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A MYSTERY.

BY JOHN G. WHITTIER.

The river hemmed with leaning trees
Wound through its meadows green;
A low, blue line of mountains showed
The open pines between.

One sharp tall peak above them all
Clear into sunlight sprang;
I saw the river of my dreams,
The mountains that I sang!

No clew of memory led me on,
But well the ways I knew;
A feeling of familiar things
With every footstep grew.

Not otherwise above its crag
Could lean the blasted pine;
Not otherwise the maple hold
Aloft its red ensign.

So up the long and shorn foot-hills
The mountain road should creep;
So, green and low, the meadow fold
Its red-haired kine asleep.

The river wound as it should wind;
Their place the mountains took;
The white, torn fringes of their clouds
Wore no unwonted look.

Yet ne'er before that river's rim
Was pressed by feet of mine,
Never before mine eyes had crossed
That broken mountain line.

A presence strange at once and known,
Walked with me as my guide;
The skirts of some forgotten life
Trailed noiseless at my side.

Was it a dim-remembered dream?
Or glimpse through aeons old?
The secret which the mountains kept,
The river never told.

But from the vision ere it passed
A tender hope I drew,
And, pleasant as a dawn of spring,
The thought within me grew.

That love would temper every change,
And soften all surprise,
And, misty with the dreams of earth,
The hills of heaven arise.

THE WISHING-RING.

A young farmer, whose farming did n
prosper particularly well, was sitting res
ing on his plow for a moment as he wipe
his brow, when an old witch crept up t
him and said:

"Why do you toil so hard, and all fo
nothing. Walk straight before you f
two days, and you will come to a large fi
tree, which stands alone towering over a
the other trees of the forest. If you ca
but fell it your fortune is made."

The farmer did not wait to be told twice
but, taking his ax on his shoulder, starte
on his way. After walking two days, h
came to the fir-tree, and immediately se
to work to fall it. Soon it toppled and
crashed to the earth, when from the to
branches dropped a nest containing two
eggs. The eggs rolled on the ground and
broke. As they broke out came a young
eagle from one, and a small golden ring
from the other. The eaglet grew visibly
till it reached half the height of a man
shook its wings as if to try them, raised
itself from the ground, and then cried
"You have released me! As a token o
gratitude take the ring the other egg con
tains—it is a wishing ring. Turn it o
your finger, speak your wish aloud, and i
will immediately be granted. But th
ring has only one wish; when that is ac
complished it will lose all power and be
come no more than any other ring. There
fore, reflect well on what you wish for, s
that you may not have to repent after
wards."

Having so spoken the eagle rose hig
into the air, swept for some time in w.d
circles over the farmer's head, and then
like an arrow from a bow, shot swiftl
toward the east. The farmer took th
ring, put it on his finger, and startee
homeward. Towards evening he reache
a town. At the door of his shop stood
goldsmith, who had many valuable ring
for sale. The farmer showed him h
ring and asked him what was about th
value of it.

"Mere trumpery," answered the gold
smith.

The farmer laughed heartily, telling th
man it was a wishing ring, and of mo
value than all the rings in his shop pu
together. Now the goldsmith was a fals
designing man, so he invited the farmer
stay all night at his house, saying: "
must bring one good luck to entertain
man who is the possessor of such a p
cious jewel; so pray remain with me
He accordingly entertained him well wi
wine and civil words, but when he we
to sleep at night he drew his ring steal
ily from his finger, and put on it instead
common one quite like it in appearanc
The next morning the goldsmith cou
hardly wait with any degree of patien
till the farmer had taken his departur
He awoke him in the early dawn, saying
"You have so far to go you had bette
start early." As soon as the farmer wa
safe on his journey the goldsmith went
into his room, and having shut the shut-
ters that no one might see, he bolted him-
self in, and standing in the middle of the
room, and turning the ring on his finger,
exclaimed:

"I wish to have a hundred thousand
silver crowns immediately."

