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MY MOTHER'S GRAVE.

BY G. D. PRENTICE.

The trembling dew-drops fill
Upon the shutting flowers—like owls at rest—
The star-shine [illegible]—and all
Save me is blest.

Mother! I love thy grave!
The violet, with its precious blue and mild,
Wave over thy head—when shall it wave
Above thy child?

'Tis a sweet flower—yet must
Its bright leaves to the coming tempest bow?
Dear mother, let thine emblem—dust
Is on thy brow.

And I could love to die—
To leave, untouch'd by the dark, bitter streams,
By thee, as erst in childhood, lie,
And share thy dreams.

And I must linger here,
To stain the plumage of my sinless years,
And mourn the hopes to childhood dear,
With bitter tears?

Ay, and I linger here,
A lonely branch upon a blasted tree,
While the last leaf, in melancholy sere,
Went down with thee?

Out from life's withered flower,
In sad communion with the past, I turn
And muse upon the only flower
In memory's urn.

And when the evening pale,
Looks like a mourner on the dim blue wave,
I stray to hear the night-wind's wail
Around thy grave.

Where is thy child?Own
I gaze above—thy look is imaged there;
I listen, and thy gentle tone
Is on the air.

Oh, come—what here I press
My brow upon thy grave—and in those mild
And chilling tones of tenderness,
Bless, bless thy child!

Yes, bless thy weeping child,
And give thy son—religion's holiest shrine—
Oh, give his spirit modelled
To meet with thine.

THE BRITISH CAMP AND ANNIE LAURIE.

We give below the words of "Annie Laurie," now the most popular ballad in the British camp. It was sung by the second battalion of the rifle brigade, the night prior to the attack on the Great Redan. A correspondent, who was present on the occasion, writes

"Hundreds of voices, in the most exact time and harmony, sang together—

'And for bonnie Annie Laurie,
I'd lay me down and die.'

The effect was extraordinary; at least I felt it so. I never heard any chorus in an oratorio rendered with greater solemnity. The heart of each singer was evidently far over the sea. It was more like a psalm than a ballad; for at such a time, on the eve of a great battle, a soldier only thinks of his love and his God."

ANNIE LAURIE.

Maxwelton braes are bonnie,
Where early falls the dew,
And it's there that Annie Laurie
Gaed me her promise true;
Gaed me her promise true,
Which ne'er forgot will be;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me down and die.

Her brow is like the snawdrift—
Her throat is like the swan—
Her face it is the fairest
That e'er the sun shine on—
That e'er the sun shine on,
And dark blue is her eye;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me down and die.

Like dew on the gowan lying
Is the fall of her many feet,
And like the wines in summer sighing
Her voice is low and sweet,
Her voice is low and sweet,
And she's all the world to me;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me down and die.

PRAYER.

Man's plea to man is, that he never more
Will beg; and that he never begged before:
Man's plea to God is, that he did obtain
A boaster suit, and therefore sues again.
How good a God we serve; that, when we sue,
Makes his old gifts th' examples of his new!
Quarles.

The few that pray at all, pray off amiss,
And seeking grace to improve the prize they hold,
Would urge a wiser suit, than asking more.
Cowper.

A good man's prayers
Will from the deepest dungeon climb to heaven's height,
And bring a blessing down. *Joanna Baillie.*

Fountain of mercy! whose pervading eye
Can look within the dread what passes there,
Accept my thought for thanks; I have no words.
My soul, overcaught with gratitude, rejects
The aid of language—Lord!—behold my heart.
Hannah More.

Any heart, turned Godward, feels more joy
In one short hour of prayer, than e'er was cast
By all the feasts on earth since their foundation.
Bailey.

O, the precious privilege
To the poor given,—
Sending by the wave of prayer
Holy words to heaven!
Arrows from the burning sun
Cleave the quivering air,—
Swifter, softer, onward on,
Speeds the dove of prayer,
Bearing from the parted lips
Words of holy love,
Warm as from the heart they gush'd
To the throne above! *Mrs. Hale.*

CLOSING OF THE LEDGER.

BY HENRY MORFORD.

Close up the Ledger, Time!
Slowly or hastily, but let it be,
Mournfully passed by the years:
What are the records for you and me
Left by the falling fingers here?
What for passion, and what for love?
What for avarice and crime?
What for hope and the heaven above?
What of the Ledger, Time!

