The Potter Journal.

Devoted to the Principles of True Democracy, and the Dissemination of Morality, Literature and News.

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BITTER-SWEET.

Thus is it over all the earth!
That which we call the fairest,
And prize for its surpassing worth,
Is always rarest.

Iron is heaped in mountain piles,
And gluts the laggard forges;
But gold-flakes gleam in dim defiles
And lonely gorges.

The snowy marble flecks the land
With heaped and rounded ledges,
But diamonds hide within the sand
Their starry edges.

The finny armies clog the twine
That sweeps the lazy river,
But pearls come singly from the brine,
With the pale diver.

God gives no value unto men
Unmatched by meed of labor;
The Cost of Worth has ever been
The closest neighbor.

Wide is the gate and broad the way
That open to perdition,
And countless multitudes are they
Who seek admission.

But strait the gate, the path unkind,
That lead to life immortal,
And few the careful feet that find
The hidden portal.

All common good has common price;
Exceeding good, exceeding;
Christ bought the keys of Paradise
By cruel bleeding;

And every soul that wins a place
Upon its hills of pleasure,
Must give its all, and beg for grace
To fill the measure.

Were every hill a precious mine,
And golden all the mountains;
Were all the rivers fed with wine
By tireless fountains;

Life would be ravished of its zest,
And shorn of its ambition,
And sink into the dreamless rest
Of inanition.

Up the broad stairs that Value rears
Stand motives beck'ning earthward,
To summon men to nobler spheres,
And lead them worthward.

A TALE OF A 'KERCHIEF.

"I beg your pardon!"

"Excuse me, sir!"

The first speaker was a fashionably dressed young man, and his interlocutor a beautiful young lady. Their situation was the most embarrassing in the world, for as the gentleman turned the corner of the street he had been unexpectedly confronted by the damsel in question. After a succession of desperate efforts to pass each other, which only resulted in various disagreeable collisions, and mutual attractions and repulsions analagous to the manœvres of two electrified pitch-balls, they had come to a stand still. The blush on the lady's cheek, although deep and rich as the crimson on the sunset cloud, was nearly equalled by the corresponding hue of the gentleman's face. One last despairing movement on his part to pass his lovely antagonist was unfortunately seconded by a simultaneous endeavor of her's; and perceiving almost irrepressible mirth on the countenance of his companion, who stood a few feet distant to watch the issue of the rencontre, the gentleman raised his hat from his head, and, marching at right angles directly to the curbstone, gave utterance to the above ejaculation, which elicited its fellow from the rosy lips of the young lady. With a bow and a glance from her bright eyes of mingled amusement and vexation, she availed herself of this retreat, and passed on, entering a shop a short distance below. Our hero cast his eyes behind him as she passed by; and, noticing that she had dropped her handkerchief, he hastily picked it up, and was on the point of following her to return it, when observing a name in one corner, he paused, coolly pocketing the delicate *mouchoir*, and rejoined his companion. The latter received him with mock gravity, while merriment evidently filled his soul to the very brim.

"Bravo!" was his salutation. "Ralph, you are in luck to day; I envy your *tete-a-tete* with so charming a neighbor. 'Pon honor, now, don't waste your kisses in private on that handkerchief; without doubt, it was a fair prisoner of war, but be magnanimous and give it to me. It shall be framed in magnificent style, and receive my profoundest adoration."

"I should like to gag you with it, Harry," retorted his irritated friend. "Could not you have had sense enough not to stand grinning while I was all in a perspiration with frantic efforts to get out of my scrape? You havn't as much heart as a rotten pear."

"And you have not as much sweetness as a premature crab apple, Ralph," replied the impurturable Harry. "Oh, that partial judge, Fortune, if she had only put me in your shoes!"

"I wish she had," exclaimed Ralph vehemently. "I should like to know if anything can set your cold blood a-fire. You are the most phlegmatic—"

"Phew!" said Harry, "draw it mild—I left my Webster at home this morning. But are not the sweet divinities so enchanting on first inspection, eh?"

