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Two Pictures.

An old farm-house with meadows wide,
And sweet with clover on each side;
A bright-eyed boy who looks from out
The door with woodbine wreathed about,
And wishes, his one thought all day:
"Oh! if I could but fly away
From this dull spot the world to see,
How happy, happy, happy,
How happy I should be!"

Amid the city's constant din,
A man who round the world has been,
Who, 'mid the tumult and the throng,
Is thinking, thinking all day long:
"Oh! could I only tread once more
The field-path to the farm-house door,
The old, green meadow could I see,
How happy, happy, happy,
How happy I should be."

THE POTENCY OF GEMS.

"So you think there is a potency in gems?"

"I do, most certainly. I believe firmly in talismans, and that certain gems have an occult influence, not understood, to be sure, but no less real."

"Have you any reason for this belief founded upon facts in your own experience?"

"Yes, strong reasons."

"Strong reasons, indeed! Out with them. It is plain to be seen that thereby hangs a tale. A story about the talismanic power of precious stones! That will be worth hearing, indeed!"

The conversation took place in my back parlor, in October, 1870.

I had been married just two years, and my wife was up stairs, having a frolic with the baby—a boy, six months old, and ahead of anything in the shape of a baby yet known in the world.

My companion was Bob Greenleaf, the jolliest, laziest, and biggest-hearted fellow I ever saw. He had been my chum in college, and after my marriage he made our house his home whenever he pleased, my wife not considering it necessary to cut off all her husband's previous blessings because she had bestowed herself upon him.

Bob added a good deal to our happiness in his good-natured way. He was always ready to hear Carrie rave about me, and to hear us both rave about the boy; and every point worth having is gained in a friend when you have found one who will let you ride your pet hobby in his presence, and sympathize till you dismount of your own accord.

Bob's laziness helped in this, and I sometimes suspected, with secret indignation, that he carried on certain day-dreams of his own, while we supposed him wholly absorbed in our enthusiasm. However, he had listened to me so often when I had talked for my own pleasure, that I thought it only fair to give him the history he wanted, and the more as it was the story of my first meeting with, and my love for, the dear little woman up stairs with the baby.

"Well, to begin," said I, lighting a Havana, and offering one to Bob, while we both drew our lounging chairs nearer to the glowing fire in the grate, "there has been a ring in our family nearly two hundred years; set with diamonds and emeralds, very valuable, and of very curious workmanship."

"Why, that's the ring Carrie wears on state occasions," interrupted Bob.

"Exactly, old fellow. Three years ago last August I was at Long Branch with my mother. One warm day I was going to New York for a few hours, when my mother handed me the ring, asking me to take it to a jeweler's, as one of the stones needed resetting. She gave me a thousand cautions about it, for there had always been a belief that no bride would be happy who took the family name at the altar without the ring. Since it had been in the possession of the Howards, there had not been a marriage without it.

"I myself did not share in this superstition, as I then considered it,

but I valued the ring nevertheless, and promised my mother all she desired. I believe now, as firmly as I believe in my own existence, that the losing of that ring was just as important a part of the programme of life as the birth of that blessed baby above. If I hadn't lost the jewels, that baby would not have been born, at any rate."

"Growing interesting," interpolated Bob, drawing a long breath. "I don't exactly see the analogy between emeralds and babies; but that isn't of the least account, so long as you take care to keep up the mystery to the end."

"I stowed the ring away in my inner vest pocket, by the side of various and sundry valuable business documents, and never thought of it again until it occurred to me, on the corner of Broadway and Barclay streets, that I had better attend to my mother's errand before attempting to transact my own business. So I hailed a stage and started for Tiffany's. By George! there was the prettiest girl inside that 'buss that I ever laid my eyes on—"

"Carrie, I suppose?" put in Tom, with a knowing look.

"Just hold your horses, my Christian friend," I replied. "It is all very mysterious from beginning to end. Don't interrupt me again. If you do, you will 'destroy the conditions,' as the Spiritualists say. Oh, that face! oh, that cunning little hand! oh, the inimitable grace with which she said 'Thank you,' as I handed up her stage fare! True as you live, Bob, notwithstanding I am a married man, since that time I have never closed my eyes of a night, or opened them of a morning, but this radiant countenance was the first and the last to smile upon me."

"To say that I am astonished," said Bob, with the gravity of twenty deacons, "would feebly express my feelings at the present moment."

"I thought best not to notice him, so continued:

"A short distance on, a gentleman with whom I had an important business engagement happened to enter the stage. This was the second time I had put my hand in my vest pocket since I started; once before on the train, on a similar matter of business.

"I got out at Tiffany's. Leaving the little darling, who had so provokingly robbed me of my heart, still in the 'buss.

"Imagine my surprise and horror when, upon feeling in my pocket for the ring, I found there was no ring there! It didn't take me long to go through my clothes, you may well believe, but that is all it amounted to. If I only could have told mother that I had been robbed, I should have felt quite comfortable; but the idea of owning up to my own carelessness was a little more than I was equal to.

"To make my story short, I spent all that day vainly endeavoring to gain some tidings of the tormented little thing. Failing to know which particular vehicle I took on my trip up town, I had every South Ferry stage in the city carefully examined, and every driver questioned. I advertised and advertised, and moved heaven and earth almost, for my mother's sake (I didn't care three straws about it myself) to find it. It was no use, and I finally gave it up.

"Not so mother. If she wasn't a thorn in the flesh about that time, no poor fellow ever had one. I always felt that Job had it pretty rough; but there's no account in the Holy Writ that Job ever lost a five thousand dollar ring belonging to his mother.

"Three months rolled by, and during that time my maternal parent never let up on me a particle. In the dead of the night she would

walk into my room, and wake me with, 'Don't you think, George, you'd better offer a larger reward for the recovery of that ring? You can never be married without,' and then leave the room, sobbing.

