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Select Poetry. AN ANCIENT TOAST.

It was a grand day, in the old chivalric time, the wine circling around the board in a noble hall, and the sculptured wall rang with sentiment and song. The lady of each knightly heart was pledged by name, and many a syllable significant of loveliness had been uttered, until it came to St. Leon's turn, when lifting the sparkling cup on high: "I drink to one," he said, "Whose image never may depart, Deep engraven on a grateful heart, Till memory is dead. To one whose love for me shall last; When lighter passions all have passed, So holy 'tis and true; To one whose love hath longer dwelt, More deeply fixed, more keenly felt, Than any pledged by you." Each guest upstarted at the word, And laid a hand upon his sword, With fiery-flashing eye; And Stanley said, "We crave the name, Proud knight, of this most peerless dame, Whose love you count so high." St. Leon paused, as if he would Not breathe her name in careless mood, Thus lightly to another; Then bent his noble head as though, To give the word the reverence due, And gently said, "My Mother!"

Making Love in the Dark.

"COME, girls, do stop that banging, and spin me a yarn about the Centennial." This from Dick Ashleigh, as with the help of a cane, he limped slowly into the cheerful parlor where his sisters were practising a duet. Thus commanded, shy little Lettie looked up rather confusedly. "The fact is, Dick, I can only remember one thing that I have not told you." "Well, that's all I asked for," interrupted Dick. "And that I don't think I can tell—and besides I don't know the end of it." "Then let's have the beginning, or if you don't know that, the middle," laughed Dick. "That sounds interesting, Lettie. That's the reason you think you can't tell it," he continued, pulling her down on to the low ottoman beside him. "Don't you know you always tell me everything?" "But Julie will laugh so at me," hesitated Lettie. "She says I am always imagining foolish things." "Never mind," answered Dick, with a lordly air. "Julie sha'n't laugh this time. If she does we'll make her tell the next story. Now, Julia, drop the curtains, and stir up the fire. Don't ring for lights. Lettie can talk better in the dark. Sit down on the ottoman at the other side of the fire, Julia. Now, Lettie, proceed!" "Well, you see, Dick," began poor Lettie, nervously twisting her curls over her slender fingers, "perhaps I oughtn't to have overheard this, and yet I couldn't help it. So I thought the best way would be not to say anything about it, and I never did, not even to Julie." "Why, Lettie Ashleigh, I am ashamed of you," broke in Julie, half indignantly, "when I told you every single thing I saw all the time I was gone." "No matter," cried Dick, impatiently. "Don't you understand, she didn't see this—she heard it!" "And I didn't mean to tell you now," continued Lettie. "Only you said you saw it in my eyes, Dick." "Oh yes," said Dick, stifling a laugh at Lettie's innocent belief in his assertion. "So now tell away."

