

Lines to a Skeleton.

[Exactly sixty years ago the London *Morning Chronicle* published a poem entitled "Lines to a Skeleton," which excited much attention. Every effort, even to the offering of a reward of fifty guineas, was vainly made to discover its author. All that ever transpired was that the poem, in a fair clerical hand, was found near a skeleton of remarkable beauty of form in the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, Lincoln's Inn, London, and that the Curator of the Museum had sent them to Mr. Ferry, editor and proprietor of the *Morning Chronicle*.]

Behold this ruin! 'Twas a skull.
Once of ethereal spirit full;
This narrow cell was life's retreat
This space was thought's mysterious seat.
What beautiful visions flit this spot!
What dreams of pleasure long forgot!
No hope, nor joy, nor love, nor fear,
Have left one trace of record here.

Beneath this mouldering canopy
One shows the brightest sunny face;
But start not at the dismal view;
If social love less eye employed;
If with no lawless eye it glanced,
But through the view of kindness beamed,
That eye shall be forever bright.
When stars and suns are sunk in night.

Within this hollow cavern hung
The ready, swift and tuneful tongue.
If falsehood's breath could breathe of form
And where it could not praise was chained;
If bold in virtue's cause it spoke,
Yet gentle could never break,
This silent tongue shall plead for thee
When time unveils eternity.

Say, did these fingers delve the mine?
Or with its slender rubies shine?
To how the rock, or wear the gem,
Can little now avail to them.
But if the pace of truth they sought,
Or comfort to the mourner brought,
The hands a richer metal claim
Than all that was on earth or fame.

Avails it whether bared or shod
These feet that tread the dusty road?
If from the halls of ease they fled,
To seek affection's humble shed,
If grandeur's haughty bride they spurned,
And home to virtue's cot returned,
These feet with angel's wings shall vie,
And tread the palace of the sky.

OUR PASSENGER.

THE CAPTAIN'S STORY.

It was a lovely autumn afternoon toward the close of September, when we weighed anchor, and sailed out of the river Mersey, bound for Melbourne. We had a good ship—Janet's Pride—loaded with miscellaneous articles. On board were four passengers, and take them all in all, a pleasant lot I never steered across the stormy seas.

There were three old gentlemen, who were going out to share their fortunes, come to that night, and which, poor old fellows, they seemed to be fastened in the brightest colors, long before the English coast was out of sight.

Then there was a solitary old gentleman, who, judging from the general tone of his conversation, was seeking the new world for the ostensible purpose of finding fault with its manners and customs.

There were two young married couples, all full of hope and activity, bent upon making a new home far away from their native land.

There were also a very jolly elderly brother and sister, neither of whom had ever entered into the bonds of matrimony, but instead, had stuck by each other through life. The kind-hearted brother and sister, found themselves minus every article of jewelry that they had possessed. Even the grumbling old gentleman had lost his gold snuff-box.

There was no keeping matters quiet this time. The thief must be traced and the method of procedure? What would Mr. Moore suggest?

"I would suggest, though most reluctantly," said Mr. Moore, "that every sailor and every sailor's luggage be carefully searched."

"To this proposition we unanimously agreed," he continued, "must be most humiliating to the feelings of your crew, captain, and therefore, in common fairness to them as our fellowmen, let me also suggest that every passenger and every passenger's luggage be also thoroughly searched."

A little hesitation on the part of one or two of the passengers was demonstrated before acceding to this last proposal, but our pleasant passenger soon contrived to bring those who at first demurred to his side of thinking.

"Or course," he said, "there is not a passenger on board who is not above suspicion, yet in justice to the feelings of the crew, it is, in my humble opinion, the least we can do."

This delicacy of feeling and this thoughtfulness on the part of Reginald Moore, rendered him, if possible, more admirable and praiseworthy in our eyes than ever.

Most of the crew objected strongly to this mode of procedure, but all were compelled to submit. The old boatswain was furious with indignation, and vowed that if it cost him his life he would trace the thief who had caused him to be searched like a common pick-pocket. Even the pleasant passenger failed to soothe his sense of injury.

"Well, a thorough search was made by myself, in company with the kind-hearted old gentleman and his sister. Every one's 'traps' were ransacked from top to bottom, but without success.

Further search was useless. What was to be done? At that night all having been snug, and passengers having turned in, none of them, as you may imagine, in very brilliant spirits, I went on deck, it being what we call at sea "the captain's watch."

I turned in about four a. m., the second officer was on board. I could not with infinite pleasure, make a long pipe at this juncture in the thread of my story, to dwell upon the pleasant memories I still retain of Reginald Moore.

