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A NICE assortment of Dry Goods, just received and for sale by J. I. LACEY.

Select Poetry.

I OFTEN WONDER WHY 'TIS SO.

BY FATHER RYAN.

Some find work where some find rest,
And so the weary world goes on;
I sometimes wonder which is best—
The answer comes when life is gone.

Some eyes sleep when some eyes wake,
And so the dreary night hours go;
I often wonder why 'tis so,
Some hearts beat where some hearts break.

Some wills faint where some wills fight—
Some love the tent, and some the field;
I often wonder who is right—
The one who strives—or those who yield?

Some hands fold when other hands
Are lifted heavily in the strife;
And so thro' ages and thro' lands
Move on the two extremes of life.

Some feet halt where some feet tread
In tireless march a thorny way;
Some struggle on where some have led,
Some see—when others stray.

Some crowds rest where others dash—
Some flags flur where others flash—
Until the battle has been won.

Some sleep on while others keep
The vigils of the night;
They will not rest till roses creep
Around their name above a grave.

Select Miscellany.

A GAME FOR LIFE OR DEATH.

A TERRIBLE STORY.

It was night in the camp of Maximilian's army, and sounds of merriment were heard upon all sides, for soldiers are ever wont to indulge in pleasure, regardless of what the morrow will bring forth.

In a tent in the inner circle of the camp sat two officers at a rude table, upon which was marked with lead pencil a chess, or checker board, while black and white buttons served for the "men."

Around the tent were stationed guards, and both of the officers were unarmed, while not a weapon of any description was visible in their canvas room.

They were prisoners; soldiers in the service of Juarez, captured the day before; but their appearance indicated that they were not Mexicans.

Both men were of tall commanding forms, and of easy, graceful address; but, where one had dark blue eyes, and light hair and mustache, the other had eyes that were large and black, with brown hair and mustache.

Both men were exceedingly handsome, and upon their faces bore the impress of noble souls and hearts that knew no fear.

A love of adventure had caused them to leave their homes in the north, after the close of the civil war, in which both had fought bravely, and cast their swords with Juarez, to aid in driving from Mexican soil a German emperor.

Capoul Monteith, the blonde officer, was a young man of wealth and good family, a New Yorker, and a pet in society.

Garnet Weston, the brunette, was a poor man, a young lawyer in New York, of good, though poor parentage. He was possessed of superior intelligence, and was fast winning a name, when he crossed the path of Mabel Monteith, the sister of Capoul and a beauty and an heiress.

So deeply did Garnet love Mabel that he was miserable when not in her presence, and he believed she cared for him; but his pride was great, and he would not ride a pumper hand to a belle and heiress, and so struggled hard to win fortune and fame in his profession.

One day, an evil day for Garnet, a pretended friend told him that Mabel was his promised wife, but that their engagement had not yet been made public.

Like one in a dream Garnet Weston listened, and then in despair determined to seek some more stirring field, where the image of his lost love would not be ever before him.

A month later found him a cavalry captain in the army of Benito Juarez, where a few weeks later, he was surprised to be joined by Capoul Monteith, who had also offered his service to the Mexican President.

In an engagement, two days before they are presented to the reader in their tent, they had been captured and carried into the lines of Maximilian.

That night in camp they were playing a game of checkers, *pour passer le temps*, and Capoul, who was an expert player, was surprised to see how readily he was beaten by Garnet.

Suddenly a heavy tread resounded without, the sentinel challenged, there was a response, and the next instant three of Maximilian's officers entered the tent, one of whom was an American, a Republican fighting for Imperial Mexico, against the Republic; another was a Frenchman; the third was a Mexican colonel.

"Gentlemen, I am sorry to disturb you; but news has come to-night that Benito Juarez has executed a captain of our army, and I have orders to select one of you, and march you forth in retaliation," and the American Imperialist looked sad over the duty he had to perform.

