

#### FOOTSTEPS OF DECAY.

The following is a translation from an ancient Spanish poem, which says the Edinburgh *Review*, is inexpressible with which we are acquainted in the Spanish language, excepting "Ode of Louis de Leon."

Oh let the soul its shimmers break—  
Arouse its sense and a wake  
Life, in its glories, glides away,  
And the firm footsteps of decay  
Come stealing on.

And with the tides the rolling tide  
Down which our precious minutes glide  
Away so fast,  
Let us the present hour employ  
And dream as future dream a joy,  
Already past.

Let no vain hope the mind,  
No happier let the hope to find  
To-morrow than to-day,  
Our good dreams of yore were bright,  
Then the present shall delight—  
Like them dear.

Our lives like uttering streams must be  
That time is but a sea  
Are doomed to flow.

The sea of death, whose waves roll on  
The ocean, crown and thone,

Within the grave.

Alike the river's lonely tide,  
Alike the humble rivulets glide  
To that sad waste;

Death's path is broad and wide,  
The rich the poor sleep side by side

Within the grave.

Our birth is but a starting place;  
Life is the running of that race,

Then all those glittering toys are bought—  
That path, alone of all, is ours;

See, how poor and little worth  
Are all those glittering toys of earth

That here us—Dreams of a short death must break;

Alas! that it bids us wake,

We disappear.

Long are the damp of earth can blight,  
The check's pure glow of red and white

Youth smiled and all was heavenly fair—  
Age came and laid his finger there—

And where are they?

Where is the strength that spurned decay,  
The steed's pure strength and light and gay,  
The heart's bold tone?

The strength is gone, the step is slow,  
And joy grows wan with woe

When age comes on.

#### THE MADDENED QUILL-DRIVER.

Night brooded over the scene—a habit that night has between the hours of sunset and sunrise. During those hours the sun rarely shines in our latitudes, and night has everything its own way, with a clear fit to itself.

Godfrey Stichleben sat at his table in the sanctum of the *Morning Tamboree*, his idle pencil in his listless fingers, and his aching head resting upon one weary hand. The satyrical bell tolled, and steeped in melancholy, I a.m.

There was no money of copy on the desk, and the echoes of the clamors of inapprehensible composers came nimbly in ghostly cadences down the speaking-tube, and once the sarcastic tones of the foreman's voice penetrated the dismal sanctum, conveying to Mr. Stichleben the entirely-superfluous information that this was "not an afternoon paper," and furthermore that he "would like to go to press before the men went to dinner." Mr. Stichleben sighed heavily, and in an abstracted manner turned over the closely-written pages of his manuscript.

In forty-two years he had sat at that table and praised everything that ever came within fifty miles of Shawneetown. Horses, bird-dogs, new houses, minstrel troupes, new goods, lectures, eminent citizens, big railroads, tall corn, long jumps, speeches, brass bands, imported cows, fine waltzers, new road wagons, fancy gowns, concerts, fairs, hops and debating societies. He had noted the uprising of the eminent citizen, and observed his lying down, his wading in mud, and his falling in mud. He was wearied.

He had written, I once read, a \$900 horse, an imported pig, a new fence, a big egg, a seventeen-pound tumor, a lecture, and here was a concert to be written up. He knew what a delicate mattock this was. He knew that who waited upon his footsteps if he failed to notice each performer at length and in perfect detail. Wrath and denunciation hovered above his head, ready to fall in one destroying deluge if he said any body sang or played better than any other else. He could not name the father of the young lady who wore the most expensive dress on the stage, and yet got a notice four lines shorter than the shoemaker's daughter, who had nothing in the world but her voice to command her at all to public notice? How could he look Miss Uppercrass in the face when in his description of her exquisite rendition of "Monastery Bells" he forgot, or perhaps with malice aforethought intentionally omitted, to mention the cost of the dress?

"Professor" Sowpont played a violin solo—*Da-Beriot's "Soveth Air."* Everybody was grateful that he didn't play the eighth. The professor dresses like a waiter, and handles a fiddle like a graduate from a side-show. He is in great demand at the fairs down at Wystons' Branch and the Sassafras Bottoms, and it is believed, in fact, that all his musical education was acquired at Dan Coseman's store, at the old ford, on Clymer's creek. He is trying to get up a class in this city, and, mistaking the fact for a compliment, Mrs. O'Connor, a widow, and pointed out the edge of the piano, two inches away from the keys, grows upon him, and he suddenly either changes his drink or his voice.

Mr. Bangalon played "Monastery Bells," as usual. It was disguised under a French name in the programme; but every one knows what is coming after Mrs. Bangalon finally gets the piano moved into precisely the right place—which is always just where it stood before she had moved it the first time, and, after seating herself to the piano, she was much excited, owing to the fact that both families were prominent, and it was generally reported that much blood might be shed between these two families.

Mr. O'Connor was the President of the Mechanics' National Bank of Knoxville. He was standing in his doorway, holding an empty bottle, apparently unarmed, walking up the street.

The Major drew a double-barrel shotgun, and shot the General, inflicting a mortal wound.

Mr. O'Connor had been advised that his life was threatened, and naturally turned to his friends for protection.

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