We were within a week's sail of Melbourne. Reginald Moore had all but completed a model of the Janet's Pride, which he proposed presenting to me the night before we landed.

fact that I should explain matters. The fact of the matter is, my watch has been stolen."

"Stoien!" we all exclaimed in a breath.

"Undoubtedly," he answered; "but I pray you, captain—here he turned to me—say not one word about it. The only thing that renders the loss of consequence to me is the fact that it once belonged to my poor mother. On that account alone, I would not have lost it for any amount of money. However, it cannot be helped, and therefore it is useless to cry over spilt milk, as the old adage has it. My only request in the matter is, my dear captain, that you will leave the matter entirely in my hands, and I think it very probable that I may recover it. This request I am sure you will oblige me by granting."

"Certainly, my dear sir," I replied; "but still—"

"Exactly," he interrupted, with one of his pleasant smiles, "you would like to take the matter in hand and investigate it to the utmost of your power. I know that, my dear captain, full well; but I can trust you to keep your promise, and leave the case entirely in my hands."

How could I deny him his request. You will readily imagine what consternation this event gave rise to among the other passengers. The three old gentlemen instantly proceeded to explain that they possessed jewelry to the value of at least three hundred pounds, which they usually kept locked up in a brown leather writing case; but unfortunately, at the present time, the lock was out of order.

Mr. Reginald Moore suggested a safer deposit for their valuables. The young married couples announced the fact of their owning at least two hundred and fifty pounds' worth of jewelry; and they, too, consulted Mr. Moore. The safest plan of securing it, the kind-hearted brother and sister had, it appeared, more valuables in the way of jewelry than any one on board, since fifteen hundred pounds had never purchased what they possessed.

The whole of the evening was occupied in speculating as to the probable perpetrator of the theft, and in condoling with Mr. Reginald Moore on his great loss.

Every one turned in, at that night, in an uneasy state of mind; and it was with astonishment that they found themselves in the morning still in possession of all their worldly goods. This improved condition of affairs seemed to reassure our passengers, who again began to look cheerful and at ease.

Reginald Moore's pleasant face wore its wonted smile, and, as heretofore, he enlivened and charmed us with his vivacity and anecdote. All day through, he worked at the model of the Janet's Pride, and used the top of the empty water-cask for a work-table.

That night we retired to rest with minds far more at ease than on the previous one. Alas! what a scene of anger and distress came with the morning! Every passenger on board possessing jewelry had been robbed during the night.

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astonishing rapidity, replaced the lid of the cask. In another moment the cause of his alarm was made apparent, as a couple of sailors passed him on their way to relieve the man at the wheel.

When all was again quiet, for an instant he seemed determined to at once return to the cask, and no doubt, without drawing something that the interruption had prevented him withdrawing in the first instance. But suddenly changing his mind, he went down the stairs that led from the deck to the saloon and sleeping cabins.

Scarcely had he disappeared, when another figure, stealthily crossing the deck, met my anxious observation. It was the boatswain.

I saw him glance toward the stairs, down which Mr. Reginald Moore had taken his departure. He then made direct for the water-cask. It was now obvious to me that the old boatswain had been watching the pleasant passenger.

Just as he reached the water-cask, a heavy green sea struck the ship to windward, necessitating the boatswain to hold on by a rope so as to keep his footing, and precisely at the same moment Reginald Moore appeared at the top of the cabin stairs. I shall never forget the scene.

The instant the ship had steadied herself, the boatswain commenced his examination of the water-cask. For a moment only, Moore stood looking at him with as evil an expression on his face as I ever beheld.

With one bound he was upon the boatswain, before he could turn to protect himself. I waited no longer, but flung open the door of my cabin in an instant, and in another was to the rescue, and in a few moments we had our pleasant passenger in irons. So, you see, he was the thief, after all, hiding his knavery under the pleasant exterior I ever knew of a man possessing.

The manner in which he had manufactured the top of that water cask was the most finished and ingenious piece of carpentry I ever beheld. In the interior of the side of the cask he had driven several nails, about two feet from the top, on which he had suspended, in wash-leather bags, the jewelry he had stolen.

You may easily imagine the surprise evinced by our passengers on discovering that the thief was the man for whom each and every one of them entertained such regard and even affection.

At the expiration of three days from the date of the pleasant passenger's departure, we landed in Melbourne, where duty compelled me to hand him over to the police; but as no one cared to remain in that town for the purpose of prosecuting him, he was summarily dealt with. The magistrate sentenced him to six months' imprisonment with hard labor.

My Little Love.
HESTER A. BENEDECT.
I.
My little love, asleep so far,
Beyond the hills I cannot cross nor climb,
Forgetting where the bees and wild birds are,
And musing not the running river's rhyme—
I pray you, in the silence grown sweet
And full of heaven—since having you to hold,
Dream that the wind hath kissed for your feet,
Blow from my heart with blessings manifold.

