

THE IMPOSSIBLE.

Man cannot draw water from an empty well,
Nor trace the stories that gossips tell.
Nor gather the sounds of a pealing bell.

Man never can stop the billow's roar,
Nor change the winds till they blow no more,
Nor drive true love from a maiden's door.

Man cannot overtake a fleeting lie,
Change his wheat to a field of rye,
Nor call back years that have long gone by.

Man cannot a cruel word recall,
Fetter a thought, be it great or small,
Nor honey extract from a drop of gall.

Man never can bribe old Father Time,
Gain the peak that he cannot climb,
Nor trust the hand that hath done a crime.

Man never can backward turn the tide,
Nor count the stars that are scattered wide,
Nor find in a fool a trusty guide.

Man cannot reap fruit from worthless seed,
Rely for strength on a broken reed,
Nor gain a heart he hath caused to bleed.

Man never can hope true peace to win,
Pleasure without and joy within,
Living a thoughtless life of sin.

ANYBODY.

A fading spinster lone and lorn,
Upon a summer's night,
Was praying for proposals
With all her maiden might.

Beneath her window posed an owl
In sober dignity,
Inspecting the fair landscape
From perch on apple tree.

A zephyr rustled o'er that owl,
Who by that window sate,
The maiden hearing "Who! who! who!"
Cried "Any one, O fate!"

TRAILED BY BLOODHOUNDS.

BY CAPTAIN JAMES MONTFORD.

"The person who passed through the war without meeting with adventures that thrilled his blood, or mysteries which chilled it, must have been a very queer individual."

"We all met with adventures, Colelon," I replied, "but they flitted past so quickly that they became obliterated by the stirring events which came after."

"Umph! I must have a better memory than other people," the old gentleman said, smiling, "for scarcely a day passes but some circumstance is recalled to my mind."

"Then it is your duty to supply the deficiencies of your friends."

"Well, I think the most horrid action I was concerned in took place a few days before the battle of Perryville. There was a negro teamster attached to our company, who was one of the principals. He was a tall, raw-boned fellow, with a countenance of mingled brutality and cunning.

"He was stubborn and unmanageable to a degree, and we had a good deal of trouble with him at different times.

"It was always necessary to place a 'boss' over him, and even then willful mistakes were always occurring.

"One day he was shoeing a horse, a valuable black, belonging to one of the aids, and a sergeant was directing his movements.

"The fellow was sullen, and had committed several faults. At last he pared the hoof so close that the blood followed the knife.

"I happened along at that juncture, and saw the sergeant raise the stick he held in his hand, and bring it down over the black's shoulders.

"The negro turned his head, and cast a look so fierce and vengeful at his chastiser that the latter changed color.

"I shall not soon forget the glance; it expressed all the depravity of his vile nature.

"He did not speak; not even a cry of pain escaped his lips. Resuming his task with the manner of one who desired to complete it as soon as possible, he had soon finished, and, after examining the horse, I walked on."

"The next morning the sergeant was found, wrapped in his cloak, dead.

"The vein in his throat had been severed in a horrible manner, and from the position in which he lay it was evident the deed had been done while he was sleeping, and that he had not been allowed an opportunity to defend himself.

"There was not the slightest clew to the perpetrator of this outrage; but it at once occurred to me that the negro teamster was the murderer.

"I did not express my opinion until I had made inquiries and found that the fellow had left the camp.

"None of his acquaintances had the least knowledge of his whereabouts.

"Then I made my suspicions known, and a strict search was instituted; but nothing was found to bring home the charge.

"At last one Medill offered a suggestion which, though it was, perhaps, no more than strict justice would permit, has always seemed awful to me.

"It was to trail the murderer with bloodhounds, a practice too often followed in that country.

"There's a gentleman near here," said Medill, "who owns a fine pair. They will find him, I'll warrant it, if he's above ground."

"After some consideration, it was decided that the soldier's suggestion should be followed.

"It was necessary that an example should be made; for murder, like everything else, if it goes unpunished will spread.

"Medill and another man were dispatched for the dogs, and they returned about the middle of the forenoon, accompanied by an old negro who had charge of the brutes.

"They were an ugly looking pair, evidently old, and their bodies slashed with many wounds.

"I could not resist comparing them with the black whom I thought the murderer. They seemed well chosen for their duty.

