

# The Millheim Journal

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## THE VOICE OF NIGHT.

How beautiful the heavens look to-night! So calm, transparent, and the starry crowd. These exquisite embodiments of light, Could ye not almost fancy they were proud Of their own loveliness that they had bliss In beaming forth on such a night as this?

Forever and forever there is set In the enduring sky a seal and sign. A voiceless evidence of God's will which yet Unchanged shall live when this frail form of mine Hath mouldered from the bosom of the earth. Leaving no record of its mortal birth.

The elements of which we are composed May perish, they are finite; but the soul Burns from the frame in which it laid inclosed Beyond the grasping reach of time's control?

That spirit which within us swells and speaks, Shall find the immortality it seeks! O thou, Creator, God! and can it be That man is heir to thine own glorious heavens.

Tis so! the light which is sublimity, The essence which is thought by Thee were given! The fear and heaviness of doubt are o'er. I muse and feel, and tremble and adore!

## An Unexpected Request.

A bright fireside, with fender and fire-irons shining like gold, windows hung with drapery of Turkey red, walls of crimson-flecked paper, starred over with gold, and a little walnut stand of books opposite—Mrs. Milford's parlor was a cabinet gem in its way. Not that the Milfords were rich. On the contrary, Merton Milford was a bank clerk, on a salary so small that it sometimes became an almost insoluble problem to make both ends meet.

Almost, we say, but never quite; for Lucy Milford had learned the lesson of household economy, and it was her pride to be able to say that they had never been in debt. Yet Lucy had a woman's taste and a woman's cravings after the beautiful and the costly; and on this special evening, as she sat by the fire leaning one cheek on her hand, her foot mechanically agitating the rocker of her baby's cradle, she was thinking of the possible—the unattainable.

"If we were only rich," thought Lucy as she gazed across the room, "how I would like a Persian patterned carpet, instead of this staring red and green ingrain. And a little oil painting, or a bunch of water-colored flowers over the table, where the map of the city hangs now. And then I could afford a Valenciennes cap for the baby, and a real poncy silk for myself, and I could surprise Merton with half a dozen silk handkerchiefs, and I would send papa a new meerschaum, real sea-foam, with an amber mouth-piece and odd carvings on the bowl, and mamma should have an Indian-bordered shawl, and—"

Bang went the front door. Tramp, tramp, came a well-known footstep along the hall, with just enough pause to fling the hat carelessly on the little circle of pegs, which in that unpretentious household took the place of marble-topped, mirror-backed hall rack.

"It's Merton," said Mrs. Milford, starting up; and Merton it was.

"Hallo, Puss," said Merton, coming in, flushed and breathless. "And how is the little kitten?"

"Citterly is well," said Mrs. Milford. "Shall I order tea, dear?"

"Yes."

The little maid-servant—Lucy Milford only kept one—brought in the urn, and when she had tipped-toed out again, Mrs. Milford looked her husband in the face.

"Merton," said she, "something has happened. I can read it in your eyes. What is it?"

"What a little fortune-teller you are, to be sure," said he. "Yes, something has happened. I've got a telegram from Fortley, and old uncle Jesse is dying. Uncle Jesse, the rich old miser. And Wirt informs me that his last will, made in a fit of pique against the directors of the Fortley Orphan Asylum, leaves everything to us."

"To us, Merton?"

Lucy drew her breath with a little gasping sound.

"Why, it must be half a million of money!"

"That, at least, we shall be rich people, Puss."

"Oh! Merton, it scarcely seems possible! It's like a dream."

"It's a dream with a pretty solid vein of reality running through it, you'll find, my dear," said the husband.

"And just before you came in, I was sitting here and thinking what I would do, and how I would ornament my home if only we were rich!" cried Lucy, clapping her hands.

Mr. Milford pinched her cheek, and laughed complacently. Evidently he was in the best of humor.

"Half a million, Lucy!" said he. "You shall have a set of diamonds that will rival those of Mrs. Merriwell, the banker's wife, and a real car-horse shawl. And I'll order a pony phaeton for your own driving, and you—"

"But we shall buy a fine country place, shall we, Merton?" wistfully asked Lucy, the soft carnation shadows deepening over her cheek.

"A country place! What for?" said Merton, a little contemptuously. "What on earth should we bury ourselves in the country for, when we can buy a place at the West End, and surround ourselves with all the refinements of city life?"

A shade of disappointment came over Lucy's face.

## A country house, sighed she.

"With burglars and mildew and spiders thrown in, eh? Nonsense, my dear, nonsense! The city is the place to live in."

"And we can have papa and mamma to live with us, can't we?"

"Well, I don't know exactly about that," said Merton, thoughtfully stroking his moustache; "I'll buy 'em a snug little place, if you say so, my love; but I never did believe in fathers and mothers-in-law living with their children. Every household is complete in itself. That's my notion."

