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POETICAL.



"AT THE LAST."

This beautiful poetry appeared, originally in the Independent, written upon the passage, "Man goeth to his work, and to his labor, until evening." The stream is calmest when it nears the tide, And flowers are sweetest at the eventide, And birds most musical at the close of day, And saints divinest when they pass away.

Morning is lovely, but a holier charm Lies folded close in Evening's robe of balm; And weary men must love her best, For morning calls to toil, but night to rest.

She comes from Heaven, and on her wings doth bear A holy fragrance like the breath of prayer; Footsteps of angels follow in her trace, To shut the weary eyes of day in peace.

All things are hushed before her, as she throws O'er earth and sky her mantle of repose; There is a calm, a beauty, and a power That morning knows not, in the evening hour.

"Until the evening" we must weep and toil, Plow life's stern furrow, dig the weedy soil, Tread with sad feet our rough and thorny way, And bear the heat and burden of the day.

O! when our sun is setting may we glide, Like Summer evening, down the evening tide, And leave us beauteous as we pass away, Sweet, starry twilight round our sleeping clay.

COMFORT.

Art thou a lone one waging The bitter war of life, While sore temptations raging Mote dreadful make the strife? Oh! turn thine hopeless one, Turn, turn thine eyes above, To one who'll not abandon, To one of boundless love.

There's one who watches o'er thee, While passing through the fire; He bore it all before thee, And sees thy penitence's desire. There's One, the Lord of glory, Who knows thy feeble frame; However sad thy story, Oh! trust thou in his name.

He'll give thee strength thou weak one, And take thee to his breast; He'll be thine all, thou lone one, He gives the weary rest; And soon life's struggles ending, Will take thee to his home; 'Then on his love depending, Fear not, what e'er may come.

MISCELLANY.

THE UNMEANT REBUKE.

Charles Nelson had reached his thirty-fifth year, and at that age he found himself going down hill. He had once been one of the happiest of mortals, and no blessing was wanted to complete the sum of his happiness. He had one of the best of wives, and his children were intelligent and comely. He was a carpenter by trade, and no man could command better wages, or be more sure of work. If any man attempted to build a house, Charles Nelson must "boss" the job, and for miles around people sought him to work for them. But a change had come over his life. A demon had met him on his way, and he had turned back with the evil spirit. A new and experienced carpenter had been sent for by those who could no longer depend upon Nelson, and he had settled in the village, and now took Nelson's place.

On a back street, where the great trees threw their green branches over the way, stood a small cottage, which had been the pride of the inmates. Before it, stretched a wide garden, but tall, rank grass grew up among the choking flowers, and the paling of the fence was broken in many places. The house itself had once been white, but it was now dingy and dark. Bright, green blinds had once adorned the windows, but now they had been taken off and sold. And the windows themselves bespoke poverty and neglect, for in many places the glass was gone, and shingles, rags and old hats had taken its place. A single look at the house and its accompaniments told the story. It was the drunkard's home.

Within, sat a woman yet in her early years of life and thought; she was still handsome to look upon, but the bloom had gone from her cheek, and the brightness had faded from her eyes. Poor Mary Nelson! Once she had been the happiest among the happy, but now none could be more miserable! Near her sat two children, both girls, and both beautiful in form and feature; but their garbs were all patched and worn, and their feet were shoeless. The eldest was thirteen years of age, her sister a few years younger. The mother was hearing her recite a grammar lesson, for she had resolved that her children should never grow up in ignorance. They could not attend the common school, for thoughtless children sneered at them, and made them the object of sport and ridicule; but in this respect they did not suffer, for their mother was well educated, and she devoted each time as she could spare to their instruction.

For more than two years, Mary Nelson had earned all the money that had been used in the house. People hired her to wash, iron and sew for them, and besides the mon-

ey paid, they gave her many articles of food and clothing. So she lived on, and the only joys that dwelt with her now, were teaching her children and praying to God. Supper time came, and Charles Nelson came reeling home. He had worked the day before at helping to move a building, and thus had earned money enough to find himself in rum for several days. As he stumbled into the house the children crouched close to their mother, and even she shrank away, for sometimes her husband was ugly when thus intoxicated.

