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POETRY.

To the First Blue Bird of Spring.

BY E. D. HOWARD.

Sweet prophet of the early Spring;
That from the leafless spray,
Or poised on light and fluttering wing,
Dost pour thy tuneful lay.
Like a pure blessing on the air,
A voice of hope and love,
So sweet, it seems this sunny morn
Thy flight was from above!

I love thee, bright and gentle bird,
That thou hast far away
Left scenes of never fading bloom,
All beautiful to-day,
To sing from yonder leafless bough,
Of summer joys to me,
And light the cold and dreary North
With Spring's sweet prophecy!

'Tis better thus to sing, sweet bird,
To other hearts than thine,
Of coming beauty, than to stay
Where fullest glories shine;
And thou hast learned in some far off sky,
That sentiment of Heaven,
"'Tis better to bestow a bliss
Than taste of blessings given."

How many a care-worn heart will feel
A thrill of joy to-day,
Touched by thy simple melody
Which charmeth care away!
How many a heavy step grow light,
And sad eye re-illume,
And stern lips smile, and brow grow bright,
Beguiled of grief and gloom!

So sweet the feelings in my breast
Awoke this balmy morn
By sky, and Earth, and by blythe note
On gentle breezes borne,
I fain would sing, like thee, a song
That gushes in my heart,
A joyous idol of the May,
Whose harbinger thou art.

Wit at a Pinch.

A country girl one morning went,
To market with a pig;
The little curl tail not content,
Began to squeal a jig.
A dandy who was riding by,
Who wished to pass a joke—
"My dear, how comes your child to cry,
When wrapt up in a cloak?"
The country girl thus quick replied—
"So bad a breeding had he,
That ever and anon he cries
When'er he sees his daddy."

MISCELLANY.

THE GHOST RAISER.

A CAPITAL STORY.

My uncle Beagly, who commenced his commercial career very early in the present century as a bagman, will tell stories. Among them he tells his singular ghost story so often that I am heartily tired of it. In self-defence, therefore, I publish the tale, in order that when next the good k'nl o'd g ntleman, offers to flore us with it, everybody may say they know it. I remember every word of it.

One fine autumn evening, about forty years ago, I was travelling on horseback from Shrewsbury to Chester. I felt tolerably tired, and was begining to look out for some snug wayside inn where I might pass the night when a sudden and violent thunder storm came on. My hors terrified by the lightning, fairly took the bridle between his teeth, and started off with me at full gallop through the lanes and crossroads, until at length I managed to pull him up, just near the door of a neat looking country inn.

'Well," thought I, "there was wit in your madness old boy, since it brought us to this comfortable refuge."

And alighting, I gave him in charge to the stout farmer's boy, who acted as hostler. The inn kitchen, which was also the guest room, was large, clean, neat and comfortable—very like the pleasant hostelry described by Isaac Walton.—There were several travellers already in the room—probably, like myself, driven there for shelter—and they were all warming themselves by the blazing fire, while waiting for supper. I joined the party. Presently, being summoned by the hostess, we all sat down twelve in number to a smoking repast of bacon and eggs corned beef, and carrots, and stewed hare.

The conversation naturally turned on the mishap occasioned by the storm, of which every one seemed to have his full share. One had been thrown off his hors; another driving in a gig had been upset into a muddy dyke; all had got a thorough wetting. and agreed unanimously that it was dreadful weather— a regular witches' sabbath.

"Witches and ghosts prefer for their sabbath a fine moonlight to such weather as this!"

These words were uttered in a solemn tone, and with strange emphasis, by one of the company. He was a tall, dark looking man, and I had set him down in my own mind as a traveling merchant or pedler. My next neighbor was a gay well looking, fashionably dresed young man. who, bursttng into a peal of laughter said:

"You must know the manners and customs of ghosts very well, to be able to tell that they dislike getting wet or muddy."

The first speaker, giving him a dark fierce look, said,

"Young man speak not so lightly of things above your comprehension."