Close up the Ledger, Time!
Many a page for good or ill,
Frills to the margin your blotted scroll—
Many a high and haughty will,
Many a low but humble soul;
Yet one page to each is given,
Marking the changing path we climb,
Holding the balance of hell or heaven;—
What of the Ledger, Time!

Close up the Ledger, Time!
Say, are we credited—aught?
Have we a [illegible] of noble deed,
Springing from high and generous thought,
Such as our fellow brother needs?
Have we laid up for coming years
Words to weave in a funeral rhyme,
Names that will call up grateful tears?
What of the Ledger, Time!

Close up the Ledger, Time!
Say what promises hopes has drawn—
Say what results stern truth has paid;
Say what bankrupt hopes have gone
In the grave with memory laid;
Say if the heart has kept its own,
Gathering beauty with lure and lime,
Say what fabrics are o'er its own:—
What of the Ledger, Time!

Close up the Ledger, Time!
Hark the knell of the year gone by!
Have I run out my golden sand?
Where shall I be when the next shall die?
Where shall the soul within me stand?
Naught beyond may the Ledger tell;
Naught be known but in guilt and crime:
Listen! I hear the New Year's bell!
Shut up the Ledger, Time!

The Caledonian.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE. With Notes. 2 volumes 8mo. Boston: Phillips, Sampson & Co.

Of new books there is no end: and of old books in new editions there are countless numbers. It is not a paradox to say that some old books are always new. They are like perennial fountains ever fresh and pure as when first they flowed from the lips of genius centuries ago. The demand for such must ever remain exhaustless. The masterpieces of mind, whether in art or literature, never grow old, and our human nature never ceases to recognize in them the grand workings of the inner secrets of existence. The lapse of ages, in fact, only serves to furnish forth new illustrations of their truth and power, new proofs of their universal sympathy with nature and man, and their intuitive recognition of all that is noble and godlike, amid so much that is ignoble and devilish. Hence the student of life may derive nearly the same profit in studying the characters of Shakspeare as from studying those of the work-day people by whom he is surrounded, and with this advantage: that there the actors are cut in strong *relief* by the bold free strokes of a master: whereas, in life, every thing is seen as through a glass, *darkly*. We may therefore be lightly excused if, to a notice of this new and beautiful edition of the great dramatist, we append a few observations, not altogether new it may be, nor yet altogether useless, since the field is exhaustless as the air we breathe, or as the light that radiates from a thousand suns.

Shakspeare is never simply diverting and amusing. His views of life are higher, and hence his aims are nobler. As in life that which is, in action or feeling, most apparent, whether trivial or grand, is but the natural working of those profounder laws of being which have their course all silent and unseen, so, in Shakspeare, is character the natural outworking of a deeper and more far-reaching principle than is apparent upon the surface of life. And as in life, the fact that we cannot see and comprehend all drives us often to skepticism, often to a belief in fatality and chance for a solution of life's enigma, seeing no goodness in its end, no higher law of justice and mercy in its workings, so is Shakspeare often closed in doubt and obscurity, concealing from blinded eyes its lamp of light and life. This arises from the fact that the right and only key which leads to his treasures is not employed. If it be sought for in amusement, it will not be found. If it be considered simply as poetry, it is not there. If it be tested as religious character, the manifest working of religious principle, it will also fail of application. But if the key be sought in the workings of our own moral nature, in the development of the great truths of moral being, in the ultimate conformity of life in all its phases to the higher laws of moral truth and virtue, through the medium of daily action, and by the means of retribution and reward, according to the natural laws of conscience: then, indeed, is the whole book open before us, written as with the point of a diamond.