Oh! how that man had changed within two years! Once there was not a finer looking man in the town. In frame he had been tall, stout, compact, and perfectly formed, while his face bore the very beau ideal of manly beauty. But all was changed now. His noble form was bent, his limbs shrunken and tremulous, and his face all bloated and disfigured. He was not the man who had once been the fond husband and doting father. The loving wife had prayed, and wept, and implored, but all to no purpose; the husband was bound to the drinking companions of the bar-room, and he would not break the bands.

That evening Mary Nelson ate no supper, for all the food in the house, there was not more than enough for her husband and children; but when her husband had gone, she went out and picked a few berries, and thus kept her vital energies alive. That night the poor woman prayed long and earnestly, and her little ones prayed with her.

On the following morning Charles Nelson sought the bar-room as soon as he arose, but he was sick and faint, and the liquor would not revive him, for it would not remain on his stomach. He drank very deeply the night before, and he felt miserable. At length, however, he managed to keep down a few glasses of hot sling, but the close atmosphere of the bar room seemed to stifle him, and he went out.

The poor man had sense enough to know that if he could sleep he should feel better, and he had just feeling enough to wish to keep away from home; so he wandered off to a wood not far from the village, and sunk down by a stone wall and was soon in a profound slumber. When he awoke, the sun was shining down hot upon him, and raising himself to a sitting posture, he gazed about him. He was just on the point of rising, when his motion was arrested by the sound of voices near at hand. He looked through a chink in the wall, and just upon the other side he saw his two children picking berries, while a little farther off were two more girls, the children of the carpenter who had lately moved into the village.

"Come, Katie," said one of these little girls to her companion, "let's go away from here, because if anybody should see us with those girls, they'd think we played with them."

"But the berries are so thick here," remonstrated the other.

"Never mind—we'll come out some time when these little ragged, drunkard's girls are not here."

So the two favored ones went away hand in hand, and Nelly and Nancy Nelson sat down upon the grass and cried.

"Don't cry, Nancy," said the eldest, throwing her arms around her sister's neck.

"But you are crying, Nelly."

"Oh, I can't help it," sobbed the stricken one.

"Why do they blame us?" murmured Nancy, gazing up into her sister's face. Oh, we are not to blame. We are good, and kind, and loving, and we never hurt anybody. Oh, I wish somebody would love us; I should be so happy."

"And we are loved, Nancy. Only think of our noble mother. Who could love us as she does?"

"I know—I know, Nelly; but that ain't all. Why don't papa love us as he used to do? Don't you remember when he used to kiss us and made us so happy? Oh, how I wish he could be so good once more. He is not—"

"—sh, sissy! don't say anything more. He may be good to us again; if he knew how we loved him, I know he would. And then I believe God is good, and surely he will help us sometime, for mother prays for him every day."

"Yes," answered Nancy, "I know she does; and God must be our Father sometime."

"He is our father now, sissy."

"I know it, and he must be all we shall have by-and-by, for don't you remember that mother told us that she might leave us one of these days? She said a cold dagger was upon her heart, and—"

"—sh! Don't, don't, Fanny, you'll—"

The words were choked up with sobs and tears, and the sisters wept long together. At length they arose and went away, for they saw more children coming.

As soon as the little ones were out of sight Charles Nelson started to his feet. His hands were clenched, his eyes were fixed upon a vacant spot with an eager gaze.

"My God!" he gasped, "what a villain I am! Look at me now! What a state I am in, to what I have sacrificed to bring myself to it! And they love me yet, and pray for me!"

He said no more, but for a few moments he stood with his hands still clenched, and his eyes fixed. At length his gaze was turned upward, and his clasped hands were raised above his head. A moment he remained so, and then his hands dropped by his side, and he started homeward.

When he reached his home he found his wife and children in tears, but he affected to notice it not. He drew a shilling from his pocket—it was his last—and handing it to his wife, he asked her if she would send and get him some porridge. The wife was startled by the tone in which this was spoken, for it sounded as in days gone by.

The porridge was made nice and nourishing, and Charles ate it all. He went to bed

early, and early on the following day he was up. He asked his wife if she had milk and flour enough to make him another bowl of porridge.

"Yes, Charles," she said, "we have not touched it."

"Then if you are willing, I should like some more."

The wife moved quickly about the work, and ere long the food was prepared. The husband ate it, and he felt better. He washed and dressed, and would have shaved had his hand been steady enough. He left his home and went at once to a man who had just commenced to frame a house.

