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POETRY.

LIFE.

BY HERMAN KELSEY.

Oh! what is life with the joys and smiles
That brighten its opening hours;
With youth's gay dreams and enchanting wiles
As fresh as the morning flower!
Full soon the glow of the trusting heart
Shall yield to the wasting blight,
And Hope, like rainbow's hues, depart
Away from our dazzled sight.

Oh! what is life when strength and might
Of manhood have faded their way
Up the mount of fame to its starry height,
Where the beams of honor play?
The stately bark from the billow's crest
Is hurled to the gulf beneath;
And the falling star with a dark unrest
Yields up its roseate wreath.

Ah! what is life when our years are passed,
And our heads are white and hoar,
But a sunbeam trembling in the blast
On a dark and desolate shore?
Or a flower whose leaflets all are brown
From their native stem away,
Without one tint to recall the dawn,
Or lighten its wintry day.

From Godey's Lady's Book.

FUNERAL SHADOWS.

A MYSTERY BY F. A. DURIVAGE.

The wind was howling and moaning through the
almost deserted streets of Boston, on a chilly evening
of September, as a young man of medium height and
slight figure drew a faded and threadbare black cloak
around him, pulled his fur cap down on his forehead
to shelter his eyes from the cutting wind, and strode
down Washington street, in a northerly direction, with
a rapid and impatient step. Arrived at the door of a
house of moderate pretensions, he entered hastily.
We shall follow him to the third story, enter with
him a large and wholly dark apartment, and watch
him while he kindles a fire on the ample hearth stone.
A pale blue flame flickers hesitatingly among the
wood, and conjures up from the walls around strange
shapes and countenances bathed in the indistinct and
lurid light. And now the flame grows brighter and
the heavy furniture in the apartment flings strange
shadows, horizontal, diagonal and perpendicular; and
the picture on the wall (for we are in a painter's) look
quite as vague and vaporous as the projected shadows.
It is not difficult to imagine some of these faces endow-
ed with vitality, and so wild and startling are many
of them that the wavering shadows seem to belong to
them and be their strangely animated limbs.

The painter lit a lamp and then a huge meerschaum
filled with fragrant tobacco, his nightly solace and daily
inspiration. While the smoke-wreaths slowly as-
cended to the ceiling, he wore his Gothic fancies and
saw, in the blue clouds that hovered over him, embryo
designs and groups that he afterwards transferred to
canvas.
Malise Grey was an artist of great but peculiar tal-
ent—a fine draughtsman, an admirable colourist, but his
imagination was of a Gothic cast, and he delighted in
strange, fanciful and supernatural subjects. He had
travelled much in Germany, and his mind was imbued
with the superstitions and legends of that storied
land. These he loved to illustrate with his pencil, and
his walls were covered with German scenes and
subjects, from the 'Witches' Sabbath to the 'Castled
Crag of Drachenfels.' Portraits he painted from nec-
essity, not choice; but he was too true an artist for
the million. The sleek hypocrite wore not on his
canvas the deceptive look of holiness that bore him on
through life to wealth and honor, but the crafty sen-
sual smile, the libertine eye and lips that indicated the
secret phases of his character. Imbecile beauty wore
her index in the painted mirror. Folly stood convicted
by the pencil. It was frequently remarked that
you might learn more of a man from a glance at his
portrait than for months companionship with the origi-
nal. Malise Grey was not popular—but he lived for
his art, and bread and water satisfied his earthly crav-
ing.

The meerschaum fairly smoked out, the artist drew
from a dusty pile of canvases one on which he had
painted a family group. It was a fancy piece. An
old man lay upon his death-bed, over which bent a
weeping wife and a sorrowing and lovely child. The
face of the latter was one of unearthly beauty, and
Raffaele or Titian might not have disdained the paint-
ing of those glistening blue eyes and the falling sun-
beams of that golden hair. The painter had poured
out his soul upon that angelic countenance and perfect
figure.

'It is my ideal,' said the artist; 'and by the mystic
whisper of the heart, by the bright teaching of the star
that rules my destiny, by the forbidden love of which
I have drunk deeply, I know that the ideal of each

mind is the reflex of the actual, and with the true ar-
tist fancy is existence.'

