

Saint Mary's Beacon.

VOL. VI

LEONARDTOWN, MD., THURSDAY MORNING, JULY 29, 1869

NO. 42

ST. MARY'S PEACON

IS PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY BY
JAMES S. DOWNS.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.—\$1.00 per annum in advance. No subscription will be received for a shorter period than six months and no paper to be discontinued until arrangements are made for the payment of the arrears at the rate of five cents per copy.

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All communications for publication must be accompanied with the real name of the author, or no attention will be paid to them. The name of the author will not be published, unless desired, but we cannot consent to insert communications unless we know the writer.

DIAMOND DUST—Man—A bubble on the ocean's rolling sea;
Life—A gleam of light extinguished by the grave;
Fame—A meteor dazzling with its distant glare;
Wealth—A score of trouble and consuming care;
Pleasure—A gleam of sunshine passing soon away;
Love—A morning stream whose memory glides the day;
Faith—An anchor dropped beyond the vale of death;
Charity—A stream meandering from the fount of love;
Bible—A guide to realms of endless joys above;
Religion—A key which opens wide the gates of heaven;
Death—A knife by which the ties of earth are riven;
Earth—A desert through which pilgrims wend their way;
Grace—A home of rest when earth's life's weary day;
Resurrection—A sudden waking from a quiet dream;
Heaven—A land of joy, of light and love supreme.

A STRANGE ACCUMULATION—Thomas Dick puts the hoarding of wealth in this striking way: "Suppose a man could lay up a stock of clothes and provisions sufficient to last him for 300 years, what would it avail him, since he can live, at most, but 70 or 100 years? Suppose he had laid up in a store house 70,000 pairs of shoes, to what end would it serve, if he could make use, during his whole life of only one hundredth part of them? He would be in the same condition as a man who had 100 dishes placed before him at dinner, but who could only partake of one; or of a person who had 100 mansions purchased for his residence, but who could occupy only one. How ridiculous it would appear if he could be said of a man while he lived was simply this: That his whole life was occupied in collecting and laying up in a store house 60,000 mahogany chairs which were never intended to be used for the furniture of apartments, or 80,000 pairs of trousers which were never intended to be worn. And where is the difference, in point of rationality and utility, between such absurd practices and hoarding thousands of guineas and bank notes, which are never brought forth for the benefit of mankind. There is no conduct connected with the pursuit of human beings, that appears more absurd and wicked than such practices (however common) if examined by the dictates of reason and the word of God.

WHAT IS LIFE?—Life is but Death's vestibule, and our pilgrimage on earth is but a journey to the grave, the pulse that preserves our being beats our dead march, and the blood which circulates our life is floating it onward to the depth of death. Today we see our friends in health; tomorrow we hear of their decease. We clasped the hand of the strong man, but yesterday, and today we closed his eyes. We rode in a chariot of comfort but an hour ago, and in a few more hours the last black chariot must convey us to the home of all the living.

Stars die perhaps; it is said that configurations have been seen afar off in the ether and astronomers have marked the funerals of other worlds—the decay of those mighty orbs that we have imagined set forever in sockets of silver to glisten as the lamps of eternity. Blessed be God there is one place where death is not life's brother, where life reigns alone and "to live" is not the first syllable which is to be followed by the next, "to die." There is a land where the death knells are never tolled, where winding sheets are never woven, where graves are never dug—Blessed land beyond the skies. To reach it we must die.

A married lady being asked to wait, gave the following sensible and appropriate answer, "No, thank you sir. I have hugging enough at home."

A schoolmaster on being asked what was meant by the word fornication, answered, "Two twentificians make a fornication."

He that is good, will be better, and he that is bad, worse; for virtue, vice and blue never stop.

A WONDER.

Still a way growth in the great wonder,
When all the fields are hushing like the dawn,
And only one poor little flower plowed under,
That I can see no flowers, that one being gone,
No flower of all, because of one being gone.

Aye, ever in me growth the great wonder,
When all the hills are shining, white and red,
And only one poor little flower plowed under,
That it were all as one if it were dead,
Aye, all as one of all the flowers were dead.

I cannot feel the beauty of the roses;
Their soft leaves seem to me but layers of dust;
Out of my opening hand each blessing closes;
Nothing is left me but my hope and I trust;
Nothing but heavenly hope, and heavenly trust.

