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Poetry

THE BIBLE.

Blessed Bible, book divine,
Sure thou art a treasure mine;
A letter from our Father sent,
A light to every wanderer's tent,
A mirror polished bright and pure,
A kind physician who can cure,
A bright star in a cloudy sky,
A sun of light at noonday high,
A lover ever wooing me
More than my crown to see:
A friend to guide my weary feet
O'er mountain crag and glassy steep;
A page of history so true,
Its lessons none can ever rue.
A code of morals undisputed,
A solver of all questions mooted,
A law for nations universal,
And chart for business commercial,
Peace maker on land and sea,
Filling the widow's heart with glee,
A father to the fatherless
And succor the humble poor to bless;
A lighthouse on the shores of time,
Pointing to heaven's healthful clime;
Jasper of an ardent hope
That lifts the fainting mourner up;
A deed to brighter worlds on high,
For which as prisoners here we sigh;
A book of promises to men,
"To the believer—yea, amen!"
Hail, monument of grace and truth,
We never can tell thy endless worth;
Thy wisdom's boundless as the ocean,
Thy bliss in parallel proportion.
Thou'lt guide us by thy holy light,
Till the city spires heave in sight;
And then thy bright and glowing page,
Unfurled to view from age to age,
Shall brighter, and yet brighter shine,
As angels' nailed to this chime;
And traced on adamantine walls,
In heaven's vast and splendid halls
We'll read thy truths in living fire,
Precise as told by prophets, sire;
The mysteries foretold of old
In beauteous form shall thou unfold,
And God, the author of the plan,
Will add us too his work to scan.
Roll on, thou pure, bright constellation,
To bless with light our land and nation;
By day our cloud to guide aright,
Of fire a pillar to lead by night,
To the promised land, though far it be,
In faith's pure light we ever see.

EVANDER

Select Miscellany.

THE LAST SACRIFICE.

An Incident of the Battle of Germantown.

BY LAWRENCE LABREE,
Editor of the New York Illustrated Magazine.

We have heard the story of a young man who lived during the perilous times of our country—those "times that tried men's souls." He was ardent and patriotic, and thirsted to be a sharer in those glories which our brave armies plucked from the bristling bayonets of the enemy; yet he had been withheld from joining the ranks by aged and infirm parents, whose only support and comfort he was. As he looked upon the feebleness of their old age, and thought of the perils they would be exposed to, with no defender of their helplessness, he gave a sigh for the destinies of his country, and resigned himself to the duties of the small farm that was their only support. He could not desert them, and leave them to the mercy of the vagabonds stragglers from the enemy's camp, and the worse traitors to his own country. Instances were two fresh in his memory of reverend heads and hoary locks having been crushed to the dust by midnight plunderers and assassins, and his love for the authors of his being left him nothing but his prayer for his oppressed country.

But he had other affections that were growing in his breast like spring flowers, shedding a perfume of holiness upon his spirit, like the Christian's inspiration. There had existed, since their childhood, an attachment between him and the only daughter of a widow who resided but a few rods from his father's residence, and that attachment had ripened to a mutual declaration of love when the parties became sufficiently old to appreciate the glow of true devotion. A time was set for the consumation of their vows, which was the evening of the ever memorable 25th of December, 1776, at the time that Washington was making his perilous but triumphant passage across the Delaware, amid floating ice, and suffering from the intense cold of the season.

The two families were now united, George removing his bride and her mother to the house of his father. But still he was not happy—he could not banish from his mind an oppressive anxiety for the welfare of his country, and the doubtful struggle which she was maintaining in the hopes of acquiring that freedom for which every noble heart so warmly prayed.

In a week from the night of the passage of the Delaware, Washington met a detachment of the enemy at Princeton, which he defeated with small loss, with the exception of several officers, among whom was the gallant and brave General Mercer, while that of the enemy was upward of one hundred killed, and the remainder, about three hundred, taken prisoners.—The general then retired to winter quarters at Morristown, which he did not leave until the latter end of May, with an army amounting to but little over seven thousand men, although Congress had offered recruits bounties in land with increased pay.