Hardly were the words spoken when bright five-shilling pieces began to rain down from the ceiling; shining silver crowns poured down so fast and hard that at last they began to beat him unmercifully about the head and shoulders and arms. Calling piteously for help, he tried to rush to the door, but before he could reach it and unbolt it he fell bleeding to the ground. Still the rain of silver coins did not cease, and soon, under the weight of it, the flooring gave way, and the unfortunate goldsmith and the money fell down into a deep cellar. And still it rained on till the hundred thousand crowns were completed and then the goldsmith lay dead in his cellar, with the mass of money upon him. Attracted at last by the noise, the neighbors rushed to the spot, and on finding the goldsmith dead under the money, exclaimed:

"It really is a great misfortune when blessings rain down like cudgels."

Then the heirs came and divided the spoil.

Meanwhile, the farmer went happily home, and showed the ring to his wife.

"We shall now never want for anything, dear wife," he said; "our fortune is made. But we must consider well what we must wish for."

The wife had a bright idea all ready at hand.

"Let us wish ourselves some more land," said she; "we have so little. There is just a nice strip which stretches out into our field. Let us wish for that."

"That would never be worth while," replied the husband; "we have only t
work well for
[illegible]

around the coffin, and as one of them tried to draw the ring from the dead man's finger, his eldest son said:

"Let our father take his ring to the grave. There was some memory about it. Probably it was some love-token, for our mother often looked at the ring, too. Perhaps she gave it to him when they both were young."

So the old farmer was buried with the ring which should have been a wishing ring, but was not one, and yet had brought as much good into the house as a man could desire.

TO YOUNG MEN.—The young man who has an ambition to make a great noise in the world should learn boiler making. He can make more noise at that trade than at anything else he can engage in.

If he believes a man should "strike for wages," he should learn blacksmithing—especially if he is good at "blowing."

If he would embrace a profession in which he can rise rapidly, he should become an aeronaut. He couldn't find anything better "for high."

He certainly could do a staving (and perhaps a starving) business at the cooper trade.

If he believes in "measures, not men," he will embark in the tailoring business.

If the one great object of his life is to make money, he should get a position in the United States mint.

If he is a punctual sort of a chap, and anxious to be "on time," he should put his hands to watchmaking.

"If he believes it the chief end of man to have his business largely "felt," why of course he will become a hatter.

If he wants to "get at the root of a thing," he will become a dentist, although, if he does, he will be often found "looking down in the mouth."

If a man is a bungler, at his best, he should become a physician, and then he will have none of his bad work thrown up on his hands. It is generally buried out of sight, you know.

Should he incline to higher living, but prefer a plain board, then the carpenter's trade will suit him. He can plane board enough at that.

If he is needy and well-bred, he will be right at home as a baker.

He shouldn't become a cigar maker. If he does, all his work will end in smoke.

The young man who enjoys plenty of company, and is ever ready to scrape an acquaintance, will find the barber business a congenial pursuit.

The quickest way for him to ascend to the top round of his calling is to become a hod carrier.

A very 'grave' young man might flourish as an undertaker.

Don't learn chair-making, for no matter how well you please your customers, they will sooner or later get down on your work.

And don't become an umbrella maker, for their business is "used up."

If he would have his work touch the heads of the nation, we know of no way he could sooner accomplish such an object than by making combs.

The young man who would have the fruits of his labor brought before the eyes of the people, will become an optician. The work being easily seen through cannot be difficult to learn.

A man can always make a scent in the perfumery business.

If a young man is a paragon of honor, truthfulness, sobriety, has never sworn a profane word, and has twenty thousand dollars that he has no use for, then he should immediately start—a newspaper.

HAND WRITING.—Was Chesterfield correct when he said that "every man who has the use of his eyes and his right hand can write whatever hand he pleases?" If so, would Byron have put his burning verse into such a miserable school-boy scrawl, Emerson write so sprawling a hand, or Napoleon I. have written the worst hand on record—so bad that his letters to Josephine from Germany were sometimes mistaken for maps of the seat of war? No doubt the vileness of his pot-hooks was aggravated by the speed with which he wrote. Jacob Bryant said of Archdeacon Coxe's hieroglyphics, that they could be called neither a hand nor a fist, but a foot, and that a club one. Sydney Smith's hand, with the exception of Jeffrey's, was the worst that Constable's printers had to puzzle out for the *Edinburgh Review*. He himself compared it to the hieroglyphics of a swarm of ants escaping from an ink bottle, and walking over a sheet of paper without wiping their legs. When his wife inclosed to him an illegible passage from one of his letters from London, containing directions about the management of his farm, and asked for an explanation he simply returned it with the remark that he must decline ever reading his own hand-writing 24 hours after he had written it!