II.
The palms are proud above me and I go,
Singing across the laughter-loving land,
Telling, sometimes, with my voice dropped low,
Of the wind that kissed for your feet,
Blow from my heart with blessings manifold.

III.
And I sing with brooks, and birds, and bees,
Under the palms and where the pampa grows;
Choosing my many friends from them and these,
And from wild winds that seek Sierra's snows,
And so I wear the raiment of delight,
And so I walk with glad and loving feet;
And so I wait, till past the day and night,
Finding my love, I find my love complete.
—Baltimore Monthly, February, 1879.

THE AVALANCHE.
The following graphic account of the perils of avalanches in the Alps is from "Hours of Exercise in the Alps," by the celebrated John Tyndall, the scientist. A party of six were being conducted by two local guides and a famous Alpine guide, Johann Joseph Bennen, over the Haut de Cry, one of the Swiss Alps. They advanced in the beginning of the ascent very rapidly. The snow was glistening before them, and hopes of success cheered their spirits. After a time they came to snow frozen upon the surface which would bear them a few steps and then break down. This, of course, delayed matters and was very fatiguing. Finally it came to a point that, in order to reach a certain *aret*, they would be obliged to go up a steep snow field 800 feet high, 150 feet broad at the top and 500 feet at the bottom. During the ascent they sank about one foot at every step. After mounting for some distance the two leading men suddenly sunk above their waists. They were enabled to get up after some struggles and presently found better footing and came to the conclusion that the snow was accidentally softer than elsewhere. But Bennen was afraid of starting an avalanche, and said so. They started forward again—but let the back of the snow slide.

The snow field split in two about fourteen or fifteen feet above us. The cleft was as first quite narrow, not more than an inch broad. An awful silence ensued, and then it was broken by Bennen's voice:

"Wir sind alle verloren" (we are all lost). His words were slow and solemn, and those who knew him felt what they really meant when spoken by such a man as Bennen. They were his last words. I drove my alpenstock into the snow and brought the weight of my body to bear on it. It went in to within three inches of the top. I then waited. It was an awful moment of suspense, and yet my head toward Bennen to see whether he had done the same thing.

To my astonishment, I saw him turn round, and face the valley and stretch out both arms. The ground on which we stood began to move slowly, and I felt utter uselessness of my alpenstock. I soon sunk up to my shoulders, and began descending backward. From this moment I saw nothing of what had happened to the rest of the party.

With a good deal of trouble I succeeded in turning round. The speed of the avalanche increased rapidly, and before long I was covered up with snow and in utter darkness. I was suffocating, when, with a jerk, I suddenly came to the surface again. The rope had caught, and this was evident by the moment when it broke. I was on a wave of the avalanche, and saw it before me as I was carried down.

It was the most awful sight I ever witnessed. The head of the avalanche was already at the spot where we had made our last halt. The head alone was preceded by a thick cloud of snow-dust; the rest of the avalanche was clear.

Around me I heard the horrible hissing of the snow, and far before me the thundering of the foremost part of the avalanche. To prevent myself sinking again I made use of my arms, much in the same way as when swimming in a standing position. At last I noticed that I was moving slowly; then I saw the pieces of snow in front of me stop at some yards distant; then the snow, straight before me stopped, and I heard to a large scale the same creaking sound that is produced when a heavy cart passes over hard-frozen snow in winter.

I felt that I should stop, and in a moment I had my arms to protect my head in case I should again be covered up. I had stopped, but the snow behind me was still in motion; its pressure on my body was so strong that I thought I should be crushed to death. This tremendous pressure lasted but a short time, and ceased as suddenly as it had begun. I was then covered up with snow coming from the sides. My first impulse was to try and uncover my head, but this could not do. The avalanche had frozen by pressure the moment it stopped, and I was frozen in.

Whistling vainly to move my arms, I suddenly became aware that the hands as far as the wrists had the faculty of motion. The conclusion was easy; they must be above the snow. I set to work as well as I could; it was time, for I could not have held out much longer. At last I saw a faint glimmer of light. The crust above my head was getting thinner and it let a little air pass, but I could not reach it. I was then covered up with snow coming from the sides. My first impulse was to try and uncover my head, but this could not do. The avalanche had frozen by pressure the moment it stopped, and I was frozen in.

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Miscellaneous Items.

The Mollie Maguire may well pause and consider, when Pennsylvania hangs two men for murder of a person named Smith.—*N. O. Picayune.*

"Marriage," says a cynic, "is like putting your hand into a bag containing ninety-nine snakes and one eel. You may get the eel, but the chances are against you."

