

St. Martin's Summer.

1879.

Tho' flowers have perished at the touch
Of Frost, the early comer,
I hail the season, loved so much,
The good St. Martin's summer.

O gracious morn, with rose-red dawn,
And thin moon curving o'er it!
The old year's darling, latest born,
More loved than all before it!

How flamed the sunrise thro' the pines!
How stretched the birchen shadows,
Braiding in long, wind-wavered lines,
The westward sloping meadows!

The sweet day, opening as a flower
Unfolds its petals tender,
Renews for us at noontide hour
The summer's tempered splendor.

The birds are hushed, alone the wind,
That thro' the woodland stretches,
The red oak's lingering leaves can find,
And yellow plumes of larches.

But still the balsam-breathing pine
Invites no thought of sorrow,
No hint of loss from air like wine
The earth's content can borrow.

The summer and the winter here.
Midway a trace are holding,
A soft, consenting atmosphere
Their tents of peace enfolding.

The silent woods, the lonely hills,
Rise solemn in their gladness;
The quiet that the valley fills
Is scarcely joy or sadness.

How strange! the autumn yesterday
In winter's grasp seemed dying,
On whirling winds from skies of gray
The early snow was flying.

And now while over Nature's mood
There steals a soft relenting,
I will not mar the present good,
Forecasting or lamenting.

My autumn time and Nature's hold
A dreamy tryst together,
And, both grown old, about us fold
The gold in tissue'd weather.

I lean my heart against the day
To feel its bland caressing;
I will not let it pass away
Before it leaves its blessing.

God's angels come not as of old.
The Syrian shepherds knew them;
In reddening dawns, in sunset gold,
And warm noon lights I view them.

Nor need there is, in time like this
When heaven to earth draws nearer,
Of wing or song as witnesses
To make their presence clearer.

O stream of life, whose swifter flow
Is of tue end forewarning,
Methinks the sundown a-forglow
Seems less of night than morning!

That clouds must veil this fair sunshine
Nor less a joy I find it;
Not less you warm horizon line
That winter lurks behind it.

The mystery of the untried days.
I close my eyes from reading;
His will be done whose darkest ways
To light and life are leading!

Less dreary the winter night shall be,
If memory cheer and hearten
Its heavy hours with thoughts of thee
Sweet summer of St. Martin!

—JOHN G. WHITTIER, in *Atlantic*.

The Wife's Christmas.

Ah, how can you speak so cross, Charlie?
It isn't kind or right;
You wouldn't have talked a year ago
As you have done to-night.

You wonder to see me sit and cry,
Like a baby vexed, you say,
When you didn't know I wanted a gift,
Nor think about the day!

But I'm not like a baby, Charlie,
Crying for something fine;
Only a loving woman pained
Cen'd shed such tears as mine.

For every Christmas time till now—
And that is why I grieve—
It was you that wanted to give, Charlie,
More than I receive.

And I would not have cared to-night,
Charlie,
How poor the gift or small,
Had you only brought me something to
show

That you thought of me at all.

The merest trifle of any kind,
That I could keep or wear,
A flimsy bit of lace for my neck,
Or a ribbon for my hair.

A pretty story of lovers true,
Or a book of pleasant rhymes,
A flower or a holly branch, to mark
The blessed Christmas time.

But to be forgotten, Charlie!
'Tis that that brings the tear;
And just to think that I have been
Your wife but a single year.

—Phoebe Cary.

A Mother's Warning.

"You are a widow, mother," whispered Joyce; "and that is something very sad and lonely, to lose one you love."

"Yes, my daughter; but if between marriage and widowhood lie only years of a terrible blackness, and terror, and pain, no white spots in them but a row of little snow covered graves; and then if death comes at last to end the history—comes not as a gentle angel sent of God, but in a whirl of madness and horror and a double murder. O Joyce! what then?"

Joyce shook like a leaf in a storm. She had let fall her roses, and the lily crown was not whiter than her face. She spoke hoarsely.

"Mother, tell me all."

"I must, my poor little girl. I, who have hidden this story so that it should not cast its shadow over your childhood am doomed now to blight with it your trusting girlhood. Oh! what a lot is mine. I hoped that such silence might be left me forever; but I break it now, hoping that hearing my tale, you may escape its repetition in your own life. Joyce, let me have this consolation out of my dreadful past, that it has saved from like ruin my last left child."

The girl made no answer, but her eager and frightened eyes were fixed on her mother's face.