I get no sweetness of the sweetest places;
My house, my friends no longer comfort me;
Strange somehow grow the old familiar faces;
For I can nothing have, not having thee;
All my possessions I possessed through thee.

Having, I have them not—strange contradiction;
Heaven needs must cast its shadow on our earth;
Yea, down me in the waters of affliction,
Breast high, to make us know our treasure's worth;
To make us know how much our love is worth.

And while I mourn, the anguish of my story
Breaks, as the wave breaks on the huddling shore,
Thou art but hidden in the deeps of glory,
Even as the sunshine hides the leaping star,
And with true love I love thee from afar.

I know our Father must be good, not evil,
And never not for faith's sake, at my ill;
Nor at the mystery of the working axel,
That somehow husheth all things in His will,
And though He slay me, makes me trust Him still.

ALICE GAY, in Harper's Magazine for August.

A SAD STORY.
HISTORY OF A YOUNG GIRL'S BETRAYAL AND SUICIDE—AFFECTING LETTERS.

Nellie Van Roy, a lost girl, and an inmate of Jennie Hall's house of ill repute, on Green street, committed suicide last evening, between 7 and 8 o'clock, by taking a large dose of arsenic. Suicide among this class of people is not an infrequent occurrence, but there are circumstances attending the life and death of this unhappy girl which single her out from the crowd of her companions, and give her history such a coloring as is seldom found in the career of such people.

Nellie Van Roy (an assumed name) was born of respectable parents in Jackson county, and at the time of her death was not quite 19 years of age. She was unusually talented, and having received a good education, was distinguished by nature for a place of honor and respectability, above the common order. About three years and a half ago she became acquainted with a man, one of whose many aliases is McGuire, and who is known to the police here as Charles Epp, and who, it appears, is a desperate and disreputable character—he is said to have murdered men in his day—and he is at present either in the jail at Chicago, or in the penitentiary at Joliet, Ill.

This man called to see her at her home in Jackson county, and by his wiles and intrigues, soon gained her confidence and love. Her parents, who doubtless, had heard of the bad character of the man, forbade her receiving his visits, but, when one night they found her on the point of eloping with him, they consented to her marrying him. He soon showed his real character to her, and its influence was ruinous forever, for he changed her very nature, and from an artless, impulsive girl, he made her a guilty wretch. She seems to have forgotten everything of good she ever knew, and to have become a wild ungodly fury, with every passion all-well full play, without restraint of any kind. When she found it was an outlaw and a villain she had married, and heard that he had another wife living; that her companions were only thieves and disreputable characters, she sank in despair, and abandoned every thought of virtue.

She lived for a while with her husband in Illinois. The officers of the law were after him, and once she fired at a man who was attempting to arrest him. For this she was arrested and sent to the penitentiary for two years, and served out her time. She soon after came to St. Louis, and entered upon a life of sin. She grew to hate, with an intense hatred, the man whom she married, and after her release she never lived with him. Last winter she is reported to have twice fired at him, with the intention of killing him.

Among her associates here she was well liked. They described her as a person of few words, retired in her manner, but with a vindictive thought always lurking within her. She spent most of her time reading, writing and composing poetry, and in her trunk this morning about 200 of her letters, and many scraps of poetry were found, all of which show that she was well read and carefully educated. The following letter is a fair specimen of her ability, and contains not only a sketch of her life, but also a moral that should impress all whom thoughtlessness may allow to play with temptation. It was written to a man named Edward Lawson, who at the time was a prisoner for some offense.

SATURDAY NOON, March 13, 1869.—My Darling Edwin: How glad I was to receive your loving letter; now, Ed, we will drop all foolishness and sin no more. * * * So you thought me too good for such a life, ah, pet, that time was, but

BETROTHAL.

O for an hour of such enchanted light
As made a fairer daytime in the sky,
When on the willow-bank we sat that night,
My old-time love and I!

A while we talked so low and tenderly,
We felt the listening trees above as lean
And louder for the silence seemed to me
That fell at last between.

Her heart lay floating on its quiet thought,
Like water-lilies on a tranquil lake;
And love within, unknown, because unthought,
Lay dreaming half awake.

Ah, Love is lightest sleeper ever known!
A whisper, and he started plain to view;
Old as the heavens seemed our story grown,
While yet the moon was new.