At this time George burned to enlist in the ranks of his countrymen, and share their sufferings and their glory. But his young wife looked in his face with weeping eyes, whose eloquence, added to the infirmities of his parents deterred him from the sacrifice. Besides, as the roads became more passable, and the season more temperate, robberies and midnight excursions of straggling Hessians and skinners were more frequent, and the house of one of their neighbors had been pillaged, the inmates brutally murdered, and the dwelling set on fire within sight of their friends, who could offer them no assistance, expecting as they did, every moment to meet a similar fate.

In this state of inquietude passed away the summer, until the intelligence reached George of the engagement between the American and English armies at Brandywine, on the 11th of September, when the Republican forces were compelled to retire after a days hard fighting with a loss that was estimated at three hundred killed, about six hundred wounded, and between three and four hundred made prisoners.

This reverse of the American arms arouse anew the patriotic feelings of George, and he at once communicated his intentions to his father, who offered no impediment to his immediately joining the army and helping to retrieve what had been so unfortunately lost.

"Go, my son," said he, "I am beyond service, myself; but like Abraham of old, I am willing to offer my son to the sacrifice. Let the plea of protection to your parents be no longer an excuse to keep you from the ranks of those brave and devoted men who follow Washington, but receive our blessing, and bid farewell to your young wife, whose love of her country I am sure can not be less than her affection for yourself. If you fall, it will be in a just and holy cause."

This was heroic advice, but nowise uncommon in the mouths of our venerable sires.—George communicated his design to his mother, and afterward to his wife; but the latter would not listen to his arguments, and wept, and beseeched him not to leave them to the mercy of the mercenary robbers that overran the country in the neighborhood of the British armies. Earnestly did he plead the suffering of his countrymen and the necessity of his presence among those who were battling for the blessings of liberty—to nothing would she listen—no argument could convince her. What was a single arm in the mighty strife! Despairing and impatient, our hero resolved to leave for the army the ensuing night, and for this purpose he made all necessary preparation for his secret departure. His gun and knapsack were deposited in the barn, and a letter of farewell written, which he would leave to be read after his departure.

Midnight at length came, melancholy and gloomy to George; but he arose from his bed, to which he had retired in the early part of the evening, to lull suspicion, and kissing his wife affectionately as she lay asleep, he hurried to the barn, accoutered himself as well as his few equipments would allow, and was soon on his way to join the army. He had not far to travel, as Washington had encamped within eighteen miles of Germantown, and but half that distance from his own residence, and long ere daylight on the first of October, he had presented himself within the lines of the American army, and made known his desire to enlist, and that morning's reveille, as it beat the time to rise, was answered by the presence of George Madden.

But what consternation did that morning's dawn bring to the hearts of his wife and parents! His non-appearance was at first scarcely noticed, till the former perceived a letter lying on the table directed to herself, wherein George informed her of his resolution, and urged the necessity of his assisting in the struggle for freedom.

"If I fall," it said, "remember me—I shall die in a just and glorious cause. If I live—trust me it will be in the enjoyment of a freeman's glorious privileges."

Ere the letter was concluded, the forsaken wife had fallen senseless on the floor. The father felt a glow of patriotic pride thrill his heart at this devotion in his son, while the mother knelt and clasped her hands in silent prayer.

The poor wife at last came to her senses but it was to wander about the house weeping, continually calling upon her husband, and insisting that she should never see him more and marveling at his cruelty in deserting her. She was not of Spartan mold, and possessed not those stern virtues which prompted those ancient heroines to lay the last particle of affection upon the altar of their country's freedom. No; she asked nothing more than the love and presence of her husband—a devotion that reigned paramount in her heart, permitting the presence of none else. Grief! she could not submit to be left thus alone. The act must be revoked that made him one of the army. She would seek him—she would implore him to come back to those who loved him, and to whom he was all the world.

