

THE BIG BLUE UNION.

BY G. D. SWEARINGEN.

"Westward the Star of Empire takes its Way."

VOLUME I, NUMBER XXXIII

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The Mermaid and Liberty.

Under the ocean waves afar,
Beyond the light of sun or star,
A mermaid sat in the coral hall,
And saw the telegraph cable fall,
Past down the golden ledges it came,
Slowly down like a line of flame,
Breaking the branches from the trees,
That grow in groves under the seas.

Lodging here on a mountain tall,
Leaving there, from an island wall;
Sweeping for leagues the ocean floor,
Scaring the monsters up to the shore,
The mermaid dressed her shining hair,
With comb of pearl, and flowers as fair
As those that bloom so near the skies;
Sun, moon, and stars, are in their eyes.

She looked and wondered what could be
Falling so softly in the sea.
Had the earth been wed with the tide?
Was this a gold chain for his bride?
Or was it a chain of Slavery,
Dropping slowly into the sea?
Then leaping from her Gothic door,
She lighted on the ocean floor.

With her small hand she broke the chain;
[There are no slaves in her domain;]
So now the silent cable lies
Broken, like England's sacred ties.
Were it to speak with tongue of flame,
It would proclaim Britannia's shame;
When next it speaks its words will be,
"America and Liberty!"

MINISTERING ANGELS.

Angels of light spread your bright wings
and keep
Near me at morn;
Nor in the starry eve, nor midnight deep,
Leave me forlorn.

From all the dark spirits of unholy power,
Guard my weak heart.
Circle around me in each perilous hour,
And take my part.

From all foreboding thoughts and dangerous fears,
Keep me secure;
Teach me to hope, and through the bitterest tears
Still endure.

If lonely in the road so fair and wide
My feet should stray,
Then through a safer, rougher pathway guide
Me day by day.

Should my heart faint at its unequal strife,
Oh, still be near—
Shadow the perilous sweetness of this life,
with holy fear.

Then leave me not alone in this bleak world,
Where'er I roam,
And at the end, with your bright wings unfurled,
Oh take me home!

A NICE GIRL.

There is nothing half so sweet in life
half so beautiful or delightful, or loveable
as a "nice girl." Not a pretty, or a dashing,
or an elegant girl, but a nice girl.—
One of those lovely, lively, good-tempered,
good-hearted, sweet faced, amiable, neat,
little domestic creatures, met within the
sphere of "home," diffusing around the
domestic hearth the influence of her goodness,
like the essence of sweet flowers.

A nice girl is not the languishing beauty
dwading on a sofa, and discussing the last
novel or opera; or the giraffe-like thing
sweeping through the drawing-room. The
nice girl may not even dance or play well,
and knows nothing about "using her eyes,"
or coquetting with a fan. She never languishes;
she is too active. She is not given to
sensation novels, she is too busy.—
At the opera she is not in front showing
her bare shoulders, but sits quiet and unobtrusive—
at the back of the box, most likely. In fact it is not often in such

scenes that we discover her. Home is her place.

Who rises betimes and superintends the morning meal? Who makes the toast and tea, and buttons the boys' shirts, and waters the flowers, and feeds the chickens, and brightens up the parlor, and sitting-room? Is it the languisher, or the giraffe or the elegante? Not a bit of it it is the nice girl.

Her unsided toilet is made in the shortest possible time, yet how charmingly it is done, and how elegant her neat dress and plain collar! what kisses she distributes among the family! not presenting a cheek or a brow, like a "fine girl," but an audible smack which says plainly, "I love you so much," if ever I coveted anything it is one of the nice girl's kisses.

Breakfast over down, in the kitchen to see about dinner; and all day long it is up and down always cheerful and light-hearted. Useful till the day is gone, when she amuses the boys, and sings old plays old tunes to her father for hours together. She is a perfect treasure is the nice girl.