"Oh, Merton, how can you talk so!" cried Lucy in a pained voice.

"Oh, well, Lucy, there's no use in sentimentalizing on these points," retorted her husband, a little brusquely.

"I don't care to be rich if I can't enjoy the pleasure of my money," said Mrs. Milford, pouting.

"So you may enjoy them if you only will be reasonable about it."

"And I've always thought so much of having mamma with me."

"Better leave off thinking of it then," said Merton, lighting a cigar and leaning back in a chair, the better to enjoy it.

"I suppose I can have as many servants as I please, now?" hazarded Mrs. Milford, wisely steering the conversational barque away from the shoals of dispute.

"Twenty, if you like, my dear," replied Merton.

"And a housekeeper, like Mrs. Miller's?"

"Not a housekeeper," said Mr. Milford, shaking his head. "No fine ladies for me, disguised as dependents. As many servants as you like, no one to domineer over them—a proxy for yourself."

"I will have a housekeeper," said Lucy, excitedly.

"No, you will not, my dear—not in my house."

"And can we have a cottage at Brighton?"

"Why do you say Brighton?" gravely questioned Merton. "To my mind, Puss, Brighton is nothing more than a hot-bed of folly and flippery. At Hastings' now!"

"I don't care for Hastings," said Lucy, moodily; "the air never did agree with me." Lucy burst into tears.

Mr. Milford got up and strode out of the room.

"Merton, Merton!" cried the wife, "where are you going?"

"To the billiard room at the corner," said Merton, hotly. "I can find friends enough there, I dare say, to give me the sympathy my wife seems inclined to withhold."

Lucy cried bitterly. In all the bright years of their married life they never had any serious differences until now. Was it possible that riches were destined to bring them only a mead of misery instead of the expected rind of happiness? Next came a feeling of bitterness and resentment. She would show Merton that she was not to be treated like a child. He came home, but Mrs. Milford feigned to be asleep. She did not come down to breakfast next morning, making an excuse of a slight headache, the effect of last night's tears, and Milford ate and drank alone.

"Humph!" commented he, swallowing his coffee in a succession of dyspeptic-breeding gulps. "A pretty sort of a life this."

"For three days Lucy cried and Merton sulked. At the end of that time he came home with a curious expression on his face."

"Puss," said he.

Lucy looked up, her sensitive face brightening at the old, caressing pet-name.

"I've just had a second telegram—Uncle Jesse is dead."

"Poor old man," said Lucy soberly. "Do you know, Merton, I begin to doubt whether Uncle Jesse's money will do us any good."

"I don't think it will," said Milford, "because you see the old man rallied at last, and made a new will in favor of the Refuge for Old Men."

## An Autumn Night's Dream.

The year was waning. The leaves of the churchyard trees hung red and yellow, or dropped slowly to the ground. The ivy on the church gables was in flower, and the honeysuckle on the mossy chancel had put forth its second blossoms. Chimney-swallows and house martins congregated in scores upon the lichened church roof, warming their wings in the mild Autumn sunshine for flight to glowing lands beyond the sea, and starlings mused in hundreds upon the Downs that swelled around the churchyard in mighty waves of perfect calm.

But the birds had gone to sleep for the night—all except the hooding brown owl—as a travel-brouzet, travel-stained man walked over the downs, dragging his feet wearily in spite of the springiness of the turf, beneath a full moon which made the shallow little chalk bottomed sleep pools flash with silvery radiance. It was a very still night. There was scarce the faintest sigh of a breeze to stir the bramble sprays. The hooting of the owl, and now and then the drowsy tinkle of a sheep bell were the only sounds floating over the great land sea of huge waved peace; but there was no calm in the traveler's breast.

On he plodded toward the churchyard. There, after all his wanderings, he had come back to find, was his only home, in which he could hear no hearty shout, receive no clinging kiss of welcome, the lips of all his kindred were sealed in everlasting silence, if not crumpled into dust.

He entered the churchyard by the lych-gate, laid his knapsack on the dewy grass, and sat down with his back against the wall in front of the stone where was his family register.

The churchyard was crowded with graves, but he had gone straight to the one of which he was in search, because he remembered the corner where the primroses and Lent-lilies grew in which his mother had often wished to be laid, and felt sure since she had died before his father, that her wish had been gratified.

There was the tall stone, inscribed with name after name, hers first upon the list, the latter entries crowded in smaller letters.

