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Select Poetry.

THE DIGNITY OF LABOR.

Those who toll to earn their bread
Need not blush to own their lot;
They in noble footsteps tread,
And a claim to live have got.
Toll is not the wage of sin,
For in Eden work was given;
Man was made to work and win
Spoils of earth and bliss of heaven.

He who at the anvil stands,
Striking while the iron glows,
Though he works with horny hands,
Nobly strikes the ringing blows,
At the loom and in the field,
In the shop, and on the soil,
Where men wisely power do wield,
There is dignity in toil.

He who works with throbbing brain,
Thinks to teach men how to live;
Writes that others good may gain,
Speaks to truth fresh zest to give.
He can claim the manly right
With the sons of toll to stand;
He asserts his mental might,
Helps to bless his native land.

He who lives a life of ease,
Idly wasting all his days—
Aiming only self to please,
Filled with pride and courting praise—
Call him not a noble man,
Such existence is a shame;
And when ends his life's bank span,
Soon will die his empty name.

Labor brings reward and rest,
Educate the latent powers;
And he serves his age the best
Who employs his golden hours;
Working not beyond his might,
Tolling not against his will,
And beneath his master's sight
Glad his mission to fulfill.

All things labor for our good,
He who made us never sleeps;
He who tills the ground for food,
For his pains a harvest reaps.
None who work need feel ashamed,
As they do what good they can;
'Tis an honor to be named,
As we toll, "A workingman."

PLAYING THE FOOL.

ONE of the most singular men I ever met was a private soldier in the Twelfth New York Infantry, which regiment was brigaded with the Second and Third Michigan and Second Massachusetts, during the first year or so of the war. Seen at one time you would say that Dan Harrison had blue eyes. Five minutes after you would make an oath they were black, as indeed they were.

Dan also had wonderful control over his voice. He could mimic the voice of any man in the brigade. He could bark like a dog, bray like a mule, whistle like a bird, and was the wonder of the camp. On one occasion our wagon master was asleep in the wagon, with six mules roped near by. Dan crept behind a bale of hay and brayed loud and long. The wagon master awoke and jumped down and pounded the nearest mule, growling out as he re-entered the wagon:

"There, blast ye, I guess you will feel humble for a while."

In about two minutes Dan repeated the words. The voice was so exactly the same that a dozen of us, who were hiding near by thought it was the wagon master again. The latter individual stuck his head out, looked around in great surprise and then said:

"Well, it took that echo a long time to get around this wagon."

There were yet other reasons why Dan was considered greater than a managerie. He could drop one shoulder three

inches lower than the other. He could walk as if one leg was shorter than the other. He could work his ears like a horse. He could cramp his hands until they seemed to have been drawn all out of shape by rheumatism. He could make it appear that he had a squint in either eye, and could raise his eye-brows clear up into his hair. He was a farmer's son, genial, good hearted and brave, and he was never tired of doing something to amuse us.

Soon after Heintzelman made his reconnaissance from in front of Alexandria down to Centerville, he sent for Dan Harrison, and the result of the interview was that Dan was engaged by the government as a spy. His curious physical structure and his natural coolness and bravery fitted him for such dangerous work, and I may say that for three years he was accounted the most successful and daring spy in the service.

One lonely rainy night in the beginning of '62, Dan Harrison set out to work his way into the Confederate intrenchments around Centerville, charged to see everything that might be turned to value to the Federal cause. Dan had no particular make up except the dress of a Virginia farmer, and no story to tell except that he was (when he got there) within the Confederate lines to secure some sort of compensation for three horses seized by a party of Confederate raiders. Circumstances might alter his plans and his story, but if so he would have something else at his tongue's end.

The spy left the Federal outpost and headed directly for Centerville. He met with no adventure that night, lay in the woods all next day, or advanced under cover of them, and at dark again took the highway. He knew that danger lurked in every fence corner for one who skulked along, and he therefore put a bold face on the matter and walked briskly forward, passing quite a number of negroes and several white men without being disturbed. Just then many slaves were trying to reach the Federal lines and the fact got Dan into trouble.