"Confound you," cried his friend in a towering passion, "it's the third time I've made a fool of myself before her, and she's a splendid girl, by Jove!"

"Aha, an old love, is she?" chuckled Harry. "What a romantic rendezvous you choose! The ranging mildness of a midday moon shed ineffable fragrance on the pellucid glade where Damon and Amaryllis—"

"Don't, don't!" expostulated poor Ralph, in a wild appeal to his pitiless tormentor. "What do you want to cut a fellow up for, Harry? If you must know where I have seen her, I'll tell you, just to put a stopper in the bung-hole of that barrel of nonsense which you call your head. The day before yesterday, I was descending from the exhibition, and got wedged among a bevy of ladies, whose abundant crinoline nearly extinguished me. I was devoting every energy of my nature to the one object (of reducing myself to the least possible compass,) and was congratulating myself on never having felt so small before, when, unfortunately missing a step, I only saved myself from diving headlong into that sea of beauty by involuntarily clapping my hand on the Talma before me. At the same time I was conscious of a mysterious entanglement of my foot, and a simultaneous noise of silk, that set my teeth on edge for an hour afterwards. My fair supporter turned round in astonishment and wonder at my audacity, and gathered up her torn dress in stately reserve, while I stammered out my apologies as well I could. But the titter that greeted my ears on every side made me endure agonies untold, until I escaped from the press, and vanished. Well, that was bad enough, but my second encounter was quite as excruciating. Yesterday afternoon, I was going out to dine with a friend at Brixton, and as I was somewhat belated, I hailed an omnibus to save time. The driver rolled his clumsy vehicle near the pavement, and I began to ascend the steps; but before I had reached the only seat still vacant, the impudent blackguard whipped up his horses, thereby giving the whole conveyance a sudden lurch to one side. I clutched convulsively at the strap above and as I found I had lost my balance beyond recovery, endeavored to steer myself into the blessed little harbor I mentioned without involving my neighbors in my own distres. But with a glance as quick as lightning I measured the distance between the said seat and my own awkward carcass, and perceived it was impracticable; with a shuddering presentiment I shot a momentary look at the lady towards whom I was helplessly gravitating, and imagine my chagrin at recognizing the injured princess of the day before. Of course, it was only the infinitessimal fraction of a second that I hovered in mid air, but during that period, mortification ran riot in my luckless breast; the next instant, a fall—a little shriek—a roar of laughter—and I was picking myself up from the lady's lap, and begging pardons enough to reprieve all the criminals in christendom. But my emotions were too much for me; I could not look the lady in the face and if I chanced to turn my eyes towards any one of the other passengers an unmistakable smile curled the corners of their mouths. They were amusing themselves at my cost, and I could not resent it; so seizing the first opportunity, when the crazy old thing stopped to put down a passenger, I made my exit from the infernal old cart as quickly as possible. And now," exclaimed the poor fellow, with a comical yet lugubrious expression of the face, "I am going out tomorrow to hunt up this lovely incognito, and return her handkerchief. If rencontre number four is not better than the others, I'll go swimming in a sea of sulphuric acid."

"So I would," returned the sympathizing Harry. "I'll fish for your body afterwards, and bait my hook with Celia's handkerchief; dead or alive, you will snap at it. But if you return the dainty article, tie your heart up in it, and label the parcel, "to the adorable Celia," for one is as much her property as the other."

"You are an unregenerate pagan, Harry," replied the young man reddening; if you had the sensibility of a boiled lobster, you would know that self respect requires me to exculpate myself in her eyes, and —and"

"Oh, I understand," interrupted Harry, taking leave of his companion at the corner of a street. "I appreciate the delicacy of your sentiments. But take my advice, be sure to conciliate mamma, and don't forget to send your humble obebient his share of the cake. Adieu, *mon ami—vive l'amour.*"

"Confound the scamp," muttered Ralph, half nettled and half pleased at his friend's raillery, "some day I will be even with him. But you might do worse, after all, Ralph Barker; she's a magnificent girl. Pshaw! when a man begins to be a fool, there is no stopping. I wish I had given back her handkerchief at the time; let me look at it again."