"We'll, promise not to tell any one," pleaded Lettie. "O yes, we'll promise," said Dick, carelessly. "It was on the day we left Philadelphia," began Lettie, desperately; "that rainy Saturday! You know we intended to take the three-o'clock train to New York, but the crowd was so great, that the doors were closed when part of the people had passed through to the cars, and the rest were obliged to wait for the next train. It was almost entirely dark when we were finally in the cars. In the crowd, you recollect, I got separated from you and the rest of our party, Julie, and was pushed along to the other end of the car, where I got a seat. I sat for some minutes amused in listening to the various remarks and complaints made by my neighbors. One man was scolding about the cars, which he declared, if the seats were taken out, would not be fit for a cattle car. "You seemed very glad to get into it, however," retorted the gentleman opposite, upon which all who had seen his frantic rush for a seat, laughed. "Just in front of me was a lady dressed in deep mourning. I had noticed her as I was pushed along, and had intended if possible to obtain the vacant seat by her side, as the other seats were filled with men, but before I got to her, a man took the place, and on my looking about me, another man in a seat directly behind her rose, saying, 'Here's a chance, miss,' and before I understood that he was speaking to me, he had pushed me into his place, and vanished into the next car. "I was tired and wet, and very thankful for an opportunity to put my valise down and rest myself. The lamps were lighted, but before we had been many minutes on our way, the one at my end of the car went out—and the other burned so dimly that it scarcely made 'darkness visible.' In a short time the man sitting in front of me, by the lady in mourning, went into the next car. I debated whether I would change my seat, but I was comfortably settled, and too tired to want to move. My companion in the seat was an old gentleman already fast asleep, and I concluded to stay where I was. "I had hardly come to this decision when the door opened, and a gentleman, entering, advanced to the vacant seat, and courteously inquired of the lady if it were disengaged. It was too dark for me to see more than that he was tall, and graceful in his movements. He wore a heavy cloak, and a travelling cap pulled so low that even had it been light, I could not have seen much of his face. "Although the lady made but a very brief reply, something in her tone made me think she was weeping. The gentleman politely arranged her bag and shawl—strap in the rack above her, and then quietly seated himself. There was nothing to occupy me, and presently I fell into a daze, from which, however, I was frequently aroused by the laughter of two men who sat two or three seats behind me, and seemed to be determined upon entertaining the whole company with accounts of their various exploits and adventures in Philadelphia. "You can tell me some of them," suggested Dick. "No I can't," laughed Lettie, "for the voices were so loud and coarse that I listened as little as possible. Besides, as I told you, I was half asleep, and listening to nothing, when suddenly I was roused—broad awake—by a sound from the seat in front of me. It was a sob—low and smothered, but so full of misery! "I sprang partially from my seat, only thinking that the lady was in distress, and I must offer help, when the idea occurred to me that she might have just left some dear friends, and she would prefer not to have any one notice her grief. So I sank back, determined to listen for a few moments, and try to ascertain what I ought to do. "But the gentleman by her side seemed to think no delay necessary, for I could see that he bent toward her, and I heard him apologize for the inquiry, and beg to know if he could be of any service. "The kind voice appeared to take away what self-control she had, for her sobs came thick and fast, though she

evidently tried not to attract notice. Fortunately, as I have said, the gentleman in my seat was fast asleep, and those noisy men behind must have prevented any one else from hearing. "After a few minutes she managed to thank the gentleman, and added in such a sweet, childish voice, 'I am very sorry to have disturbed you.' "I had somehow fancied that she was an elderly lady—perhaps the mourning dress had made me, but as soon as I heard her speak, I knew she must be young, not older than I possibly, and I felt so sorry for her! The gentleman seemed to feel so too. I could not hear all he said, for sometimes the car shook and rattled, and the rain was beating on the roof and against the windows, but I could understand that he was again offering his services, and begging to know how he could assist her. "Why, Lettie," exclaimed Julie, "don't you know it was very wrong in her to talk to a perfect stranger? You ought not to have listened!" "How could I help it?" demanded Lettie. "I could not get up and walk the whole length of the car to where you were sitting, laughing with Kate Seymour's brother; and how much better was that, I would like to know? You had never met him till that day!" "Good for you, Lettie," cried Dick, patting the curly head, approvingly. "Now don't make any more comments till the story is done, Julie, or the supper-bell will ring, and spoil it all." "Beside," continued Lettie, "I don't believe that man was wicked. He spoke so gently and kindly. Just as Uncle May used to talk to me when I was sick last year." "Well, I never!" ejaculated the horrified Julie. "Presently," said Lettie, "she told him what she had been crying about. It seems she was an orphan. She had lived in Baltimore, but her father and mother had both died within a few weeks, and then it was found that there was no property left, nothing for her to live on, though she had always supposed her father to be wealthy. She had no relatives, but some friend or acquaintance had recommended her as a nursery governess to a lady in New York, and she was now on her way to take the situation. "I had tried to be brave," she said, and I could fancy, Dick, just what a pitiful look there must be on her face, 'but sitting here alone in the dark, the remembrance of my dear parents and our happy home came over me, and I could not help crying.' "Poor little girl!" muttered Dick, who had a soft heart under his domineering ways. "Why couldn't you have spoken to her, Lettie, and brought her home with you? You know mother is always ready to befriend any one in trouble." "Dick, Dick!" cried Julia, in consternation. "Are you a perfect idiot?" "No, thank you, ma'am," returned the unabashed youth. "I leave that honor for some of my female relatives." "Hush, Dick!" pleaded Lettie. "To tell the truth, I did think of it, and made up my mind that I would speak to her before we got to New York, and at least to give her my address, begging her to let me know if she could not succeed at the place where she was going. Just then a man came through the car to sell fruit, and he was followed by another, with Centennial views. Then those two noisy men grew even more noisy than usual over some joke or story, so it was quite a long while before I heard anything more. I could just hear that the gentleman was talking very low, and very earnestly, and the girl seemed much interested, and much astonished, too, I thought. Perhaps I oughtn't to have tried to hear at all, but I did, for I wanted so much to know more about the poor little thing." "At last, however, just before we got to Trenton, I heard the gentleman say, 'There is one way in which we can settle it, and I entreat you to think favorably of it. As soon as we reach New York, I will take you to a clergyman, and we will be married. Then I shall have a right to protect you, that no one can dispute or censure. For the sake of'—Then the locomotive shrieked, and I heard no more." "Phew!" whistled Dick. "This is thrilling!"