All his close kindred were buried in one grave, before which he seated himself, and longed to be able to roll back the years, to be again at home respected and beloved, no stain or shadow of future shame upon his name, with an intensity that made his heart literally well as aghastively ache. He could not weep. The fountain of his tears had long been dried up, and, deprived of that relief for his feelings, it seemed to him that he must go mad. He raised a wild cry that rang wearily over the still Downs. The startled birds whirled from their roosting places in the ivy, and wheeled round the church in a black cloud.

Ere long, however, they settled again, and the way farer was again staring at the moonlit headstone in hopeless stillness.

Hour after hour the church clock rang out in a voice cracked with age, whilst the moonlight in quiet frolic marked fantastic time upon the sun dial. The last stroke of one had just died away, when the waandering star of the heavens fell flat, the grave opened, and he was in his mother's arms. "My son, my son," she sobbed, "at last, after these many weary, weary years. And then from the grave rose brothers and sisters, some of whom greeted him but coldly; and last of all his father, who frowned and turned aside without speaking.

But the weeping mother made peace between the son and the father whom he had disgraced, and the brothers and sisters whose portions he had squandered. The young man once more, forgiven after some mad prank by his father, the idol of his mother, the darling of his sisters, the model hero of his little brothers.

The autumn moon went solemnly down; but in its stead there rose the sun of spring. Other graves gave up their dead. It was a May Sunday morning, and the country side churchgoers, when they had come out, stopped to chat with their neighbors in the churchyard. The wanderer saw faces, heard tones, that he had not seen or heard for half a lifetime; but it seemed quite natural that he should do so—the years had been rolled back.

Instead of mustering for departure, swallows had come again from the winter quarters. Blackbirds, thrushes, skylarks, woodlarks, titlarks, goldfinches and greenfinches, wrens and robins, yellowhammers and whitethroats, were singing; in the hanger, sloping down to the pasture tufted with pagies, more than one night-ingale might be heard. The tuft of the Downs was white—as if milk had been spilt upon it—with the flowers of sandwort and roseton flow, and fuzze and bee haunted broom were out in all their glory, the King Wood was pink and white with the blossoms of wild pear trees, crabs, and rowans. The oak, the beech, the maple, the barberry, the horse chestnut were also in flower. The lily-of-the-valley and the wood sorrel shook their soundless little fairy tulle bells in the warm breeze that had stolen into their cool hiding places. Forget-me-nots, veronicas, and brooklime made earth look sky-like with their streaks and specks, and patches of brilliant blue in places moist and dry. Buttercups and daisies were scattered over the green earth broadcast.

The strangely united family came to the leafy lane, at the bottom of which stood the old farm house, in the midst of a few remnant racks and straw stacks, looking out complacently on the springing crops it next should garner. There was the orchard, with the apple trees and the old medlar tree in blossom, and the walnut and the mulberry coming out in leaf, lilac and laburnum, foxglove and flags, columbine and peonies, were blooming in the garden, and over the little moat hung guilder roses and elder flowers. The old dog got up from his lounge on the warm step of the open door, and wagged his stump of a tail to greet the wanderer, but only as if he had been away for a couple of hours, instead of some forty years. The leisurely, better than ordinary Sunday dinner followed, with its friendly, though sometimes censorious gossip about the clergyman and his wife, and the dress, demeanor, and affairs in general of the other neighbors that had been seen at church.

Then came the lolling about Sunday afternoon, the farm-folk half pleased, half perplexed, by their spell of laziness; the wandering through the fields to criticize their own and their neighbors' crops; the

milking of the cows, the feeding of the bullocks and horses, the looking after the calves, sheep and poultry, with an enjoyment not felt on other days, because to those who have few resources to wit away leisure time the want of occupation brings but little rest.

At night the father whom he had almost ruined, the mother whose heart he had broken, the brothers and sisters whose prospects he had blighted, knelt with the wanderer whilst the mother read their simple evening prayers.

He had not bent his knee in worship since he had left home, but it all seemed quite natural—the years had been rolled back.

His mother had given him her good night kiss; he was about to shake hands with his father, when suddenly he saw in his face the frown which he so well remembered—the frown that had driven him from home. The faces of his brothers and sisters, so lately so affectionate, again grew cold; the sweet, pleading face of his mother faded from his sight.

He shuddered—and awoke in a raw, autumn mist, with his lips pressed to damp, faded leaves. Alas! that the dead can not return again to forgive and to be forgiven."

## A Novel Deposit.

A tall man, with a squint in his left eye and a terrible long nose, which was beautifully decorated with a red tuft, entered a corner store and demanded of the bartender if the boss was in.

"Nixie," replied the bartender.

"At what time do you expect him?"

"Can't say; probably in one hour and probably a little later."

The tall man looked mysteriously around, and then, in a low tone, asked:

"Can I trust you?"

"Well, I guess so."

The tall man rubbed his hands convulsively together, and said:

"Ah, confidence begets confidence. Then if I can trust you surely you can—ah!—you can trust me for a drink until the boss comes in."