"You cannot mean that one of us must die for an offence against Maximilian by Juarez," said Capoul Monteith, rising.

"Even so are my orders, sir; but I know not which to select, for my duty is most painful."

"Let the gentlemen play a game for the choice of the loser to die," suggested the young Frenchman.

"A good idea, monsieur. Gentlemen, I observe you were playing a game of checkers when we entered, so set to work and play three games, the one

who wins two of them to escape, the other to die."

"When is this execution to be?" asked Garnet Weston.

"Within the hour, sir."

"Very well; Capoul, I am ready for the game of life and death."

Capoul Monteith paced to and fro the tent with quick, nervous strides; he was young, handsome, possessed of vast wealth, and fond of life, and he could not be thus shot down like a dog; but he was a brave man, and thought of Garnet Weston, whom he had always admired, and half wished to be the loser rather than to see his friend die.

"I am ready," he at length said, and the two friends, strangers in a strange land, sat down to play the game for life or death.

Capoul Monteith played with the utmost caution, for, "If one must die, I have as good a right to struggle for life as has Garnet," he thought.

Garnet Weston played with indifference, a quiet, sad smile upon his face, and around them stood the three officers, and the platoon that were to be the executioners of the losing one.

Ten minutes passed, twenty, and the game was won by Capoul Monteith, whose face flushed crimson and then paled again.

Garnet Weston's face never changed an expression, for the same smile rested there.

The second game passed quickly, Garnet making his move the instant Capoul had raised his hand, and surprising all by his reckless indifference, but cool manner.

Five minutes passed, and the second game was won by Capoul Monteith.

"My God! Garnet, old fellow, I feel for you from my heart," cried the winner, the tears starting to his eyes.

Garnet pressed his friend's hand, the same smile upon his face as he said, quietly:

"I was ever a poor unlucky dog, Capoul; but, my friend, when I am dead look in my saddle-roll, hanging there, and the papers you find please deliver to the proper address—and—Capoul, say to—Miss Mabel I left a farewell for her."

"Gentlemen, I am ready."

"Curses on your Imperial humanity! Will you slay a man as though he were a hound?" cried Capoul, angrily turning toward the officers, for it cut him to the heart to thus part with his friend.

"I yield to the fortunes of war, Capoul, and these gentlemen but do their duty."

"Come, let it be over," replied Garnet, and shaking the hand of his friend warmly, he was marched away.

Half distracted with grief, Capoul Monteith paced his tent, his thoughts whirling, and his brain on fire, as he gazed at the stool where a short while before poor Garnet had sat.

An hour passed, and the American officer of the Imperial army stood before him.

"Well," said Capoul, hardly daring to ask the question.

"God has mercy upon him," groaned the sorrowing friend.

"Yes, Captain Monteith, he is dead, and though I have seen many men die I never saw one face death with such perfectly calm indifference, as did your friend."

"He gave the order to the platoon to fire, and fell instantly; but, ere he died, he wrote this note to you, and the American Imperialist handed a slip of paper to Capoul, and turning left the tent.

In Garnet's bold hand was written:

"I gave my life away to save you, for I loved Mabel too dearly ever to let her brother die where I could see this now, for I stand on the brink of my own grave."

"Farewell!"

A bitter night of sorrow passed Capoul Monteith in that lonely tent, for well he knew his friend had spoken the truth, and when months after the star of Maximilian's crown had set in gloom, and he resigned from the army of the successful Juarez, he wended his way homeward with a heavy heart, for he could not forget that Mexican soil covered the noble man who had fallen, a sacrifice to save his life.

Three years passed away after the game for life or death, and one pleasant evening, toward the sunset hour, a horseman was riding slowly along a highway, traversing a fertile valley of a South-western State.

Three years had added more dignity to the face, and perhaps saddened it; but otherwise no change had ever come over Capoul Monteith's features.