The meerschaum was again filled, and Malise Grey
contemplated his picture. The smoke-wreaths rolled
around it, but it shone out luminous and star-like. Its
harmony was like the silent melody of the spheres,
and its musical radiance dispelled the remembrance of
all his sufferings and lulled him like the melody of fall-
ing water. When, at length, he drew his poor
couch from its recess and threw himself upon it, he
left the picture full in sight, and continued to watch it
by the fading firelight till its last luminous point dis-
appeared with the blaze and slumber closed his lids to
make its memory brighter.

The next morning was clear and sparkling; the first
rays of the sun were like fierce rubies on the walls of
the studio.

The painter sprang to his feet. 'The dream!' he
cried. 'My heart did not deceive me. The spirits are
at work for its accomplishment.'

He went forth to take his daily walk. There were
times when an appalling dread of insanity smote his
heart, and once the expression of a friend at the rec-
ital of one of his wildest fantasies led him into a train
of reflection and self-examination which shook his very
soul. For a time he forsook his studio and went abroad
into the gay world and formed fashionable acquaint-
ances, but he went back to his lonely room and his
hermit life, at the expiration of a few weeks, con-
vinced that the madness of art was preferable to the mad-
ness of society. And it was a painful thing for him
to go abroad, for no one sympathized with him. His
mind dwelt either on the shadowy past or the yet more
shadowy future. He held no community with the
present. So, on the occasion we have referred to, at-
ter a hurried walk, he returned to his room, the door
of which he had left unlocked. A veiled lady sat
before his easel. She rose upon his entrance. His heart
beat high with anticipations. The lady thus ad-
dressed him:

'Malise Grey, we have known each other in the land
of dreams; and removing her veil she pointed with
her right hand to the picture, while she extended her
right hand to the painter. The ideal and the actual
stood before him. A strange light gleamed upon
the painter's mind, and he spoke as if prompted by
some unseen power.

'Esther Vaughan, by this token do I know you.—
He then took her hand and added—By the mystic spell
that drew us to each other, I conjure you here to plight
your troth to me for real and wo.'

'My father died shortly after that picture was paint-
ed,' replied the maiden, 'and my mother—my poor
mother soon followed him. The spirit-summons com-
manded me to seek you out. I have obeyed.'

A strange marriage was solemnized in the Old
King's Chapel. The bride wore no rose or orange
flower in her braided hair, and a long black veil en-
veloped her from head to foot. In fact, her entire ap-
pearance and that of the bridegroom was of the same
ghastly hue, and the ceremony was performed be-
neath the light of torches which threw their funeral
glare upon the mortuary tablets and reliefs that de-
corate the interior of the sacred edifice. As the newly
married pair were about to step into the carriage at
the door, a thin figure in black approached the bride
and laid its hand upon her arm; the countenance
was not visible. The bride uttered a sharp cry of pain
and terror, and the figure instantly stepped back.

'Hold up your torch there, sexton,' cried the pair-
ter, 'some one has insulted the bride.'

A small figure was seen stealing off through the
tombs in the church yard, to which he had prob-
ably gained access through a breach in the wall, at
that time wholly ruinous.

It is not our intention to describe the happiness of
Malise Grey and his strangely found and strangely
wedded bride. Enough to say, it was like all the cir-
cumstances that composed his existence, dreamlike and
strange. So vivid were his dreams and reveries that he
often wondered whether they were not the actual, and
his marriage life the imaginary part of his existence.—
He could not give himself up to enjoyment, and
sometimes when his young wife would have lavished
on him the wealth of her innocent caresses, he turned
from her moodily and muttered—'What have I to do
with a spirit bride? When the sun rises these sha-
dows will disperse.'

Esther Grey had often solicited her husband to
paint her portrait, since the likeness in the family pic-
ture showed her under the influence of grief. She
wished a record of her happiness. Grey set about
completing with her request. He assumed the task in
a moment of inspired and fresh feeling, and went to
work with heart and soul. His sketch was instantly
executed, and

'His touches they flew like leaves in a storm,
And the pure pearl white & the carnation warm,
Contenting in harmony glowed.'

