LOVE AND DEATH.

I.

"Now, who can take from us what we have
known—
We that have looked into each other's eyes?
Though lowering night should blacken all
the skies,
The day is ours, and what the day has
shown.
What we have seen and been, hath this not
grown
Part of our very selves? We, made love
wise,
What power shall slay our steadfast memories
And who shall take us from what is our
own?

So when a shade of the last parting fell,
This thought gave peace, as one deep comfort hath,
Who, thirsting, drinks cool waters from a
well
But, sudden, I saw that spirit without breath,
That body bodiless, that invisible
Maker of visible woe; I looked on death!

II.

We know not where they tarry who have died
The gate wherein they entered is made fast
No living mortal hath seen one who passeed
Hither, from out that darkness deep and
wide.
We build on Faith; and some less bold have
cried,
"Behold the butterfly!—the seed that's cast!"
Vain hopes that fall like flowers before the
blast!
What man can look on Death unterrified?

Who love can never die! They are a part
Of all that live beneath the summer sky;
With the world's living soul their souls are
one;
Nor shall they in wide nature be undone
And lost in the general life. Each separate
heart
Shall live, and find its own, and never die.

ON WITH THE OLD LOVE.

A THANKSGIVING STORY.

Miss Jane Finch was lonely; the sensation was an old one, and she was at a loss what to do with it. She had lived for fifteen years a solitary life, had prided herself for a decade and a half on being independent of and indifferent to the rest or the great human family, and now she grew suddenly weary of her self-imposed solitude. It might be because it was Thanksgiving week, and everybody about her was so busy and bustling and happy, or it might be from many other reasons; but whatever the cause, the fact remains that, on a certain sunny morning in November, Miss Finch awoke to the knowledge that her condition was not to be envied.

In vain she tried to argue herself back into her old self-satisfaction. It was ust as true new as it was yesterday that her brother James had married Sarah Jones—a girl she thought she had good reason to hate; but, someway, there was no pleasure to be gained from comparing their poverty with their riches.

A monster turkey was just being brought into the next door neighbor's; it reminded her that the following day was Thanksgiving, and also reminded her that she had to provide herself with the culinary wherewithal without which no Thanksgiving dinner might be properly celebrated.

It always made Miss Finch's face burn to think of Captain Abel Jones—first cousin to her obnoxious sister-in-law. Long ago, when she was in her teens, they had been lovers, and everybody knew that, as soon as he got his ship, Abel Jones and Jenny Finch were to be man and wife; but one evening she ran over to Sarah's (they had once been bosom friends), and hearing voices in the parlor, had stopped a moment to discover who was there. In that moment she had seen Miss Sarah crying, as if her heart would break, with her head on Mr. Abel's shoulder.

Quite ignoring the fact that these two had been brought up together, and that Abel had time and again told her that Sarah was just the same to him as a dear sister, Miss Finch grew righteously indignant; yet she was just—very just, indeed! she would not judge them on this evidence, although to most any one it would have been proof enough of a very disagreeable fact; but she would wait, and see how their conversation accorded with their position. So she waited.

"Don't cry," said Mr. Abel Jones, pleadingly, "I am sure I can fix it all right. She isn't nearly so fond of me as you think; and you know, Sarah, how dear you are to her. I'll break it to her gently, and I'm sure she'll give me up of her own accord.

Now, Miss Finch hadn't a jealous nature, not at all but the most unsuspicious idiot in the universe could not have misunderstood that speech. It was very evident he wanted to be free from her. So she stole gently out, without letting them know of her presence, walked home at railroad speed, and, with a very proper self-respect, immediately tied up his picture, his few presents and his fewer letters, and sent them back to him with the pretty falsehood that she found she didn't like him well enough to marry him, and should be obliged it he would release her from her engagement.

She didn't propose to be jilted by him—and she wasn't.

Then she went off on a visit, staid two months, and came home to find her brother engaged to her friend, and her false lover nowhere.

In vain she endeavored to prevent this marriage. Her brother would not be convinced, without absolute proof, that Sarah Jones was not a perfect woman. She begged, pleaded and urged. But pride prevented her giving him the one fact of which she had become possessed, and so the two were married, and she took her fortune (left her by her father's only sister) and herself to another town, gradually withdrew herself more and more from the world, until, at twenty-six she was a confirmed misanthrope, seeing no one.