With these words he produced the article in question, and scrutinized it thoroughly; in one corner was written in a delicate female hand, "Isabella Harton." Having satisfied himself that he had read the name accurately, he repeated it to himself several times, and mentally resolved that he would see its beautiful owner again before sunset.

The afternoon, accordingly, found him strolling about Brixton, inquiring for the residence of Mr. Harton. Several unsuccessful attempts to discover the nest of this bird of paradise were at last followed by one more agreeable to his wishes; and, more than half distrusting his unusual method of seeking a lady's acquaintance, he approached a large, handsome mansion, situated on a little eminence, with a tastefully arranged garden in front. He was perfectly conscious that etiquette would hold up her hands in horror at the idea of his not being formally introduced: but he reflected that "faint heart never won fair lady," and mentally snapped his fingers at etiquette's face. He rang the bell and presently a page appeared.

"Is Miss Harton at home?" he asked.

"Yes, sir; will you step in?" replied the butler civilly. "What name shall I say?"

The young man's heart beat like a steam engine at the thought of his own audacity.

"Be so kind as to take up my card, and say that Mr. Barker requests to see Miss Harton a few moments."

The page ushered him into the drawing room, which was empty, and disappeared; Ralph braced himself for the coming interview. After a short delay, which seemed to him like the interval between the condemnation and execution of a criminal, the door opened, and the beautiful Isabella entered the apartment. Without manfesting any surprise at such an unusual visit, she politely motioned him to a chair, and seated herself at some distance from him, awaiting the announcement of his errand.

"I must request your indulgence, Miss Harton," said Ralph, with perfect outward self-possession, although inwardly he completely realized the strangeness of his position, "for having taken so great a liberty as to call upon you personally without ever having had the honor of an introduction. My object is simply to return a handkerchief which I picked up in the street, bearing your name. I might have restored it to you without intruding upon your leisure; but I trust you will pardon the freedom I have ventured to take, in order to apologize more completely for what must have seemed so much like intentional rudeness. By some strange fatality, I have three times caused you great annoyance, although nothing could have been further from my wishes. I beg you to believe that I deeply regret my own awkwardness, and am most sincerely sorry ever to have placed you in such embarrassing situations."

"Indeed, Mr. Barker," replied the beautiful girl, with a pleasant and cordial smile on her features, "I beg you never to think of it again; I assure you, you greatly exaggerate the importance of such trifles, which require no apology at all. I am extremely sorry you have taken the trouble to come so far merely to restore a handkerchief, which I was ignorant I had lost until you mentioned the fact."

At the conclusion of his little speech (which, we fear, was hardly an extempore effort) and, during Miss Harton's reply to it, Ralph had been searching his pockets for the lost article, and picture the intensity of his chagrin and mortification as the truth came upon him like an avalanche that he had left it behind! Isabella instantly divined the real state of the case: she saw the blood rush to his face, reddening to the roots of his hair, and as swiftly retreat, leaving it as pale as marble.

If she had not perceived the real distress of the young man's mind the incongruity and absurdity of the whole matter would have overpowered her self control; but her quick sympathy with all kinds of suffering took away every inclination to laugh. Ralph at last spoke, with a forced smile upon his countenance, and a voice trembling in spite of himself.

"It may seem, perhaps, a premeditated insult, Miss Harton, when I tell you that the handkerchief I though I had with me has been left behind by some careless mistake of my own. I have once again made myself ridiculous in your eyes, but I promise you this shall be the last time. Your property shall immediately be sent by post; if I had no other motive than simply to vindicate my own sincerity, I should be concerned to see it restored. If you will only have the same charity for my last misfortune which you have so generously expressed for its predecessors, I will take pains never to need the same indulgence a fifth time."

So saying he took up his hat and rose to go, but Isabella eagerly motioned him to remain.