When illness comes, it is she that attends with unwearying patience to the sick chamber. There is no risk, no fatigue that she will not undergo; no sacrifice she will not make. She is all love, all devotion. I have often thought it would be happiness to be ill to be watched by such loving eyes and tended by such fair hands.

One of the most strongly marked characteristics of a nice girl, is tidiness in dress. She is invariably associated in my mind with a high neck frock, plain collar and the neatest of neck-ribbons, ornamented with the most modest little brooch in the world. I never knew a nice girl who displayed a profusion of rings and bracelets or who wore low dresses, or a splendid bonnet.

I say again, there is nothing in the world half so beautiful, half so intrinsically good, as a nice girl. She is the sweetest flower in the path of life. There are others far more stately, far more gorgeous; but these we admire as we go by. It is where the daisy grows that we lie down to rest.

THE GIRL AND THE BASKET TRICK.

The juggler calls the little girl to him and begins to play with her. At first gently, then a little more boisterously until at last he thrusts her roughly under the basket, and tells her she shall keep her there until she is good. The little girl begins to whine and remonstrate from underneath the basket; the juggler gets angry, scolds her, and tells her to hold her tongue, else he will whip her; but the little one is unappeased, and the quarrel goes on, increasing in intensity, until at last the man in a paroxysm of anger, draws his sword, and thrusts it wildly into the basket. The screams of the child are heart-rending—her yells and cries agonizing; but the juggler stabs and stabs again, and works his sword about the wicker-work in uncontrollable and fiendish fury. The child's voice ceases, and just a few heavy sobs are heard, then, some fainter means, fainter—fainter, as the last gasps of a murdered child would be—and then all is still. The juggler pulls his bloody sword from the basket, wipes it, and composedly salaams Mem Sahib and her friends, who are generally in a state of hysterical distress; sometimes, indeed the soldiers are with difficulty restrained from tearing the man to pieces, especially in one case known to me, when the captain of the company, himself quivering in every limb with horror and agitation, had actually to defend the juggler from the excited men. How it might have fared with him heaven only knows, but that on his giving a peculiar cry, the little girl came bounding and laughing into the circle, (coming from behind the soldiers), though every man of them was ready to swear that she had not

passed him, and could not have passed through the thick ranks any where. Now how is that trick done? It is nothing but mere jugglery from first to last—as much mere jugglery as Torrini's trick of sawing one live page into two; but mere tricks as it is, it is undiscovered yet, though hundreds of shrewd, hard-headed unimaginative, and scientific English men have seen it, thought about it, tried—and been baffled—for half a dozen generations.— [All the Year Round.

A gentleman from the country, stopping at one of the hotels in Cincinnati, entered into a conversation with one of the boarders, asking questions about the fare, &c. After a few moments' conversation, the boarder drew his cigar case saying—

"Will you take a cigar, sir?"
"Well I don't mind if I do," was the reply.

The cigar was passed to him; also the one which our boarder was smoking, for the purpose of giving him a light. He carefully placed the cigar first handed him in his pocket, and took his knife and cut off that end of the lighted cigar which had been in the mouth of his friend and commenced smoking, saying—

"It ain't often a man from the country runs across as clever a chap in the city as you are."

A witty man can make a jest, a wise man can take one.

Why is a fool like a needle? He has an eye, and no head.

What throat is the best for a singer to reach high notes with? A sore throat.

If you buy what you have no occasion for, you will soon have to sell what you can't spare.

If a young lady has a pain in her side can she relieve it by wearing a sash?

A bed of gold is a mine of wealth; but a boy whose father is very rich is a minor of wealth.

Once in a minute, twice in a moment, once in a man's life?—the letter M.

Would the botanist classify the Ghost in Hamlet, as a species of deadly night-shade?

Be diligent, frugal, and faithful, and success is sure.