We have no sympathy with verbal criticisms or peculiar interpretations. In reading him we would seek no hidden meaning, prate of neither this or that philosophy, nor refer to this or that creed as the one he had in his mind. We would not always claim for him gravity or profundity, or hold that he always appreciated himself or understood the full import of his ideas. No more, as Goethe says, than that the beautiful woman comprehends the mysteries of the being of the offspring that for the first time nestles in loveliness upon her bosom. But we do claim that he is always true to life: that he ever, if understood, teaches the great lessons of virtue and moral truth; and does so by the very constitution of his universal genius, true to the laws of virtue and truth which it represents. In fact, it must be true, since all mental greatness is conditioned on these, and without these can have no genuine and healthy development. In his pages is life *embodied* with all its deep and subtle influences. Not one force, not one impulse is wanting in all the whirl and confusion of dramatic action. Hence to the eye at first it may look like a maze without a plan: and yet there is the deepest, which, when understood, tells powerfully on the side of truth; and in no case is he ever treacherous to nature and humanity. By as much as the manifold contrariety of influences, impulses, and feelings, are left out, by so much is the play plain, simple, and some say natural.—Hence, in strange contrast with Shakspeare's manner, are the plays of the passions—one *virtue*, one *sentiment* or habit. In them, *art* becomes conspicuous, the action uniform and direct, the plot clear, and the catastrophe certain and inevitable. The great play and interplay of the thousand outward influences that are woven around, modifying character and changing events, are all here sheared off, till the naked design of the author is most apparent, the character insipid, and the action tame. This is true of Joanna Baillie's plays, of Sheridan's and eminently of Ford's. This is most true of the Grecian drama, and that, compared with the highest forms of the romantic drama, would be little better than colloquy, ennobled however by the highest passions, and elevated by the boldest sentiment and action.

As we have said, there is significance in every play, in every character. It may be upon the surface, and apparent to every school-boy, as the ambition of Richard III. or the quarrels of the Capulets and Montagues; or it may require the highest philosophy of a Coleridge to make plain, as in Hamlet or King Lear.

His most penetrating insight into the motives and actions of men may appear in the anomaly of King Lear's fool; and talents, originally noble, but besotted and debased, may outrage nature in the mammoth rotundity of a Falstaff; and yet all these find their explanation in the highest moral truths of our being. Let us take two principles, of which the expulsion of Cordelia by Lear, and the "Taming the Shrew" are but the direct evolution, and see how these remarks may be illustrated.

The first is an every day case, and lies upon the surface. The reason of its beauty is to be sought in the inimitable *manner* of its relation and not in the incident itself. Goneril and Regan belong to the most ordinary class of villains (if the term may be applied to women). Their intellects are stronger than their affections; their passions, as avarice and selfishness, are stronger than either: and hence their brawling strumpet tongues easily overpower the delicate sensibility and tender affection of Cordelia in the estimate of the doting and childish father, who sees but the *outside* of things. Goneril and Regan are the most frequent characters, and the most easily understood by the mass; while the beautiful and affectionate Cordelias, whose hearts are not always on their tongues, are often trampled to earth by the heartless and unthinking. And yet the law of happiness is so wisely balanced that the cold, selfish, and unfeeling, are not so happy in the full enjoyment of possession, as the tender and affectionate are in yielding and alleviating. Regan and Goneril possessed the kingdom, yet was Cordelia happiest in the possession of virtue, affection, and truth. And here is not Shakspeare true to nature? Has he not justified the ways of God to man?

In the case of taming the shrew, the truth is none the less certain, yet it lies deeper in the tangled web of human action. You often hear it spoken of as a strange conceit of Shakspeare's—a curious farce, a fanciful sketch;—whereas it is true to nature as the constancy, love and affection of Desdemona. Kate is the type of almost half a world of women brought up in the full enjoyment of every whim, every fancy, every caprice and conceit; only her passions are stronger, and her parents have less of firmness and decision, more childishness and folly. Nowninety-nine men out of an hundred would have sought to reform her (if they had strength of mind and resolution enough to have undertaken it at all,) by kindness and gentleness, overcoming evil with good. That would be the first and apparent way, sure for most cases. But mark what Petruchio did. He sought deeper for the solution, and was successful. He saw that the education which produced this was conventional and factitious; that her very passion and feeling, her strength of mind and character, were capable of the highest development of the most perfect woman. Thus having untied the Gordian knot in his own mind, he sought to break it in practice, and did so most happily, and thus in the wayward Kate he found the most true, devoted, obedient and affectionate of women. It was on the homœopathic system that what *makes*, *cures*, and should we ever become a commentator on Shakspeare, we should prove that he had that system in his mind, and founded this play upon it.

Thus, what in prosperity was the most weak, capricious and disgusting, in adversity had changed, as if by magic, into all that is true, beautiful and lovely in the character of woman. The brawling shrew, while in the possession of that which *should* have made her happy, was most miserable. It was for hardship and distress to make her loving, kind, and happy.

Shakspeare! how dost thou shame us of our degenerate nature, and point out the way to our highest moral worthiness!

[From the New York Observer.]

A WATERSPOUT.