"Do not feel so keenly about a mere nothing, I entreat you, Mr. Barker," said she, with genius kindness in her large, beautiful eyes; "I shall never forgive myself for having been the innocent cause of so much chagrin, if you persist in viewing this idle matter through a microscope. Pray laugh at the whole affair with me for we have both been placed in a ridiculous light; and believe me it is true wisdom not to waste feeling on such undeserving objects as little mistakes and incidents."

The unaffected kindness of her tone and manner went to poor Ralph's heart, and as we often feel more gratitude for little favors than for great ones, he felt that her beauty was the least of her charms, for it was only the transparent veil through which shone her true womanly nature in all its loveliness. As he again rose to go, she extended her hand towards him; he took it in his own, and bowing his head, was on the point of imprinting a kiss upon the white tapering fingers, when the door suddenly opened, and Mr. Harton entered. Isabella hastily withdrew her hand, and coloring deeply, said to her father:

"Let me introduce you to Mr. Barker, papa."

The large, stout gentleman advanced, and offering his hand, said, with a penetrating glance in the young man's face:

"I am always glad to welcome my daugter's friends; how do you do, Mr. Barker?"

Ralph stammered out something about the weather, and was evidently in no little confusion when Isabella came to his rescue, and said, with quiet self possession:

"Mr. Barker found my handkerchief in the street, papa, and was so kind as to come on purpose to restore it. I feel very much obliged to him, indeed, for his politeness."

"Barker, Barker," said Mr. Harton repeating the name abstractedly, (he saw there was embarrarsment on both sides, and having unlimited confidence in his daughter, wished to extricate them from it,) "an old schoolfellow of mine was named Barker—Ralph James Barker. Perhaps you are a relation of his, sir?"

"That was my father's name, sir," answered Ralph, internally thanking the old gentleman for his tact; "but he died several years ago."

"Then upon my word," said Mr. Harton, warmly; it's the luckiest chance in the world that brought you here, Mr. Barker. Your father and I were old friends of long standing, and for years after we corresponded together; but when he went to Calcutta, I suddenly ceased to hear from him. You must stop and dine with us this evening; I have a hundred questions to ask. I might have known you were Ralph's son," he added, looking in the young man's face, "same eyes, same hair, same everything. Well, well, it will be my turn next."

And with these words the old gentleman left the room.

The two young folks remained in silence for some time; Ralph at last broke the silence, by saying:

"May I consider that I have Miss Harton's permission to remain, as well as her father's?"

"I shall always welcome my father's friends," she answered, evasively, and a little distantly, adding in a more cordial tone, "I am sure nothing has happened to make your visit other than acceptable. Besides," she continued, a little mischievously, "when you next call, you may as well bring my handkerchief yourself, instead of sending it."

Having thus seen our hero fairly launched on "the course of true love," we will hope that it "it ran smooth" for the future, and that the little ripples at its commencement were not prophetic of subsequent matrimonial storms. One thing is certain, and that is, that about a year after, the *Times* contained the following notice:

"May 11, at St. Matthew's, Brixton, by the Rev. Alfred Coupler, D. D., RALPH BARKER, Esq., of the Middle Temple, to ISABELLA, daughter of Frederick Harton, Esq. of Bushy Hill, Brixton."

It may be interesting to add that Ralph's groomsman on the occasion was Mr. Henry Livingstone; and after the ceremony was over he was heard to whisper in the bride groom's ear:

"I say, Ralph, if you find any more handkerchiefs, send me one, will you?"

A royal soul may belong to a beggar, and a beggarly one to a king.

Modern education too often covers the fingers with rings, and at the same time cuts the sinews of the wrists.

All men look to happiness in the future. To every eye heaven and earth seem to embrace in the distance.

Sorrow comes soon enough without despondency; it does a man no good to carry around a lightning rod to attract trouble.

Cunning is only the mimic of discretion, and may pass upon weak men, just as pertness is often mistaken for wit, and gravity for wisdom.

The great see the world at one end by flattery, the little at the other end by neglect: the meanness which both discover is the same.

