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Select Poetry.

THE WAY OF THE WORLD.

There are beautiful songs that we never sing,
And names that are never spoken;
There are treasures guarded with jealous care,
And kept as a sacred token,
There are faded flowers, and letters dim
With the tears that have rained above them,
For the fickle words and the faithless hearts
That taught us how to love them.

There are sighs that come in our joyous hours
To chasten our dreams of gladness,
And tears that spring to our aching eyes,
In hours of thoughtful sadness.
For the blithest birds that sing in spring
Will flit in the waning summer,
And lips that we kissed in fondest love
Will smile on the first new comer.

Over the breast where lilies rest
In white hands stilled forever,
The roses of June will nod and blow,
Unheeding the hearts that sever,
And lips that quiver in silent grief,
All words of hope refusing,
Will lightly turn to the fleeting joys
That perish with the using.

Summer blossoms and winter snows,
Love and its sweet elysian;
Hope, like a siren dim and fair,
Quickening our fainting vision;
Drooping spirit and falling pulse,
Where untold memories hover,
Eyelids touched with the seal of death,
And the fitful dream is over.

THE MYSTERIOUS ROBBERY.

I HAVE generally but little sympathy for those over-cautious mortals who bury their portable wealth in the earth for safe keeping, and on proceeding to dig for it for use find that it has been carried away by some unknown agency. Mother earth is a kind, and faithful and trustworthy mother enough so long as we burden her only with such responsibilities as she is able to bear with credit to herself and satisfaction to her children; but as a depository of gold and greenbacks, bullion or bonds, she is very apt to prove a failure. Her vaults are damp; her bolts and bars are weak, and her banking accommodations are generally inconvenient and insecure; inasmuch that we may consider ourselves indeed fortunate if we receive again anything outside of the agricultural line that we entrust to her keeping. Even when moisture and mould fail to corrupt, or thieves to break through and steal, she is so constantly changing the external aspect of things that one cannot always be certain where his coin or collaterals are hidden; and as she keeps no books, nor gives certificates of deposit, we cannot come back upon the old girl for damages, even though we were able to prove that she had the money. I have known so many cases of loss resulting from over-confidence in her fiduciary faithfulness, that I am convinced that no one but a born idiot will commit his worldly treasure to her care while there is a bank of even doubtful reputation, or an iron safe whose lock is capable of baffling the ingenuity of a four-year-old boy, within a hundred miles of him. Still there are idiots in this world, and I know of no law by virtue of which they can be brought to a state of financial sanity.

I make an exception in the case of Dick Stapleton, there are exceptions, you know, to all general rules. Dick was not a born idiot; he was a good, and in the main, as sensible a fellow as I ever saw; but he had undoubtedly become temporarily insane through an unhappy concatenation of circumstances. In the first place, he was in love; and that—I say it *ex cathedra* and emphatically—is enough to unsettle the best of us. Second-

ly, the stupendous failure of Adams & Co. had just taken place, involving in financial disaster a large majority of the depositors in and forwarders by that great California express and banking-house, and causing general doubts concerning the soundness of rival institutions, large and small. Thirdly, Dick had just disposed of his interest in the Muletown Deep Gravel Diggings for the comfortable sum of \$30,000, dust in hand; and as it was more money than he had ever before possessed, it was calculated to shake his nerves somewhat when he looked at the glittering heap, and fondly reflected that it was all his own.

What should he do with it?—that was the question. He had already reflected upon its future employment. He was going to invest it in a wing-dam on the Yuba, for the purpose of mining a portion of the river-bed, a popular and occasionally profitable sort of enterprise at that date; but first of all he meant to bring matters to a crisis with Jessie Fairbanks, the belle of Muletown, who had plagued him now with a six months' heartache; who, he believed, was not altogether indifferent to his peculiar style of masculine attractions, and without whom he fancied he could not enjoy life a great while longer. He had determined, therefore, laying aside all other business and excuses whatsoever, as the lawyers phrase it, to attend strictly to his little suit in the high court of Cupid, until it should be ended and a true verdict rendered, favorable or otherwise.