"I don't believe a word of it, Lettie," exclaimed Julie. "You must have been asleep and dreamed it!" "I was not asleep!" rejoined Lettie. "I never felt so wide awake in my life. I heard nothing more of any account. The girl seemed to hesitate, and the gentleman to urge her, and when we got to Jersey City, they crossed the ferry together, and I saw him call a carriage at New York." "And you never told me a word about it!" began Julie, reproachfully. "How could I, Julie, when you were laughing and talking with Kate and her brother all the time?" "I wish I knew what became of the girl," observed Dick, thoughtfully. "So do I," answered Lettie. "I have often wished to know the end. But I am quite sure the gentleman was good and kind, Dick." "Many thanks, my little niece," exclaimed a merry voice behind her, which made Lettie start up, suddenly. "Uncle May!" she exclaimed, in astonishment, as she recognized the tall, handsome intruder. "Yes, and Aunt Effie!" he answered, laughing, leading from the back parlor a slight, girlish figure, looking much too youthful to be called aunt by the group of three about the fire. That both the new-comers were favorites was evident from the cordial greeting extended to them, and it was not until the whole party were cozily seated about the glowing fire, that Dick inquired, "What did you mean, Uncle May, by thanking Lettie, when you came in? She was not talking of you." "O, I thought she was," replied Uncle Lay, with a comical look at his wife, which made her blush and smile. "That was a very interesting story of yours, Lettie," remarked her uncle, presently. "Why, Uncle May!" exclaimed Lettie. "Did you hear me? Were you in the parlor all the time?" and the girl looked really distressed. "Don't be trouble little one," said her uncle kindly. "Yes, Effie and I came into the back parlor just as you commenced, and I was so much interested, that I would not allow her to interrupt! So we listened. Played eavesdroppers! In fact, 'did as we had been done by,' as you will understand when I tell you the end of your story, that you wished so much to hear." "O, May!" exclaimed his young wife, appealingly. But he smilingly shook his head. "Yes, I shall, Effie, to reward this little girl for her interest in the friendless orphan." "After you saw the interesting pair enter a carriage at the ferry, Lettie," he continued, "they were driven directly to the house of a well-known clergyman, and united in the holy bonds of matrimony." "How do you know?" asked Lettie, breathlessly. "Because the lady was no less a personage than your Aunt Effie, and the gentleman, your devoted Uncle May. Was I not right to thank her, Dick?" he inquired, mischievously. "But I thought—that is, I didn't know," stammered poor Lettie, in much embarrassment, while Julia and Dick seemed petrified with astonishment. "I know you didn't know!" laughed Uncle May. "The fact is we didn't mean any one should know, but it was too good a story to be spoiled, for want of an end. Now don't look so grieved, Lettie, but come to your old place on my knee, while I tell you the beginning, for as Dick remarked, you only had the middle, and not quite the whole of that. O, Aunt Effie won't be jealous. There is room enough for both. There, now, we are comfortable." "You will remember that early in September, I went to Washington on business. I was detained there longer than I expected, but on the evening of Saturday the 23d, I left Philadelphia, on the six-o'clock train, for New York." "The very one that we were on!" exclaimed Julie. Lettie said nothing, but she evidently began to understand matters. "I had no idea that you were there," continued Uncle May, "but, as I see Lettie already understands, it was I who was in front of her, and who, when the sobs of the lady beside me attracted