Rufus Choate's hand-writing could not be deciphered without the help of a pair of compasses and a quadrant. The best specimens look like the hieroglyphics on a Chinese tea chest. Having been invited on certain occasion to address a public meeting in New Hampshire, he replied by letter; but the committee, after puzzling for hours over the scrawl, despaired of deciphering it, and were obliged to send a special messenger to learn his answer.

☞The man who can't afford to take a newspaper paid three dollars for another dog, Saturday.

PERPETUAL ALMANAC;

OR, A GENTLEMAN SOLDIER'S PRAYER BOOK:

Showing how one Richard Middleton was taken before the Mayor of the City he was in, for using cards in church during Divine Service: being a droll, merry, and humorous account of an odd affair that happened to a private soldier, in the 6th Regiment of Foot.

"The sergeant commanded his party to the church, and when the parson had ended his prayer, he took his text, and all of them that had a Bible, pulled it out to find the text, but this soldier had neither Bible, Almanac nor Common Prayer Book, but he put his hand in his pocket and pulled out a pack of cards, and spread them before him as he sat, and while the parson was preaching he first kept looking at one card then at another. The Serjeant of the company saw him and said, "Richard, put up your cards for this is no place for them." "Never mind that," said the soldier, "for you have no business with me here."

Now the parson had ended his sermon, and all was over; the soldiers repaired to the churchyard and the commanding officer gave the word of command to fall in, which they did. The serjeant of the city came and took the man prisoner.—"Man you are my prisoner," said he.—"Sir," said the soldier, "what have I done that I am your prisoner?" "You have played a game of cards in the church." "No," said the soldier. "I have not played a game, for I only looked at a pack." "No matter for that, you are my prisoner." "Where must we go." said the soldier. "You must go before the mayor," said the serjeant.

So he took him before the mayor, and when they came to the mayor's house he was at dinner. When he had dined he came down and said, "well serjeant, what do you want with me." "I have brought a soldier before your honor for playing at cards in the church." "What! that soldier!" "Yes." "Well soldier, what have you to say for yourself." "Much, I hope." "Well and good, but if you have not you shall be punished the worst that man ever was." "Sir," said the soldier. "I have been five weeks upon the march and have but little to subsist on, and am without either Bible, Almanac or Common Prayer Book, or anything but a pack of cards, I hope to satisfy your honor of the purity of my intentions."

Then the soldier pulled out of his pocket a pack of cards, which he spread before the mayor; he then began with the ace.

"When I see the ace," said he, "it puts me in mind that there is one God only; when I see the deuce, it puts me in mind of the Father, and the Son; when I see the tray, it puts me in mind of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; when I see the four it puts me in mind of the four Evangelists that preached the gospel, viz. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; when I see the five it puts me in mind of the wise virgins that trimmed their lamps—there were ten but five were foolish who were shut out: when I see the six, it puts me in mind that in six days the Lord made Heaven and Earth; when I see the seven it puts me in mind that on the seventh day God rested from all the works which he had created and made, wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day and hallowed it; when I see the eight it puts me in mind of the eight righteous persons that were saved when God drowned the world, viz: Noah, his wife, three sons and their wives; when I see the nine, it puts me in mind of nine lepers that were cleansed by our Saviour; there were ten, but nine never returned God thanks; when I see the ten, it puts me in mind of the ten commandments that God gave Moses on Mount Sinai on two tables of stone."

He took the knave and laid it aside.

"When I see the Queen it puts me in mind of the Queen of Sheba, who came from the furthermost parts of the world to hear the wisdom of King Solomon, for she was as wise a woman as he was a man, for she brought fifty boys and fifty girls, all clothed in boys' apparel, to show before King Solomon, for him to tell which were boys and which were girls; but he could not until he called for water for them to wash themselves; the girls washed up to their elbows and the boys only up their wrists, so King Solomon told by that. And when I see the King, it puts me in mind of the great King of Heaven and Earth, which is God Almighty; and likewise his majesty King George to pray for him."