I presume he was right enough in this course. Perhaps under similar circumstances I should not have done exactly as he did; but he was in many respects a peculiar fellow; whatever he did he did with all his might; and while he had been devoting himself heart, brain and muscle to the excavation of the Muletown Deep Gravel Diggings, other fellows were forestalling him in the regard of his pretty little blue-eyed charmer. I have no doubt, now that I reflect upon it, that the best thing he could do was to pursue the course he did; for, between you and me, gallant young masculine reader, there isn't a word of truth in the old saying "If you would woo a maid, you must seldom be in her sight," etc. The venerable saw, "Out of sight, out of mind," is vastly more applicable in a majority of cases. Yes, undoubtedly Richard was right.

But what to do with his dust, that was the perplexing question. Adams & Co. had failed. Wells, Fargo & Co. might also fail; and Styles, who had been badly shaken by the late financial catastrophe, was not for a moment to be thought of. It would not do to keep the treasure in his cabin—that would be a temptation sufficient to entice passably honest men to crime. He would bury it.

So in the night, at the hour "when church-yards yawn," he dug a hole beside a very ordinary looking manzanita bush, placed his bags of dust therein, carefully covered them up, and returned home satisfied that no one had witnessed the act, and that the hiding-place of his wealth would remain undiscovered until he chose to exhume it himself.

Devoting himself not with his accustomed energy and single-heartedness of purpose to the business of wooing, he prospered in his suit to the utmost desire of his heart. That young lady, with little beyond her proud birthright of beauty, could resist a lover so devoted and withal so pleasing, and with thirty thousand dollars buried among the roots of a manzanita bush? Jennie Fairbanks could not; so in a reasonable length of time she consented to name the happy day, received the congratulations of her family and friends with becoming modesty, and thenceforth, as was right, assumed a haughtier carriage and higher style when promenading the streets of Muletown.

Pretty Jessie had insisted upon setting the wedding-day six months later than the date of her engagement. I could never altogether understand why young women almost invariably prefer long engagements—never, by any means, if they can help it, falling below six months. Courtship is a delightful thing, I know; but when the parties truly love each other, matrimony, in spite of its disenchantments and sober realities, is more delightful still. The

majority of men, I believe, when they have fully resolved to wed, are eager to do it at once, and only submit to delay to please their charmers. Dick Stapleton was anxious to marry immediately; but Jessie, who had at first stipulated for a year's delay, would not abate a jot of six months, and he was compelled to acquiesce in her decision. It would not do, he thought, to idle away all that time in amorous billing and cooing; so he resolved to resurrect his buried nuggets and proceed with his project of damming the Yuba.

Upon proceeding to the place of its sepulture, what was his consternation and despair on finding that some one had been there in his absence, and had stolen his treasure away!

Yes, it was gone, and doubtless beyond the possibility of recovery. The robber had left no trace behind him.—There was nothing even to indicate the time when it had been removed—whether it had been done immediately after its burial, or at a later period, could only be conjectured. It was a pretty heavy blow for Dick. It "cleaned him out," as the miners phrase it, "to the bed rock," and he engaged to be married to the prettiest girl in Muletown. It was enough to drive some men to suicide or hard drinking. But Dick, as I have already intimated, was no idiot. He felt badly enough about his loss; but he had the courage and the sense to keep it quiet and to send for me—which latter step he ought to have taken before he committed his treasure to the earth, as I flatter myself that I should have dissuaded him from doing so. I was an old friend and counselor of his, with a pretty intimate knowledge of men and matters in and about Muletown, and it was quite natural that he should seek my advice and assistance at such a time as this.

He told me his story, which possessed in a very high degree the merits of brevity and pith, and asked me what I would advise him to do.

"Have you reason to suspect any one?" I inquired.