"Do you mean to imply that there are such things as ghosts?"

"Perhaps there are, if you had courage to look at them."

The young man stood up, flustered with anger. But presently resuming his seat, he said, calmly:

"That taunt should cost you dear, if it were not such a foolish one,"

'A foolish one!' exclaimed the merchant, throwing on the table a heavy leathern purse; 'there are fifty guineas. I am content to loose them, if, before the hour is ended, I do not succeed in showing you who are so obstinately prejudiced, the form of any one of your deceased friends; and, if after you have recognised him you will allow him to kiss your lips.'

We all looked at each other; but my young neighbor, still in the same mocking manner replied:

'You will do that, will you?'

'Yes,' said the other, 'I will stake these fifty guineas on the condition that you'll pay a similar sum if you loose.'

After a short pause, the young man said, gaily:

'Fifty guineas, my worthy socerer, are more than a poor college sizar ever possessed; but here are five, which if you are satisfied I shall be most willing to wager.'

The other took up his purse saying in a contemptuous tone:

'Young man you wish to draw back.'

'I draw back!' exclaimed the student. 'Well, if I had fifty guineas, you should see whether I wish to draw back.'

'Here,' said I, are four guineas which I will stake on your wager.'

No sooner had I made this proposition than the rest of the company, attracted by the singularity of the affair, came forward to lay down the money; and in a minute or two the fifty guineas were subscribed. The merchant appeared so sure of winning that he placed all the money in the student's hands, and prepared for his experiment. We selected for the purpose a small summer-house in the garden perfectly isolated, and having no means of exit but a window and a door, which we carefully fastened, after placing the young man within. We put writing materials on a small table in the summer-house, and took away the candles. We remained outside with the pedler among us. In a low solemn voice he began to chant the following lines:

'What riseth from the ocean caves
And the stormy surf!
The phantom pale sets his blackened foot.
On the fresh green turf.'

Then raising his voice, solemnly, he sad:

'You asked to see your friends, Francis Villiers, who was drowned three years ago off the coast of South America; what do you see?'

'I see,' replied the student, 'a white light arising near the window; but it has no form; it is like an uncertain cloud'

We—the spectators—remained profoundly silent.

'Are you afraid?' asked the merchant in a loud voice.

'I am not,' replied the student firmly.

After a moment's silence, the pedler stamped three times on the ground and sang:

'And the phantom white, whose clay-cold face
Was once so fair,
Dries with his shroud his clinging vest
And his sea-tossed hair."

Once more the solemn question:

'You would see revealed the mysteries of the tomb—what do you see now?'

The student answered in a calm voice, but like that of a man describing things as they passed before him:

'I see the cloud taking the form of a phantom; its head is covered with a long veil | it stands still!'

'Are afraid?'

'I am not!'

We looked at each other in horror-stricken silence, while the merchant raising his arms above his head, chanted in a sepulchral voice:

"And the phantom said, as he rose from the wave
He shall know me in sooth!
I will go to my friend, gay, smiling and fond,
As in our first youth!"

"What do you see?" said he.

"I see the phantom advance; he lifts his veil—'tis Francis Villiers! he approaches the table!—he writes—'tis his signature!"

"Are you afraid?"

A fearful moment of silence ensued; then the student replied, but in an altered voice:

"I am not!"

With strange and frantic gestures the merchant then sang:

"And the phantom said to the mocking seer,
I come from the South;
Put thy hand on my hand—thy heart on my heart
Thy mouth on my mouth."

"What do you see!"

"He comes—he approaches me—he pursues me—he is stretching out his arms—he will have me! Help! Help! Save me!"

"Are you afraid *now?*" asked the merchant in a mocking voice.

A piercing cry, and then a stifled groan were the only reply to this terrible question.

"Help that rash youth!" said the merchant bitterly. "I have, I think, won the wager, but it is sufficient for me to have given him a lesson. Let him keep his money, and be wiser for the future."