"Well," said the mayor, you have given a very good description of all the cards except one, which is lacking." "What is that?" said the soldier. "The knave," said the mayor. "Oh, I can give your honor a good description of that, if your honor won't be angry." "No, I will not," said the mayor, "if you will not term me the knave." "Well said the soldier, "the greatest knave that I know of is the serjeant of the city, that brought me here." "I don't know," said the mayor, "that he is the greatest knave, but I am sure he is the greatest fool."

"When I count how many spots there are in a pack of cards, I find there are three hundred and sixty-five; there are so many days in a year. When I count how many cards there are in a pack I find there are fifty-two; there are so many weeks in a year. When I count how many tricks there are in a pack, I find there are twelve; there are so many months in the year. You see, sir, this pack of cards is a Bible, Almanac, Common Prayer Book, and pack of cards to me."

Then the mayor called for a loaf of bread, a piece of good cheese, and a pot of good beer, and gave to the soldier a piece of money, bidding him to go about his business, saying he was the cleverest man he had ever seen.

DON'T CALL A MAN A LIAR.—Never tell a man he is a liar unless you are certain that you can lick him, for as a general rule when you say that, it means fight.

I have arrived at this conclusion through sad experience. I know that it is not safe to give the lie to a muscular Christian.

I did it once. I am sorry for it as I never grieved for anything else in the whole course of my life.

We were standing on the sidewalk, in front of the club, when I made the statement. We were talking politics, and men who talk politics, and get hot over it, are, to put it mildly, lunatics, or else want an office, or have some friend who wants an office.

This man made an assertion touching the fair fame of my candidate. It is probable if it had been as true as it was false, I should have taken the same course, because, you understand, a man who talks politics has no sense, anyhow. I think I said this before, but it is all the same. I want to make it strong, and get you to understand how I got my ornamental eye.

I mildly suggested that a man who would make such a statement as that was lost to all sense of shame, and would be guilty of any bad crime.

He disagreed with me upon that point. As for himself, he never made a statement except upon the most ample proof. My candidate was the meanest villian living.

I told him he lied.

I have been kicked by a mule; have fallen out of a second story window on a hard pavement; eaten green persimmons; heard Miss —— read poetry for two hours and a half; skated; rode sharp-backed horse of mustang parentage, an adept in the art of "bucking;" suffered grief of various kinds, and still clung to life; but all of these are feathers in the balance as compared with the result of that little word liar!

Immediately after saying it, I sat down—not in the way people usually sit down. I sat down on the rim of my ear, ten feet from the spot where I had been standing when I made use of the expression quoted above. I am not used to sitting in that position, and I do not think it agrees with me.

I have heard of people who "got up on their ear," and walked off. I wished I knew how to do it; I would have propelled myself away from the spot immediately if I had possessed this happy faculty. I proceeded to get myself perpendicular, intending to use the locomotion which Nature had given me, but when I came right side up, something heavy ran against my nose and I felt very tired. I sat down on my other ear, I like a change, it is too monotonous doing the same thing over and over again.

Somebody took my large friend away, and I was quite pleased when he was gone. I have concluded to look twice at a man before I give him the lie again. My eye is in mourning, my nose swelled into the size of a citron, with the color of a blush rose, and my clothes look as if they had been run through a patent sausage machine.

I would not have that man's temper for anything in the world.

☞There is a dentist in Harrisburg who has a daughter who is loved by a young man, but he is bashful, and don't like to go to the house to see her unless he has an excuse. So every Tuesday and Friday he calls and gets the old man to pull a tooth for him, and then he goes into the back parlor and sparks the girl under the pretence of trying to find his hat. He has only six teeth left now, and what worries him is to know what he is going to do when they are all out and his new set is made and put in. He is all the more anxious about it because the fair maid dosen't seem as if she was going to respond to his heartfelt sighs, and there is room for suspicion that she has been playing the coquette so as to rope in a good customer for her fond parient. The young man's confidential friends state that he has intimated his intention either to have that girl or to jerk the whole skeleton out of her father.