A most fearful catastrophe has just occurred in the harbor of Tunis. A waterspout passed over at half past 7 o'clock, A. M., and in an instant five vessels foundered, and one was dismasted, the names of which, with the details, are enclosed in an official document, obtained from the harbormaster's office. I was a passenger by a boat which left Tunis at 7.30 A. M. bound to a steamer in harbor, belonging to the Messegeries Imperiales.—The lake being eight miles across, we had advanced about half the distance when my attention was attracted to a remarkable cloud, which in a very short space of time assumed the unmistakable appearance of a waterspout. It continued to grow in size as well as increase in proportion, until it presented the appearance of a huge oak, a most colossal trunk supporting a majestic head.—It moved gradually, causing by its power of suction a corresponding action in the waves over which it passed, they rising in the usual form in such cases.

In about half an hour it had lost its well-defined outline, and appeared to be gradually dissolving, about which time an immense excitement was visible among the crew and passengers of the boat, all Italians; but I being unfortunately ignorant of that language, could surmise that some terrible catastrophe had occurred, in which something of the name of "bastimento" had suffered. By dint of perseverance I at length became alive to the awful nature of the event, for rising on the seat of the boat, and looking across the narrow neck of land dividing the lake from the harbor, a scene of the most awful havoc presented itself. Five vessels had disappeared, with the exception of their masts. The appearance of these, as may be imagined, was a sight to make a beholder uneasy as to the fate of the various crews and passengers: but as our utmost efforts could have produced (on account of our distance from the scene) no beneficial result, we were reluctantly compelled to allow matters to take their course. On arriving at Goletta we learned the full extent of the disaster; and, considering it possible this letter might reach you by the vessel leaving this day with the mails, I at once penned these few hurried lines, giving a most incomplete account of that which even here is an unprecedented visitation.

The thunder is now rolling in the most awful manner; its reverberations are appalling. It is a most fortunate circumstance that an American frigate, the *Constellation*, which passed eight days in the harbor, and which had on board 300 souls, sailed two days ago; had she been here and in the track of the mighty destroyer, she would inevitably have been lost, with perhaps a considerable number of her officers and crew.

I have the honor to remain, sir, your obedient servant, JAMES SQUIRES.

TUNIS, *Nov. 18—9 o'clock, A. M.*

[From the New Orleans Bee.]

THE LOAN OFFICE WINDOW.

The pawnbroker is an "institution" in every large city of the world, and his window is a curiosity. He is called "my uncle" by needy and seedy young gentlemen, who are fond of making a show, and whose only means of raising the wherewithal occasionally is by a visit to their obliging financial relative. But needy and seedy nephews are not "my uncle's" only customers. He has many others, ranging from the highest circles of aristocratic pride to those who are but one removed above beggary, and well does he know how to accommodate himself to their ever varying peculiarities. A keen, shrewd, calculating man is "my uncle," and practical withal; for, instead of the romantic title "pawnbroker's shop," he has changed the name of his shop to the "loan office," and he assumes the benevolent duty of making loans to the needy "for a consideration." Truly, an accommodating man is "my uncle."

On a favorite street of this good city of ours a Loan Office has for some time flourished, and as we have passed it almost every day for quite a number of years, our eyes have become familiar with its show window. This window is one of the most expressive of its kind. Every article seen through it is full of mysterious eloquence, which conveys a world of meaning.

We have often stood by it to read as from an open book," the stories which the various articles on deposit had to impart, to contrast them with one another, and to speculate concerning the circumstances of the parties who had deposited them.

Perhaps it may not be so to others, but to us every article in pawn individualizes itself, and becomes extremely suggestive of its past associations. There are, for instance, a number of watches in the window, all of which mark a different hour and tell a different tale.

That large, heavy gold lever, with the full, expressive face, belonged once to a plain, solid, substantial old gentleman. You can read as much in its honest countenance. There is no trickery or trash about it; no brazen attempt at imposition—no humbug. While he lived, the old gentleman paid his debts honestly, but sickness and misfortune left him at his death but little of this world's goods. Years passed away, the widowed partner of his youthful joys became helpless and bed ridden, and an only daughter was left for the support of her old age. And what could she do to earn money, when a helpless mother demanded her undivided care and attention. Everything of value about the house, except the old, honest, full faced watch, had long since been sold; and that watch the fond daughter determined never to part with. But necessity knows no law. A mother's wants must be provided for; the chill winds of autumn cause her to shiver, and she pockets pensively, first at her daughter and then at—

"The rusty grate, unconscious of fire."

