locks of youth. Among those who wooed her were old bachelors, and Young America, and men of family, and widowers, and brainless fops, and boys whose chins had not even made acquaintance with down. And the attentions to which she was treated were by no means confined to the wordy class. No, indeed! substantials in abundance fell to her lot. Old Mr. So-and-so gave her a new dress, and "old bach" So-and-so presented her with several pairs of pocket handkerchiefs and fast So-and-so sent her two pairs of silk gaiters, and several pairs of Alexander's best, while Master So-and-so gave her an order for a new bonnet. Then, too, scarcely a day passed that she was not taken out to ride behind a pair of fast nags, with usual accessories of ice cream, strawberries and cream, Roman punch, &c.

Thus things went on—from the time of her appearance at the Varieties, in this roseate way, until a few days ago, when the astounding discovery was made that "Miss Addie" was a man! of course the manager and her crowd of admirers were both astounded, and inclined to doubt their senses; but it turned out that she was a man.

The young man stated that for fourteen years he had worn the garb of a woman, in which guise his fair and pleasing looks had materially assisted him. In fact, he looks as much like a woman when dressed in male attire as when dressed bonnet and gown. In New York he played the part of "pretty waiter girl" at a Broadway Varieties, remaining there until the waiter girls were "crushed," when he came hither. Since the discovery of his ruse he has gone on the stage, and appears each evening at the Varieties in 'part first.' "Truth is stranger than fiction."—*Cleveland Herald.*

A HAPPY HOME.

The first year of married life is a most important era in the history of man and wife. Generally, as it is spent, so is almost all subsequent existance. The wife and the husband then assimilate their views and their desires, or else, conjuring up their dislikes, they add fuel to their prejudices and animosity forever afterwards.

"I have somewhere read," says the author of Bridal Greetings, "of a bridegroom who gloried in eccentricities. He requested the bride to accompany him into the garden a day or two after their wedding. He then threw a line over the roof of their cottage. Giving his wife one end of it he retreated to the other side, and exclaimed—

"Pull the line."

She pulled it, at his request, as far as she could. He cried—

"Pull it over."

"I can't," she replied.

"But pull with all your might," shouted the whimsical husband.

But in vain were all the efforts of the bride to pull over the line, so long as her husband held to the opposite end. But when he came round, and they both pulled at one end, it came over with great ease.

"There," as the line fell from the roof, "you see how hard and inefficient was our labor when we pulled in opposition to each other; but how easy and how pleasant it was when we both pulled together! It will be so with us, my dear, through life! If we oppose each other, it will be hard work; if we act together, it will be pleasant to live. Let us always pull together."

In this illustration, homely as it may be, there is sound philosophy. Husband and wife must mutually bear and concede if they wish to make home a retreat of joy and bliss. One alone cannot make home happy. There needs unison of both in action, sweetness of spirit, and great forbearance in both husband and wife, to secure the great end of happiness in the domestic circle.

VENTILATE YOUR CHILDREN'S ROOMS.—Most parents, before retiring to rest, make it a duty to visit the sleeping-rooms of their children. They do so in order to be satisfied that the lights are extinguished, and that no danger is threatening their little ones. But if they leave the room with closed windows and doors, they shut in as great an enemy as fire, although his ravages may not be so readily detected.—Poison is there, slow but deadly. Morning after morning do many little children wake weary, fretful and oppressed. 'What can it mean? what can it be?' the mother cries. In despair she has recourse to medicine. The constitution becomes enfeebled, and the child grows worse.—The cause is perhaps never traced to over crowded sleeping rooms without proper air; but it is nevertheless the right one An intelligent mother, having acquainted herself with the principles of ventilation will not retire to her own room for the night without having provided a sufficiency of air for her children, in the same manner that she provides and regulates their night covering, or any other requisite for refreshing slumber. Sometimes by judiciously lowering a window, and at another time by leaving a door wide open this end may be attained. In many houses the day and night nurseries communicate. When this is the case, the window of the further room should be left open, and the door between the rooms likewise open.—Even in severe weather young children can bear this arrangement, if they are not exposed to a direct draft.—*Family Herald.*

WHY SO MUCH BEAUTY IN POLAND.—"Because," says Bayard Taylor, "there, girls do not jump from infancy to young lady hood. They are not sent from the cradle to the parlor, to dress, to sit still and look pretty. No, they are treated as children should be. During childhood which extends through a period of several years, they are plainly and loosely dressed, and allowed to run, romp, and play in the open air. They are not loaded down, girded about, and oppressed every way with countless frills and superabundant flounces, so as to be admired for their clothing. Nor are rendered delicate or dyspeptic by continual stuffing with candies and sweet cakes, as are the majority of American children. Plain, simple food, free and various exercise, and an abundance of sunshine during the whole period of childhood, are the secrets of beauty in after life."

All in your I. What is it that putting its eyes out, leaves nothing but a nose? Noise.

Gen. Beauregard, it is rumored, will soon ask for pardon, that he may go to Europe and take a position in the French army.

Repairs to the damaged railroads in Virginia are rapidly progressing, and it will not be long before such communication will be restored throughout the State.