"Mr. Manly," he said, addressing the man alluded to, "I have drunk the last drop of alcoholic beverage that ever passes my lips. Ask no questions, but believe me now while you see me true. Will you give me work?"

"Charles Nelson, are you in earnest?" asked Manly in surprise.

"So much so, sir, that were death to stand upon my right hand, and yonder bar-room upon my left, I would go with the grim messenger first."

"Then here is my house lying about us in rough timber and boards. I place it all in your hands, and shall look to you to finish it. While I can trust you, you can trust me. Come into my office, and you shall see the plan I have drawn."

We will not tell you how the stout man wept, nor how his noble friend shed tears to see him thus; but Charles Nelson took the plan, and having studied it for a whole hour, he went out where the men were at work getting the timber together, and Mr. Manly introduced him as their master. That day he worked but little, for he was not strong yet, but he arranged the timber, and gave directions for framing. At night he asked his employer if he dared trust him with a dollar.

"Why, you have earned three," returned Manly.

"And will you pay me three dollars a day?"

"If you are as faithful as you have been to-day, for you will save me money at that."

The poor man could not speak his thanks in words, but his looks spoke them for him, and Manly understood them. He received his three dollars, and on his way home he stopped and bought first a basket, some tea, sugar, and a piece of beef-steak, and he had just one dollar and seventy-five cents left. With this load he went home. It was some time before he could compose himself to enter the house, but at length he went in, and set the basket upon the table.

"Come, Mary," he said, "I have brought something home for supper. Here, Nelly, you take the pail and run over to Mr. Brown's and get two quarts of milk."

He handed the child a shilling as he spoke, and in a half-bewildered state she took the money and hurried away.

The wife started when she raised the cover of the basket, but she dared not speak. She moved about like one in a dream, and ever and anon she would cast a furtive glance at her husband. He had not been drinking, she knew it—and yet he had money enough to buy rum—with if he wanted it. What could it mean? Had her prayers been answered? Oh, how fervently she prayed then.

Soon Nelly returned with the milk, and Mrs. Nelson set the table out. After supper, Charles arose and said to his wife:

"I must go to Mr. Manly's office to help him to arrange some plans for his new house, but I will be at home early."

A pang shot through the wife's heart as she saw him turn away, but still she was far happier than she had been before for a long time. There was something in his manner that assured her, and gave her hope.

Just as the clock struck nine, the well-known foot fall was heard, strong and steady. The door opened, and Charles entered. His wife cast a quick, glance into his face, and she almost uttered a cry of joy when she saw how he was changed, for the better. He had been to the barber's and 'hatter's. Yet nothing was said upon the all important subject. Charles wished to retire early, and his wife went with him. In the morning the husband arose first and built the fire. Mary had not slept till long after midnight having been kept awake by the tumultuous emotions that had started up in her bosom, and she awoke not as early as usual. But she came out just as the teakettle and potatoes began to boil, and breakfast was soon ready.

After the meal was eaten, Charles arose, put on his hat, and then turning to his wife, he asked:

"What do you do to-day?"

"I must wash for Mrs. Bixby."

"Are you willing to obey me once more?"

"Oh, yes."

"Then work for me to-day. Send Nelly over to tell Mrs. Bixby that you are not well enough to wash, for you are not. Here is a dollar, and you must do with it as you please. Buy something that will keep you busy for yourself and children."

Mr. Nelson turned toward the door, and his hand was upon the latch. He hesitated, and turned back. He did not speak, but he opened his arms; and his wife sunk upon his bosom. He kissed her, and then having gently placed her in a seat, he left the house. When he went to work that morning, he felt well and very happy. Mr. Manly was by to cheer him, and this he did by talking and acting as though Charles had never been unfortunate at all.

It was Saturday evening and Nelson had been almost a week without rum. He had earned fifteen dollars, ten of which he had now in his pocket.

"Mary," he said after the supper-table had been cleared away, "here are ten dollars for you, and I want you to expend it in clothing for yourself and children. I have earned fifteen dollars during the last five days. I am to build Squire Manly's great house,

and he pays me three dollars a day. A good job isn't it?"