And the daughter, poor thing, knows well enough the meaning of the mute appeal.

There is a tear in her eye as she takes the old watch from its hiding place. She kisses it, while the memories of other days crowd thickly upon her, and places it kindly into her bosom.

It is a wearisome journey to the loan office, though the poor depositor knows but too well the way. The place has to her an extremely repulsive and inquisitorial sort of look. She knows that the dear old watch will be slandered and cheapened by the man of loans, and will sting her to the heart to hear his flippancy of tongue on the subject. Yet go she must.

At length, summoning all the energy she can command, she enters.

"And how much do you expect on this old fashioned turnip?" asked the inquisitor.

The poor girl could scarcely command her utterance but at length she managed to say—"Forty dollars, if you please, sir—it cost four hundred.

"Forty dollars! ha! ha! ha!" laughed the man of loans—"Forty dollars for such an old thing as this? You must be joking. Half the amount would be a large advance. I can't afford it; business is business my dear."

And thus, deerving the gage, wagged the ready tongue of the stern keeper of the shop, till the poor girl, with an almost bursting heart, exclaimed—

"Well, give me what you will, but as much as you can, for it's the last thing I have to pawn, and my poor sick mother is so much in want."

Gravely and deliberately the leader, on pledge, counted out twenty five dollars, and laying it down beside him, proceeded as deliberately to examine the interior of the watch.

At length he remarked—"Why, this has been a pretty good old ticker in her day, but she's very old, and sadly out of repair. I did think I'd be able to let you have $25 on her, but it 'll cost $3 to place her in proper running order, and when that is deducted, it will leave you just $22. The interest, you know, is $1 a month on every $10—that is $2 50 for the $25; and the old rule, mind—we keep nothing over three months for anybody."

Any attempt to drive a better bargain the poor grief-laden girl knew would be useless, so she received the amount that was tendered her, and with eager step hastened back to the cheerless room where her ailing parent lay, and provided for her many wants as best she could out of her scanty store.

[From the Ohio Cultivator.]

THE DISASTROUS TRADE.

A TALE OF THE LAST WAR.

It was one morning in the latter part of January, 1816, that a large number of our good citizens of the town of Newcastle, Delaware, were collected on it's landing, or pier, to witness the progress, and ultimate fate of a small vessel down the bay, scudding under bare poles, and endeavoring to make port.—At one moment she rose on the crest of the waves, and the next was lost in the trough of the sea.

The storm had continued through the night and still raged, though most of its fury was spent, rendering the chance for the little craft to gain the harbor extremely perilous.

The spray dashed quite over the crowd of spectators, who still held their places, entirely absorbed in watching her, and trying, with the aid of glasses, to make out her name and destination. Newcastle, at that time, contained a number of agents of Philadelphia merchants, interested in private armed ships, who, unable to pursue their former trading during the war, had embarked in the rather hazardous business of privateering. Among those stood one whose name was Christian Wernwag, the son of a Dutch merchant, formerly of Philadelphia, who had left at his death a mercantile business to his hopeful heir.

Christian, like his father, was of a saving, plodding character; but his capacity was narrow and his disposition niggardly.

At last, through the skill of her helmsman, the little vessel approached the pier and was hailed with long cheers as she ran up the American flag.

No sooner was she moored at the wharf than she was besieged by a crowd of people, eager to welcome her hardy crew. She proved to be the schooner R. Q., well known in her time as a successful cruiser and had made the voyage safely home from Cutaven, in the North Sea.

Christian, who owned a share in her, hurried on board to see the Captain; but started back on beholding a passenger at the gangway door, with a cloak on, and a small trunk in his hand. The face he immediately recognized, and at once commenced a retreat;—but, on second thought, he stopped, and awaited the captain's leisure. Meanwhile the passengers had gone over the vessel's side and proceeded to the hotels or stage office, a short distance off.

"It is George Selby, sure enough," muttered Christian to himself. "What could have brought him home at this time, and in this vessel? Perhaps he has come on some speculation which will make his fortune, and if so, then farewell to my hope of Mary Morrison." But I will find out, and then he ran in haste to overtake him.

Mr. Selby, a young man of five and twenty, turned at the approach of Christian, and eyed him more severely than otherwise, returning his low bow by only a slight, formal nod. Though repulsed he was still bent on a closer acquaintance, but he did not wish to lose sight of the Captain. So, retracing his steps, he learned from that officer that Mr. Selby had paid him five hundred dollars for his passage home.