About nine o'clock, as Dan stepped briskly along, a patrol consisting of three men sprang from behind the bushes and confronted him, supposing at first to be a negro, when, finding that he was a white man, the leader of the patrol began asking him questions and insisting on prompt replies. For some reason Dan thought best to change his plans. Dropping his left shoulder and humping up his back, he replied to their questions in a whining, drawing voice, in imitation of a half wit.

"Laid for a nigger and captured a fool!" growled the leader, as Dan began to ask silly questions and dance around.

"Well, I suppose we'd better give him a kick and let him go," remarked the leader. "He don't know enough to be a soldier, and we'd better hurry him along."

"I don't know about that," remarked the third man, who had all along been silent. "I don't know of any fool in the neighborhood, and we shouldn't let this chap go until we have had a closer look at him. Here, you infernal idiot, do you know any one around here?"

"Missus Brown—Missus Brown!" replied Dan, using the first name that came in his way.

"Well, it's only a step down thar," said the man, "and if she knows him, it's all right."

So there was a Mrs. Brown close at hand. No one could have been more surprised than the spy, and he feared that he had gotten himself in a bad scrape. There was no chance for him but to go along, and go he did, amping the men for a quarter of a mile with strange antics and silly talk. Mrs. Brown was a widow, living in a comfortable though small farm house, and Dan was marched straight to her door. She was a woman about fifty years of age, with a kind face and motherly ways.

"Widder Brown," began the leader of the party, as he put his hand on the spy, "we captured this fool down the road thar. He acts and talks like a fool, but we want to be sure he isn't tricking us. He says he knows you. If you know him that's all we want."

"Missus Brown know Tommy," chuckled Dan, as he boldly entered the

house and sat down and took the family cat on his lap.

The widow's vanity was a little bit flattered, in the first place, that she had been called upon to identify a stranger, and in the next place she would lose her prestige if she failed to do so.

"Mebbe I know him, mebbe I do," she replied, as she looked around for her spectacles. "Somehow or other I allus know all the fools going, and most of 'em comes around here for vittels. Now, then I'll look at him."

She put on her spectacles, took the candle in her hand, and Dan was scrutinized for a long minute. He looked up in her face and grinned and chuckled, though his heart was in his mouth.

"She don't know him," whispered one of the men.

The widow overheard it, and now she was on her mettle. Walking slowly across the room to put down the candle and her spectacles, she turned and said:

"Yes, he's a fool, and you are bigger fools for stopping!"

"Then you know him?" asked the leader.

"I raythur think so! His name is Tommy, and he lives somewhere around Fairfax. He's been here mor'n a dozen times."

"Didn't propose matrimony, did he?" asked one of the men.

"No!" she snapped, "but if he had he'd have stood a better chance than white men who hide in fence corners to capture niggers!"

So saying she slammed the door on them and went away. She sat down at the table and looked across at Dan, and presently mused:

"Yes, he's a fool, and those men had no business hauling him around no matter whether I know him or not. I guess he's hungry and tired, and I'll give him something to eat and send him to bed."

Dan "played the fool" to perfection, and when he had eaten, the woman had a real motherly interest in him. She guided him up stairs, showed him the bed he was to occupy, and then went down with the light saying:

"Fools can see in the dark as well as by daylight, and you might set the house on fire."

The spy was out of the scrape in one sense, and yet he was in trouble. He wanted to reach and pass the Confederate out-posts before daybreak. If he remained in the house over night he might encounter people next day who might want him more fully identified. But how was he to leave?

