

The Lady

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J. A. STEVENS, Editor & Proprietor.

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## POETRY.

COMMUNICATED.

Mr. Editor: I have at present in my possession, a book of manuscript containing a number of well written poems, which have never yet been in print; the author of them died in Wickburg about three years ago. He was a native of Cork, Ireland. If you deem the following worthy of a place in the Whig, you will please give it publicity.

### Man's Joy's not lasting—An Allegory.

The orb of day in splendor shone  
Majestic o'er this globe of ours;  
The fragrant jasmine had blown,  
In fairest, sweetest robe.  
Froud roll'd the liquid, dazling ball,  
No cloud to dim its light;  
It shot its golden beams o'er all,  
In vivid rays full bright.  
And gay, by greenest shaded bowers,  
In fragrance spreading wide,  
Full sweetly bloom'd the lovely flower,  
In modest virgin pride.  
All nature shone in brightest form,  
As such in pristine days;  
So calm and mild, so fair and warm,  
The sun's refulgent rays.  
"Hail! lovely sight," I cried in joy,  
"So shall my hours glide;  
No cares to shade, or sorrows joy,  
But glow in youthful pride.  
And thus, as you bright dazling orb,  
My days shall cloudless be;  
Nor shall dark grief my joys absorb,  
But bloom like this sweet tree!"  
Thus, as I mused upon the scene,  
I caught once more the sun;  
An envious cloud had pass'd between—  
Its light and rays were gone.  
Then turning round, my eyes I cast  
To view the flow'r sweet sward—  
"Was torn all leafless by the blast,  
And hung its drooping head.  
"Tis thus, (I cried) the joys of man  
Last but a little hour;  
Grief clouds his life while on earth's span,  
And blasts hope like a flower.  
The sun may gild his happy morn,  
Elate, his hopes may rise—  
But gloomy clouds by whispers borne,  
Will turn his joys to sighs."

### Hungarian Tales & Legends.

BY MISS FARDON.

CHAP. VII.

### THE BROTHERS OF BISTNITZ.

The bold and restless Knights of Podmanin were alike the wander and the terror of the fifteenth century, not only throughout the province of the Wasg which they inhabited, but also of Moravia and Silesia, into which they perpetually carried war and rapine. Nearly the whole of the fortresses on the heights of the Carpathian range, which even in the northern portion of the country of Transchia had already become lofty and difficult of access, were in their power; some few of them, indeed, by right of inheritance; but the greater number had been won by aggression from their legitimate and rightful owners. The vassals subjected to their extended sway were very numerous; and the continual success which attended their daring and desperate enterprises, drew to their side so many of those poor and petty nobles whose sole possessions at that troubled period were a high sounding name and a sharp sword, and to whom the prospect of plunder was ever welcome, that their forces assumed the dignity of an army; and what on a smaller scale would have merely worn the aspect of a predatory and factious foray, grew in its more extended shape into all the menace of an aggressive war. Thus, for instance, in 1466, Blaise of Podmanin and Bielko of Lednitz entered Moravia at the head of a strong body of men, plundered and sacked the holy cloister of Wisowitz, and devastated the surrounding country to so frightful an extent that Podmanin, King of Bohemia, wrote to demand redress from his son-in-law, the great Matthias Corvinus, in an autograph letter; although only a short time previously the Grand Marshal of Bohemia, Matthias Sternberg and Jany Lipka, had made a similar marauding enterprise into Hungary. But still more famous even than Blaise himself were his grandsons John and Ralph of Podmanin; and the times in which they lived were well suited to the development of their fierce and factious qualities. Hungary had two Kings, each asserting his claim to the crown, and neither possessing sufficient power to secure it. Pressed by Zepolya and his allies the Turks, Ferdinand I. could not control or limit the excesses of either faction; who, while their respective masters were contending for the throne, ruined the peaceable citizens, under pretext of serving their particular party. The brothers of Podmanin did not fail to profit by the licence of so reckless a period; and being as uncompromising as they were