"Not a soul," he replied. "Of course, my suspicions would naturally turn first to my nearest neighbors. There's on one side of me Mason and Sloper, steady-going old fellows, who have been working for a long time in a moderately paying claim, and who would have cleared out to the States if they had lifted such a plant as that; and on the other side there's Charley Heath and Jim Brierley, pretty fast specimens of the honest miner, given to running late and occasionally tussling with the tiger—they, or one of them, would have been more likely to see me hiding the stuff than any one else; but I have never heard dishonesty laid to their charge, and I have neither noticed nor heard of anything in their conduct of late which would indicate that they were unusually flush. So far as my observation goes, they work and spent about as much as usual, and you know their claim is a very steady paying one. I am convinced that none of my neighbors have got the dust, and I can think of no one else who would be likely to have discovered it."

"Nor I, just now; but by keeping our eyes and ears open we may get a clue.—Have you any means of identifying the dust?"

"None whatever, unless the thieves should keep it in the same bags in which they found it. It is ordinary dust, such as is dug in this vicinity, and I did not notice among it any specimens which I, or any one else who saw them, would be able to identify. But three of the bags which contained it were marked with my initials, and I would know them if I should ever happen to see them again."

"Well, I don't know as there is anything to be gained by making your loss public just at present. You and I will keep a sharp lookout for developments, taking a trusty friend or two, but no more, into our confidence, should we deem it necessary. We will follow the quest singly, each in the method that seems best to him, and we can meet every day or two to compare notes and agree upon such measures as may seem advisable. It is a rather hopeless-looking case at present, but we may strike the right trail, after all."

"Yes, it's worth trying for, and I think your plan is a good one. I'll get Steve Hopkins and Jack Henderson to

assist us, and day after to-morrow we'll meet here and compare notes, unless something sooner should turn up; in which case we can notify each other."

So we separated. For days we lounged carelessly about town, watching and listening; but we got no information whatever. The thief, whoever he was, evidently possessed an unusual share of discretion. We then changed our tactics, and cautiously pushed inquiries in every conceivable direction, but without result. At the end of a month we had made no progress whatever. It may be wondered that we did not secure the services of a sharp detective; but the truth is there was not one of that class in the State whom we would have been willing to trust; nor is it likely that the most consummate skill would have availed in this case. Again we changed our tactics, advertising the robbery extensively, and offering a large reward for the recovery of the missing dust.—The reward was not claimed; and Dick Stapleton, who had now well nigh exhausted his means in the fruitless search, accepted his loss as absolute, and prepared to retrieve it by diligent effort. Of course he was compelled to forego his project of damming the Yuba; but he soon possessed himself of a good mining claim, and went earnestly to work with fair success.

When Jessie Fairbanks was informed of Dick's loss she was undeniably chagrined and disappointed. Her affianced husband, instead of possessing a comfortable share of worldly wealth, was a poor man, dependent upon his own muscle and energy for a livelihood. But she loved him none the less, and declared that she would marry him if she had to support him by the labor of her own hands. Her parents, however, did not look upon the matter in that disinterested light. They were desirous that their daughter should marry well; and while they made no objection to Dick so long as they supposed him to be moderately rich, they would have much preferred that Jessie should have selected, as she might indeed have done, a wealthier suitor.

Now that Dick was poor, they resolved to break off the match; and Mrs. Fairbanks, who was a bold as well as a shrewd woman, took the first opportunity that presented itself to hint that, in his altered circumstances, the family would not consider an alliance with him desirable, and to suggest to him that as an honorable man it was duty to release Jessie from an engagement which could no longer be considered suitable to her. Dick, to whom this assault was not altogether unexpected, replied that he was perfectly willing to leave the whole question to the young lady herself, and to abide by her decision. Jessie remained steadfast to her plighted troth.

A rather exciting family scene hereupon ensued; and the end of it was that Dick was forbidden the house, while Jessie was subjected to severe treatment, and compelled to receive the attentions of a wealthy suitor, whom her parents encouraged to resume his wooing. The persecuted lovers, however, found means to meet and communicate pretty often, and while they deemed it best to postpone their marriage for a time, in the hope that by another turn of the wheel of fortune the course of their true love might be diverted into a smoother channel, they resolved at all hazards to defy the parental tyranny, and, if necessary, to openly and decidedly rebel against it.

