

ODDS AND ENDS.

A LOVE SONG.

Come into thy garden, my love, my sweet;
The flowers are lifting their heads;
They wait for the sound of thy coming feet,
And, smiling, stretch forth from their beds.

Come into thy garden, my dear, my love,
And bark to the birds' merry lay,
The golden sun shines in the blue skies above,
And the humming bees join in thy praise.

Come into thy garden, my sweet, my dear,
I stand at the old trying place,
To me all is dark when thou art not near,
And bright when I gaze on thy face.

—Hermione J. Kennedy in Madama.

THE TRAMP.

He was a real, bona fide tramp. His coat was a marvel of grime and tatters, on one foot he wore a tolerably respectable boot, while the toes of the other protruded through a very ragged shoe, and his hat would never have been recognized for that article of headgear if it had not been upon his head. Altogether he might have been the original of the funny papers' latest edition of Weary Willie.

At present he was resting. This was the chief occupation of his life, his profession, as it were, and after many years of experience he had succeeded in bringing it down to a very fine point, being able to pursue it under the most unfavorable conditions and in circumstances that would have daunted an ordinary mortal. Such is the result of practice!

Just now the conditions were extremely favorable, the day being warm and the fence-corner grass grown and shady, so the tramp lay upon his back, with one leg thrown over the other and his hat pulled down over his forehead.

Over in the field opposite a farmer was plowing up stubble, pausing now and then to wipe his perspiring face, while his blue shirt hung in damp streaks to his skin.

The tramp watched him meditatively. "I wonder why people like to work!" he soliloquized. "Queer! They're always a-doin' somethin'. Now, I ain't never done anything, and I get along just the same. I bet that chap owns this whole place all round here, but he ain't havin' as good a time as I am, and I ain't got a red cent. I wonder what people want to be always working for when they might be takin' it easy. It's a funny world. Wish I had a chaw of tobaccoer."

By and by the tramp climbed the fence and began to investigate a haystack standing a short distance from the road.

"Might as well fix my bed for tonight," he said and squirmed into the heart of the stack. Presently he heard the sound of voices. It was probably the farmer, and he lay still in his hiding place.

"Of course '0.00, is a little early for you, but that is a through train and bound to be worth more than either of the other two."

"But there will be more people on it."

"What's the odds? A dozen more or less. They won't sit heavy on our consciences."

"It's a dead easy thing too. All it takes is grit. We'll be pretty sure to strike a gold lined pocket or two before they can make out what's happened. And if any one turns up beforehand—"

"Shoot him dead. We don't stand no trifling. You stand at the bottom of the gully; ain't likely to be seen walk that track, but if there is crack him dead without a word. I'll take care of my part. I tell you, I'm desperate, and if— Look, there's a man over in that field. Get around on the other side. He didn't see us. Make a bee line for that hedge. We can"—

The voices died away. The tramp turned over on his side.

"Train wreckers! Well, it ain't no business of mine," he grunted.

Nevertheless the vision of a wrecked train disturbed his nap, and he crawled out of his hole. He sat on the fence and nursed his ragged foot, watching the sunset.

"It's a pity for so many people. I guess some of 'em would be young, too; maybe some little babies; maybe a feller about my age. They're all a-lookin' at the sun for the last time if they only knew it."

What kind of a queer feeling was this? He tried to whistle it off, but it only came back the stronger. The frog's singing had never disturbed him before, but tonight it sounded weird and sad, and after awhile the very stars came out and looked at him as if they knew something about it.

"What a strange thing it must be to die! Maybe somebody'll be waitin' and waitin' for some of those people to come home."

Not in his remotest past could he remember any love, but somehow he understood this waiting.

The frogs sung on, the young moon sailed slowly down the heavens, and by and by the tramp climbed off the fence and slouched away down the road. Hanging beside a stable door he had seen a lantern when he passed that afternoon, and he crept up, hooked it off the nail and went on his way. He had no definite purpose in view except that he was going toward the gully, and it might be useful. "I never did do anything, and I always got along. But it's a pity to let them all die. Better to have one old feller go. I wonder how it feels to die!"

He sat down by the roadside and said solemnly: "It ain't none of my business. I ain't got nothin' to do with it. It don't concern me any."

But after awhile he went on again. "It must be 'o'clock now," he said. The night had grown dark and cloudy; only a few stars glittered at intervals through the flying rack. The tramp had reached the head of the gully. It was not very deep, but sufficient to cause a terrible disaster. The track sloped around a curve a few yards be-

hind and just here ran over a narrow bank of earth slanting abruptly down on either side.