Returning to the town, he found his way into the presence of Mr. Selby, just as that gentleman had engaged a seat in the mail coach to Philadelphia. Christian, as we have said, was of narrow capacity, but he saw clearly the path of self interest, and always followed it. He was destitute of speculative views, and had been heard to pride himself on superior cunning, though this least among those who knew him, gained no credit.

"Mr. Selby," said he, "I hardly expect we can be friends; but this is no reason we should be enemies. We may be rivals—honorable rivals. If wealth is on my side you have other advantages; but come let us dine together. I am anxious to hear the news from abroad, and perhaps," he added, with an attempt at a smile, "my *home* news may be acceptable to you."

His manner was frank and open, and to say the truth, Selby was anxious to hear what Christian could tell though rather through another channel. He, however, declined the invitation, as the coach would start in half an hour. The rebuff made Christian still more anxious to keep his rival company. He was driven to desperation. Intense love of gain stirred him to find out the other's secret, by whatever means attainable. Love of Mary Morrison, or the desire for her wealth, prompted him to the overthrow of a rival beloved by the lady, though not countenanced by her father. Should, however, George Selby become rich, her father's objections would vanish.

"It is very fortunate I happened to be here," muttered Christian to himself, as he paced the hotel parlor, after having engaged a seat in the same coach with Selby, his own business in Newcastle having been settled.

It was not long till the stage horn sounded and in ten minutes more George Selby and Christian Wernwag were borne rapidly away.

Selby, for several miles, remained silent; and here we may as well acquaint the reader with his history. He had been a confidential clerk of Mr. Morrison, a wealthy merchant of Scotch extraction, but long resident in the city of Penn, and indebted for most of his wealth, to the wars of Europe. Selby had gained his esteem, was admitted into his private circle, and had won the affections of the merchant's only daughter, though she was closely besieged by the attentions of Mr. Christian Wernwag. To Selby the latter was no stranger, as they had often met on business in the counting-house. Christian's fraction system on account, and his unwillingness to pay charges allowed by commercial usage, rendered him an unpleasant man to do business with. Dislike, engendered by these bickerings, changed, of course, to hatred when they became rivals. Christian took occasion to inform Mr. M. of his clerk's pretensions, when an explanation followed, ending in mutual declarations of love and fidelity between the lovers, and in Selby's being sent, as assistant, to an old commercial friend in Hamburg, to whom he was highly recommended by Mr. Morrison, who took occasion to say to Selby he might always count on his friendship; that personally he had no objections to him as a son-in-law; but without some corresponding advantage of wealth, an alliance with his family was impossible.

The fair lady vowed constancy to Selby, so Christian gained nothing by the removal of his rival; as her father, though anxious to discourage an intimacy he deemed disadvantageous, was not, however, disposed to control his daughter's affections. True, Christian grew daily more a favorite with him, inasmuch as he esteemed him a wealthy, quiet, practical young merchant, though deficient, perhaps, in personal graces and brightness of intellect.

Affairs remained in this way for three years or so, when Selby appeared as we have narrated, on the deck of the Roger Q., at Newcastle.

As the coach sped on, Christian used every artifice to extract the secret of George Selby's journey, but in vain. To entice him from his reserve, Christian spoke of Mary Morrison, described her father's country seat at Hamilton village, the late ball there, at which Mary was the belle, &c.; to all of which Selby listened with interest, forgetting in the pleasure afforded by the recital, his unwonted narrator.

It was under the influence of this favorable impression that he accepted Christian's proposal to take supper, and rest themselves for the night at Chester, (some fifteen or twenty miles from the city.) The coach went no farther; but the mail would be taken by another in the course of the evening.

At Chester, then, they stopped, and while supper was preparing, Christian (whose cogitations in regard to the unexpected circumstances around him resulted in a definite determination to satisfy himself that very night,) took a walk by himself in the street. "Five hundred dollars for his passage," he exclaimed, "and in our vessel! Why did not some of the English cruisers fall in with her? The old sea-dog, Captain Q., would certainly have fought, and then we might have got rid of this serpent, who comes to cause my misery. I wonder does he know he is paying me pay of his passage money?"