It is rather uphill work in matters of this kind to combat an experienced matron, and so our lovers found it.—Having set out to do Dick Stapleton a serious wrong, for look at it in what way you will, it amounted to just that—she began to hate him quite cordially, and she invented and practised 'no end of devices to embitter his existence. I suppose there is no torture equal to that which a spiteful woman can wreak upon a sensitive man, who is restrained from retaliating by the natural respect he has for the sex of his mother, and so Dick was fain to acknowledge after a limited experience.

But Jessie's faithfulness compensated him for all the mental agony he was made to endure, and his daily toil was cheered by the assurance that she was wholly his, and ready at his bidding to leave father and mother to share his fortune, good or bad. And so he quick-

ened his endeavors to prepare a home in which he could receive her when domestic tyranny should render her father's roof a no longer tolerable shelter for her.

About this time an event occurred of which neither Dick nor I thought much at the moment, but which proved, to him, at least, of the utmost importance. A new gambling saloon was opened in Muletown, ostensibly by a stranger from another town, who selected as his assistant a good-natured good-for-nothing sort of fellow who had vegetated in the town for about two years, gaining a livelihood by dealing faro and other short-card games, in which he was an adept. This fellow, whose name was Joe Budd, at first took a rather subordinate position, but it soon became evident to close observers that he exercised paramount authority in the establishment, and that the nominal proprietor deferred to him in all things. The business, though considerably fallen off from former years, was still pretty lively. The new house opened with large banks and other liberal attractions, acquired a reputation for "square games," and prospered; and in a few weeks Joe Budd arrayed himself in fine attire and expensive jewelry, and purchased a fancy saddle-horse, upon which he rode out every fine afternoon, while his supposed principal confined himself strictly to business, rarely allowing himself any relaxation. There was some mystery in their relationship which passed the comprehension of everybody; but they both were very reticent and baffled all attempts to fathom it. As I had afterwards to reflect, it was strange that neither Dick nor myself, being aware of these circumstances, had had our suspicions aroused that Joe Budd was the robber who had possessed himself of Dick's gold dust.

One afternoon, while Budd was taking his usual ride, his horse, frightened at some object which he saw in the road, started violently, and threw his rider, whose foot being caught in the stirrup, was dragged over the ground by the horse, which immediately started off at full speed. The accident occurred near Dick's cabin, and Dick, who had remained at home that afternoon because of a severe headache, occasioned by the heat of the sun, was sitting at his door, enjoying the cool refreshing northwest breeze. As the horse approached him he sprang forward and seized him, with some difficulty checked his career, and extricated Budd from his perilous situation. The gambler was insensible from the injuries he had received; and when Dick, having called assistance and caused him to be carried into his cabin, examined him, he found that he had an arm and leg broken, and was otherwise badly injured. As speedily as possible a surgeon was called, who pronounced the injuries probably fatal, but proceeded, nevertheless, to do all in his power for the sufferer. The broken limbs were set, the bruises dressed, and restoratives administered which at length recalled the sufferer to his senses. On opening his eyes and looking around him, he asked:

"Where am I? Whose house is this?"

"You are in my cabin," replied Dick. "Be quiet, now, and don't excite yourself."

"O, I can't stay here!" shouted Budd. "Take me away—take me home—take me anywhere away from here!"

"You can't be removed now," Dick answered. "You are very badly hurt. In the morning, if you wish it, and the doctor will permit it, you may be removed."

"Who brought me here?"

"I did," said Dick. "I stopped your horse in front of my door, and you were too much injured to be carried any further."

"Then I owe my life to you?"

"If you live, I shall have the satisfaction of knowing that your life was saved through my means."

"I will live! I deserve to die, but I can't afford to do it now. Carry me home—I cannot, will not, dare not stay here any longer!"

He would listen to no persuasion, but swore a fearful oath that if his wish was not complied with he would crawl home through the streets. On consultation with the doctor, it was thought best to gratify the wounded man's whim. It