

### THE KEEPSAKE KISS.

BY NATHAN D. URNER.

Fare thee well, and fare thee sweetly!  
And, since we must shortly sever,  
Name some keepsake that shall meetly  
Symbolize our love forever.  
Gaud of gold or costly jewel.  
Which, my true-love, shall it be?  
"Ah!" she murmurs, "that were cruel,  
These would be unworthy thee."

Name it, then, before we sunder—  
Gift that ne'er will fade or perish.  
Is there naught on earth or under  
That for love of me wouldst cherish?  
Over to thrill and linger  
When my face is far away?  
"Yes!" and the uplifted finger  
Bids me listen to her say.

"Give me but one sacred kiss, love,  
And while on my lips it hovers  
Breathe the spell of magic this, love,  
Ne'er will heaven the round earth covers  
To bestow on other women.  
What by right belongs to me;  
So, with love intense and human,  
Still my heart shall beat for thee."

Angel wife! so much to offer,  
For a gift so poor and simple.  
When each kiss my soul shall proffer  
Mouth, cheek, brow, or charming dimple  
Can but breathe its worship gently—  
Love, faith, hope, and truth eterne,  
If thy heart but lies intensely  
To the words that live and burn.

Take, then, with this kiss that settles  
On thy lips' imperial blossom  
What I pledge between the petals—  
To thy pure and saintly bosom—  
Faithfulness to thee completely,  
Ne'er from thy fond heart to stray;  
Fare thee well, and fare thee sweetly!  
Now, my love, I must away.

### THE COLONEL'S STORY.

BY CAPTAIN JAMES MONTFORD.

"No dog was at the threshold, great or small;  
No pigeon on the roof—no household creature,  
No cat demurely dozing on the wall,  
Not one domestic feature.

"The centipede along the threshold crept,  
The cobweb hung across its mazy tangle,  
And in its winding-sheet the maggot slept,  
At every nook and angle."

"The person who passed through the war  
Without meeting adventures which thrilled  
His blood, or mysteries which chilled it,  
Must have been a very queer individual."

"We all met with adventures enough,  
Colonel," I replied; "but they fittered past  
so vaguely that very little is remembered  
by the great majority. What was noticed  
has now become historical. Every tale  
groans beneath the weight of that great  
mass."

"Umph!" said he, sitting down in his  
chair. "But what is to become of the mass  
of events which the historians of to-day  
would swear at, eh?"

"That must furnish entertainment for  
those who will listen. But I see you have  
a story; I'm not one of the sneers, I  
promise you."

"Well," said the old gentleman, laugh-  
ingly, "the tale will diminish in the telling,  
but I will relate it plainly."

"There was an old ruined house upon  
the plantation of a gentleman named Mur-  
ray, in Tennessee, which had gained a  
celebrity for being the harboring place of  
the spirit of a giant soldier, who was said  
to have fallen under disgraceful circum-  
stances during the War of Independence.

"The gentleman who owned the place at  
the date I am speaking of disclaimed all  
knowledge of the ghastly warrior, and, in  
deed, scouted the idea altogether.

"The house, which I shall attempt to de-  
scribe after a moment, had been erected by  
a gentleman of French descent called Gaston;  
but whether that was a family name or  
not I do not know.

"According to the story, he had two sons,  
and, as very often happens in romances,  
they both loved a lady, the daughter of a  
neighboring thane.

"The elder son was unsuccessful in his  
suit, his brother marrying the lady and  
bringing her home to his father's house.

"As might naturally be expected, the dis-  
appointed suitor became very jealous of his  
brother's good fortune, and, being of a fiery  
disposition, his anger rankled into a stern  
determination to be revenged.

"Both young men were patriotic, and im-  
mediately joined the revolutionary forces at  
the first ringing of the bell of freedom.

"Gaston, as I shall call the elder, con-  
cealed his hatred from his brother; but,  
watching his opportunity, killed him.

"Accounts differ as to the circumstances,  
but the act was so cautiously carried on  
that no one suspected Gaston of the crime  
except his brother's wife, who was probably  
in possession of knowledge which satisfied  
her as to the real assassin.

"Soon after his brother's death Gaston  
returned to the plantation to pass a few  
weeks with the bereaved family.

"Then it was that his brother's wife ac-  
cused him distinctly of the crime, and  
warned him of exposure as soon as his  
mother, who had become very ill upon re-  
ceiving news of her son's death, recovered,  
and was able to sustain this still more ter-  
rible disclosure.

"The several narrators whom I have heard  
relate the legend give a very full account of  
the scene, and Gaston's uncomfortable  
position after the accusation.

"However, upon finding that neither  
threats nor promises could restrain her  
tongue, he watched his opportunity until he  
finds her one night in a solitary part of the  
mansion, when he strangles her neatly,  
and buries the corpse in the cellar beneath  
the house.

"There is great excitement the next day,  
and a strict search is instituted, but without  
a satisfactory result, and the family at last  
decide that the young lady has, in a mo-  
ment of mental disorder, thrown herself  
into the lake (a very beautiful sheet of  
water, which I have seen) not far distant  
from the plantation.

"Soon after, Gaston returns to the army;  
but his good fortune has deserted him.  
His guilty conscience preys upon his body  
and mind, and in a slight skirmish in the  
mansion, when he strangles her neatly,  
and buries the corpse in the cellar beneath  
the house.

"As a fitting close to his career he is  
court-martialed, found guilty of cowardice  
and treason, and executed by martial law.