He walked rapidly away. We opened the door of the summer-house and found the student in convulsions. A paper signed with the name "Francis Villiers," was on the table. As soon as the student's senses were restored, he asked vehemently where was the vile socerer who had subjected him to such a horrible ordeal—he would kill him! He sought him throughout the inn in vain; then, with the speed of a madman, he dashed off across the fields in pursuit of him—and we never saw either of them again. That, children, is my Ghost Story.

"And how is it, uncle, that after that, you did'nt believe in ghosts?" said I, the first time I heard it.

"Because, my boy," replied my uncle "neither the student nor the merchant ever returned; and the forty-five guineas, belonging to me and the other travellers, continued equally invisible. Those two swindlers carried them off, after having acted a farce, which we, like ninnies, believed to be real."

READING ONE'S OWN OBITUARY.—The tenure of the Major Generalship of Massachussetts, like that of a good many other officers in that ancient Commonwealth, is for life or during good behaviour. The Boston Transcript says that one of the former lived so long that a wicked wag, at his reported death, gave as a sentiment at a public dinner: "The memory of our late Major General—may he be *eternally* rewarded in heaven for his *everlasting* services on earth." Judge of the surprise of the author of this toast, on learning, the next day, that the report was false, and that the veteran officer was still living.

This reminds us of an occurrence that took place in the same State some years ago. In the days of old Mycall, the publisher of the Newberryport Herald, (a journal still alive and flourishing) the sheriff of old Essex, Philip Bagley, had been asked several times to pay up his arrears of subscription. At last he told Mycall that he would certainly "hand over" the next morning as sure as he lived. "If you don't get your money tomorrow, you may be sure I am dead," said he.

The morrow came and passed but no money. Judge of the sheriff's feelings when on the morning of the day after, he opened his Herald, and saw announced the lamented decease of Philip Bigley, Esq., High Sheriff of the county of Essex, with an obituary notice attached, giving the deceased credit for a good many excellent traits in his character, but adding that he had one fault very much to be deplored—he was not punctual in paying the printer.

Bagley, without waiting for his breakfast, started for the Herald office. On the way it struck him as singular that none of the many friends and acquaintances he met seemed to be surprised to see him. They must have read their morning paper. Was it possible they cared so little about him as to have forgotton already that he was no more? Full of perturbation, he entered the printing office to deny that he was dead, in *propia persona*.

"Why, Sheriff!" exclaimed the facetious editor, "I thought you were defunct."

"Defunct!" exclaimed the sheriff.—"What put that idea into your head?"

"Why you you s lf!" said Mycall; "did you not tell me——"

"Oh! ah! yes; I see," stammered out the sheriff. "Well! there's your money! And now contradict the report in your next paper if you please."

"That's not necessary, friend Bagley,' said the old joker; "*it was only printed in your copy!*"

The good sheriff lived many years after this "sell," and to the day of his real death always took good care to *pay the the printer!*—*N. O. Picayune.*

☞ The most impudent and unblushing assault upon *hoop rotunda* we have yet seen is the following from an exchange:

When I survey this new-fashioned rotunda in all its parts, I cannot but think of the old philosophers who after having entered into an Egyptian temple, and looked for the idol of the place, at length discovered a little black monkey enshrined in the midst of it, upon which he could not help crying out, to the great scandal of the worshipers, 'What a magnificent palace is here for such a ridiculous inhabitant.'

The fellow who wrote the above had better "keep dark."

☞ The Tartars pull a man by the ear when they want him to drink, and keep pulling until he opens his mouth, when they pour down the liquor.

There are some fellows hereabout whose ears would not require much pulling.

The Harbinger of Liberty.

BY JAS. FRANKLIN FITTS.

The dawn of a sultry summer day had risen upon the city of Penn—that city which in the goodness of his heart the peaceful Quaker had called the City of Brotherly Love. It was JULY 4TH, 1776, and at every street corner were gathered excited groups of men, old and young and in the appearance of each could be seen alternate joy and anxiety. A mysterious fear seemed to hang over the whole city and to walk the thoroughfares.