The chamber was a two-story affair, all in one room, and a window at either end. One of these would let the spy out. He crept across the floor and tried the sash of one. It was old and shaky, and yet he worked at it for a long ten minutes, and gave up in despair. The sashes were not nailed, but so warped that to get them up or down would make noise enough to arouse everybody in the house. The sash in the other window could be raised, but Dan's fingers had scarcely touched it when two or three dogs, which seemed to be kennelized directly below, commenced a furious barking. Escape by that way was cut off.

After a moment's thought Dan decided to wait until the house grew quiet, and then descend the stairs and go out by the front door. He might have to wait for an hour or more, and he therefore threw himself on the bed. He had scarcely got settled when he heard a commotion down stairs and the heavy tread of a man. Creeping out of bed and putting his ear to the floor, he soon made out that the woman's son had returned home after a considerable absence within the Confederate lines.

Dan listened for a long time, catching words enough to keep the run of the conversation, and when he heard them both moving across the floor he slipped into bed again. It was well he did so. The stair door opened, a light appeared, and as mother and son ascended, she said:

"Of course he's a fool! Do you think I've got so old that I can't tell an idiot when I see him?"

"Well, these are suspicious times," muttered the son in reply, and both advanced to the bed.

Dan seemed to be fast asleep. One

hand, all cramped up, was on the quilt in plain sight, and he had his face screwed up until the lonesome look ought to have melted a heart of stone.

"There! don't he look like a fool?" whispered the mother.

"He may be one, but it won't do any harm to let the patrol take him into our outposts," answered the son, and both descended the stairs.

Dan must get out of that. Not by way of the window, but down stairs and out of the front door. The patrol could not be far off; he had no time to spare. Hastily resuming his garments, he softly descended the stair. While waiting at the door he heard the son go out, and after two or three minutes he softly opened the door.

No one was in the room. Tiptoeing across it, he opened the front door and stepped out, but only to stand face to face with the son, a young man of about 25 and of good muscular development. For what seemed to be a long minute they looked into each other's face. Then the Confederate said:

"Throw up your hands, mister Yank—the game is up!"

"I just come to bid you good night," coolly answered Dan, and he made a rush.

The Confederate did not follow, because he realized that Dan was running directly for the approaching patrol. He was under full headway when he met them, or saw that he was going to run into them, and swerved aside.

"Shoot the Yankee! kill him! kill him!" shouted the Confederate at the house, and the patrol opened fire in response.

Dan was not over 30 feet away, and the gloom of the night saved him from being riddled. One bullet struck him in the left arm, just below the elbow, inflicting a painful wound, but the others went wild and he soon distanced pursuit. Dan did not get into Centerville that time.

The Fate of the Apostles.

ALL THE Apostles were assaulted by the enemies of their Master. They were called to seal their doctrines with their blood, and nobly did they bear the trial. Schumacher says:

"St. Matthew suffered martyrdom by being slain with a sword at a distant city of Ethiopia.

St. Mark expired at Alexandria, after having been cruelly dragged through the streets of that city.

St. Luke was hanged upon an olive tree in the classic land of Greece.

St. John was put in a cauldron of boiling oil, but escaped death in a miraculous manner, and was afterward banished to Patmos.

St. Peter was crucified at Rome with his head downwards.

St. James, the Greater, was beheaded at Jerusalem.

St. James, the Less, was thrown from a lofty pinnacle of the Temple, and then beaten to death with a fuller's club.

St. Bartholomew was flayed alive.

St. Andrew was bound to a cross whence he preached to his persecutors until he died.

St. Thomas was run through the body with a lance at Coromandel, in the East Indies.

St. Jude was shot to death with arrows.

St. Matthias was first stoned and then beheaded.

St. Barnabas, of the Gentiles, was stoned to death by the Jews, at Salonica.

St. Paul, after various tortures and persecutions was at length beheaded at Rome by the Emperor Nero."

Such was the fate of the Apostles, according to traditional statements; and though we cannot authenticate them all, we at least know that the hatred of the world to these men and their teachings was sufficient to render the accounts not very improbable.