fortunate, they ultimately subdued the whole of the upper valley of the Wasg, to which they gave the name of the Gospanschaft of Silesia, and governed with arbitrary sway. Numerous complaints and expostulations were made by those oppressed by their iron rule; and more than one admonitory letter was addressed to them by the sovereign; but they disregarded both the remonstrances of the king, and even in 1542, when they were at length under sentence of outlawry for their manifold aggressions, there was not a sufficient force available in the province to carry the edict into effect; the resistance of the brothers sufficing to render of none avail every effort of the royal troops; and had not dissension broken out between them, it is impossible to calculate upon the results of their unquenchable ambition. In 1542, however, a feud so deadly in its nature, that it broke away every fraternal bond, and changed them from loving kinsmen into bitter foes, so paralyzed their strength, and weakened their resources, that they were finally reduced to obedience, and subjugated to the royal authority. The cause of their dissension is thus described in the chronicles of the time:— "Winter was approaching. The last clinging and discolored leaves were dropping reluctantly from the forest boughs, and the frost-touched vegetation was garbing the earth in a sombre and monotonous drapery of russet; the winds swept down from the heights shrilly and angrily, and the dancing river had taken a leaden hue; when the two strong Knights of Podmanin sat together before the ample hearth of their castle of Bistnitz. Both were sheathed in complete suits of steel armour; and as the fierce flames, which rose and fell in their dallying with the huge pine-logs that fed the fire, flashed over their tall and muscular forms, they seemed to draw sparks of light from the scales of the gleaming armor. A table stood before them, on which lay their trusty swords, side by side with a portly pitcher of wine, and two antique silver drinking cups; which looked as though they had been originally destined to a hobnob purpose, but which they now served. The brothers were in the full strength and beauty of their manhood; and had it not been for a fixed ferocity of expression, and a cold haughtiness of look, which betrayed an indifference to all interests but their own, they would have been strikingly handsome. In person they greatly resembled each other; and, amid all their evil qualities, the perfect unanimity which had always existed between them had been the one only and holy bond that had seemed to link them to their followers. They were but recently returned from a successful foray; and for a time they talked complacently of its results, and consulted together on the arrangements consequent upon them; but at length John exclaimed suddenly:— "Now, curses on these changeable seasons, which ever came adroit our brightest plans, and hold us idle in our own hills like child and women, when we should be up and doing, instead of letting our joints stiffen and our armor rust. Here in the winter on our backs again, threatening us with a three months imprisonment!" "We can, at least, curtail the term of our captivity by a bold start; our matters become worse," answered Ralph. "How say you? Shall we hazard one more venture, or we being up, our battle-axes all lying?" "Do you think the project worth the risk?" asked the elder. "We can only hard blows, but it is not so easy in our mountain passes to stop a snow-storm at defiance." "I am ready to make the trial," said the younger composedly. "So be it then, in the name of all the Saints!" retorted John with a hoarse laugh; "I know a certain Baron in Moravia, who is over-housed, and should be taught economy—he may be worth the trouble of a foray." "My plan is fixed; but it will be for small matter to acquire two masters, and you are not bound to follow me." "No shall I?" said Ralph, as he stretched forth his long limbs still more forward towards the bright blaze; "I will go to Silesia, where I shall probably be an unobscured guest of this baron; although, if I have any luck, not an unsuccessful one. And now that we are resolved for us, let us know in five days all may be prepared. The names of such of our allies as will be useful to each may be easily ascertained, and warning given to each to take up arms; while there are few of our own subjects who require much time for preparation." As they decided in this conversation, so they ultimately acted; and at the end of a week each had marshalled their troops, and commenced his march. Fortune, which ever seems by some strange fatality to favor the wicked, was peculiarly propitious on this occasion to Ralph; for he had scarcely reached the pass of the