The chief point of interest seemed to be the building now known as Independence Hall. The crowd surged and swayed around the steps of the edifice, and the street was blocked up by the number. Within the hall, a legislative body was assembled, by name the Continental Congress

Men there were, on whom the mantle of greatness had already fallen—men who could look beyond the doubtful future and behold the emancipation of their country. There was Franklin with his benevolent aspect and firm patriotic heart—he of whom it was so truly said, "he snatched the lightnings from heaven and the sceptre from tyrants!" There were Jefferson, Adams, Hancock—scores of patriots, all to be connected with the after glory of their country. And now their labors were ended, for all crowded around the president's table and one by one affixed their names to a document which the committee had then prepared. The deed was done, the Rubicon passed; and as eye met eye, each felt in silence that Liberty or death awaited them!

* * * High up in the belfry of Independence Hall, where the swallows built their nests and the spiders wove their webs undisturbed, hung a massive bell. Years before had it been brought from the mother country and placed in its belfry house, to send forth its deep-voiced tones upon special occasions of public interest. But of late, its clapper had hung idly within it, and the spiders had spread their webs all around it as if they would forever tie and bind its voice. The swallows had even ventured to build their nests upon the beam that supported it, and their loud chatterings were like pæans over a conquered enemy. No longer the cupola shook and quivered as the deep-mouthed bell swayed backward and forward, and threatened to destroy its prison house with its sonorous breathings. The rust of idleness had overspread it and its "occupation was gone."

But not yet. The uneasy crowd still filled the streets, and their undertoned voices still announced their excitement. And now each heart beat faster and each breath was held as loud peals from the old bell smote upon each listening ear.—Faster and faster they came, not like the cadence of a funeral knell, with slow and measured strokes, but with loud and joyful ringings, which aroused the flame of hope in the listener's heart ere he knew its cause. Men asked of each other what could mean these joyful peals, and why the old bell, so long silent, had found its voice again. Louder and louder; faster and fastor, peal after peal the iron tongue sent forth, until the echoes doubled and redoubled from the housetops, and the sound penetrated every nook of the city, and yet again, like breakers upon the ocean beach, the waves of sound rolled forth. But now every eye was fixed upon the steps of the hall where the members of the Congress stood within and without the door, and a man held aloft in his hand and unrolled a document with the broad seal of state attached! A perfect silence fell upon the vast crowd as the tones of his voice fell upon their ears low, at first as he read, "when, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another"—louder, as he read, "the history of the present king of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these States," followed by the accusation of wrongs and grievances which found an echo in the heart of every patriot present, but when his voice rose loud and high with the utterance of the closing declaration, "and for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor," the pent up anthusiasm of the listening crowd burst forth in cheers which made the welkin ring, and even drowned the voice of the bell, which had again burst forth in triumph tones and which now found an echo in the one great heart which beat for all the assemblage of patriots.

Now was it noised abroad that the Declaration of Independence had been boldly signed and promulgated, and that as the bell-ringer had cleared the ponderous old bell of its long accumulated dust, he had found legibly engraved thereon these prophetic words, which had been placed upon it in years gone by when it was cast in England: "Proclaim liberty to the land and to the people thereof!" Strangely enough it was that these words should be brought to light at such a time, when the old bell-ringer was about to obey the command!

The liberty bell is yet preserved in the venerable Independence Hall in Philadelphia, and though it is battered and worn like a faithful old soldier, it is gazed upon by thousands every year. It is a link connecting the past with the present of our country, and though the signers of the immortal Declaration have passed away, the first proclaimed is still preserved which, though an inanimate thing, was upon the Fourth of July, 1776, THE HARBINGER OF LIBERTY!

THOUGHTS AND SENTENCES.—1. The first seven years of a child are a bill of expenses. From seven to fourteen his profits equal his expenses. From fourteen to twenty-one his profits exceed his expenditures enough to pay for the first term, and having paid for himself, he goes free.