As the diamond is found in the darkness of the mine, as the lightning shoots with the most vivid flashes from the gloomiest cloud, so does mirthfulness frequently proceed from a heart susceptible of the deepest melancholy.

To the American People.

That late, in half despair, I said—
"The Nation's ancient life is dead;
Her arm is weak, her blood is cold;
She hugs the peace that gives her gold—
The shameful peace, that sees expire
Each beacon-light of patriot fire,
And makes her court a traitor's den"—
Forgive me this, my Countrymen!

Oh! in your long forbearance grand,
Slow to suspect the treason planned,
Enduring wrong, yet hoping good
For sake of olden brother-hood,
How grander, how sublimer far
At the roused eagle's call ye are,
Leaping rrom slumber to the fight
For Freedom and for Chartered Right!

Throughout the land there goes a cry;
A sudden splendor fills the sky:
From every hill the banners burst,
Like buds by April breezes nurst;
In every hamlet, home, and mart
The fire-beat of a single heart
Keep time to strains whose pulses mix
Our blood with that of Seventy-Six!

The shot whereby the old flag fell
From Sumter's battered citadel
Struck down the lines of party ereed
And made ye One in soul and deed—
One mighty People, stern and strong
To crush the consumated wrong,
Indignant with the wrath whose rod
Smites as the awful sword of God!

The cup is full! They thought ye blind:
The props of State they undermined;
Abused your trust, your strength defied,
And stained the Nation's name of pride.
Now lift to Heaven your loyal brows,
Swear once again your father's vows,
And cut through traitor hearts a track
To nobler fame and freedom back!

Draw forth your million blades as one:
Complete the battle then begun!
God fights with you, and overhead
Floats the dear banner of your dead.
They, and the glories of the Past,
The future, drawing dim and vast,
And all the holiest hopes of Man,
Are beaming triumph in our van!

Slow to resolve, be swift to do!
Teach ye the false how fight the true!
How bucklered Perfidy shall feel
In her black heart the patriot's steel;
How sure the bolt that Justice wings;
How weak the arm a traitor brings;
How mighty they, who steadfast stand
For Freedom's Flag and Freedom's Land.

Be Positive.

There is perhaps more failure and want of success in life occasioned by a neglect to obey this injunction, than from any other single cause.

Many a young man having every advantage which wealth, position, talent and culture can possibly give him, becomes only a mere cypher at last, from the lack of those qualities which positiveness of character gives. Nothing great or good in life can ever be accomplished with out it.

Wealth receives only the respect which it deserves at last, and so with influence and intellectual culture. All things seek a level. That which dazzles and lures at first, is invariably set down, finally, at its intrinsic worth.

The old Greeks had a maxim which read, "know thyself." This required some courage, for when a man deliberately sets about knowing himself, and judging the secret springs of his actions, he will be apt to find within, in the inner recesses of his soul, some things which need a vast deal of mending; nevertheless such a study is not to be neglected, however much modern philosophy may cry out against it saying: "Leave off knowing thyself." Thou wilt never accomplish thy desire. Do thy work—that is best for thee.

"*Be* thyself" said the philosopher; and this indeed requires more courage than the other. It needs more strength of character and a firmer purpose. It tolerates no servile imitation, nothing but a frank, honest, and earnest expression of the reality within us.

Positiveness of character presupposes attention to these requisites of *knowing* and *being*. A man must understand himself, his position, and his motive of action, before he is competent to be positive in the expression of opinion, or in the defense of principles where action is required, where opposition meets him at every step, and where only by an unyielding energy he can succeed.

It requires courage to be positive. It is a very easy matter for a man to say lazily; "it may be so;" or "I think so;" or "perhaps I will." But to say "*yes*" or "*no*" when the occasion requires.

Do good with what thou hast, or it will do thee no good.

The moment that anything assumes the shape of a duty, some persons feel themselves incapable of discharging it.

Night brings out stars, as sorrow shows us truth. We never see the stars till we can see little or nought else, and thus it is with truth.