Unconsciously he stopped; but his eye was attracted by the glare of an apothecary's shop. "Ah," he thought, "I have a key here." He saw the ruin of his hopes if Selby succeeded; he should lose Mary, he should lose her father's wealth. Could he not obtain the means in this shop to save them?—True, the scheme was, perhaps, dangerous; but then the risk was not great compared to that of losing the lady and her wealth. So into the shop he went and purchased a phial of laudanum.

It was, of course, then, no surprise to Christian to observe Selby, after supper, grow drowsy, and fall fast asleep (supper was followed by a bottle of wine). Christian assisted the landlord in carrying up stairs the victim of his villany, remaining, however, to see the complete success of it in the profound slumber of Selby. Searching carefully the pockets of his rival, he found a letter of some length from the merchant at Hamburg to Mr. Morrison, stating that the commissioners of the United States and those of England were then at Ghent, to fix upon the terms of a treaty of peace, and perhaps by *that* time one had been agreed upon.

It proceeded to advise him to profit by the information, by making large purchases of merchandise therein specified, even to the extent of his capital, in order to meet the heavy demand on the American market, which the expected treaty would create—the profits to be shared between him and Mr. Selby, who had eagerly undertaken to be the bearer of the news, even at the risk of capture.

"Yes," said Christian, as he replaced the letter, "Mary Morrison is the cause of all this undertaking, as *she has been* the cause of my being engaged in this dirty work;—but is it not all fair? I was her suitor before Selby ever dared address her, he would cut me out—but it's all right, now."

It is said by the Great Bard, that "vaulting ambition oft o'erleaps itself;" and in this example he is sustained; for Selby, on agreeing to the proposal of Christian to stay over night, thought proper to place in the hands of the driver of the next coach, a duplicate copy of the letter which Christian read, to be handed to Mr. Morrison on the arrival of the coach that night. The man was to leave word that Selby would arrive next day. Two Spanish dollars, with the promise of more for the faithful delivery of the letter, had sealed his lips, and secured his confidence.

The next morning found Selby very unwell, and a physician was called, who saw at once the cause of his illness. Administering a mustard emetic, and advising his patient to rise from his bed as soon as it should operate, the doctor took his leave. Selby, however, who now clearly suspected the villainy of his rival, resolved to keep his bed for such a length of time as would defeat, perhaps, the whole design. The driver who carried his letter would return at noon, and Selby requested Christian to remain with him until the evening, when he should no doubt be able to proceed with him to the city. To this the latter consented at once; but as time would thereby be lost, he wrote by a special messenger, who would reach Philadelphia by two or three o'clock in the afternoon, instructions to his chief clerk, similar to those in Selby's letter. His orders were peremptory, and left the clerk no time to hesitate.

On the return of the coach-driver from Philadelphia, he informed Selby of the punctual delivery of his letters to Mr. Morrison, within three hours of his departure from Chester. Two more Spanish dollars concluded the business, and Selby made preparations to proceed by the coach in the evening. No suspicion having entered the mind of Christian that all was not right; he was ready at the proper time, and by seven o'clock, P. M., the coach, with both gentlemen, was on its way.

Mr. Morrison, on receipt of his friend's letter, was very much surprised. He retired to his chamber to consider the first course to be pursued in the morning and made memoranda of all he could purchase. No one else was the wiser of the contents of that letter, until he was no longer to be affected by it;—at least so he thought.

The next morning Mr. Morrison made his purchases, and by 12 o'clock, noon, they were all, as a measure of safety, stored under Custom House lock. It was then that the merchant made known so much of the letter as related to the expected Treaty of Peace, and immediately all merchandise for export rose a hundred per cent.

The letter of Christian to his clerk, was received about 6 o'clock that evening, and as no choice remained between disobedience and a compliance with his employer's instructions, the clerk acted fully up to them, in receipting for such a quantity of goods, as at the advanced prices involved nearly the whole of his employer's capital.

The old State House clock struck ten, when the two rivals alighted from the coach—Selby proceeding to the house of Mr. Morrison, and Christian to that of his clerk who after informing him of the receipt of his letter, and his purchases on its faith, was desirous to know the ground he acted on. "My grounds," said he, are these: "peace is already agreed upon at Ghent."

"Good heavens sir!" exclaimed the clerk, "this is bad business; Mr Morrison received the news yesterday morning, and bought on the strength of it a hundred thousand dollars worth before he made it known.—Prices went up a hundred per cent, the moment the news became public."