Upon his right hand, setting back from the road, was a pretty little farmhouse, surrounded by fertile fields, and the sight promising well for a night's lodging "for man and beast," Capoul turned in at the white gateway, and rode up to the front door, and dismounted.

The owner of the mansion descended the steps to greet him, and Capoul Monteith stood face to face with Garnet Weston.

"My God! has the grave given up its dead!" cried Capoul in dismay.

"No, old fellow, you find my flesh and blood ready and willing to give you a hearty welcome to my home, left me by an old bachelor uncle a few months since. But come in; I will tell you all."

The surprised and delighted Capoul willingly accepted, and around a well-spread tea-table that evening he heard how Garnet had been carried forth to be most bunglingly executed; but to a squadron of Juarez cavalry had appeared the young Frenchman.

"I am here, brother, I am here," cried the first platoon had retired, and that a watchful ranchero had seized him and borne him to his

ranchero where, through months of suffering, he recovered, and was able to depart from the house of his good friend.

But it was long ere he could gain strength enough to reach Galveston, Texas, and there he met an old uncle, who had carried him to his comfortable home with him.

The kind old bachelor was one day thrown from his horse, and night and day Garnet had watched by his bedside, until death relieved him of his sufferings, and the young man found that his uncle had left him all his wealth.

But, old fellow, why did you not write to let me know, for you know not how I have mourned for you!" asked Capoul.

"I did write to my old law partner in New York, and he said you had removed away, none knew whither."

"True; poor Mabel failed in health, and I carried her to Europe, but we soon returned and to effect a change in scene and air I purchased a fine farm, about two days journey from here, and there we now live. Mabel is contented, if not happy."

"She married? Fiddlesticks? No, she never had any idea of marrying any man excepting yourself, and you were off to Mexico, and nearly broke her heart."

"God, I thank Thee," cried Garnet, and he buried his face in his hands and wept like a very child.

Three months passed, and the bachelor home of Garnet Weston had mirrored to preside over it—a queenly-looking woman of twenty-two, perhaps, with dreamy, sad eyes, and a face of wondrous beauty.

That woman was once the heiress and belle of New York—Mabel Monteith—who, after long years, married her first and only love, through that game of life and death, in the gulf-washed land of Mexico.

That Sneaking Mr. Jaskins.

"Can I be protected here, Mister?" asked a woman yesterday as she entered the office of the Chief Police.

"Yes, m."

"Can my family—my innocent children—also be protected?" she demanded, striking the floor with her umbrella.

"Yes, m."

"If there is any law I want it," she went on, dropping in a big arm chair.

"If there ain't, I propose to take a club to him!"

"My dear woman the world is full of sorrow," said the captain as he looked up from his writing; "each one of us has his own separate and distinct grief to grieve over. Tell me yours."

"Do you know Jaskins?" she asked.

"Jaskins? Jaskins? Seems as if I had heard that name sometimes."

"Man with a limp—one eye gone—red neck—sandy hair—got a skulking sneaking way with him," she said.

"And he has stolen your poultry, eh?"

"Poultry! No! It's worse than poultry—it's next to arson or murder!"

"Go on, madam—go into the particulars!"

"Well, he boards next to me. I'm a widow. Been alone these fourteen years, and if I do say it myself, I've always had the respectablest kind of a name. I've a daughter Jane. She's seventeen. She is a good girl."

"Yes, madam."

"And that sneaking, skulking Jaskins is after her," she exclaimed.

"Possible."

"He just is! Was after me first. For weeks and weeks he'd hang around our gate, and smile at me and inquire if I wasn't lonesome, and send up strawberries, and look his loveliest out of that one eye!"

"And then?"

"And then, when he found I wouldn't marry him to save his neck, and he couldn't get my property to run through with, what 'rye spose he done?"

"Cut his throat?"

"No! He turned right around and went to loving Jane! He has sent notes to her in these long pink envelopes; he has sent bouquets and cocoanuts, and perfume and cherries, and he is skulking around yet! I've talked and talked, but it don't do no good. If something ain't done I believe Jane'll marry him!"