loaka when he fell in with a carriage, surrounded with armed horsemen, which he immediately attacked. The carriage contained Girich of Lasekowitz, an old Silesian nobleman, and his only and beautiful daughter, the Lady Hedwig, who were on their way to Hungary, guarded by a party of their retainers. The struggle was of short duration; the strength of the adversary being so great as to render the very effort made by the Silesians a mere voluntary act of madness; for, bravely as the youth rallied round their lord, who aged he was, drew his sword in defence of his helpless child, there was not the most remote hope of success; and thus, in less than a moment, the hardy old Baron fell to the earth, smitten with a dangerous wound; while his insensible daughter was torn from the carriage, and made the spoil of the victor. Sir Ralph of Podmanin, although by no means susceptible of the softer emotions, was yet human and, consequently, he could not look upon the beautiful girl who lay senseless in his arms, without experiencing a feeling equally new and incomprehensible; and he exerted every energy to revive her, while his associates and followers were pursuing their work of plunder, and seizing upon every thing within their reach. His too officious care at length succeeded; a slight flush rose to the cheeks of Hedwig, and she opened her eyes; but it was only to be conscious that her father lay stretched on the earth beside her, his limbs rigid, and his gray hairs dabbled in blood; and with a deep groan, and a faint shuddering of her whole frame, she relapsed into the fearful swoon from which she had just awakened. The carriage having been pillaged, and no further booty remaining to be obtained, the Knight commanded his party to remount; and having placed his fair prize in the arms of a sturdy horseman, with strict injunctions to be careful of her safety, he left the old Baron and his brave vassals, wounded and helpless as they were, to their fate; and instead of pursuing his original intention of pushing on to Silesia, gave orders for an immediate return to Bistnitz. So thoroughly had the followers of Podmanin performed their business of plunder, that they had not only secured the weapons of the old Baron, and the jewels that they found upon his person, but, owing to the coolness of their material, had actually despoiled him of his garments; and thus, when they abandoned him, as they believed, to die, he had to contend, not alone with the smart of his wound, but also with the damps of the night, which were fast gathering about him when he awoke to consciousness. The spot where he lay was a deep hollow, one of the most difficult portions of the mountain pass; and his first feeling when he had recalled his senses was one of deep despair; but he resolved to abide his fate without a murmur, or any effort which could not fail to increase his bodily suffering, and which must only be productive of disappointment. He had scarcely made this determination when he remembered Hedwig, his pure and lovely child; and then indeed he grasped his bow in impotent passion, as he mentally contemplated her probable fate; but the very horror of his own thoughts gave him strength and courage, as he bowed to heaven, under the clear sky of heaven, that he would strive to live, were it only for vengeance on her ravisher. Under the excitement of this resolution he dragged himself along the steep and rocky gullies, leaving a track of blood upon the rocks as he struggled onwards; in the hope of being enabled to reach the wretched hut of a hermit which he remembered to have passed on the way, and to have made good with the Alps that he hung to a woman, who with three or four sunburnt and half-naked children, sat upon a bed, had shared with a black dog and a parrot, lying in a mud and stink-water as his only couch. It was a desperate effort; but the thirst for vengeance that was burning at his heart sustained him for a time unconscious, both of suffering and fatigue; and just as the dawn was breaking in the east, he found himself, exhausted and almost expiring, at the threshold of the hut. Once arrived there, the excitement of the attempt was at an end, and he relapsed into insensibility; but never once did his eyes wander from the door of the miserable dwelling in which he now crouched all his chance of life. Fortunately for the aged sufferer, he was not found much longer to endure the wear and ailing blasts which accompanied the dawn, as it is every way his lingering years had with sleep deeply to the mountain side; he was many minutes past asleep, his heavy eyelids were both with the side, in his own unconsciousness he happened to be in the daily habit of his construction when he dis-

covered the appalling object which lay stretched before his threshold; and the exclamation that he made drew his wife to his side; who, on approaching the wounded man, was not long in discovering her benefactor of the preceding day. The recognition was serviceable to the poor sufferer, for it augmented the care and zeal of the wandering and terrified peasant, who having covered the old Magistrate with some of their own coarse but cleanly garments, laid him on a rude bed formed of Indian corn straw, and the skins of wild animals which had been shot by the forester; supplied him with such food as their hat afforded, and gathered from his disjointed sentences a tolerably distinct idea of the cause which had reduced him to his present plight. They drove the children from the solitary apartment that composed their dwelling to gambol in the sunshine, lest their young voices should disturb the invalid; and then, with a prayer and a blessing they left him for a time to his repose, and went forth to their labor. When he awoke, the active mother was dispensing to her little ones their mid-day meal of black bread and grapes, keeping meanwhile a careful eye on her patient, through the open door of the hut; and no sooner did she discover that he had ceased to sleep than she hastened to his side, and with considerable skill dressed his wound, and laid him in a position of greater ease. This done, she dispatched her elder boy to the forest to summon his father, who was not slow in obeying the call; and who set forth within the hour to inform the household of the Baron of the evil chance that had befallen him. Early on the morrow his son, a brave and noble youth, arrived with a strong party of armed retainers, and a litter, in order to remove his wounded parent, which he did, after having breathed a solemn vow to leave no effort untried that might enable him to revenge the abduction of his sister. The miserable Hedwig, meanwhile, was detained a close prisoner in her chamber, of which her captor kept the key; and into which no one was permitted to enter save the Knight himself, and one female attendant, whom he, on every occasion accompanied to the threshold of the apartment, and then closed the door upon her, until she made the signal that her duties to the fair captive were performed. And she was indeed a fair captive; with eyes of deep blue, fringed with long dark lashes, and locks of raly gold waving over her shoulders; in these rich and rounded volumes which art strives in vain to imitate. Small of stature, but beautifully formed, the Lady Hedwig at sixteen was the very dream of beauty on which the most fastidious cavalier might have loved to linger; while on the fierce Knight of Podmanin her extreme loveliness produced as powerful an effect, that from the moment in which she fell into his hands, and fury were forgotten, and he seemed to live only to keep watch over the chamber that she inhabited. But let it not be supposed that the coarse soldier contented himself with keeping this helpless guard over his treasure, without availing himself largely of the privilege which it gave him to intrude his unwelcome presence upon the prisoner. Little formed to win a lady's love, despite his handsome and martial appearance, from the rude and ungentle life, which he had so long led, Sir Ralph had also, in the case of the Baron of Lasekowitz's daughter, the additional disadvantage of being recognized as her father's murderer. For of the old Noble's escape from death, neither the one nor the other entertained hope or idea. It was consequently with a feeling of the most undisguised loathing and aversion that the Lady Hedwig looked upon him, and when on the second day of her imprisonment at Bistnitz, the Knight not only indicated his presence upon her, but actually talked to her of love in the style of a freebooter and a ruffian; the indignation of the fair girl was added to her hate; and the gentle young creature, who had never hitherto been approached save with respect and courtesy, rose from her seat, with a dignity so impressive, and a rebuke so keen, that the bold chieftain, when another blood not suffering could appal, crouched under the glancing of her eye, and the stern haughtiness of her deportment, and hurriedly left the room. The trace was hollow, however; for no sooner had the Knight passed from her presence, than he cursed himself for a curst, and ere he had traversed half the length of the gallery, he had returned to the apartment of his victim. He found her seated with her head bowed upon her hands, pale as death, the hair and other parts of her person, damp and clammy with cold perspiration; and, when he entered, she started up, and, gazing upon the long curls, which had fallen about her face, she started her hand to her forehead, as if she had been struck imperceptibly.