Suddenly he threw down the pencil and paced the ap-
artment to and fro with rapid strides. 'The doomed
look!' he muttered—'the doomed look!' Esther, I can
paint no more to-day.'

But the meerschaum found him early at his task. A
few hours work completed a portrait which for fidelity
of likeness, harmony of accessories and felicity of col-
oring, was almost unsurpassable. Yet the painter
refused to have it framed, and concealed it from
view behind a curtain in his studio.

A day or two afterwards a stranger called upon the
artist. He was a tall thin man, attired in a threadbare
suit of black bombazine. He was frightfully pale; his
jaws were prominent, and the hollow, shrunken skin
clung close to every muscle of his countenance. His
dark, sunken and glossy eyes had an unearthly ex-
pression and his air was melancholy in the extreme.
A nameless chill came over the painter as he surveyed
the aspect of his unknown visitor. The stranger
coldly surveyed the productions of the artist, and hon-
ored them with a few brief comments. At length he
paused before the veiled picture, and said—'This

picture of your wife belongs to me.'

The painter was so strong a believer in the super-
natural, had been subject to so many inexplicable in-
fluences, that he felt no surprise at the stranger's nam-
ing the subject of the veil picture, without uncovering
it. But he repeated sternly—'Belongs to you? What
mean you by that remark?'

'I mean it is, or will be mine by purchase.'

'Not so.'

'Then you will not sell?'

'I will not part with it at any price.'

The stranger smiled but not sincerely or sarca-
stically. The expression of his countenance was mourn-
ful in the extreme, and likewise unpleasant, because
the parting of his shrivelled lips displayed his large
yellow teeth in unpleasant relief. He opened the
door, but paused upon the threshold.

'You will not part with it?'

'Once more—no! replied the painter.

'No matter—the original—will soon be mine.'

The door closed rapidly behind his noiseless steps.
A vague terror shrank through the soul of the artist.

When Esther Vaughan came to the dwelling of the
painter, she was radiant with a health which had tri-
umphed over sorrow and long watching by the bed of
disease and death; but soon diseases fastened upon her
frame, and she sunk under its influence, growing fee-
bler and feebler. The almost distracted husband em-
ployed the best physicians in the city, and under their
efforts Esther for a while seemed to revive. One day,
in solemn convalesce, they decided that the patient
would live, and announced the intelligence to the poor
painter as he sat in his lonely study, with much pon-
tosity and emphasis. At the time of this announce-
ment the painter was standing opposite the open door
through which the physicians had just entered. At
the moment when a smile of gratified love was light-
ing up his intelligent countenance, his eyes—looking
beyond the group of visitors—caught in the corridor
those of the strange bidder for the veiled picture. The
unknown shook his head slowly and mournfully, then
turned and retired.

'Stop him, gentlemen!' cried the painter, bursting
through the group of leeches; 'he is a deadly enemy.'

The physicians looked at each other, smiled darkly
and shook their heads.

'Poor Grey!' said an old doctor.

'Mad!' asked one of the group.

'The cell, the chain and scourge would be a whole-
some prescription,' said the first speaker.

Such were the tender mercies of science to madness
in the eighteenth century.

It was a hushed midsummer night; the hum of busy
footsteps had long since died away, and the twinkling
lights had faded one by one from the huge bulk of the
metropolis. To the lonely night-watcher there was
enough of light in the mild effulgence of the moon to
distinguish whether the pale invalid woke or slumbered,
whether the repose of the dead was inviolate or
invaded by noisome things that move abroad only in
darkness. And midway between life and death, so
motionless that you would say she belonged to the dark
realm of the latter, so lovely that the former still seem-
ed to claim her own, lay the earth-born love of the
painter, with her supernatural essence yet hovering
near the beloved of her soul. The painter sat by the
bedside with her thin pale hand clasped in his; he had
listened to her last accents, he heard her call him in
the fervor of her affection 'her beautiful, her own'; and
he knew that ere the unseen clock had recorded the
death of another hour, the feeble pulse that fluttered
beneath his fingers would have ceased to beat. Yet,
with all this, his eyes were tearless, and his heart less
heavy than in those dark dreams which had fore-
shadowed this event. In weal or woe his prophetic
dreams seemed even more impressive than the real-
ities which followed them.