"How does she act?"

"She's a grinning around and looking soft and loving like, and she won't mind half I say, and is getting notes and writing answers, and all!"

"And she broke down. She wiped her eyes, softly rubbed her nose, and after a moment jumped up and demanded:

"Is there any law?"

"Lots of law—dead laws, madam?"

"And you'll put the law to him?"

"I will, madam—I'll make the town a volcano for him before he is a week older."

"And you'll break up the match?"

"Either that or break his back!"

"Good! the police are worth something after all! If you say you'll wait on him and tell him he's got to back right down or go to jail, I'll chain Jane to the table leg and sit by her four weeks but what I'll make her forget him!"

"I'll do it, madam!"

"Think of Jane marrying a man with one eye! and a red neck! and a limp. Oh! when I think of that skulking Jaskins sneaking around my innocent Jane to make her his wife, I could tear the house down."

Why call him the "groom" as eight out of ten people do? A groom's business is to look after the horses. A bridegroom's business is to look after his wife's mother.

A CHILD'S DREAM OF A STAR.

BY CHARLES DUCKENS.

There was once a child, and he strolled about a good deal, and thought of a number of things. He had a sister, who was a child, too, and his constant companion. These two used to wonder all day long. They wondered at the beauty of the flowers; they wondered at the height and blueness of the sky; they wondered at the depth of the bright water; they wondered at the goodness and the power of God who made the lovely world.

They used to say to one another, sometimes, supposing all the children upon the earth were to die, would the flowers and the water and the sky be sorry? They believed they would be sorry. For, said they, the buds are the children of the flowers, and the little playful streams that gambol down the hill-sides are the children of the water; and the smallest bright specks playing at hide and seek in the sky all night must surely be the children of the stars; and they would all be grieved to see their playmates the children of men no more.

There was one clear shining star that used to come out in the sky before the rest, near the church spire above the graves. It was larger and more beautiful, they thought, than the others, and every night they watched for it, standing hand-in-hand at the window. Whoever saw it first cried out, "I see a star!" And often they cried out both together, knowing so well when it would rise, and where. So they grew to be such friends with that star, that before lying down in their beds, they always looked out once again to bid it good-night, and when they were turning round to sleep, they used to say, "God bless the star!"

But while she still was very young, O very young, the sister drooped, and came to be so weak that she could no longer stand in the window at night; and then the child looked sadly out by himself, and when he saw the star, turned round and said to the patient, pale face on the bed, "I see the star," and then a smile would come upon the face, and a little weak voice used to say, "God bless my brother and the star!"

And so this time came, all too soon, when the child looked out alone, and when there was no face on the bed; and when there was a little grave among the graves not there before; and when the star made long rays down towards him, as he saw it through his tears.

Now, these rays were so bright, and they seemed to make such a shining way from earth to heaven, that when the child went to his solitary bed, he dreamed about the star; and dreamed that, lying where he was, he saw a train of people taken up that sparkling road by angels. And the star, opening, showed him a great world of light, where many more such angels waited to receive them.

All these angels who were waiting, turned their beaming eyes upon the people who were carried up into the star; and some came out from the long rows in which they stood, and fell upon the people's necks, and kissed them tenderly, and went away with them down avenues of light, and were so happy in their company, that lying in his little bed, he wept for joy.

But there were many angels who did not go with them, and among them one he knew. The patient face that once had lain upon the bed was glorified and radiant, but his heart found out his sister among the host.

His sister's angel lingered near the entrance of the star, and said to the leader among those who had brought the people thither:

"Is my brother come?"

And he said, "No."

She was turning away hopefully when the child stretched out his arms, and cried "O sister, I am here! I take me!" and then she turned her beaming eyes upon him and it was light; and the star was shining into the room, making long rays down toward him, and he saw it through his tears.

From that hour forth the child looked out upon the star as on the home he