Last Sunday a week ago a party of Clevelanders, on a visit to Independence were informed that one Phillip Herz, a farmer in that town, had after whipping a little six year old boy, a son of his confined him for four days and nights in the hog pen without food, except what he might find in the trough; evidently for the purpose of killing the child. They proceeded to the spot and found the poor boy in a horrid condition, emaciated to a mere skeleton, his clothes torn to shreds and covered with filth, with hardly enough life in him to stand up. The child was rescued by them and delivered to a neighbor, and on the day following, on complaint of one of them, to Justice Nichols, a warrant was issued for the apprehension of the inhuman father. He had however, got wind of it and eluded the vigilance of the officers, who returned the process to that effect. From words spoken by him before his departure, and letters left behind him, it was suspected that that the man had done himself some injury. Search was made yesterday, and his body found in the woods near his late residence. He had shot himself with a double-barrel shot-gun, one of the charges taking effect in his head, and the other going through his hand.—(Cleveland Herald.

Good morning, Mr. Henpeck; have you any daughters that would make good type-setters?

"Not exactly, but I've got a wife that will make a first-rate Devil."

Bottom of the sea.—Mr. Green, the famous diver, tells singular stories of his adventures when making search in the deep waters of the ocean. He gives some new sketches of what he saw at the Silver Bank, near Hayti:

"The banks of coral on which my divers, narrated in a previous chapter, were made, are about forty miles in length, and from ten to twenty in breadth.

On this bank of coral is presented to the diver one of the most beautiful and sublime scenes the eye ever beheld.

The water varies from ten to one hundred feet in depth, and so clear that the diver can see from two to three hundred feet when he is submerged, with but little obstruction to the sight.

The bottom of the ocean, in many places on these banks is as smooth as a marble floor; in others it is studded with coral columns from ten to one hundred in height and from one to eighty feet in diameter."

An exchange says, grass seed should be sown in the fall, because it is the natural time; and as much so as winter rye or wheat. By turning under the stubble of your grain crops to prepare for sowing grass seed you give your grass the clean possession of land. If sown with grain in the spring, the tender grass plants are crowded, above and below ground, by grain and weeds above, and their roots below and for three months have a hard struggle for life in the shade. Can it surprise any one that, after such exposure and trial, his crops of grass, on which his hopes of a good crop are strongly based should prove short and thin.

A writer in the Oskaloosa Herald gives his method of preserving sweet potatoes through the winter. His plan is as follows: I use dry sand to put them up in—it don't matter how the sand was dried in a kiln, a log heap, or in the sun so it is dry that is all that is required. I prefer drying it in a log heap, as it costs at least four times less, and is just as good. And a family that has a little room with a stove in it, may keep a box or two, with eight or ten bushels in them, without any inconvenience or consequence. The boxes must be raised a few inches from the floor, and they must not be nearer than four inches from the wall. Fill the boxes with potatoes, and then put sand until they are covered.

PROVERBS OF THE BILLINGS FAMILY.

—Preserved by Josh Billings, Esq.

Ef yu kant git gud close and edication too git the gud close.

Say how ar ye? to evrybody
Kultivate modesty, but mind and keep a gud stock of impudence on hand.

Ef u argy, never git beat.

Bee charitable—thre cent peaces war made a purpus.

It costs more to borrow than to by.

Ef a man flatters yu, yu kin kalkerlate that he's a roge, or yure a fa'e.

Kepe both ire open, but don't see mor ner haf yu notia.

n b—these ar proverbs hev stud for morn a hundred yers, and haint gin out yit.

"Union is not always strength," as the sailor said as he see the purser mixing water with his rum.

A Scotch paper tells the story of a dairy farmer who after the burial of his wife drove a hard bargain with the grave digger, who bringing his hand down on his shovel, exclaims: "Down w' another shillin or up she comes."

If you owe your printer pay him. For you will always find him hard up, more or less, usually more. Ye "scads" doth not weigh his pocket heavily.

Remember the printer in the days of thy prosperity, and in your adversity he remember thee.

Do you owe for your paper?