Not a step further, Sir Knight! You, who in your doughty chivalry make war on woman, and shame your spurs and your proud name by lawless rapine and fierce aggression. Stand back, sir, and say your second word, be what it may, with speed, for I would be alone. Sir Ralph laughed a mocking laugh;— "You queen it bravely, lady," he retorted; "but you forget that you are in a stronghold of the Podmanins, where their will is law, and their pleasure the duty of those about them. I have already told you that I love you." "Love me!" cried Hedwig, in an accent of intense disgust; "would a freebooter and a rebel persist in talking to the Lady of Lasekowitz of love? We have had sufficient of this already. I plight my troth to no robber-chief. I do not ask so much, sneered her captor; "we have little priestcraft to answer for at Bistnitz. We are free mountaineers, and do not love to shackle ourselves with any fetters, however light." "How, sir," once more exclaimed the indignant girl; "have you no fear of heaven's thunder, that you talk to me thus?" "I fear nothing," was the reply. "Then may the Virgin save me!" murmured his victim, sinking upon her knees; "for on earth there is no hope." "Pshaw! this is fooling," exclaimed the Knight, while with his muscular arm he lifted her from the earth as the wind scatters the thistle down. "Listen to me, maiden. I have already told you that I love you; you are in my power; and I am not one accustomed to contradiction. Opposition will be idle; for what have you to hope, or with what will you resist? You are the first woman who has ever made the pulses of my heart quicken in her presence; and neither tears nor prayers will avail you here. I give you till to-morrow to reflect—but from to-morrow you are mine." And so saying, Sir Ralph of Podmanin turned a long lingering look upon the quailing girl, and left the apartment, carefully securing the heavy door behind him. The morrow came; but the attendant who had entered to stir the Lady Hedwig for the day, as was her wont, was overcome with terror when she discovered her stretched across the floor on the very spot where the Knight had left her, and where she had lain all night insensible. On removing her to her bed, the unhappy girl only recovered her senses for a while to lose them again in the still more painful delirium of fever;— and when her disappointed and enraged captor next looked upon her, she no longer recognized him, for her thoughts had wandered back to her own happy home; and she talked of beautiful and peaceful things, of her birds and flowers, her gray-haired father and her gallant brother; and she called them by a thousand gentle and endearing names, and warbled out sweet snatches of familiar songs; and looked so wildly beautiful amid her madness, that even his cold heart was touched; and he bade the woman, who stood weeping beside her, console her when she recovered consciousness, with the assurance that he would not again come into her presence until she should have strength to listen to his arguments; when, having gained this unwonted victory over himself, he strode to the ramparts, and with folded arms and gloomy brow, his armor rattling as he moved along, and his crimson plume waving in the wind, sought to overcome the vexation which was gnawing at his heart. Once or twice he bitterly reproached himself for what he was pleased to consider the woman's weakness which had betrayed him into the promise to which he had pledged himself; but the one virtue of truth was left to him, and he had now no alternative. Another and another day succeeded; and still the precarious state of his captive, of which he was careful to assure himself, banished him from her presence; and finally, wearied by such unaccustomed fluctuation, and satisfied that the unfortunate Hedwig could not elude his power, he resolved on quitting the fortress, and making a visit to a neighboring chief, who was one of the allies of his house. This was not to be, however; for scarcely had he sprung upon his horse, when the well known sound of his brother's bugle awoke the echoes of the mountain, and he saw the foremost of the party dashing through the rocky and narrow pass. Lightning his raid, and pressing his arched heels into the flanks of his fiery Arab, he accordingly shot through the arch, crossed the drawbridge, and advanced to meet his brother, who, recognizing him, started off, waving his hand in welcome, and invited him to the long train of animals which preceded him, by which he was accompanied. He not even so soon as he looked on the presence of the brother whom he had with the long curls, which had fallen about her face, she started her hand to her forehead, as if she had been struck imperceptibly.