This sort of existence she had kept up until the time our story opens.

Why Sarah Jones married James Finch, and why Abel Jones was still a bachelor sea-captain, were mysteries she did not trouble herself to explain. Sure of their treachery, what mattered it to her how they spent their lives.

To-day Miss Finch, in thinking over her past, acknowledged to herself for the first time that she might have been hasty; not so far as the stalwart sailor was concerned, but about her brother.

"I don't suppose I ought to have expected him to give up his sweetheart without any reason," she thought. "I wouldn't have done it myself. I believe I'll send them a good Thanksgiving dinner. From all I can hear, they ain't able to do much in that line for themselves; and with a sudden twinge of conscience, the more acute from being unusual, Miss Finch hurried on her bonnet and shawl, and started off to market.

Oh, the marvelous purchases she made! Pumpkins, and cranberries, and turkeys, and chickens, and barrels of potatoes, onions, apples, flour and everything else in the eating line that could be desired.

"I'll give 'em a Thanksgiving that will last the winter," she said, grimly; and then, all of a sudden, she felt a great desire to partake of the good things she had generously provided.

"I've a good mind to go down and eat dinner with 'em. I don't know as I'll be welcome, but they can't do more than shut the door in my face. I believe I'll try it, any way. James and I are the only ones left, and I don't think it is right we should live any longer in this way. According to all accounts, Sarah's been a good wife to him."

And so that night Miss Finch started off for a visit to her brother's.

James Finch looked forward to Thanksgiving Day with no great pleasure.

Captain Abel Jones had just returned from a voyage to the Indies, and, as was his custom, repaired immediately to the home of his cousin Sarah, there to remain until such time as his ship should be ready to start again.

"And you hear nothing at all from Jenny?"

To him Jane Finch, spinster, aged forty-one, was not the grim, formidable woman she seemed to everybody else.

He had not seen her since her girlhood, and his memories of her were all of that happy time.

"No," said James Finch, sadly. "We hear of her, but nothing from her. She still lives alone, and refuses to hold communication with any of us."

Captain Jones looked around the poorly furnished little room, and sighed.

"She has changed greatly," he said; "if she can enjoy her wealth, while you are struggling on in this style. I cannot understand it. But there's no use in talking it over. Years ago we decided that it was incomprehensible. Come, to-morrow is Thanksgiving, and we must bestir ourselves to give it a hearty reception."

The husband and wife well knew what that meant.

Captain Jones proposed to provide the Thanksgiving dinner. James Finch with all his poverty was a proud man.

"I can't take it." said he resolutely. "If I was in need Jones, I'd come to you; but I can get along very well without that; and so, until I'm unable to provide myself with one I won't have any."

What the captain would have said, must forever remain a mystery, as, just at that moment, the disputed dinner, in the shape of Miss Jane's donation, drove up to the door.

It was in vain that Mr. Finch protested that the load was not for him. His name and address on the card were correct, and the expressman refused to be convinced.

Then the captain was impaled as the sender; but his astonishment was so evidently genuine, that the veriest skeptic in the universe could not but have believed him innocent.

But that mystery! Mrs. Sarah was a utilitarian. She did not waste her energies in trying to imagine where the things came from—not she! She rolled up her sleeves, put on a big apron and went to work.

Oh, the marvelous time she made that day! But, after all, it was little wonder, for she impressed everybody—from the big, good-natured captain to little six-year-old Jimmy—into service.

Miss Jane made her appearance, bright and early, on Thanksgiving morning. Mrs. Sarah was alone in the kitchen when she entered.

"How do you do, Sarah?" said she, not very cordially it must be confessed, for although prepared to extend the right hand of fellowship to James and the little ones, she could not, even now, look upon her sister-in-law except as a traitor, whom she would be obliged to make the best of.

"Oh, Jane!" and Mrs Sarah, with one rush, left her cranberries to take care of themselves, and gave her husband's sister a heartier welcome than she deserved by a good sight.

Miss Jane didn't return her kiss, but she suffered it; and though she did mutter "Judas!" under her breath, I think she was a good deal more comfortable than she would have been if her hostess had been as cold and stiff as herself.