Honor Your Business.

IT IS a good sign when a man is proud of his calling. Yet nothing is more common than to hear men finding fault constantly with their particular business, and deeming themselves unfortunate because fastened to it by the necessity of gaining a livelihood. In this spirit men fret and laboriously destroy all their comfort in the work; or they change their business and go on

miserably, shifting from one thing to another, till the grave or the poor-house gives them a fast grip. But while occasionally a man fails in life because he is not in the place fitted for his peculiar talents, it happens ten times oftener that failure results from neglect and even contempt of an honest business. A man should put his heart into everything that he does. There is not a profession that has not its peculiar cares and vexations. No man will escape annoyance by changing business. No mechanical business is altogether agreeable. Commerce, in its endless varieties, is affected like all other human pursuits, with trials, unwelcome duties, and spirit-tiring necessities. It is the very wantonness of folly for a man to search out the frets and burdens of his calling, and give his mind every day to a consideration of them. They belong to human life. They are inevitable. Brooding, them, only gives them strength. On the other hand, a man has power given to him to shed beauty and pleasure upon the homeliest toil, if he is wise. Let a man adopt his business and identify it with his life, and cover it with pleasant associations; for God has given us imaginations not alone to make some poets, but to enable all men to beautify homely things. Heart-varnish will cover up innumerable evils and defects. Look at the good things. Except your lot as a man does a piece of rugged ground, and begin to get out the rocks and roots, to deepen the mellow soil, to enrich and plant it. There is something in the most forbidding avocation around which a man may twine pleasant fancies—out of which he may develop an honest pride.

A Dutchman's Views.

VELL, if dat ain't de blaimdest gountry vat ever vas; de fellers dat liles in dis gountry, dey tink a Dietoherman don't got some sense, dey ask de foolishhest questions I efer seen. Ven I goes down to my vork de oder tay mine boss he says to me, "Hans, dis vos von vet mornin'." Now, don't I know dot vas von vet mornin'? He tinks I don't know if it rain or schnow. Don't I vaik mit dot rain? Couldn't I tole if it vas vet?

Den, de next too, he says, "Hans, dis vas von very hot tay." Now, if dot vasn't de biggest fool question I efer heard. Vasn't I vorkin' met de hot sun all tay, and he vas valkin' around, his hande mit his pockets, und sayin', "Hurry, up, poys, hurry up, poys," und den he says, "Hans, it was hot." I don't answer dot foolish question at all. If he don't got some sense mit his questions I don't answer, dot's vat's de matter. I goes out to schovel de schnow mit mine sidevalk off, und efer feller vot comes along, he say, "Hans, dot vas a goot pisness for you." Pretty soon I gits mad, und say, "If some of you fellers don't got some sense mit your questions you petter mind mine own pisness." Efer feller tink a Deitcherman is a fooler.

I goes down mit a shoe store to puy myself a pair of poots. "Vell," I say, "Mister, dot poot vas too pig." Den he sticks his face up mit mine, und he says, "Hans, dot poot schrink awful; you gits dot poot some schmaller as dot, you could no wear um." I dries on some more poots, und den I say, "Doo poot is too schmall." Den he gits excited, und he lay his hand mit mine shoulder on, und he vispers mit mine ear, und he say, "Hans, I tole you dot poot stretch fearful. You gits dot poot some pigger as dot, I pet you five hundred tollar you no keep um on your feets."

Vell, I take um. De next tay I no git um on. I takes um back, und he say, "Hans, you must know your own pisness." Vell, I tinks I know mine own pisness in some shoe stores after dot.

A family is like an equipage.—First, the father, the draught-horse; next the boys, the wheels, for they are always running around; then the girls, they are surrounded by fellows; the baby occupies the lapboard; and the mother—well what's a wagon without a tongue, anyhow.

He that knows a little of the world will admire it enough to fall down and worship it, but he that knows it most will most despise it.—Colton.