The pleasantest things in the world are pleasant thoughts, and the greatest art in life is to have as many of them as possible.

Were we a painter and desired to personify human life, we should represent a ragged and haggard mortal with a crust so hard that it could be broken only when moistened by tears.

The Blessings of Poverty.

If there is anything in this world which a young man should be more grateful for than another, it is the poverty which launches us in life under very great disadvantages. Poverty is one of the best tests of human quality. A triumph over it is like graduating with honors at Oxford or Cambridge. It demonstrates mental stamina. It is a certificate of worthy labor faithfully performed. A young man who cannot stand this test is not good for anything. He can never rise to affluence or station. A young man who cannot feel his determination strengthened as the yoke of poverty presses upon him, and his energy rise with every difficulty which poverty throws in his way, had better never enter the lists with the champions of self-reliance.

Poverty makes more men than it ruins. It ruins only those who are destitute of sterling energy of character; while it makes the fortunes of multitudes whom wealth would have ruined.

Now, if any young man with a good fortune, and in the possession of that which is commonly called an excellent opening in life, reads this paper, let him be warned in time. His advantages may be anything but what they seem; they may turn out to be the bane of his life; the full pocket, in the long run, may be beaten by the empty purse; for money will never make a man, and never did in the whole course of the world's history.

No, young man; if you are poor, thank Heaven, and take courage. You have the prospect of making your own way in the world. If you had plenty of money, ten chances to one it would spoil you for all useful purposes. Do you lack education? Have you enjoyed but little schooling? Remember that education does not consist in the multitude of things which a man possesses. What can you do?—that is the question which settles the matter for you. Do you know your business? Do you know men, and how to deal with them? Has your mind, by any means whatsoever, received that discipline which gives to its action power and facility? If so, then you are more of a man, and a thousand times better educated, than the youth who has graduated at college, but who knows nothing of the practical business of life. And as to wealth, there are very few men in the world less than thirty years of age, and unmarried, who can afford to be rich. One of the greatest benefits to be reaped from great financial disasters is, the sowing of a large crop of young Men. They are taught that they must help themselves; they get energy of character, and personal enterprise, and industry, in place of a foolish dependence on the wealth which their fathers or grandfathers have accumulated before them; they are made to work, and work gives to their character that nobility and manhood which are not to be obtained without it.

In regard to the choice of a profession, every young man must consult his own inclination. If you adopt a trade or profession, do not be persuaded to resign it, unless you are perfectly satisfied that you are not adapted for it. Advice of all sorts you are certain to receive; but if you follow it, and it leads you into a profession which starves you, these who gave the advice never feel bound to give you any money. You have to take care of yourself in this world, and you had best choose your own way of doing it; always remembering that it is not your trade or profession which makes you respectable, but that respectability depends on the manner in which you discharge the duties devolving upon you.

Manhood and profession or handicraft are entirely different things. God makes men, and men make lawyers, doctors, carpenters, bricklayers, all the trades or occupations of life. The offices of men may be more or less important, and of higher or lower quality; but manhood is nobler than any, and distinct from all. A profession or trade is not the end of life; it is an instrument taken into our hands by which to gain a livelihood. Thoroughly acquired and assiduously followed, a trade is still to be held at arms' length. It should not be allowed to tyrannize over, to mold, or to crush a man. It should not occupy the whole of his attention. So far from this, it should be regarded only as a means for the development of manhood. The first object of living is the attainment of true manhood, the cultivation of every power of the soul, and of every high spiritual quality. Trade is beneath the man, and should be kept there. With this idea in your mind, look round you, and see how almost everybody has missed the true aim of life. They have not striven to be men, but to be lawyers, docrors, tradesmen, or mechanics—they have missed the chief end of life; and though they may become influntial in their professions, they failed to make the right use of their existence.

It is not necessary that you should be a "learned blacksmith," but it is necessary that you be superior to your occupation, and that to attain MANHOOD be the great end of your struggle with the world.