It appeared as if there was a magnetic influence in
touch of the dying hand, that the soul of Esther, bathed
in the dawning light of the better world, had com-
municated a portion of its brightness to his own. So
the hours wore on; the feeble pulse yet beat, but faint-
er. At last, through the open window which com-
manded a view of the east, the brightening streaks of
dawn appeared; in the leaves of a solitary tree that
stood amid a wilderness of brick hard by, was heard the
faint, tremulous twitter of a bird, waiting but a
ruder ray to launch forth upon his dewy pinions.—
A smile, like a ray of light dawned upon the counte-
nance of Esther. She pointed to a shadowy alcove in
the chamber, and the painter's eye following the indi-
cation, detected the figure of his mysterious and pro-
phetic visitor. But the countenance of the unknown
was milder, softer; a veil of brightness had fallen upon
the more repulsive lineaments, and when the broad
daylight beamed into the apartment, his image melted
into the ray, like a rain drop into a sunny sea. A
thrill ran through the painter's frame; he gazed upon
the face of Esther—it was that of death.

An unfinished painting rests upon an easel; it is a
glimpse of Paradise. In the centre is a focus of almost
intolerable splendor, the luminous veil of the Incon-
ceivable and Infinite, while towards it, as if drawn by
a vortex of glory, yet held in suspense when too near,
hovers a sea of radiant forms and faces, their souls pure
and beautified beaming from their countenances, all
full of adoration, intelligence and bliss. The painter
sat before it, putting the last touches with a feeble yet
graceful hand. A light seemed to stream upon him
from the picture, and lit up his pale, inspired counte-
nance.

The door opened, the painter turned not from his
task; he heard no footstep, yet he knew that the Mes-
senger—no longer feared, but hoped for—was stand-
ing at his side.

'One touch more,' he said softly. 'Thus—'tis done,
and bravely done.'

He turned—the mysterious messenger was truly
there. But as the painter gazed, the herald's form was
transfigured; his poor garments had given place to

slashing raiments; his countenance beamed glory and
goodness; effulgent wings expanded their snowy plu-
mage from his glorious shoulders, and his forehead
shone a star like that of Morning. He touched the
mortal hand that thrilled to meet his clasp; the last
film fell from the painter's eye, and he saw with ecsta-
sy, a horrid phantom, but Azrael, the Angel of
Death, great, beautiful and good.

'W. Aiston—the Paint King.'

PLEASANT THINGS.

It is pleasant, in a sultry summer's day, to leave the
dusty thoroughfares of trade, and sit down beside some
bubbling spring, the margin of which is carpeted with
green and tender turf, while overhead the tall family
of the forest enweave their rustling branches, forming
huge Gothic arches, while thro' their interstices a
beam of sunshine descends in softened glory.

There, with a book, a good cigar, or, better than ei-
ther, an intelligent companion, who can read the great
volume of nature with enthusiasm, and who delights
in racy anecdote and the reminiscences of happier
days, it is pleasant to linger, forgetful awhile of the
goadings of life and the sharp spur of uncongenial
toil.

'Tis pleasant to wander by the sea shore, and per-
mit the cool breezes from the waters to fan the fever-
ish brow, and the low murmur of breaking waves to
lull the anxious heart to rest—to view the white and
swelling sails of summer barks, gliding in distance,
and catch the thrill of happy voices, song and laugh-
ter that came, wafted by the gale, along the glittering
expanses.

It is pleasant, at early morning, to behold the bright
and rising sun—to see the mists rolling away their
vast and fleecy curtains from the mountains, and the
glowing heralds of day painting the portals of the east
with gold and crimson hues, while the morning star,
like the eye of a beautiful woman, trembles with its
own lustre, and scintillates like a jewel upon the coral
of a goddess.

At evening, it is pleasant to wander forth in the
moonlight—to stand amid the heavy shadows of tree
or tower—to see the great dome of nature's temple,
sprinkled with thousands of unwaning lamps, and see
those mystic images of light which entranced the Chal-
dean shepherds, and made the Pagan bend in adora-
tion.