The tramp lit his lantern, and, taking off his coat, wrapped it carefully around. Then he lay down on the ties, flat on his face, and began to creep slowly along, squirming and crawling like a worm.

After a seemingly endless time of creeping and feeling carefully with his hands he felt the smooth cold steel of the track end abruptly. The rail had been removed just at the highest point in the gully.

Now he had nothing more to do but wait. And he killed! He wondered how it felt to be shot. A strong desire to get up and run took possession of him, but he might just as well be shot saving the train as now, so he lay still.

"Maybe I won't be killed. I might get through some way. An old no-count like me 'ud be likely to get through with a whole hide. Anyway, 'twon't be much lost. If 'twould only come!"

It seemed an hour since he had lain there; then he heard the rumbling and the distant "whoop—whoop—o—o—o," and in a minute the train rounded the curve. The tramp flung his coat into the gully and sprang to his feet, waving the lantern up and down over his head. Five pistol shots rung out sharply above the noise of the train, the lantern tumbled into the gully, and the tramp fell forward across the track, the engine coming to a standstill within two feet of his body.

Instantly a clamor of voices arose, the engine puffed breathlessly, lights flashed through the darkness, the ties were examined, the lantern, the coat and an empty pistol were rescued from the gully, and the tramp was lifted by a dozen pairs of hands.

"He is dead!" they cried. "Shot dead! Murdered by train wreckers!"

A young doctor elbowed his way through the crowd. He was of tall, commanding presence, and they fell back before his authoritative voice.

"Make way, there!"

He knelt down beside the tramp and after a rapid examination said: "The man isn't even seriously hurt. There is only a flesh wound in the hip. He has fainted from fright."

Even as he spoke the tramp opened his eyes. A young girl sat down and took his shaggy head into her lap, where he moved uneasily from time to time as he told his story.

"He's a real hero!" cried the girl.

"A brave, noble fellow, God bless him!" cried another woman.

A man held his brandy flask to the tramp's lips and another held his hand heartily. The tramp seemed to hardly understand it all. He blinked at them stupidly, but clung to the brandy flask.

They carried him aboard the train, and the engine backed slowly toward the town, a mile away, and as the tramp reclined upon velvet cushions, surrounded by sympathetic faces, for the first time in his life treated as an equal, a man among men, strange, new desires stirred vaguely in his heart.

"I ain't been nothin' but a no 'count son-of-a-bitch," he thought, "but I'm mighty glad I could save 'em all, mighty glad."

"We will make up a suitable reward for that brave fellow," said an old gentleman, but the young doctor spoke up suddenly.

"See here! That man is a fake! His story is the thinnest I ever heard. I say he took up those rails and waved the train in the hope of a reward, shooting himself to give weight to the story. Do you think of five shots aimed straight at a man only one would hit him and inflict a slight flesh wound? And if he feared the wreckers why didn't he wave the train on the other side of the curve? Any sane man would have done that."

This was an indisputable fact, and the passengers began to comprehend the whole matter.

"He says he heard the two men at 'o'clock," the young doctor went on. "Why, he could have gone to Fordsville and got a posse to capture them in that time! And he says he took the lantern from a farmhouse stable. Why, he could have gone in and informed the farmer! Pshaw! The thing couldn't be plainer. He was after the reward. You will be lucky if you are not sent up for this, old fellow."

The passengers laughed or were angry. The doctor tried to explain the meaning of the change in their manner, but could not exactly comprehend. Hadn't he saved the train? They took him to the hospital at Fordsville, and later on the men whom they had left behind came in to report that they could not find the slightest trace of the wreckers or any evidence to prove the truth of the tramp's preposterous story.

In the morning the young doctor called at the hospital, and the nurse who received him said: "The man is dead. He died during the night of heart disease, from the fright, I suppose."

She showed him the bed, and they both stood looking down on the still form lying there.

"Well, he's gone to his reward," said the doctor jocularly. —Chicago News.

Pastidious Snakes.

Mr. A. B. Baker of the national zoological park notes that the large snakes refuse to eat rats captured about the buildings, but quickly devour those caught out of doors. Rats taken indoors were then kept for a day or so in a cage with an earth floor, after which they were readily eaten. A very similar experience was had with smaller snakes, copperheads, these declining to eat house mice, permitting them to run about the cage or over their bodies with impunity, while field mice were quickly taken even after they had been dead for some little time. These facts seem to show that snakes have a very keen sense of smell and are largely guided by it in the choice of their food. —Science.