"They found a scent immediately, but not the right one. They pursued one of the soldiers who stood upon the outside of the group, and it required all the efforts of their black master to restrain them.

"But after considerable difficulty a scent was found, and the negro expressed an opinion that it was the correct one.

"A dozen men, among whom I was one, mounted the swiftest horses in the command, and as the dogs started away with long leaps we followed.

"It was a plain trail for the first half a dozen miles, and we covered the distance in a very short time.

"There was something wonderfully exhilarating in the chase, notwithstanding the nature of the game we had in view.

"There is more or less of the savage in man, and it only requires a proper opportunity for it to display its traits in full strength.

"I experienced the greatest eagerness im-

aginable in pursuing that poor wretch, and knew from the flushed faces and sparkling eyes of my companions that they felt the same emotions.

"Although we urged the horses forward as fast as they could bear, the dogs were far ahead.

"They came to a halt, however, after we had traversed six miles.

"A narrow creek lay in their path. When we came up they were running up and down the bank, with their noses to the ground.

"We forded the creek, and the dogs failed on the scent.

"'I am a black man,' declared the keeper, his voice trembling with excitement: 'he has waded up the creek; no white man would ever do that.'

"The dogs circled for the trail, which was found about half a mile up the stream.

"On we went again. In about half an hour we heard a peculiar sound from the dogs.

"'He am tired!' cried the keeper; and we rode rapidly up the mountain at the foot of which we had now arrived.

"We soon came in sight of the dogs, and a small cabin, which seemed deserted.

"The brutes were running about, uttering that strange sound characteristic of them when they have found their game.

"Leaping from our horses, we ran up to the cabin door. It was secured upon the inside, and we had some difficulty in breaking it down.

"'He am tired!' cried the keeper; and we rode rapidly up the mountain at the foot of which we had now arrived.

"The negro murderer had leaped from a small window in the upper part of the deserted hut, and was now running for life.

"We could not pursue him on horseback as he darted up the rocky slope. He was strong and fleet of foot; none of our hunters could rival him.

"The dogs were tearing about inside the cabin. Their keeper succeeded at last in bringing them to the fresh trail; but then the negro was barely discernible, far up the mountain.

"The fellow was exerting himself to the utmost, and I could not help admiring his pluck, even while straining every muscle in the pursuit.

"We clambered up the slope as rapidly as we could; but the negro and his pursuers had passed from our view.

"Suddenly we heard again that peculiar sound from the dogs. The murderer was at bay. Perhaps fighting for his life with the fierce hounds.

"We ran forward, almost falling at every step, and several gave up the chase, dropping upon the ground through fatigue.

"I was one of the first who came within view of the strange scene presented at the top of the mountain.

"The dogs were sitting upon their haunches at the foot of a huge tree whose limbs hung over a high bluff.

"The negro was hanging upon a limb of the tree. His face was distorted, and his eyes seemed upon the point of dropping from their sockets.

"His clothing hung about him in shreds; his hands were torn and bloody.

"As we came within sight he turned his eyes upon us with the look of a wolf at bay; then he looked down at the dogs who were yelping a few feet below.

"'Come down,' I cried, and the fellow rose to his feet, steadying himself with one hand.

"Seeing his movement the dogs rose also; they licked their frothy lips in anticipation of the prey which they were never to taste.

"Standing for an instant upon his insecure perch, the negro glanced around him.

"The look of desperation upon his face was that of a demon; with a cry scarcely human he swung his form backward, and then leaped far out over the bluff.

"Rushing to the edge, I dropped upon my knees. I saw the form whirl over in the air, then drop from sight.

"We circled the bluff and came upon his mangled body, but

With scarce a shred to tell of human form,
Or fragment for the sea-bird or the worm."

AUCTIONS.

BY ANNIE E. MYERS.

It is a matter of history that women in Babylon were publicly auctioned off to the highest bidder for wives.

This sale occurred annually among those old heathen, at which time all virgins of a marriageable age were required to assemble at a certain place in their respective districts, and thither flocked all the gay and frolicsome young pagans to select their wives.