"No trust," was the laconic reply.

"I tell you I'm a friend of the boss."

"I don't care if you're a friend of Alexander D.L. No trust."

"Do you doubt my veracity?"

"Have you got it with you?"

"Have I got what with me?"

"Your veracity."

"Yes."

"Then take it with you and get out of here, or you'll not have much of it left when I get through with you."

"But, sir, I will leave a deposit," and he offered to leave his coat, which looked as if it might have been a few ones in days gone by; but now, alas! it possessed but one sleeve, and was half slit up the back.

The bartender's heart was made of stone. He said he had all the coats he wanted.

Then the tall fellow offered to leave his hat.

"It was a high hat, and looked as if it had descended from old Brian Boru, and had been worn by every Knight of St. Patrick that had ever paraded."

"I don't want your coat; I don't want your hat. You have but one thing that I would accept as a deposit," said the bartender.

"And what is that?" eagerly asked the big fellow.

## A Balloon Adventure.

M. Allioth, the editor of the *Phare du Littoral*, Paris, gives an interesting account of his adventures in the balloon Gabriel, on Sunday the 6th of March, in company with Captain Jovis and Lieutenant Vivier. The balloon, which started from Nice in the morning, rapidly rose to a height of 6,000 feet. The view was at first magnificent. The Alps and a great part of Switzerland were distinctly visible and the air was warm. But the clouds and a thick mist soon hid everything from view, and when by degrees, and in spite of every effort to prevent it, the balloon descended, the party found to their horror, that they were about nine miles out at sea, when they had all along believed themselves to be going steadily in a northerly direction. Once or twice the Gabriel was induced to rise again for a short time, but it soon returned to the water, and although anchor, ballast, bags, boots and every article of any weight were thrown from the car, it remained obstinately wedded to its new element. At times the balloon scudded along at a great rate, though the lower portion of the car was submerged, the water, which had first only been ankle deep, finally rising sufficiently high to stop M. Allioth's watch in his waistcoat pocket, at thirty-five minutes past five in the afternoon. Night found the unfortunate travelers in even a worse plight, and to add to their difficulties, the car began to rock with the waves, and although numbed with the bitter cold, they were compelled to hold on tightly for bare life. At intervals they shouted together, but it was labor lost, and no answer was returned. At last, to their great delight, they espied the sail of an Italian craft bearing down upon them. A boat was speedily launched, and they were soon on board, in dry clothes, and making a hearty supper. The ship proved to be the *Morosi*, bound from Naples to Cetta. The captain had, it appears, perceived the balloon during the afternoon and had actually gone out of his course for several hours in the hope of rescuing its passengers. But the balloon sped along much faster than he, and Signer Penelli was obliged to give up the chase. The meeting in the dark was thus a pure accident. The balloon had drifted about, while the ship had held to its course. The unlucky occupants of the Gabriel were picked up about half way between the mainland and Corsica, and but for the timely appearance of the *Morosi* they must have inevitably been lost. As it was M. Jovis and Allioth were terribly exhausted by all they had gone through. The party were landed at Villafra at half-past nine on the following morning, and their reappearance at Nice was the signal for a general ovation, their friends having despaired of ever beholding them again. As for the balloon, as soon as they had quitted the car it shot once more into the air with lightning speed, and may be careering still, for all any one knows to the contrary.

One day, during the summer of 1819, the Duc de Berry happened to be taking a walk in Paris with his wife, and they were returning towards the Elysee, when a heavy rain-shower came on. The two promenadeurs, being unprovided with umbrellas, took refuge under a port cochere already tenanted by a young man with the appearance of a clerk, who had an umbrella. When the storm had somewhat abated, the Duc de Berry stepped up to the young fellow, and asked whether he would mind lending the umbrella to enable him (the Duke) to take his wife home.

The other was suspicious, and decidedly objected to parting with his property on any conditions. The Duke persisted, but finding that there was no hopes of obtaining a loan of the coveted object, he asked its owner whether, though not having sufficient confidence in him to lend it, he would mind offering the lady his arm as far as her residence. The gallant young clerk willingly agreed to do so, and off the Duchess and her escort accordingly started.

The latter individual very garrulously by nature, soon opened a conversation by the query as to whether his companion lived in the quarter they were then in.

"Quite close to here," replied the Duchess.

"It is a splendid quarter, madame, plenty of luxury and very *comme il faut*. In fact, it is the *grande dames'* quarter, with nothing but duchesses and marquises in it, with their dresses all worked in gold."

"Quite so."

"I don't know whether madame has noticed the fact, but generally the less elevated a person's grade of nobility the higher the floor he or she occupies."

"There is some truth in that," gravely responded the duchess.