Draw right up to the stove, and take off your things," and the little woman bustled about, in a whirl of delight. "Oh, won't James be glad! Dear, dear! He ought to be here this minute. And to think it's Thanksgiving Day, and we've got so much to be thankful for!" And then her thoughts went back to their unknown friend of the day before, and, like a flash the truth came to her. "Oh, Jane!" she went on, with a gasp, "I see now, it was you sent us the things. Oh, dear! how can we ever thank you?" Then she rushed back to the cranberries, which showed signs of stewing over, and, for the first time since her entrance, Miss Jane had a chance to put in a word.

She had just opened her mouth to say something in explanation of her sudden appearance, when the door opened, and in walked Captain Abel.

"Got anything for me to do, Sally?" he asked, with a laugh; and then the great-whiskered man stopped short, perceiving the stranger, who sat just in front of the fire.

Miss Jane had been a beauty in her youth, and even now was not at all ugly. Her eyes were bright, her teeth were as white as ever, and her dimples were not things of the past, by any manner of means. But for a few wrinkles, and a hard look, which was the natural result of her hard life, she would have been a very handsome woman. She had not changed so much as had the captain; but both were recognizable, and each, after one glance, knew the other. Mrs. Sarah looked up from her cranberries eagerly.

"Oh, Abel, here's Jane—Jane Finch!"

Captain Abel came forward, and extended his hand; but it was an awkward meeting. They had not seen each other since the breaking off of their engagement—over a score of years before—and both of them were uncomfortably conscious of the fact. But Captain Abel drew a chair up to the stove, and tried to talk as if he had forgotten all about it; they discussed the weather, the crops, and everything else they cared nothing about, until Mrs. Sarah, who was all in a whirl with the surprise of Miss Jane's visit, and who could not keep still—try as she would—broke into the conversation with:

"Oh, Abel, do you remember the last day we saw Jane, dear? What a mess I was in! I was engaged to Jim, and nobody knew it; and mother was bound you and I should make a match of it. I never shall forget the afternoon we decided to tell her all about it. Goodness, how I cried—on your shoulder, too, Abe—and how you tried to convince me that poor ma didn't care much about you, and had just as lieve I'd take somebody else, if you only explained it to her preperly—and you were right, too!"

And the little woman, quite overcome by these reminiscences, opened the oven door, and commenced an energetic basting of the turkey contained therein.

Poor Miss Jane was too much astonished by this revelation to be prudent.

"And wasn't you in love with Sarah?" she asked, breathlessly, of the captain.

"Why, I was engaged to you."

"I know it!" she said. "But I thought you—"

"Thought what?" and the captain drew his chair eagerly toward her. "Was that the reason you acted so toward me?"

If silence gives consent, Miss Jane confessed that it was, and he went on:

"Well, now that you know it wasn't so, what are you going to do about it?" And Captain Abel hitched his chair closer still.

Miss Jane didn't pretend not to understand.

"We're too old!" she murmured.

But a week after, she was Mrs. Abel Jones: so it is to be supposed that Captain Abel vetoed the motion.

A Toady.

There is a kind ov ekonomy that don't pay; it iz the kind that people resort to after they hav squandered all their munny. The man who lives the life ov a toady is a kind of human spit-box. A gentleman kant hide hiz true karakter enny more than a loafer kan. Peace iz what we all long for, and what we git tired ov the quickest. The man who kan control his wants iz the only one who can control hiz happiness. The man whom you kan flatter you kan abuse at your leisure. Epitaffs are like cirkuss bills, thare iz a grate deal in the bills that iz never performed. It don't pay to be mean; no man ever dun a mean thing yet without being dissatisfied with it. All ov the suckcessfull vices have made their debut under cover ov sum one of the virtews. Cerimonys in society are absolutely necessary to preserve good order; most people hav no other idee ov good breeding than cerimonys.—*Josh Billings.*

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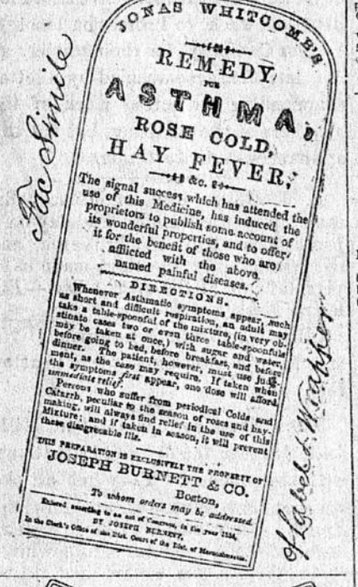

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