It is pleasant, at such an hour, to hear amid the
thick foliage the low twitter of some bird compos-
ing himself anew to slumber, the plaintive notes of the
whip-poor-will, or the far away music of a mellow
flute, that seems like the hazy whisperings of an
angel in the depths of paradisaical groves—to count
the slow and solemn strokes which, in half stern and
half melodious tones, beat the march of time upon some
distant bell, while the freshening wind playfully quavers
with the sound, and echo calls to it as it flies.

Pleasant, after the day's fatigues, is the welcome of
an affectionate wife, the prattle of dear children, the
murmuring of the faithful old house dog, or even the
purring of the less sagacious cat. It is a cordial
to the soul, that, in this cold and selfish world, there
are those who love you—that even a brute will look
upon you with kindness—and that you are not altogeth-
er like a pelican in the wilderness.

Pleasant are the slumbers which weigh down the
lids of the laboring man, and shut out the scenes of
turmoil, of lustre, and scheming avarice, which dis-
tract the brain of one whose bread is earned in a count-
ing room, in the marts of trade, amid the calculating
crowd, who care not for your perplexities, and would
laugh none the less were you stricken from existence.

Among the superstitions of the Senecas, is one which
for its singular beauty, is already well known. When
a maiden dies, they imprison a young bird until it first
begins to try its powers of song, and loading it with
kisses and caresses, they loose its bonds over her grave
in the belief that it will not fold its wings neither close
its eyes until it has flown to the spirit land, and deliv-
ered its precious burden of affection to the loved and
lost. It is not unfrequent, says the Indian historian, to
see twenty or thirty birds loosened at once, over one
grave.

Christianity has never suffered opposition for a long
time from any particular and formidable system of in-
fidelity. Infidel theories have been constantly rising
and falling; while the religion of Jesus, at times grossly
abused by its professed friends, has moved forward
like an invincible column. To oppose it, every species
of wickedness has risen up. It stands, however, in
the majesty of Truth.

USED UP!—An editor 'out west,' thus makes his ex-
citement:

'Dear readers—With this paper ceases the existence
of the 'Ohio!' Our number is full and complete, and
we are a 'busted establishment.' We shall gather up
our coat & boots, shave off our whiskers, don a few
interesting specimens of 'patrons' that will pay—in
promises, and then we're going for to go to some oth-
er field of operation. It may not be more extended,
but it cannot be less.'

The Union says that the gross amount of proceeds
from postage on business letters, unconnected with the
government, has fallen off nearly 66 per cent, while
the postage charged to the government for its letters,
&c., received and sent, is enormous. For the Post Of-
fice Department alone, it is said to reach near \$10,000
for the month just past.

Punch tells of an artist who was an eye witness to
the battle of Navarino, in the peaceful capacity of a
passenger, and received a cannon ball into his chest,
which utterly destroyed—a dozen of shirts that were
packed up in it.

A gentleman in Lowell, Mass., is so strongly at-
tached to the ten hour system that he will not drink
root beer, because it works more than ten hours per
day.

AGRICULTURAL.

PLow AND HOE OFTEN.—I fear our farmers and
gardeners are not sufficiently aware of the fact that
great benefit results from plowing and hoeing often
when we have what is deemed a drought. I am of
opinion that too little hoeing in dry, and too much in
wet weather, is practised. In a dry time, the ground
should be often stirred, even if no weeds or grass are
to be destroyed. The writer of this article a few years
since had a patch of potatoes planted the same day,
by the same hand; soil and seed equal. During the
dry season it was necessary to pass and repass almost
daily by the side of one row with a plow and cultiva-
tor, the hoe was applied to remove what dirt was
thrown on the potatoes. When the potatoes were
dug, the row yielded fifty per cent more, which were
larger and better. Since then I have been in the prac-
tice of applying the hoe freely in dry weather with
success.—*Cor. Michigan Farmer.*