"Such is the substance of the story I have  
heard related several times. The negroes  
who dwell within a dozen miles of the  
ruined house firmly believe the legend, with  
all its embellishments, and, no sum of  
money would bribe them to enter the house  
after nightfall, and even under the full  
light of the sun they look upon the place  
with awe.

"In 1862 I was stationed for the space of  
three months at a point about half a mile  
from the Gaston ruin, and passed it regu-  
larly several times a week.

"It was a low, weather-beaten structure,  
entirely dismantled, and overgrown with  
creeping vegetation, which was fostered by

the dampness of its situation; for it had  
been built in a hollow, but little above the  
level of the lake, which was about a mile  
distant.

"It extended back for a considerable dis-  
tance, but had, in the daytime at least, noth-  
ing romantic in its appearance.

"I often wished to pay a visit to the in-  
side, but leisure was wanting for a long  
time.

"But one afternoon, shortly before sun-  
down, I was returning to my barracks by  
the road which passed the house, when one  
of those sudden thunder-storms so com-  
mon in the country arose.

"I was entirely unprovided for it, and as  
the huge drops pattered upon my head,  
while the play of lightning overhead was  
startling from its intensity, I forced my  
horse through the thin hedge that fenced  
the premises.

"The ruin now bore a different aspect.  
The bright flashes of lightning seemed to  
burn their way through the walls for an in-  
stant, to be followed by gloom still  
more terrible.

"I felt a tremor of fear as I dragged the  
unwilling steed in through the broken walls,  
and I was not made more comfortable by  
the groaning of timbers, and falling wood  
inside.

"Leading the horse into one corner,  
where he would be protected by the wall  
from the full force of the storm, I crouched  
down at his side.

"The storm which followed was terrible;  
the rain fell in sheets, the thunder was almost  
deafening, and the wind seemed  
determined to tear the crime-concealing  
walls from their foundations.

"My horse was a young animal, and had  
become very excitable. I found myself  
liable to be crushed by him at any moment,  
and was at last forced to leave the shelter  
which his body promised, and creep away  
through the darkness to some further corner  
of the building, out of the reach of his  
heels.

"The floor was full of pitfalls; but, taking  
a quick glance at my surroundings by the  
momentary flashes of lightning, I  
neared the opposite side, where a portion  
of the upper floor which still remained  
would shield me from the storm.

"Suddenly there was a blaze of flame,  
under which I shrank back appalled.

"It came just in time, however, for in  
front of me, and yawning before my feet, was  
a large ragged hole in the broken floor.

"At the same instant caught a glimpse  
of a tall figure not more than three feet  
distant.

"His features became so impressed upon  
my mind in that instantaneous glance that,  
had I known him for years, the knowledge  
would have added nothing to his descrip-  
tion.

"A very tall man, with a dark face, ex-  
ceedingly handsome, but with wild-looking  
eyes, that curled the blood in my veins.  
I shivered with apprehension, and, with a  
scarcely human cry, the specter, as in that  
fearful moment I thought it to be, leaped  
across the chasm and seized me by the  
throat.

"I struggled with the desperation of mad-  
ness to release myself; but, whatever his  
mien might be, the muscles seemed  
formed of steel.

"He forced me backward toward the  
hole; but the instant I was falling the floor  
gave way, and we fell downward into the  
gloomy cellar beneath.

"The storm did not continue long," said  
the Colonel, after a short silence, "and the  
house found his way out of the building and  
to his quarters.

"When I awoke from my faint I found  
half a dozen of the boys bending over me.

"I lay upon my back in a pool of water in  
the cellar of Gaston's house.

"I related my story before I was well out  
of the place, and from the ill-disguised  
grins with which it was heard I realized that  
my veracity was suspected. I never re-  
lated my difficulties of the night afterward.

"It is my opinion that the tall specter was  
some adherent of the Southern cause, who  
had sought shelter there for the same rea-  
sons as myself.

"At any rate, it added another legend to  
the house of Gaston."

### THE BATTLE OF SHILOH.

Reunions of army organizations call to  
mind old associations, and thrill me often  
with recollections of my experiences during  
the war. I have noticed since its close the  
popular impression exists that at Shiloh  
the entire army was routed, and fell back  
in the fore part of the day, and that no part  
of that grand army held the enemy to ex-  
cept two hours.

Now, sir, from my standpoint, in com-  
mon with a part of my brigade, members of  
the Seventy-first Ohio, Fifty-fifth Illinois,  
and the Fifty-fourth Ohio; we saw

in the war a very different light, and as no  
historian or General has done us justice for  
what we did on April 6, I deem it my duty

to correct the impression, and let the world  
know what a mere skirmish line accom-  
plished without reserves or artillery.

Our camp was amid a peach orchard in  
bloom. We had been there some three  
weeks, doing fancy band-box duty. As a  
few straws or leaves accumulated in camp  
a detail was made to clear it. Hence we

had made no preparation for the reception  
of the enemy. Although the flower of the

army had fallen back hours before. We  
moved back to the deep ravine that Grant  
speaks of as the place where the second at-  
tempt to turn his flank occurred, and we

supported the siege guns on the line a half  
mile from the landing. This line was es-  
tablished as a military necessity quite early

in the day, as the army commenced to fall

back under orders of Webster, Chief of

Artillery, and was composed of guns in

sections. I say there was no water in this

ravine as per General Grant's story.

It was then near five o'clock, and all was

quiet in the woods, as all the balance of the

army had fallen back hours before. We

moved back to the deep ravine that Grant

speaks of as the place where the second at-  
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