Not a step further, Sir Knight! You, who in your doughty chivalry make war on woman, and shame your spurs and your proud name by lawless rapine and fierce aggression. Stand back, sir, and say your second word, be what it may, with speed, for I would be alone. Sir Ralph laughed a mocking laugh;— "You queen it bravely, lady," he retorted; "but you forget that you are in a stronghold of the Podmanins, where their will is law, and their pleasure the duty of those about them. I have already told you that I love you." "Love me!" cried Hedwig, in an accent of intense disgust; "would a freebooter and a rebel persist in talking to the Lady of Lasekowitz of love? We have had sufficient of this already. I plight my troth to no robber-chief. I do not ask so much, sneered her captor; "we have little priestcraft to answer for at Bistnitz. We are free mountaineers, and do not love to shackle ourselves with any fetters, however light." "How, sir," once more exclaimed the indignant girl; "have you no fear of heaven's thunder, that you talk to me thus?" "I fear nothing," was the reply. "Then may the Virgin save me!" murmured his victim, sinking upon her knees; "for on earth there is no hope." "Pshaw! this is fooling," exclaimed the Knight, while with his muscular arm he lifted her from the earth as the wind scatters the thistle down. "Listen to me, maiden. I have already told you that I love you; you are in my power; and I am not one accustomed to contradiction. Opposition will be idle; for what have you to hope, or with what will you resist? You are the first woman who has ever made the pulses of my heart quicken in her presence; and neither tears nor prayers will avail you here. I give you till to-morrow to reflect—but from to-morrow you are mine." And so saying, Sir Ralph of Podmanin turned a long lingering look upon the quailing girl, and left the apartment, carefully securing the heavy door behind him. The morrow came; but the attendant who had entered to stir the Lady Hedwig for the day, as was her wont, was overcome with terror when she discovered her stretched across the floor on the very spot where the Knight had left her, and where she had lain all night insensible. On removing her to her bed, the unhappy girl only recovered her senses for a while to lose them again in the still more painful delirium of fever;— and when her disappointed and enraged captor next looked upon her, she no longer recognized him, for her thoughts had wandered back to her own happy home; and she talked of beautiful and peaceful things, of her birds and flowers, her gray-haired father and her gallant brother; and she called them by a thousand gentle and endearing names, and warbled out sweet snatches of familiar songs; and looked so wildly beautiful amid her madness, that even his cold heart was touched; and he bade the woman, who stood weeping beside her, console her when she recovered consciousness, with the assurance that he would not again come into her presence until she should have strength to listen to his arguments; when, having gained this unwonted victory over himself, he strode to the ramparts, and with folded arms and gloomy brow, his armor rattling as he moved along, and his crimson plume waving in the wind, sought to overcome the vexation which was gnawing at his heart. Once or twice he bitterly reproached himself for what he was pleased to consider the woman's weakness which had betrayed him into the promise to which he had pledged himself; but the one virtue of truth was left to him, and he had now no alternative. Another and another day succeeded; and still the precarious state of his captive, of which he was careful to assure himself, banished him from her presence; and finally, wearied by such unaccustomed fluctuation, and satisfied that the unfortunate Hedwig could not elude his power, he resolved on quitting the fortress, and making a visit to a neighboring chief, who was one of the allies of his house. This was not to be, however; for scarcely had he sprung upon his horse, when the well known sound of his brother's bugle awoke the echoes of the mountain, and he saw the foremost of the party dashing through the rocky and narrow pass. Lightning his raid, and pressing his arched heels into the flanks of his fiery Arab, he accordingly shot through the arch, crossed the drawbridge, and advanced to meet his brother, who, recognizing him, started off, waving his hand in welcome, and invited him to the long train of animals which preceded him, by which he was accompanied. He not even so soon as he looked on the presence of the brother whom he had with the long curls, which had fallen about her face, she started her hand to her forehead, as if she had been struck imperceptibly.