A HINT ON PASTURES.—There is a common practice
in farming which our own personal experience con-
vinces us is bad economy; and that is, the close feed-
ing of grass land, after the hay is taken off. Upon
ground that has no advantage of overflow or wash,
this close feeding will lessen the crop amazingly; the
feed used is not half in amount of the value of that of
the hay crop of the next year alone which it takes a-
way. Farmers would do much better to lessen their
number of acres of mowing and convert it into pas-
ture, that they might keep their cattle entirely from
their mowing grounds. In a rough country, there is
necessarily a great portion of some farms that must re-
main in pasture; but a farm that has none or few rocks,
may be plowed in all parts; and here a quick rotation
will enable the farmer to plow both his pasture and
mowing grounds. A pasture cultivated and manured
like mowing lands, will give at least four times the
feed of the same land kept permanently down to pas-
ture.—*Farmers' Visitor.*

NEW KIND OF WHEAT.—We clip the following
from an exchange. We doubt not it will be perused
with curiosity by many, as it is on a topic in which
farmers generally feel a deep interest. Le Coteur's
efforts are probably well known to most readers of the
Cultivator. To the wheat growing portion of Europe,
as well as that of America, he is to be regarded as a
benefactor.

The varieties of Wheat are yearly increasing in En-
gland. Le Coteur enumerates eighty-four varieties,
and there have been several new introductions since
this list was made. These varieties are obtained by
judicious selections and mixtures. Some of these are
remarkable for their productiveness, while others for
the weight of gluten or nutritive matter.

At present the kinds cultivated almost universally
in the higher grounds and lighter soils of Scotland, are
the Golden Drop, and Blood Red Balon. We have
received a small quantity of the two varieties, with
specimens of the grain in straw. The average crop
of the Blood Red, is about fifty bushels to the acre.—
The skin of this variety is thicker than in most other
varieties, and they yield more bran.

The Uxbridge and Hunter's wheat are the kinds
most cultivated in the rich soils of England. The
yield is from fifty to sixty bushels per acre—the av-
erage weight per bushel is from 62 to 63 lbs. Specimens
of these grains in straw may be seen at this office,
where a small quantity of the seed may be obtained.—
Maine Cul.

ANIMALS WITH LARGE CHESTS.—Horses that are
round, 'or 'barrel chested,' are invariably more mus-
cular and enduring than those of the opposite kind.—
Scientific sportsmen are, in a great measure, guided in
their opinion of a horse's racing qualifications by his
girth just behind his shoulders. By this test, a well-
known jockey foretold the reputation and powers of
the celebrated racer 'Plenipotency,' from the peri-
od of his birth. Cattle-dealers and butchers, in like
manner, judge by the chests and shoulders of cows and
pigs with reference to the amount of fat they are like-
ly to gain in the process of feeding. All animals that
have large lungs are remarkable for the vigor of their
appetite, and for the facility with which they appro-
priate their nutriment. Such animals will feed upon
the coarsest hay and straw, whilst their less fortun-
ately constructed companions are fattened by no kind of
food. An amusing anecdote is related of a simpleton,
who, in trying to sell his horse, declared that the ani-
mal's eating was a mere nothing.' The intelligence
would, contrary to intention, have suffered to ruin the
prospect of sale, but that buyer, with a rare discrimi-
nation, inferred from the horse's chest that the cap-
acity of his appetite had been unwittingly mis-stated.
He had bought him on the hazard of an opinion, and
had no reason to repent of his judgment.—*Medical
Times.*

SALT AS A MANURE.—Professor Johnson has done
more than any other person to extend the use of salt
as a manure, by giving to the world his excellent essay
on salt used on soil, and the mass of experiments he
has recorded. It appears that salt in small propor-
tions, promotes the decomposition of animal and veg-
etable substances; that it destroys vermin and kills
weeds; that it is a direct constituent of some plants, and
therefore necessary to their perfection; that all culti-
vated plants of marine origin contain it—asparagus, for
instance—and that all such succeed better when wa-
tered with salt water, than when deprived of it; that
salt preserves vegetables from injury by sudden trans-
itions in temperature, salted soil not freezing as readi-
ly as those to which salt has not been applied, and
that it renders the earth more capable of absorbing the
moisture of the atmosphere.

Whenever you buy or sell, let or hire, make a clear
bargain, and never trust to 'We shan't disagree about
trifles.'

There are no less than five Churches now in course
of erection in the city of Washington.