☞A little boy who sang, "I want to be an angel," in Sunday school with so much energy that he almost choked himself, confessed to an enterprising reporter that he really wanted to be a captain on a canal boat.

☞The St. Louis Republican recommends an ambitious debating society in Kansas to take as its next subject "Which is the butt end of a goat?"

PAYING A WAGER.

AND THE WAY IN WHICH IT WAS PAID.

Not far from the forks of Elkhorn, lived the pretty little widow Fauntleroy, and one of her nearest neighbors was General Peyton. The General had looked upon the little widow very much as he did upon his blooded horse Powhattan—the finest horse, sir in the Blue Grass region.

The pretty Mrs. Fauntleroy had been a widow more than a year, while the General, having a great regard for etiquette, had waited patiently for that time to elapse in order to declare himself. But the widow, with her woman's art, kept her lover at bay, and yet kept him in her train.

He had escorted her to this barbecue, and, when returning, had expressed his satisfaction at the prospect of General Combs and the success of the Whig party.

The widow took sides with the Democracy, and offered to wager her blooded saddle-horse Gypsey, or anything else on her place, against Powhattan, or anything else she might fancy on the General's place.

The General's gallantry would not allow him to refuse the wager which he promptly accepted. By this time they had reached the North fork of Elkhorn, and were about to ford it (bridges were not plentiful in those day's.) when John Peyton, the general's only son and heir, came up at a sharp gait behind them.

The widow turned and bowed to John, and rode into the stream, but a little behind her companion. The east bank was very steep and required the horses to put forth all their strength to reach the top with their loads.

As luck would have it, good or ill, the widow's girth broke just at the commencement of the steep part. The lady, still seated on her saddle, slid swiftly back into the water, while her horse went up the bank like an arrow.

John Peyton leaped from his horse, and in an insant caught the floating lady and saddle and before the General had recovered from his astonishment, was at the top of the bank with his burden. The little widow was equal to the occasion, for she begged the General to ride on and stop her horse, which had now begun to understand his part in the mishap, and was beginning to increase his gait toward home.

The General did as he was bid, and soon returned with the horse. In the meantime John Peyton had secured his own horse, and, when the General came back with the widow's horse, she and John were laughing merrily over the ridiculous accident, but what further passed between them is only known to themselves.

John Peyton repaired the broken girth, fastened the saddle again on the horse, placed the lady in her seat, bade her good evening, mounted his horse, and taking another road down the Elkhorn, rode rapidly home, leaving the General to escort the widow.

It is not necessary to relate how he entertained his fair companion with ponderous anecdotes of Mr. Clay and other famous public men; but when he reached the Fauntleroy place, he accepted the lady's invitation to dismount and take tea with her.

After having changed her wet clothing, the pretty widow entertained her guest with her brightest smiles and some new songs. The General was delighted, expressed his delight as a Kentucky gentleman of that day would have done, "You are the finest songstress, madam, in the Blue Grass region."

When he bid her good night and shook hands with her on the porch, the wicked little widow gave his hand a little squeeze—only a little—but it thrilled like an electric shock through his great ponderous frame, while she laughingly reminded him of his wager. That night, in his dreams, the little widow Fauntleroy was repeated so often, and in so many bewitching forms, that he resolved to propose to her at their first meeting, nor did he dream that she refused.

The next morning, a letter from his tobacco factory called General Peyton to Louisville, and before his return the political contest in the Ashland district was over, and wonderful to relate, the Democrat was elected to Congress.

General Peyton was both astonished and indignant. "Mr. Clay's district, sir, the finest Congressional district in the Blue Grass region, has disgraced itself, sir," was almost his first remark to his neighbor, Colonel Beaufort.

To his son John he communicated his intention of bringing Mrs. Fauntleroy to adorn the head of his table.

"Sir, she is the finest lady in the Blue Grass region, and I hope, sir, you will always respect your future mother."

John, with a quiet smile assured him that he was pleased with his choice. This pleased the General mightily, for he had been a little afraid John would object to a stepmother younger than himself.

The next morning the General ordered Powhattan to be brought out and led over to Mrs. Fauntleroy's. Calling John, he requested him to go with him to call upon Mrs. Fauntleroy.