2. If a man is not tall at twenty; handsome at thirty; Wise at forty; and rich at fifty; he will never be tall, handsome, wise, nor rich.

3. He who will begin the world with a dollar, if he doubles his interest every year, will in a few years be worth enough to purchase Attico.

4. In speaking or writting, first understand the subject—then speak or write so plain that others may understand it; and do all with as few words as possible.

5. Mento is an original thinker; his belley is prolific, his mind is continually generating new ideas, but his outlet of oration is small. Pandor, on the other hand, has but little furniture in the mid dle story; but having good eyes, ears hands, and tongue, he avails himself of what Mento has forged out for him, and shines bright and flies high on borrowed wings.

6. Most questions have two, and some, like a cube, have six equal sides. Turn which way you will, in sentiment or practice, some evil consequence follows, in such cases, the least possible evil is the greatest possible good.

7. He who strives to do right, and conquors his own ill-habits and propensities, will find but little time to censure others. From this it does not follow, that good man should justify the errors of others.

To *err*, is manlike; to *repent*; is saintlike; to *forgive* is Godlike.—*John Leland.*

AN EXTRAORDINARY HYPOCRITE.—Jackson, who was murdered in Russell, Mass. by Charles Jones, was taken to Hartford, Conn., for burial in the Hebrew fashion. The Hartford Times says:

"Jones, the murderer, was a Millerite, and the same fellow who has just served out a term of four years in the Connecticut State prison for robbing John Dean's store. He was the coolest scoundrel that ever infested this city. He professed great concern for the souls of sinners, and was constantly reading the bible and exhorting at evening meetings. While in the confidence of Mr. Dean, he stole about $2,000 worth of goods from his store together with considerable sums of money. He stole the silk to make him a surplice to preach in—started a church in Glastenbury—stole the trimmings for his pulpit, and velvet for his chair, and also stole goods to pay the cabinet maker for the chair; broke into the Catholic Church and stole the priest's robe for a sample for one for himself, and also stole the silver chalice, &c., from the altar—called at Mr. Dean's one afternoon to have 'a little season of prayer," remained till evening bade the family good by, but instead of going out of the door, he stole up stairs, and secreted himself under the bed occupied by Mr Dean's son—remained there till past midnight, when he crept out and robbed young Dean's pockets of $100, then went up St. John's Hotel, called for lodgings, got up before daylight, stole a suit of clothes from a boarder, and cleared for a neighboring town. But this is not half his villainies. He was constantly stealing, praying and exhorting, till brought up by a four years term in prison.'

RULES FOR HOME EDUCATION.—1. From your children's earliest infancy inculcate the necessity of instant obedience.

2. Unite firmness with gentleness. Let your children always understand that what you say you mean.

3. Never promise them anything unless you are quite sure you can give them what you promise

4. If you tell a child to do something, show him how to do it, and see that it is done.

5. Always punish your children for wilfully disobeying you, but never punish them in anger.

6. Never let them perceive that they vex you or make you lose your self-command.

7. If they give way to petulance and temper, wait till they are calm, and then gently reason with them on the impropriety of their conduct.

8. Remember that a little present punishment, when the occasion arises, is much more effectual than the threatening of a greater punishment should the fault be renewed.

9. Never give your children anything because they cry for it.

10. On no account allow them to do at one time what you have forbidden under like circumstances at another.

☞ Punch teaches book keeping in three words—"Never lend them."

ADULTERATED LIQUORS.