"Joyce, I was, as you know, scarcely a step sister of Cuthbert's father. I was the child by her first marriage of Howard Verdeck's step-mother. Here to Verdeck I came almost an infant, here I grew up, and here I married Gerald Thoresby. Rich and handsome, a rising lawyer, they told me that the chancellor's sack was before him, and that I should be proud of being his choice. I knew that he loved wine and cognac, and that now and then he drank deep with gentlemen after dinner; but all men drank then, even more than they do now, and I saw that many of them seemed uninjured by it. I knew little of the world. I thought that delirious frenzy, that brutal outbreak in drink, belonged not to the cultured son of the upper classes, but to the untaught and disappointed child of poverty. I did not know that men who drink stand on a steeply inclined plane down which they are almost sure to be hurled to destruction. O Joyce! there is no strength nor grace, nor promise that Cuthbert possesses that your father did not possess when I gave him my hand. But he was standing where he could neither stop nor retreat in his use of liquor. It seemed such a little while until he was alternating between maniacal rage and agonized repentance, until my life was a maze of terror and compassion. The servants, which some poor woman may have envied me, were my defenders against a crazy husband. Our splendid home had a skeleton in every room; one while I retreated in terror from a rum-wild man, and then I was in an agony of sympathetic pain over the depths and keenness of his remorse. I saw him struggle for himself and for his children as Laocoon in the folds of the twin serpents. The first of those children was carried out of our house, the little white corpse of a boy, just as truly the victim of a drunken fit of his father as if he had been strangled by his father. When the coffin lid shut over my second child I blessed God for that mercy, for the child was an idiot, struck before its birth, with the curse of its father's sin. Despair over these losses seemed to make him desperate. Then came a little daughter—came to waste away of marasmus through months of patient suffering. After this the judgment changed its shape. We had a son, a child as beautiful and buoyant as one of the baby gods of the old fables. Drunk or sober, your father adored the child, and could not endure him to be out

of his sight. Hal was an idol; to me he seemed a glorious compensation for the past, a promise for the future. When he was sixteen months old you were born, also healthy and promising. By this time it was evident that neither love for wife or child, zeal in his profession, nor terror of poverty could deliver your father from the awful spell that had bound him. Our physicians assured him that he could not survive many more attacks of delirious fury. My future seemed to stretch away in some humble retirement where, living on my small dowry, I could rear my two children in the peace denied to my wedded life. I used to hope and to pray that when the hour of death came on, your father's mind would be set free of its unrest and madness, and that, calm and penitent, he could enter into some future lying hid in the great mercy of God. How, my child, can I tell you the rest? Your father would have his baby son in his arms after dinner, sitting to drink his wine. One day he drank very deeply, and delirium began to overmaster him. With the last effort of reason he came to bring the boy to me as I watched by your cradle. As he entered the door of the long bed-room, the child clutched to his breast, I saw the flame of insanity in his eyes. He fixed them on the opposite wall and shrieked 'Satan! fiend! you cannot have my boy!' I dared not move, lest, wildly holding the child tighter, he might crush him to death. He screamed, 'Demon! take everything else, take me, take my soul, but spare my son!'

"He held him closer and shrieked and foamed in his convulsion of agony. I rang wildly for the servants. They were at dinner in their room, but presently we heard their feet along the further hall and stairs. This augmented his madness; he raged, 'Satan, you surround me; you bring armies to steal my child—you will burn him—you will devour him! Help!' His eyes fell on me, and his lost brain transformed me to an angel coming to his aid. He raised his lovely babe above his head, and howling, 'Angel save him!' he hurled him toward me, and, striking against a great marble table, the darling of our eyes lay on the carpet limp and dead—killed as by a stroke of lightning. The servants who saw the deed stood still in a shock of terror; the sight of death froze the fever from the father's brain. I stood as if changed to stone. He staggered forward, turned the little lace-robed body gently, saw the stamp of death on that adored baby face, and drawing a pistol from his pocket, deliberately shot himself over the corpse of his son. Joyce, you do not wonder that after that tragedy I was all unconscious when in one coffin the bodies of that unhappy father and his murdered boy were carried out of the door. I did not know why my household went to wreck around me, when all our servants were scattered, when our home treasures went under the auctioneer's hammer. I came back at last to knowledge of events, and you were creeping around this floor, and I was sheltered by my mother's step-son in this home in my childhood. Joyce, to-day I see you standing where I stood before I was made a wife. Daughter, I cannot see you make my fatal mistake. Joyce, have mercy on me, and do not marry a man who is not strictly, totally temperate.

Joyce had been sobbing bitterly over her mother's story. She lifted her pale face. "O mother, Cuthbert is so different, so kind, so gentle, and I will make him temperate."

"So was your father gentle and kind; so I dreamed I should have power. But, child, to marry a man who drinks is not to save him—it is only to enlarge the possibility of evil for him. It is to give him power to wreck a man's life, to ruin the minds and bodies of his children; married, the constant presence of his family

may rasp a brain half conscious of its cruelties and its crimes, may goad into passion the pickings of remorse. The married man draws down two-fold the wrath of God—in that he sins as a husband and a father, and that in the multiplication of his duties and his possibilities his sins and short-comings are multiplied. Joyce, for Cuthbert's sake, for your own sake, for my sake—and I have endured so much—I conjure, marry no man who drinks!"

"Mother! mother!" wailed the poor girl, "why did you not tell me this before?"

"May Heaven forgive me!" cried the tortured mother. "I forgot the little girl was growing into the woman. We had been all and all to each other, and I did not see that the hour drew near when mother-love would cease to satisfy. Oh! I have been blind. To me you were still the little child who but yesterday laid by your dolls. My girl, my little girl, have I lost you through my ignorance?"