"The Whig party has disgraced itself in Mr. Clay's district, sir, and I am compelled to part with the finest blooded horse in the State to pay my wager with that lady, sir."

The black boy had led Powhattan to the hitching rail in front of Mrs. Fauntleroy's yard, and having tied him, had gone into the quarters to tell his brothers and sisters of their mistress's great luck in having won the famous horse Powhattan.

When General Peyton and John arrived, they found the pretty widow and two young lady friends in the yard admiring Powhattan.

The ladies were in high glee, and after the usual salutations, the gentlemen were invited to take seats on the porch, which they did.

"Madam," said the General to Mrs. Fauntleroy, "I have come here, like a true Kentucky gentleman, to pay the wager I have lost. Powhattan, madam, is rightfully yours."

"But, General," said she, "I believe the wager was conditional. It was the horse or anything else on the place, was it not?"

"Madam," he replied, "you are correct. But there is nothing on my place one-half in value of Powhattan. I cannot permit you to select an inferior animal."

The pretty widow blushed to the tips of her fingers when she said: You have another and superior animal here—your son John; if he would but use his tongue, I think I shall choose him."

There was a moment of dead silence, then a laugh, in which the General did not join.

He rose, and, in his blandest manner, bade the ladies good night. To John he said: "Sir, you will remain."

ANIMALS SHOWING PREFERENCE FOR PARTICULAR COLORS.—Bert lately took up some very curious experiments on the preference of animals for differently-colored rays. He took some of those almost microscopic crustacea—common enough in our fresh waters—the daphne-fleas, remarkable for their eager way of hurrying toward light. A number of these insects were put into a glass vessel, well darkened, and a spectrum of the ray then thrown into it. The daphnes were dispersed about the dark vessel. As soon as the spectrum colors appeared, they began to move, and gathered in the course of the luminous track, but, when a screen was interposed, they scattered again. At first all the colors of the spectrum attracted them, but it was soon noticed that they hurried much more toward the yellow and the green, and even moved away a little if these rays were quickly replaced by the violet. In the yellow, green and orange parts of the spectrum there was a thronging and remarkable attraction. A pretty large number of these little beings were remarked in the red, too a certain number in the blue, and some fewer in proportion to the distance, in the most refrangible portions of the violet and ultra-violet. For these insects, as for ourselves, the most luminous part of the spectrum was the most agreeable. They behaved in it as a man would do who, if he wished to read in a spectrum thrown about him, would approach the yellow and avoid the violet. This proves, in the first place, that these insects see all the luminous rays that we see ourselves. Do they perceive the chlorific and chemic rays, that is to say, the ultra-red and ultra-violet ones, which do not affect our retina? Bert's experiments enable us to answer that they do not. That physiologist is even led to assert that, with regard to light and the different rays, all animals experience the same impressions that man does.

A ROMAN ECCLESIASTIC.—In reply to whatever question might be proposed, used to begin by saying: "I make a distinction," a cardinal having invited him to dine, proposed to derive some amusement for the company from the well know peculiarity of his guest. Saying to him that he had an important question to propose, he asked:

"Is it under any circumstances lawful to baptize in soup?"

"I make a distinction," said the priest. "If you ask, is it lawful to baptize in soup in general, I say 'No!' If you ask, is it lawful to baptize in your excellency's soup, I say, 'Yes!' for there is really no difference between it and water."

☞The Chicago *Post* thinks that a young lady in this State who is said to have injured her health by hard study must have been trying to read one of the *Courier-Journal's* editorials. That she still lives is the best evidence in the world that she was not trying to read one of the *Post's* editorials.—*Courier Journal.*

☞We are deeply impressed by the printed statement of a rapture-smitten correspondent that Madam Lucca's voice "has not a flaw or a scratch in it, and is pure, warm, and ethereal as a rosebud in the northern lights."

☞"When Shakspeare wrote about 'patience on a monument,' did he refer to doctors' patients?" "No." "How do you know he didn't?" "Because you always find them under a monument."

☞An American reporter spoke of Columbus as "a diamond in an oasis, who soared above all his contemporaries."

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