The recent death of a young man at Brampton, Canada, from tasting the "essence of brandy," with which he was manufacturing Cognac and the revelation of the fact that strychnine is largely used in the manufacture of whiskey, has awakened some attention to the nature of the drinks which are sold for pure spirits. Brandy, gin, wine, and whiskey are so adulturated that comparatively little pure liquor can be purchased. Most of the brandies are a mixture of diabolical ingredients, caustic enough to burn oak chips, to say nothing of the delicate tissues of the human body. The Springfield *Republican* says:

"No secret is made of this business.—The drug dealers of New York advertise openly the compounds by means of which the vile imitations of spiritous liquor are made. A circular from one of these drug houses informs the world that brandy number one—the best sort, we take it—is make of 'oil of brandy,' a poisonous ether, oil of bitter almonds, (as poisonous as prussic acid.) ethereal wine, alcohol, sugar, and Malaga wine. No. 2. Oil of brandy, acetic ether, tamarinds, cherry juice, sugar, all colored with burnt sugar. No. 2. Oil of brandy, ethereal oil, bitter almonds, elder flowers, and tannin. No. 4. Oil of brandy, acetic ether, oil of peach, and alcohol. Gin—Oil angelica, oil of juniper, rum, essence of lemon, salt, sirups, and water; if smokiness is required add a few drops of creosote, and to make it bitting upon the palate, add some caustic potash. The circular advises manufacturers to use 'with discretion' tamarinds, French plums, cherry juice, brown sherry, oak shavings, tincture of catechu, powdered charcoal, black tea, ground rice, and other ordinary materials well known to distillers and rectifiers. We should advise drinkers to use these villainous mixtures with discretion, and throw them into the gutter."

SAGE.—Sage was anciently considered so rich in medicinal qualities, that there was a Latin adage, "Why does any man die in whose garden sage grows?" (*Cur moriatur homo cui salvia ireseit in horto?*" Among its other virtues it was supposed to strengthen the memory, and to quicken and invigorate the senses. Its Latin name *salvia* is derived from *salius*, i. e., in good health. Our English name comes from the French, *sauge*. The leaves of sage were used in divination by leaves. called by the Greeks botonamancy. The inquirer wrote the letters of the alphabet contained in his name, and in the question he would ask, upon the leaves which he exposed to the wind; and all that remained after the rest had been blown away, were taken up and joined together, and whatever sense could be collected from them was believed to be the answer to the inquiry.

A GENTLEMAN'S DIARY OF HIS WIFE'S TEMPER.—Monday—A thick fog; no seeing through it. Tuesday—Gloomy and very chilly; unreasonable weather. Wednesday—Frosty; at times sharp. Thursday—bitter cold in the morning, red sunset, with flying clouds, portending hard weather. Friday—Storm in the morning with peals of thunder; air clear afterwards. Saturday—Gleams of sunshine, with partial thaw; frost again at night. Sunday—A light southwester in the morning; calm and pleasant at dinner time; hurricane and earthquake at night.

CONSOLATION IN GRIEF.—A very covetous man, lost his son James. The minister came to comfort him, and remarked that such chastisements of Providence were mercies in disguise, that although in the death of his son he had suffered a severe and irreparable misfortune, yet undoubtedly his own reflections had suggested some source of consolation. 'Yes, exclaimed the weeping but still provident father, 'Jim was a *monstrous eater!*'

☞ An interesting discovery has been made in France, with regard to engrafting fruit trees. Instead of making use of a graft, a slip is taken from an apple tree, for example, and planted into a potato, so that a couple of inches of the slip remain visible. It soon takes root, developes itself, and finally becomes a handsome tree, bearing fine fruit. This method is due to a Bohemia gardener.

A BEDBUG'S PETITION.—A man named Aaron Bedbug, of Montgomery county, Ky., intends petitioning the Legislature to change his name. He says that his sweetheart, whose name is Olavia, is unwilling that he should be called A. Bedbug, she O. Bedbug, and the little ones little Bedbugs!

A FACT WORTH KNOWING.—Housekeepers should know now that the season of pies and puddings is approaching and sugar inordinately dear, that the acid in rhubarb, gooseberries and currents may be neutralized by putting a third of a teaspoonful of soda in the fruit and without affecting the flavor. A less quantity of sugar will then answer to sweeten.

POPULAR FALACIES.—That cream candy is made of cream.

That city milk comes from cows.

That qualifications is necessary to obtain office.

That money can be made at a faro bank.