Mary looked up, and her lips moved, but she could not speak a word. She struggled a few moments, and then burst into tears. Her husband took her by the arm and drew her upon his lap, and then pressed her to his bosom.

"Mary," he whispered, while the tears ran down his own cheeks, "you are not deceived, I am Charles Nelson once more, and will be while I live. Not by any act of mine shall another cloud cross your brow." And then he told her of the words he had heard the previous Monday, while he lay behind the wall.

"Never before," he said, "did I fully realize how low I had fallen, but the scales dropped from my eyes then as though some one had struck them off with a sledge. My soul started up to a standing point from which all the temptations of earth cannot move it. Your prayers are answered, my wife."

Time passed on, and the cottage assumed its garb of pure white, and its whole windows and green blinds. The roses in the garden smiled, and in every way did the improvement work. Once again was Mary Nelson among the happiest of the happy, and her children chose their own associates now.

"Passing Away."

These words, which so truthfully describe human life, have often been made the theme of poetry and philosophy. "The fashion of this world passeth away," says an inspired writer, and all experience confirms the declaration. We do not at all realize this truth when we are young. The most of us do not believe it till middle age. Successive losses of friends and vicissitudes of fortune convince us of it, with a power which books do not possess. We stand in the midst of the great battle of life, and gazing upon the destruction which Time has worked in the ranks of friends and kindred, feel like one of Napoleon's favorite Marshals at the battle of Wagram, when looking back upon the mighty column of the dead which marked his advance upon the enemy's position, he paused irresolutely, as if uncertain whether to move onward or retire. But the hand of the Man of Destiny waved him on, and he advanced, as we must advance, perhaps almost alone, to victory or destruction.

It is too much the custom with man to associate the most melancholy thoughts with the idea of "Passing Away." The flowers fade but another Spring shall revive them. The river rushes on to the sea, but its tide continues full. Nature passes from death to life as regularly as from life to death. It cannot be that among all the glorious works of creation, the spirit of man shall be the only thing which knows no renewal; that while the rugged tree revives from the winter's desolation and clothes itself with a new garb of beauty, and the worm emerges from its shroud to become a beautiful inhabitant of the air, the master of the earth and image of the Deity, shall know no resurrection. The death of children in their youthful bloom and loveliness, is a kind of "passing away" which seems clothed with peculiar sadness. No philosophy can minister resignation to a bosom freshly bleeding from such a rupture. Yet, even apart from the assurance which Faith enjoys of a reunion hereafter, the bereaved may be consoled by the reflection that there is a "passing away" more melancholy than that of death.

It is the "passing away" of a spirit from its original sinlessness to the impurities which are acquired by a short contact with the world. There is this which should be remembered by those who love young children, that they must in any event "pass away," either to the goodness and bliss of Heaven, or to the stains and sorrows of earth. Living or dying, they cannot continue altogether as they are now, any more than the opening bud can remain pure, fresh and fragrant through the heat of summer.

The "passing away" of the body, which we loved and caressed, is a sad spectacle; but it must be sader still to look upon the gradual "passing away" of a young soul; to see the light of childish innocence fade from the eye, its ingenuousness from the countenance, its joyousness clouded, its simplicity gone, and the harmlessness of a dove exchanged for the serpent's wisdom. Great exertions and unceasing vigilance can alone preserve the young from the contagion of evil which is around them. We should not murmur then if these treasures, which we cannot preserve in safety, should be transferred to a region where moth and rust cannot corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal.

PURSUIT OF PLEASURE.—We smile at the ignorance of the savage who cuts down the tree in order to reach its fruits; but the fact is that a blunder of this description is made by every person who is over-eager and impatient in the pursuit of pleasure. To such the present moment is everything, and the future is nothing; he borrows, therefore, from the future at a most unscrupulous and ruinous interest; and the consequence is that he finds the tone of his feelings impaired, his self-respect diminished, his health of mind and body destroyed, and life reduced to its very dregs, at a time, when humanly speaking, the greatest portion of its comforts should be still before him.

The first instance on record of interference with the right of speech was, according to tradition, in the case of one Satan, who had been trying to persuade Mistress Eve to desert her husband and her God, and secede from Paradise. His plausible tongue was summarily stopped and since that day he has been able only to hiss his disapprobation of the arbitrary act, like the genuine original old Copperhead that he is. His modern disciples squirm and hiss in his wake as naturally as his own shadows.