Mrs. Thoresby sank back into her chair and sobs shook her. Joyce knelt before her, and the two faces grew strangely like as something of the conquering strength the mother had learned in her tribulations spread over the soft features of the child.

"No, my mother," she said, "I will take for my own the lesson you learned for me at such a terrible price. You shall not re-live in me the horror of those bitter years. I shall not marry any man who takes one drop of liquor—no, not even Cuthbert." Her voice became low and plaintive over her lover's name.

"God bless you a thousand fold!" sighed her mother; "and if this self-renunciation is a martyrdom, my child, it may be the price of his rescue."

"And, mother, this is better known and ended now. If I tell Cuthbert this he may plead and argue until I will not know what to say. You must tell him mother. Tell him that I cannot marry anyone who touches one drop of such a poison. Tell him, mother, not to persuade me, for this is a resolution that must never be changed."

She rose from her mother's knee and turned away. Already the lilies crown was fading, and the roses thrown on the carpet were breathing out their fragrance in death.

But before the lilies of the fourth summer had bloomed and faded, the master of Verdeck was master of himself, saved by that mother's story and by that child's obedience. Broken the snares that in his early manhood had caught his wandering feet, he was an exemplar and deer of good among his tenantry, and often said that his wife had saved him from destruction by refusing to marry a man who drank.—*National Temperance Advocate*.

Valuable Facts For Home Use.

If your coal fire is low, throw on a tablespoonful of salt, and it will help it very much. A little ginger put into sausage meat improves the flavor. In icing cakes, dip the knife in cold water. In boiling for meat soup, use cold water to extract the juices. If the meat is wanted for itself alone, plunge it into boiling water at once. You can get a bottle or barrel of oil off any carpet or woolen stuff by applying buckwheat plentifully. Never put water to such a grease spot, or liquor of any kind. Broil steak without salting. Salt draws the juices in cooking; it is desirable to keep these, if possible. Cook over a hot fire, turning frequently, searing both sides. Place on a platter; salt and pepper to taste. Beef having a tendency to be tough can be made very palatable by stewing gently for two hours with salt and pepper, taking out about a pint of the liquor when half done, and letting the rest boil into the meat. Brown the meat

in a pot. After taking up, make a gravy of the pint of liquor saved. A small piece of charcoal in the pot with boiling cabbage removes the smell. Clean oilcloths with milk and water; a brush and soap will ruin them. Tumblers that have had milk in them should never be put in hot water. A spoonful of stewed tomatoes in the gravy of either roasted or fried meats is an improvement. The skin of a boiled egg is the most efficacious remedy that can be applied to a boil. Peel it carefully, wet and apply to the part affected. It will draw out the matter, and relieve the soreness in a few hours.—*Springfield Republican*.

A Grecian Legend.

When Bacchus was a boy, he journeyed through Hellas to go to Naxia; and as the way was very long, he grew tired, and sat down upon a stone to rest. As he sat there, with his eyes upon the ground, he saw a little plant spring up between his feet, and was so much pleased with it that he determined to take it with him and plant it in Naxia. He took it up and carried it away with him; but, as the sun was very hot, he feared it might wither before he reached his destination. He found a bird's skeleton, into which he thrust it, and went on. But in his hand, the plant sprouted so fast that it started out of the bones above and below. This gave him fresh fear of its withering, and he cast about for a remedy. He found a lion's bone which was thicker than the bird's skeleton, and he stuck the skeleton with the plant in it into the bone of the lion. Ere long, however, the plant grew out of the lion's bone likewise. Then he found the bone of an ass, larger still than that of the lion; and so he put it into the ass's bone, and thus made his way to Naxia. When about to set the plant, he found that the roots had entwined themselves around the bird's skeleton and lion's bone and ass's bone, and as he could not take it out without damaging the roots, he planted it as it was, and it speedily grew, and bore, to his great joy, the most delicious grapes, from which he made the first wine, and gave it to men to drink. But behold a miracle! When men first drank of it, they sang like birds; after drinking more they became vigorous and gallant, like lions; but when they drank more still, they began to behave like asses.—*Æt.*

Mistakes Concerning Alcohol.

Alcohol, whether given in the form of beer, wine or whisky, has in every case, the same destructive tendency. I am well aware that some physicians claim a power for alcohol which it does not possess. They prescribe it as a restorative, and assert that in wasting diseases, it is useful in arresting or preventing waste of tissue; neither of which effects I am positive it possesses, and for these purposes it is futile to prescribe it; I am quite sure that in a state of health, there is not a single organ or tissue of the body that derives any benefit from its use; and quite as positive that it is a most destructive agent to every organ and tissue of the body either in a state of health or disease. Most mistaken ideas have long been entertained of the efficiency of alcohol in many diseases of the system, and its general effects upon the human body; but actual experiment have convinced several of the ablest and most profound thinkers in the medical profession, that it has always, and in every form, proved itself to be the most pernicious agent that was—mechanically or otherwise. Being therefore, satisfied that its use in a state of health is never necessary, and in a state of disease it is most injurious; I have for years past abolished its use in the asylum.—*Dr. Dickson*.

—Ignorance hinders and limits.