No doubt the dandies fluttered and bobbed around, stopped here and there, put their turbaned heads together for confidential confabs, much after the fashion of the busy bee around an intoxicating clover blossom. The young fellows whose silken purses were well lined with gold and silver consulted and compared notes as to the comparative beauty of the candidates to come under the auctioneer's hammer, gave passing attention to the probabilities in regard to the dispositions and tempers of the respective mothers-in-law elect, while the dusky swain whose bidding must be more modest, and whose tastes and desires must be regulated to enjoy what may be left, passed quietly yet observingly around, mingling freely in the midst of the excited throng, silently picking up points and waiting their chances, after the fashion of the hangers-on around the wheat-pit in the Chicago Board of Trade.

The style of conducting this Babylonian sale was quite American in its main points, but perhaps on a fairer basis than deals in "Sept." wheat.

The most beautiful was put up first, and he who bid the most money gained possession of her. The second in appearance followed, and the bidders gratified themselves with handsome wives according to the lengths of their purses.

But, alas! Strange as it may appear to modern civilization—our civilization in which every girl may become a wife if she can satisfy herself with what the gods provide—among the Babylonians there were some ladies for whom no money was offered.

It seems that physical beauty alone was the one thing desired in a wife. Those benighted heathen had not acquired the taste that could appreciate the aesthetic loveliness of even protoplasmic psychology. But the pagan dogs had all the inventive genius of a maneuvering modern mamma, consequently when all the beautiful virgins were sold the crier ordered the least handsome to stand up, when he would demand who would marry her with a certain sum, then who with a smaller amount, until she would finally be adjudged to the one who would be satisfied with the

least. In this manner the money paid as premiums for beauty served as bribes for disagreeable looks.

This custom emanated from the minds of idol worshipers, at least one hundred years before Christ came with His enlightening religion, but in what movement of reform, in what solution of mystifying social questions has a more humanitarian doctrine been adopted?

The contemplation of this unique stroke of diplomacy has suggested a modern adaptation.

Why would it not be a neat manner of disposing of our men?

Use the premiums obtained from the sale of the luckless young and old bachelors who seem incapable of getting themselves married, as bribes to hasten the disposal of married men whose wives are anxious to get rid of them.

Boys, kiss your mothers. It won't

The True Ministry of the Kiss.

Of the great needs of American home life to-day, a hearty, sincere, and frequent manifestation of affection stands at the head. Thousands of families there are in which never a kiss is exchanged. The day is begun and ended by all, from the father to the five-year-old, in the same heartless fashion. No wonder the years rapidly hide their faces in the "long ago."

Yet what can stay so many sorrows as the hearty kiss of true affection? Does mamma's kiss possess such wonderful curative power for the baby, and the child's have no power of healing for the mother?

Boys, kiss your mothers. It won't

break the heart that has endured the strain of ceaseless vigil and care through all the years of your infantile tenderness, and the later years of your happy, headlong, heartless helplessness.

Try it some day. Many a boy

has risen to noble renown by the self-denying toil of a widowed mother. She

is proud of your success, and asks no

other reward for the heavy struggle

than the hearty affection of an appreciative soul. Don't deprive her of that

slight recompense, my boy. Should

the cloud become so heavy as to take

her from your sight, you will never

have another mother. The law may

give a man a dozen wives; heaven can

give him but one mother. The boy

that is too big to kiss his mother is too

small to kiss anybody else. Girls, be

ware of him! Such boys fairly pant

with anxiety to attend every occasion

that may afford them opportunity to kiss

some butterfly, whose chief accomplishments may be little waist (no reference to economy) and big bustle—not of useful

activity, but of paper.

I know, my boy, your mother's voice

may lack the low melody of your "last

flame," but it will ring with the music

of unselfish affection long after your

"flame's" has been lost amid the ashes

of selfishness. Your mother may not

be able to vie with some girl you know

in coddling, with a wealth of affectionate

adjectives and languishing attitudes, a

pet pig-nosed dog or rabbit-tailed cat.

But with arms and body rising superior

to the pain and ache that tortured her

frame, she carried you night and day

in the lingering sickness of your infan-

cy; she pressed you to her heart and

covered with kisses your face, even

while made so repulsive with foul dis-

ease that your fair charmer, who daily

divides her affections between you and

her dog, would have turned away in

disgust. But, then, her arms have

borne a nobler burden, her heart is

filled with a holier love, her mind occu-

pied with a loftier ideal, else you would

not be where you are to-day. Then kiss

the dear old face, deeply seamed with

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