Christian was stunned; his knees shook beneath him. The result was that he was rendered almost bankrupt; the disaster proved upon his spirits to such a degree that he fell sick, and left the city, without even taking leave of Mr. Morrison or his daughter, neither of whom he dared to encounter.

It was early in the spring when the official news of peace arrived; and, as the joy-bells pealed long and loud, Mr Morrison's brig Globe was taking in her lading for Hamburg. George Selby was to go supercargo. But when the period of departure arrived, he could not tear himself away from Mary Morrison. He explained the state of his affections to her father, who assured him, if she were willing, he might have Mary for a partner for life, and Mr. Morrison for a partner in business. Miss Morrison became Mrs. Selby; while the fate of Christian Wernwag was spoken of as a signal warning to all, that "HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY."

—THOMAS HOLLOWAY, the great pill and ointment man in London, writes to the *Prairie News* on the subject of advertising. He says:

DEAR SIR:—A correspondent of yours has recommended your paper to me as an advertising medium. He mentioned the circulation, but may have been mistaken in the amount. Will you kindly inform me as to the circulation of your weekly, as I wish to make a contract with you for the insertion of my advertisement. I am unlimited in my advertising: my list of papers is now 1300, and I pay in advance.

Yours, respectfully.

To which the editor of the *News* responds:

"VERY DEAR SIR:—The circulation of the *Prairie News*, which has been increasing with unexampled rapidity for more than two years, now amounts to *forty three*, though I am bound in honor to say that two of my subscribers being very precarious pay, I shall probably cut them off before this letter reaches you, so that your are at liberty to consider the list reduced to forty one. To this number should be added seven gratis copies, sent to as many friends of mine at a distance, out of compliment to their indefatigable exertions in procuring new subscribers. This number should be further augmented by a permanent exchange list of sixty five, making in all a constant weekly circulation of one hundred and thirteen, besides an average of a half a dozen surplus copies a week, which were sent with religious scrupulosity to postmasters and other distinguished individuals in benighted parts of the world. I have good grounds for estimating my *reading* patronage at forty nine persons per copy. You may safely calculate that the 5537 readers of my paper would consume on an average ten dollars' worth per annum, each, of your pills and ointment, particularly the pills, for I cannot promise you an extensive sale of your ointment in this region, cutaneous diseases being rare, as may be inferred from the fact that the foreign born population of Mississippi is only one in sixty two of the aggregate. So you perceive I shall be the means of opening a market to you for $55,370 worth of the invaluable remedies which have immortalized your name,—on which, after deducting the cost of the materials, boxes, &c. your profit will be about eighty five per cent., or $47,064 50. Upon this handsome increase of your profits, accruing through my instrumentality, I propose to charge the moderate commission of one per cent., or $470 64½. If these terms do not suit you, come over by the next steamer, and we'll talk about it. If you are satisfied with them, for the first quarterly instalment of $117, 66, be so good as to pay for me one year's subscription to *Punch*, *Diogenes*, and *The Times*, which are all good papers, and should be encouraged, and send me the balance in cuttings of the London Particular Madeira grape-vine. Subsequent instalments may be sent, at your option, in Bank of England notes, or any sort of truck, except your medicines. Give my best respects to Queen Victoria, the next time you see her—tell her she is a lady whom I esteem, and that I often think with what satisfaction, while this disastrous war is so thinning the population of her realms, she may reflect that she at least, has done her duty in the way of keeping it up.

Your obedient servant, THE EDITOR.

—LEAP YEAR—*The Ladies.* Leap year has come again, when, by long established customs, ladies are privileged to "pop the question." Crusty old bachelors go about in terror, giving a wide berth to every pretty girl they meet, and blessing Heaven for the invention of hoops, which prevents the fair creatures seizing them *vi et armis*.—Sweet little creatures, for whom coy swains have long sighed in vain, pluck up courage, and, by a few gentle hints, which are no longer unladylike, bring the modest youths to the point. Manœuvering mammas, thanking their stars that leap year comes once every four years, but secretly wishing also that it came every year, look for a fine harvest out of bashful lovers, and hurry their daughters "into society," that they may take advantage of the blessed time. Even papas, rubbing their hands in glee, rejoice over the privileges of leap year, as they calculate the annual cost of their daughters and the cent-per cent. they could make out of the money it saved. Lucky leap year! Propitious leap year! The inventor of the happy custom ought to have a statue raised to him by the ladies. Or, if the inventor was a woman—for we doubt our sex having sagacity enough for such a splendid *coup de main*—