The next best thing to governing yourself is, to be governed by your wife.

STANZAS.

Alone—upon the wide, wide world;
'Tis hard to dwell alone—
To each no look of human love,
To list no gentle tone,
But wander through life's busy crowd,
Lone as the corpse within its shroud.

Alone—'tis hard to sit and weep
In some untrodden shade,
O'er all the wrecks of life and joy
A few bright years have made;
To trace links of that bright chain
Which time will ne'er unite again.

Alone—'tis agony for one
Of spirit proud and strong,
To feel life's pulses ebbing fast
Before the world's cold wrong;
And sternly bids each pang of fate
That leaves the heart so desolate.

Hope.

A little girl was bending sorrowfully over a bed of flowers. Daily, through the summer, she had watched their expanding buds, and, nightly, through the autumn, protected them from the increasing cold. But a November frost settled upon them, and their bright petals and green leaves dropped to wave no more in the passing breeze. "Oh! cruel frost," she said, "dead! dead! dead!"

Then a voice as within, said to her—"spring will come and your flowers will bloom again." Hope sprang up from the bordering of sorrow, and through all the long, cold winter, pictured the coming spring, radiant with flowers.

A mother wept beside the remains of her departed child. She mourned a flower far dearer to her than all the flowers of the field. Despair was well nigh closing over her its dark waters, when upon her soul in angel tones, softly fell these words, "the dead shall live again!" Hope rose Heavenward, and ever after brightened all the pathway of her life.

Thus it is ever with human life. Hope lends enchantment to every scene. One has said, that we suffer more from future and apprehended evils, than from those which are present; but it is not likewise true that the greater part of our enjoyment arises from what is in the future, from what we hope for in that state of existence, where we shall be ere long, what is to be may appear no brighter than what is. But here, if the present appear full of storms, behind every storm Hope stands a rainbow. The sailor beholds the steady twinkle of the northern star beyond the wildest tempest, and eagerly watches for the falling of its tranquil beams between the rifted and retiring clouds. The Pilgrim to the Holy Shrine, sees Oriental skies from amid Alpine snows, and plants his staff with firm hold on the icy verge of the precipice.

To all hope tells of brighter days to come. To the houseless wanderer, it speaks of home and friends; to the unhappy, of happiness; to the christian, of the glories of eternity. It is a sympathizing friend, bringing consolation to the broken-hearted; a ray from a world of light streaming through the "darkened casement" of the blind; Æolian music, to those upon whose ears "earthly sound ne'er fell."

Oh, hope! we hail thee morning star of every joy, glorious harbinger of eternal life.

Recreation.

Men need, and will have some kind of recreation. The body was not made for constant toil—the mind was not formed for constant study. God has not ordained that life shall be spent in one continued series of efforts to secure the things of this world. He has fitted man for enjoyment as well as labor, and made him susceptible of pleasurable emotions. He did not design him for a slave, to dig the earth a while and die—to toil on until the hour of death comes to conduct a shattered system back to dust and ashes. On the other hand he has given him a physical system, which, like the harp, may be touched at any time. He has made the eye, the ear, the mouth, all inlets of pleasure. He has so constituted us that we may be wound up to the highest degree of pleasure, and receive through the medium of the senses a flood of happiness. Besides this, he has arranged the outward world in such a manner as to give man the highest enjoyment. Had God designed man for ceaseless labor, he would have darkened the eye, deafened the ear, and blunted all the nicer sensibilities; and made the hand as hard as iron, and the foot as insensible as brass. But, formed for enjoyment, we find men seeking it. After the labor of the day is over, and the toil of life is done, they return to every quarter to find some source of recreation some avenue of life which is fragrant with flowers, and which echoes with sweet music.

HEAR THE WORDS OF A SOLDIER.—Gen. Rosecrans, who probably understands the present condition of affairs, as well as any man in the army, says:

"Whenever they (the rebels) have the power, they drive before them into their ranks the Southern people, as they would also drive us. Trust them not. Were they able, they would invade and destroy us without mercy. Absolutely assured of these things, I am amazed that any one could think of Peace on any terms. He who entertains the sentiment is fit only to be a slave; he who utters it at this time is, moreover, a traitor to his country, who deserves the scorn and contempt of all honorable men."