And when she spoke her betrothal then
I felt the sweetest of the lips that told,
Setting a precious word within a smile—
A diamond ringed with gold.

Then blushed pale as the perfect centaur flower,
Then filled the cup and overran the brim;
And all the stars professional, that hour,
Chanted a bridal hymn.

Ah, Time, all after-days may fly away,
Such joy as that thou hast but once to give,
And Love is royal from his crowning-day,
Though kingdoms lose him live.

GARLAND, in Harper's Magazine for August.

A DIAMOND EATER.
A son of "a perfidious Albion," dressed with scrupulous care, and sporting the inevitable fiery-shed whiskers of dog-eared pattern that for the last thirty or forty years have formed the distinguished facial ornament of the male inhabitants of the British Isles, walked into one of the principal jewelry shops of Palermo a few weeks ago, and in spite of the wretched Italian in which he delivered himself, managed to make known his desire of looking over the large assortment of gems and precious stones that glistened in the windows and show-case, with a view, he explained, to purchasing the handsome one he could select for a set he intended to order.

The jeweler, whom this request plunged into an ecstasy of joy, showed, as may be imagined, great anxiety in placing before his distinguished customer the most beautiful pearls and the rarest diamonds he possessed. But the Englishman could find nothing to suit his fastidious taste. It was not the prices he murmured at; on the contrary, he expressed his willingness to pay most liberally for his purchases, provided he was successful in procuring anything he might covet. He was in a place in the princely gift which he allowed it to be intended as a surprise to some dark-eyed Sicilian beauty. Nothing discouraged by the fault-finding propensities of the magnificent foreigner, the worthy tradesman, who was all smiles and bows, continued his researches literally rummaging and ransacking his spacious store from top to bottom, in his effort to do justice to himself by proving his establishment second to none in the beauty, size, and variety of the precious minerals it contained.

Finally, after a close examination of the numberless diamonds, pearls, rubies, emeralds, turquoises, and amethysts that lay heaped upon the counter, and a lengthy discussion of their qualities and defects, the distinguished looking foreigner said anything he might covet. He was in a place in the princely gift which he allowed it to be intended as a surprise to some dark-eyed Sicilian beauty. Nothing discouraged by the fault-finding propensities of the magnificent foreigner, the worthy tradesman, who was all smiles and bows, continued his researches literally rummaging and ransacking his spacious store from top to bottom, in his effort to do justice to himself by proving his establishment second to none in the beauty, size, and variety of the precious minerals it contained.

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THE SIAMSE TWINS.
The London Times has the following interesting facts concerning the Siamese Twins:

The return to this country of the Siamese twins, thirty-eight years after their first appearance here, has naturally excited a good deal of interest and curiosity, both among men of science and the general public. The vicar of a certain island was once summoned by his lord, the king, to render an account of his government. Some of his friends on whom he had placed the greatest reliance, let him depart without stirring themselves from their places; others, in whom he had not a little confidence, went with him only as far as the ship; but, some in whom he had scarcely trusted at all accompanied him through the whole of the distant journey, even to the king's throne, spoke in his behalf, and obtained for him the grace and favor of the king.

The children did not understand who these friends could be; so their father said: "Man also has three kinds of friends on earth; but, for the most part, he does not know them till the time when he is called from this world in order to give an account of his conduct. The first of these friends, wealth and possessions, remained behind; the second his relations, remained behind; the third, his work of faith and love, follow him into eternity, even to the throne of God, where they will be recompensed each according to his works, and even the cup of cold water which is given to one who thirsts will not be unrequited. How thoughtless, then, does the man act who does not concern himself in the least degree about such true friends!"

"Do good on earth, for all the words of love, like friends, will follow thee to realms above."

HOW TO RETAIN A GOOD FACE.—A correspondent has some idea on the importance of mental activity in retaining a good face:

We were speaking of handiwork from the other evening, and I was wondering why K had so lost the beauty for which five years ago he was so famous. "Oh, it is because he never did anything," said B; "he never worked, thought, or suffered—You must have the mind chiseling away at the features, if you want handsome middle-aged men." Since hearing that remark, I have been on the watch to see if it is generally true and it is. A handsome man who does nothing but eat and drink, grows flabby, and the fine lines of his features are lost; but the hard thinker has an admirable sculptor at work, keeping his fine line in train, and constantly going over his face to improve the original design.