"Pon honor, I know how a fellow feels who is tempted to commit suicide.

"But where was the pretty girl you saw in the stage?" inquired Bob, with a yawn, elevating his feet to the mantel.

"Oh, I hadn't seen her since that time."

"I thought, by your talk, she was your constant companion?"

"Only in imagination. Can't you allow for a little fancy, my boy?"

"Did you ever tell Mrs. George Howard of your infatuation? Does she know how this vision of that woman's beautiful face lingers by your pillow during the silent night?" and Bob really grew sentimental. "Scarcely a comfortable position for a woman who loves her husband, I should think. But proceed. It would be pleasant to bear the yarn out, after so mysterious a commencement."

True as you live, my easy going friend, Bob Greenleaf, was really waxing indignant.

"Well, as I said before, three months passed, with no tidings. One day, standing in line, waiting for my turn at the paying-teller's pigeon hole in our bank, I heard two gentlemen conversing very earnestly behind me. One of them said:

"I always thought before that the girl had some common sense; but she is certainly lacking in the upper story."

"Why don't they advertise for an owner to the ring, if that's what's the matter?" inquired his companion.

"At the mention of that talismanic word 'ring,' you had better believe my eyes and ears opened wide.

"So they have advertised, until they are tired. Hundreds have been to the house to claim it, but not one of the number has ever accurately described it. If somebody don't claim it before long, upon my word, I believe the foolish girl will just up and die out of spite. She vows that the emeralds weep every time she looks at them, and a lot more such silly stuff."

"Excuse me, gentlemen; I have heard your conversation," said I, turning round sharply. "And if you will be kind enough to furnish me with the address of the lady in question, I think I can relieve her mind by relieving her of the ring."

"After a little more preliminary conversation, and an exchange of cards, one of the gentlemen offered to accompany me to the residence of the young lady. On our trip up town he informed me that she would not allow the ring to leave her person day or night; that, from a gay, rollicking girl, fond of pleasure and society, she had become a dreamer, a believer in signs and omens, and that her principal cause of trouble seemed to be that an old lady's face was always before her, and an old lady's sobs distinctly audible night and day. Of course, it is a monomania," he continued; "but, speak lightly of it as we may, it is terrible."

"My heart was in my throat as I waited in the parlor the appearance of this strangely infatuated young woman. I knew it was our ring, and knew I could prove it; but I did so dread to see this superstitious female walk in.

"Imagine my surprise, my delight, my joy unspeakable, when I beheld the little girl of the Broadway stage approach me.

"Oh! I am so glad!" she said, softly—and, as true as you live,

Bob Greenleaf, giving me both of her hands. 'I know the ring is yours; but still you must describe it,' she continued—her whole face aglow with delight. 'Have you a mother, and has she wept night and day about this treasure?' the darling girl kept on, without taking her eyes from my face.

"Yes," I replied. 'I have a mother, and she has done little else but weep since I lost it.'

"And you dropped it that morning in the stage? It must have caught on the flounce of my muslin dress, for, just before entering the house, something fell upon the pavement, and I picked up the ring, which has made me more trouble than anything I ever had in my life."

"Well, I described the ring; but not yet, would the dictatorial young lady allow me to take it in my own hands. I had lost it once, and might again. She would give it to mother, and she did. The upshot of the business was, that mother fell in love with the girl, and I married her; and there she comes now, and the baby, too, as I'm a sinner."

The Pony that Turned the Water On.

An almost unparalleled circumstance was noticed at Muirhall, near West Calder, during the great heat that prevailed in the summer. An Iceland pony, the property of Mr. John Waddell, contractor, was for a time, left to its own free will, during the temporary absence of its driver. The pony, which had been driven for a considerable distance, and was seemingly actuated by a craving for water, was observed by the proprietor of Muirhall, and others who chanced to be in the vicinity, to deliberately walk a distance of full 50 yards, and with its teeth turn the cock of a water-pipe projecting out of the road embankment, supply itself with a draught of the refreshing beverage, readjust the cock, and return to the position in which it was left. This case is not only paralleled, but surpassed by one that occurred at Leeds, in 1794. A gentleman's horse was regularly turned into a field where there was a pump, the water of which never failed. The horse observed how the pump worked, and at last took to pumping for himself, thus saving the groom the trouble of providing him with water. His mode of procedure was to take the handle of the pump between his teeth and pump away until the trough was full.

STOKES AND HIS RELATIONS.—In consequence of Stokes' infatuation with Josie Mansfield, his wife procured a divorce. The same steamer that carried that document to her in Europe, carried also the news of the murder of Fisk. On account of the same, Mrs. Sutton, a sister of Stokes, has been discarded by her husband for adhering so strongly to the fortunes of her hapless brother. The senior Stokes has been rendered bankrupt thereby, and one brother, a young man of great promise, died of grief and shame, while the remaining members of the family are in the greatest distress. Stokes, the murderer, was not many years ago a handsome and affectionate boy, and the pride of his parents. All this ruin was wrought by one bold, bad, handsome woman, who cares not a fig whether Stokes is hung or not. His fate should be a warning to others.

A bill has been introduced in the New York Assembly making a man found with a pistol, knife or slung-shot in his possession liable to from five to ten years imprisonment.

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 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 in 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 best he should become a physician, and then he will have none of his bad work thrown upon his hands. It is generally buried out of sight, you know.

Should he incline to high living, but prefer a plain board, then the carpenter 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 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 chairmaking, 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.

A female novelist commenced her last work thus: "The sun had sunk into his western bed, but drawing the golden clouds up too high to hide his face, allowed his shining toes to protrude at the other end, thus casting a faint pinkish and crimson glow over nature's face."