A courtly negro recently sent a reply to an invitation in which the "regretted" circumstances repugnant to the acquiescence would prevent his acceptance to the invite."

A lady in Louisville has a husband who snores. She keeps a clothes-pin under her pillow; and when his snoring awakes her, she puts it on his nose, then sleeps in peace.

"How does my mustache impress you?" asked a conceited fop of a young lady. To which she replied: "It impresses me with the idea that your upper lip is mourning for the loss of your brain."

In the midst of a quarrel—"I don't know what keeps me from breaking your head!" "Well, I know what keeps me from breaking yours. I'm a member of the society for the prevention of cruelty to animals!"

The Boston Transcript says, "A North End man calls his baby Madeth, because it murders steen." The story is something like that of the Irishman who called his pig Mand, because she would come into the garden.—*N. O. Pic.*

A French paper reports a trial in which a witness testified that he heard two pistol shots on the staircase, and sent the wife to see what was the matter. "You did not see your husband?" "No, sir; I was afraid of the revolver."

The Austrian-Bosnian question has been thus cleverly hit off. Two Parisian gamins are conversing. "A Congress—what is it?" "Well, this: I want to do something for you, so I give you that gentleman's watch and chain. Now it is for you to go and take it!"

Facetious Old Party—"How long do you say this wine has been bottled, waiter?" "Walter—" "Fourteen years, sir." "Facetious Old Party—" "Lor, I didn't know flies would live as long as that." "Walter—flies, sir!" "Facetious Old Party—" "Yes; I mean that one kicking about in the bottle."

Examination day: present, the school committee-man; class in morals on the floor. "Teacher—" "What do the sunshine, the song of birds, the flowers, the beautiful green fields mean?" "Bright Pupil—" "They show the greatness and goodness of the equator."—*N. E. Journal of Education.*

A little girl, visiting a neighbor with her mother, was gazing curiously at the hostess' new bonnet, when the owner queried, "Do you like it, Laura?" The innocent replied, "Why, mother said it was a perfect fright, but it don't scare me." Laura's mother didn't stay long after that.

Souvenir of the exposition by "Cham." Small gentleman appears in huge hat, which inflates him to his shoulders. His wife—But that hat doesn't fit you, my love. He—That's what I told the man; but he showed me his gold medal. The only one awarded for hats, and what could I do!

Little girl gets ninety-nine thousand marks for singing in Berlin this night. We remember of getting about that number at a boarding-school once for singing one night—and we didn't sing long either. And we've got some of em now, too.—*Oshkoosh Christian Advocate.*

A Norwich youngster of five years, having been playing in various private stables in the neighborhood where he lived, on being remonstrated thereupon by his mother, replied: "Well, I dess if a barn was dood enough for Jesus to be born in, it's dood enough for little boys to play in!"

A little Portland girl recently testified innocently to the life of drudgery experienced by the average "Queen of the household" who does her own housework. Somebody asked the child if her mother's hair was gray. "I don't know," she said, "she is too tall for me to see the top of her head, and she never sits down!"

A colored child had a fall from a second-story window, the other day, and his mother, in relating the occurrence at a grocery, said: "Dere dat child was a coming down feet fist, wid every chance of bein' killed, when de Lawd, he turned him over, de child struck on his head, and dere wasn't no such a button 'dew off."

The longer I live the more I become satisfied that nothing is so good for people who are in deep trouble as real hard work—work that not only occupies the hands, but the brain; work on which one lavishes the best part of the heart.—*George Eliot.* Any one deep in trouble can have a bucket and wood-pile by applying at this office.—*St. Louis Post.*

The champion long-nosed man resides at Sacramento. His owner was at breakfast, when a friend seated on the opposite side of the table, knowing him to be a little near-sighted, remarked, "There's a fly on the end of your nose." "Is there?" responded the owner of the horn of plenty. "I didn't know it. Just please scare him off; you're nearer to him than I am!"

"Are you engaged?" said a gentleman to a young young lady from Marysville, at a ball the other evening.

"I was, but if that Pete Johnson thinks I'm going to sit here and see him squeeze that freckle-faced Wilkins girl's hand all the evening, he'll be mistaken, salt-water or salt-free!"

The gentleman explained, and went out to get air.

A German, in telling a rather Munchausenish story of his exploits, "gave himself away" in one of the incidents of his narrative thus: "In this battle we lost the brave Captain Schultz. A cannon ball took off his head. His last words were 'Bury me on the spot where I fell.'" Had the narrator been an Irishman, the statement would not have been reflected so seriously on his veracity.

folded his arms across his buzzum, with his air parted down the middle, O, he looked puffed up like a balloon.

Long ago, when Bayard Taylor was a young man, he wrote in the album of a young friend the following lines, which revealed the character of his inspirations at that early age:

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