RELIGION—Some people are afraid of anything like joy in religion. They have no time to live, and they do not love to see it in others. Their religion is something like the stars—very high, and very clear, but very cold. When they see tears of anxiety, or tears of joy, they cry out "enthusiasm!" Well, then, to the law and to the testimony. "I sat down under his shadow with great delight." Is this enthusiasm? O Lord, evermore give us this enthusiasm! It is really in sitting under the shadow of Christ, let there be no beam in our eye. Oh! if God would but open your eyes, and give you simple, child-like faith, to sit under his shadow, then would songs of joy rise from our dwellings.

REPRODUCTION IN HEAVEN—Baxter says: "The expectation of having my friends in Heaven, principally kindles my love for them on earth. If I thought I should never know them after this life is ended, I should number them with the temporal things, and only love them as such."

"But now I delightfully converse with my friends in a firm persuasion that I shall converse with them forever, and I take comfort in those that are dead or absent, as believing I shall shortly meet them in Heaven; and I love them with a heavenly love, as the heirs of Heaven, even with a love that shall there be perfected and forever exercised."

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RELIGION—Some people are afraid of anything like joy in religion. They have no time to live, and they do not love to see it in others. Their religion is something like the stars—very high, and very clear, but very cold. When they see tears of anxiety, or tears of joy, they cry out "enthusiasm!" Well, then, to the law and to the testimony. "I sat down under his shadow with great delight." Is this enthusiasm? O Lord, evermore give us this enthusiasm! It is really in sitting under the shadow of Christ, let there be no beam in our eye. Oh! if God would but open your eyes, and give you simple, child-like faith, to sit under his shadow, then would songs of joy rise from our dwellings.

REPRODUCTION IN HEAVEN—Baxter says: "The expectation of having my friends in Heaven, principally kindles my love for them on earth. If I thought I should never know them after this life is ended, I should number them with the temporal things, and only love them as such."

"But now I delightfully converse with my friends in a firm persuasion that I shall converse with them forever, and I take comfort in those that are dead or absent, as believing I shall shortly meet them in Heaven; and I love them with a heavenly love, as the heirs of Heaven, even with a love that shall there be perfected and forever exercised."

MORE TRUTH THAN POETRY.—The following conversation between a colored prisoner and a temperance lecturer, who was in search of facts to fortify his position and illustrate his subject, explains itself:

"What brought you to prison, my colored friend?"

"Two constables, sah."

"Yes; but I mean had intemperance anything to do with it?"

"Yes, sah; dey was bofe uv'em drunk sah."

A school-teacher said to the same teacher, "Hops on, hope ever" written for him to copy by his teacher. Imagine the surprise of the latter when, upon examining the youngster's chirographical evolutions, he found it rendered thus, "Hops on, hop ever."

A daughter is almost always right when she endeavors to punish her mother; but we do not think the mother is equally right when at a certain period of life, she tries to punish her daughter.

A black woman, while picking blackberries and grapes, was asked by a white woman, "Why are you picking blackberries and grapes?" "Why, to pick 'em up," she replied.

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THE SIAMSE TWINS.

The London Times has the following interesting facts concerning the Siamese Twins:

The return to this country of the Siamese twins, thirty-eight years after their first appearance here, has naturally excited a good deal of interest and curiosity, both among men of science and the general public. The vicar of a certain island was once summoned by his lord, the king, to render an account of his government. Some of his friends on whom he had placed the greatest reliance, let him depart without stirring themselves from their places; others, in whom he had not a little confidence, went with him only as far as the ship; but, some in whom he had scarcely trusted at all accompanied him through the whole of the distant journey, even to the king's throne, spoke in his behalf, and obtained for him the grace and favor of the king.

The children did not understand who these friends could be; so their father said: "Man also has three kinds of friends on earth; but, for the most part, he does not know them till the time when he is called from this world in order to give an account of his conduct. The first of these friends, wealth and possessions, remained behind; the second his relations, remained behind; the third, his work of faith and love, follow him into eternity, even to the throne of God, where they will be recompensed each according to his works, and even the cup of cold water which is given to one who thirsts will not be unrequited. How thoughtless, then, does the man act who does not concern himself in the least degree about such true friends!"

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