REMOSE.

Red lips that dumbly quiver for his kiss
And now but fondly touch his graveyard

Ah, lips he loved of old, remember this,
He had not died if he had only known!

—Arthur J. Stringer in Harper's Magazine.

A STROKE OF GENIUS.

It Ellicted the Unbounded Admiration of the Farmer.

Only a few summers ago, among the many others that visited the wild region adorned by one of Michigan's inland lakes, was an artist. He had a wealth of scenery from which to select and chose a picturesque view with a hill of rocks and Jack pines as a background. The owner of the property transferred to canvas did not think much of the enterprise or of the man who would dawdle away his time in such an undertaking, but the artist paid the summer rates without a murmur and never entered any complaints against the accommodations. The next season the painter was again among the guests.

"How did that there picture of yours come out, anyhow?" asked the curious landowner.

"Oh, fairly well. You know that I have my name to make yet. I sold it for \$1,000."

"No," exclaimed the farmer excitedly. "Not \$1,000. You're chaffin' me."

"Not a bit of it," laughed the artist. "I got \$1,000 for that little view before there was a frame on it."

"Shake, stranger. I ains't thought I was purty slick on a dicker, but I'll be doggone if you don't take the prize. You skinned that feller slick and clean."

"How so?" indignantly, for his pride was touched.

"Oh, don't play innocent with me. It won't go no further. But you done him brown. A thousand fur that spot where you couldn't raise a bean to the acre! If the critter that bought that picture had seen me, I'd a sold him the hull drum farm for \$275." —Detroit Free Press.

In the Top Root of an Oak.

I remember a curious incident connected with the top root of an oak. This oak, a good tree of perhaps 200 years' growth, was being felled at Bradenham wood when the woodmen called attention to something peculiar on the top root. On clearing this soil we found that the object was a horse-shoe of ancient make. Obviously in the beginning an acorn must have fallen into the hollow of this cast shoe, and as it grew through the slow generations the root filled up the circle, carrying it down into the earth in the process of its increase till at length we found wood and iron thus strangely wedded. That tap root with the shoe about it is now or used to be a paper-weight in the vestibule of Bradenham Hall.—Rider Haggard in Longman's Magazine.

Pure Water a Poison.

By "chemically pure water" we usually understand perfectly fresh, distilled water. Distilled water is a dangerous protoplasmic poison. The same poisonous effects must occur whenever distilled water is drunk. The sense of taste is the first to protest against the use of this substance. A mouthful of distilled water, taken by inadvertence, will be spit out regularly. The local poisonous effect of distilled water makes itself known by all the symptoms of a catarrh of the stomach on a small scale. The harmfulness of the process, so much resorted to today, of washing out the stomach with distilled water is acknowledged. —National Druggist.

Official Lampposts.

The placing of lampposts in front of the houses of the chief magistrates of towns is an ancient custom. We find in Heywood's "English Traveler" that posts were so placed in front of sheriffs' houses. Reginald says:

What brave carved post! Who knows but here in time, sir, you may keep your shrievalty And I be one of 'er serjants!

From sheriffs, the practice extended to the houses of mayors and provosts. It has been suggested, with some probability, that the posts were at first intended for the affixing of proclamations which it was the duty of the sheriffs to publish.

A Forgetful Spouse.

Mrs. Bilkins—I never saw such a forgetful man in my life as you are. The clock has stopped again.

Mr. Bilkins—That's because you forgot to wind it.

Mrs. Bilkins—You know very well, Mr. Bilkins, that I told you to remind me to wind it, and you forget about it.

—New York Weekly.

Her Mistake.

"How did it happen that Miss Singleton refused to marry the young clergyman?"

"Why, when he proposed to her she, being a little deaf, thought he was asking her to subscribe to the organ fund. So she told him she had promised her money to some other mission." —Harper's Bazar.

Proud of His Descent.

O'Brien—And so Phelim is proud of his descent, is he?

McTurk—Yes, he is terribly stuck up about it.

O'Brien—Well, begorra, O'Brien is a bit of a descent himself to boast about. O'Brien's four stories went when the ladder broke and never shipped a brick.

—Answers.

Not Yet.

"Are you related to each other?" inquired the probate judge at Oklahoma City of a German bridal couple bearing the same name. And the groom replied: "No, Das is vat's de matter. You wants to be alrecty." —Kansas City Journal.

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