So that same day, ere the sun had reached its meredian, unknown to any one, she left her home, and after three hours' weary travel she stood beside her husband in the camp, beseeching him to return. Those who witnessed her earnestness were melted by her tender entreaties—those rugged soldiers that would rush madly on bayonet and cannon—march barefooted over frozen ground and through deep snow, sustained only by fervent patriotism—they wept as they beheld this fond but timid wife clinging to her husband, and with eloquent endearment, begging him, for the love she bore her, to return once more to the desolate hearth now left without a protector. Impossible, he had enlisted for the war—the army could not spare any of its number, which, at the best, was ever too small to cope with a larger force, better disciplined and better clothed. Impossible? He could not, with any decent grace, retreat from a position so recently assumed. He consoled her as best he could, but assured her of the impracticability of leaving the army. She must submit; it would be a sacrifice no greater than had been made by thousands. There was no remedy but to wait in hope—the end was certain, and the consequence would be glorious. But what could the poor wife do? Ha, a thought has struck her. She will seek the tent of Washington—at his feet will she lay her petition.

Behold the hero in his tent—the great, the god-like, in whom are joined all virtues—created for the age and for the cause, doing what none else ever did, performing what none else could. Before him is kneeling the wife of George Madden. Her petition has not been in vain, her tears have not been without effect. She holds in her hand a paper that will restore to her husband; but before she goes to the officer of his regiment, she reverently takes the hand of her benefactor and presses it to her lips; a tear falls upon it which the good man suffers to remain, and sends her from his presence with a benediction, and words of hope and comfort!

Again she is in the presence of her husband—she shows him his discharge with a beaming countenance, and words of joy.

"Now you will go home with me, George, and we will again be happy, oh—so happy!"

But no glow of satisfaction lit up his eye, no gladdening emotions shed their radiance over his features.

The discharge was recognized, and she led her husband from the ranks of his devoted companions? but he went not forth with that manly dignity and firm step with which he entered the camp as a volunteer. The eyes of the hardened soldiers were upon him—he fancied scornfully—his head dropped upon his chest, and suppressed whispers hissed in his ear like so many serpents, each a voice of reproach and shame; but the timid and loving woman that led him from that camp of war was unconcious of all this. She heard no whispers of reproach, she saw no scornful eyes—she was only concious that she had recovered her husband, and what cared she for eyes and lips! The pickets were passed, and the last guard stared rudely in her face, as she approached him, and muttered something that she did hear. She prattled ramblingly to her husband, fond creature, all the way, telling how happy she should be, and father, and mother—but he answered her not, still walking gloomily by her side. Little cared she, though, and still she wended along, and still she prattled. Poor timid, tender creature!—She did not imagine what a load of shame she had piled upon the head of her husband! She could not think how deeply he was wounded. She had him safe.—all her own, at last, and she could not dream of any future wo, or brooding sorrow! But *he* thought—*he* brooded over his desertion of his comrades, and remembered the expression of their faces as he suffered himself to be led out of the encampment. And that night, in his dreams, he heard the booming cannonade, the crack of musketry, the clash of steel, and the pealing shouts of victory; but he had suffered a child to tie his hands, and when he struggled to free himself, he heard the cry of "Shame! shame!" that awoke him from his uneasy slumber, with cold sweat upon his brow, and his tender wife slumbering peacefully by side, with her white and delicate arm clasping his panting chest!

When the morning dawned and the day called him to his duties, it found him a strangely altered man. The caresses of his wife seemed loathsome to him—he could not bear her presence, but sought every opportunity of shunning her. But once during that day did he speak to her. The poor creature could not bear his coolness, and her heart at last overflowing with feelings that became insupportable, she seized his hands and looking earnestly in his face, while her eyes glistened with tears he exclaimed:

"Oh, George! why, why do you behave so coldly? It is killing me, George—you must look kindly—you must speak to me, or I shall die!"

He pressed her to his bosom for a moment, and then, looking earnestly in her eyes, said:

"Mary, you have disgraced me! I can never look man in the face again!"

She spoke not, but returned his glance with a proud eye, and suddenly quitting the room, she left her husband wondering of the strangeness of her behavior. Her absence was but for a moment, and returning, she placed in the hands of her husband the gun and knapsack with which he had accoutred himself on the previous night.