Those who gabble about compromise will do well to peruse these lines with care and attention. They contain the assertions of a hero who has been at the front since the war began and has periled everything in behalf of his country.

The angels of our God die early. Precious gems are not for a lasting fame; they but perfume the temple and expire.

The next best thing to governing yourself is, to be governed by your wife.

How He Did It.—A committee called on a flourishing tradesman to solicit a subscription for the support of a clergyman.

"Can't do it, gentlemen," was the reply; "I gave five dollars to the Rev. Mr. P.—, yesterday."

After much persuasion, however, they succeeded in getting him to put down a like amount for the Rev. Mr. D.— and departed with thanks; but a minute afterward he was overheard giving the following directions to an assistant:—

"Draw off five dollars' worth of liquor and fill with water. Take it out of the row of casks next to those that you watered yesterday for the Rev. Mr. P."

HONOR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER.—One of the stern laws enacted by the Puritans in 1674 provides that:

"If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son of sufficient years of understanding, viz: sixteen years of age, which will not obey the will of his father or the voice of his mother, or they being his natural parents, lay hold on him and bring him before the magistrates assembled in court, and testify unto them that their son is stubborn and rebellious, and will not obey their voice and chastisement, but lives in sundry and notorious crimes, such a son shall be put to death."

CURIOUS FACTS.—In Australia it is summer in January, and winter in July. It is noon there when it is midnight in Europe. The longest day is in December. The heat comes from the South, and it is hottest on the mountain tops. The swans are black, the eagles are white, the bees do not sting, and the birds do not sing. The cherries have no stones, the trees give no shadow, for their leaves turn edgewise to the sun; and some of the quadrupeds have a beak and lay eggs.

Some wretch of a joker perpetrates this outrage: "If a woman were to change her sex, what religion would she be? A he then?" To which a lady, with more wit and point, replies: "And to convert an artless woman into a heartless one, there only wants a 'he'!"

A minister having remarked in the presence of Dr. South, that the "Lord has no need of man's learning," that witty divine replied, "still less has he need of man's ignorance."

A little boy, some six years old, was using his slate and pencil on the Sabbath, when his father who was a clergyman, entered and said:

"My son, I prefer that you should not use your slate on the Lord's day."

"I'm making meeting houses, father," was the prompt and probably premeditated reply.

FORBEARANCE.—To be able to bear a provocation is indicative of great wisdom; and to forgive it, of a great mind. Has any one injured you? Bear it with patience. Hasty words rankle the wound, soft language dresses it, forgiveness cures it, forgetfulness takes away sores.

Quotations from camp stocks, taken from the journal of a soldier lately on duty in Louisiana:—"Flee lively; lie steady—the old stock reduced to small compass, and mostly in the hands of government employees; lizards firm; scorpions advancing."

LANGUAGE.—Language is the amber in which a thousand precious and subtle thoughts have been safely imbedded and preserved. It has arrested ten thousand lightning flashes of genius which, unless fixed and arrested, might have been as bright, but would have also been as quickly passing and perishing as the lightning.

The twilight steals over the earth like a mournful thought over the soul. And in our sorrowful moods as amid the shadows of the evening, we see stars in Heaven that were before invisible.

Great as you may be, the cradle was your world once, and over it the only horizon you beheld beneath the heaven of a mother's eye, as you rocked in that little bark of love.

The man who mourns because he does not have the seeming ability to take part in that which others enjoy, is but turning the elements of his own character into discord.

Though reading and conversation may furnish us with many ideas of men and things, yet it is our own meditation that must form our judgment.

"Paddy," said a wag, "your ears are too long." "Divil a bit of trouble does that give me, but yours are too short altogether for the braying baste that yees be."

One of the saddest descriptions one can give of a household is that the master of it "generally goes out of an evening."

The prayer of deeds is oftener answered than the prayer of words.

A man so intoxicated that he can't hold up his head is a tip-top fellow.

Get into no quarrel or fight with a blackguard; like chaff he isn't worth thrashing.

The teeth are friends that we always get with tears and generally lose with a groan.

"I'm getting fat," as the loafer said when he was stealing hard.

Fanaticism, the daughter of ignorance; and mother of infidelity.

Hypocrisy is the homage which vice renders to virtue.