my attention, tried to comfort her. The part of the story that Lettie raised was this. When Effie told me her name, I found, to my surprise, that she was the daughter of an old friend of mine, whom I had not seen for years. The news of his death had been sent to me before his wife's illness, which followed almost immediately, but as I had been traveling all summer, my letters had not reached me regularly, and I had never received the intelligence. "This was what made Effie so willing to trust a stranger. I am sure even Julie will excuse her now. I had never seen Effie before, indeed I could scarcely be said to see her then, as she did not raise her veil, and the car was so dark, but I had known of her all her life, and do not fear that I shall ever repent having "made to Love in the Dark." A Novel Way to Churn. I THOUGHT that I had seen a good many kinds of churns before I came to Mexico—crank-churns, dasher-churns and "chemical-churns." But I will now describe a mode of churning butter that will, I think, make New England folks open their eyes. Commonly they do not make much butter in this country, and the settlers here come to get along without it; but by the time I had been at the "poesta" two or three days, I began to want some butter on my bread. M— had a herd of twenty-five or thirty cattle, which he kept for beef, and among them were a number of milk cows. Ed. was bidden to set the milk for twenty-four hours; and the next morning M— told Lizado, or "Liz," as we called him, to churn. They had done such a thing as to churn butter before, it appears. Liz went out and brought a bag of rawhide, about as large as a common meal bag. How clean it was inside, I am sure I do not know; but he turned the cream into it, and poured in new milk enough to make it two-thirds full; and then he tied it up with a strong strip of hide. M— stood with a broad grin on his face. I was already too much astonished to make any remarks. Liz now carried the bag out of doors, and then got his horse. Taking his lasso off the saddle, he made one end of it fast to the cream bag; the other end, as usual, being attached to a ring in the saddle. This done, he jumped on the horse and tucked spurs to him. Away he went, and at the first jerk that bag went ten feet in the air, and fell with a squawk, close up at the horse's heels. At the next jerk it went higher still. He soon went out of sight with the bag dancing after him. Sometimes it hit down alongside the horse, and sometimes it struck slap on the animal's rump. M— was convulsed with laughter—at me, I suppose; for I must confess this upset all my previous ideas of butter-making. In the course of twenty or thirty minutes Liz came back, the horse looking pretty hot, and the bag very dusty. "Es mantica," (Butter's come), said he. Ed. untied the churn, and sure enough there was a good homely chunk of butter in it; and it proved to be very decent butter, too. I asked if that was the way they always churned. They said it was, and Ed. declared it was "a dais asier than turnin' a crank." So I respectfully submit the "method" to all our good people up North. Every thing need for it is a sole-leather bag, a clothes-line and a horse. There's one mystery in domestic affairs that no man has ever yet been able to solve. If a woman starts to whitewash a ceiling she is sure to get lime in her eyes, and before she even attempts to clear her optics she will make a break for her husband, if he is around the house, and abuse him like a dog for not having built a house without any ceilings in it.—O. B. The man who wants to be mean can show you that fifty-five churches are destroyed by storm or fire to every one jail, and yet he will exhibit his inconsistency by employing a lawyer to keep him out of jail. Never laugh at the misfortune of others.