"There, George, return to the camp. Tell General Washington that the wife gives her heart for the cause of her country. If every American gave as much, we should be invincible! Go! God bless you, this is my sacrifice. You will bid me farewell—you will now speak to me—you will look as you used to do.—That is some happiness. Oh, I could not bear your displeasure."

Need we say how the heart of the young patriot leapt with exceeding joy, and how he pressed the yielding form of his beautiful wife to his bosom? Shall we describe the tender parting and the affectionate farewell? Or shall we cover with the veil of silence scenes so sacred? We prefer that the imagination of the reader should supply a scene that description cannot do justice to.

George Madden was once more enlisted in the ranks of his countrymen, where he was received with applause.

At this period Philadelphia was occupied by the British under General Howe, who, annoyed at some forts on the Delaware, detached a portion of the royal army to reduce them.—Washington improved this opportunity to attack the remainder of the British army encamped at Germantown. This attack was made on the fourth of October, and was maintained on the part of the Americans with great severity but they were eventually repulsed with twice the loss of the enemy, owing to the inexperience of a part of the troops and their movements. It was ascertained that the American loss amounted to two hundred killed six hundred wounded and about four hundred prisoners.

But how fared George Madden? How fought the new recruit?

An old man—a survivor of the ranks—told us that he fought with the ferocity of a tiger, and that just previous to the commencement of the attack, a young stripling presented himself to the officer and requested to be placed side by side with the hardy battler for liberty. His request was granted—for no time was allowed for questions or considerations—and he was placed by the side of Madden, who only noticed him by a look of approval as the troops wheeled into line. He fought bravely and well—foot to foot—sometimes breast to breast. But in vain the contest—useless the struggle. History tells of that disastrous field, and how, like the waves of the ocean, the brave troops of Washington, under their heroic leader, gathered and broke, again and again, upon the resisting forces of the enemy, but without effect, only to meet defeat and death. Night shrouded the victory of our oppressors, and hung gloomy and thick over the camp of our desponding, but not discouraged, countrymen.

But the early light of the succeeding day beamed upon a spectacle of worse horror.—There lay heaps of the dead, the wounded, and the dying. But, a little apart from the rest, upon a green mound, stained only with their own blood, lay two forms clasped in the faithful embrace of death. The elder and more manly form of the two was recognized as that of Madden, the other the fair volunteer of the preceding day. They were locked in a last embrace, and, in trying to part them it was discovered that the slender and delicate form was that of a woman.

The hearts of the veterans grew big as they gazed upon the melancholy spectacle, and they forebore to part them, but placed them locked in each other's arms, in the same grave, and as the earth was thrown over them, no sacred rite was performed, but the tears of brave soldiers were sufficient pleaders at the bar of Heaven, and their sad thoughts an appropriate funeral prayer for the sweet rest and perpetual happiness of two such rare spirits.

A GOOD MAN

Is respected every where by those whose respects is worth having. Whether a member of one church or another, he will be pointed at as an example to those around him. None are so lost to a sense of virtue as not to pay him reverence, all speak to him in a gentle and subdued tone of voice—and each one seems to say, I would like your respect and friendship

A good man will sooner or later be known as a good man. Water is not more certain to obtain its level, than such a one is to ultimately obtain from those around him a true estimate of moral worth. Deception may seem to prevail for a time, lying and hypocricy may momentarily obtain an advantage; but the man of truth and solid worth will live and flourish long after those who are guilty of them, are "twice dead and plucked up by the roots."—And his peace of soul—his joy in beleiving, and this tranquil and happy state of mind are worth more than silver or gold, for neither of these can purchase them.

O how sadly do those err who think to prosper through falsehood and dishonesty! Until the laws of nature and the human mind are revered the expectation of all must utterly perish. They are opposed by the warning of their own conscience, the declarations of the Bible. The eternal principles of right are interwoven with the whole frame works of Divine Providence—and lay by every thing good and desirable.

THE RETURN OF THE WANDERER.

Some years ago a pious widow, who was reduced to great poverty, and had just placed the last smoked herring on her table to supply her hunger and that of her children, when a rap was heard at the door, and a stranger solicited a lodging and a morsel of food, saying that he had not tasted bread for twenty-four hours. The widow did not hesitate, but offered a share to the stranger, saying, "We shall not be mistaken, or suffer deeper for an act of charity." The traveller drew near the table; but when he saw the scanty fare, filled with astonishment, he said, "And is this all your store? And do you offer a share to one you do not know? Then I never saw charity before! But, madam, do you not wrong your children by giving a part of your last morsel to a stranger!"

"Ah," said the widow, weeping, "I have a boy; a darling son, somewhere on the face of the wide world unless Heaven has taken him away, and I only act towards you as I would that others should towards him. God who sent manna from heaven, can provide for us as he did for Israel, and how should I grieve if my son should be a wanderer, destitute as you, and should find a shelter, even as poor as this, and be turned unrelieved away?

The widow stopped, the stranger, springing from his seat, clasped her in his arms. "God indeed, has provided just such a home for your wandering son; and has given him wealth to reward the goodness of his benefactress. My mother! O my mother!"

It was indeed her long-lost son returned from India. But had cosen this way to surprise his family. Never was surprise more complete or more joyful. He was able to make the family comfortable, which he immediately did, the mother living for some years longer in the enjoyment of plenty.

Anecdotes of the Family.

A LUDICROUS MISTAKE.—A Cincinnati grocery house, finding out that cranberries commanded six dollars per bushel, and under the impression that the article could be bought to advantage at St. Mary's, wrote out to a customer, acquainting him with the fact, and requesting him to send "one hundred bushels per Simmons," (the wagoner usually sent.) The correspondent, a plain, uneducated man, had considerable difficulty in decyphering the fashionable scrowl common with merchants' clerks of late years, and the most important word, "cranberries," he failed to make out, but he did plainly and clearly read—*one hundred bushels of Persimmons.* As the article was growing all around him, all the boys in the neighborhood were set to gathering it, and the wagoner made his appearance in due time in Cincinnati with eighty bushels, all that the wagon bed would hold, and a line from the country merchant that the remainder would follow the next trip. An explanation soon ensued, but the customer insisted that the Cincinnati house should have written *by* Simmons, and not *per* Simmons.

The age of a lady could be ascertained a short time ago by the number of flounces she wore on her dress. Thus, if not more than twenty, she had only two flounces; if above thirty, she had three flounces; if she had passed the woman's rubicon—forty, then she displayed four deep flounces; and so on, adding an additional flounce for every ten years. Since this scale of measurement, however, had become very generally known, the preposterous fashion of having the dress all flounces, running from the pavement up to the waist, has been gradually going out. It is a rare thing now to meet a lady whose dress displays more than one flounce. We even saw a lady at Kensington Gardens, the last bad day, whose mousseline had no flounce at all, which we thought was carrying the female propensity of concealing age to too great absurdity; but on peeping under her bonnet we saw at once the difficulty she must have labored under, for she certainly looked as if, like Shakspeare. she was of no time but belonged to all ages.

London Punch.

PAINTING.—"Why do you not admire my daughter?" said a lady to a young man. "Because," said he, "I am no judge of painting." "But surely," said the lady, not the least disconcerted by the reflection, "you never saw an angel that was not painted."

WELL ANSWERED.—"What time o'night is it?" said a country lass to a dull spark, of whose company she was tired. "Why," said he, "I reckon its about now." "Then just about now is just about the time that boys ought to be at home," replied Miss, as she lighted her beau to the door.

VERY SMALL.—A distinguished politician, alluding to the size of the State of Delaware, once threatened to put it in his breeches pocket. This was making a sovereign State appear insignificant indeed, but the State of Rhode Island is still less, for a Boston paper says the reason, why the earthquake that broke the old women's china in Massachusetts, did not visit Rhode Island, was that it is not large enough for an earthquake to shake in.