

The Mountains.

BY MISS GERTHURD GREENWOOD.

Down in a peaceful valley,
Where a wandering river strays
Mid the rocks, the hills and the moun-
tains,
We are spending our schoolgirl days.
And wondrous is the picture
That opens to our eyes,
And stretches to the boundaries
Of the overarching skies.

Off in the dim, dim distance,
The chains of mountains stand,
And we call them the land of Benlah—
An unseen, mysterious land.
We know not what is beyond them,
And pictured to fancy's eye
A fairy land of promise,
Under a cloudless sky.

When the weary tasks are ended,
And the long day draws to a close,
How oft to our tired spirits
Have the mountains brought repose!
How calm they look in the distance,
How peacefully they lie,
Sloping down to the river,
Pointing up to the sky!

The beautiful, beautiful mountains!
They are held in the hand of God,
And shall speak when our many voices
Are hidden beneath the sod.
Our lessons will soon be ended,
And our parting hour will come,
When we bid farewell as schoolgirls
To our beautiful mountain home.

But above the mountains' summits,
Beyond the glorious sky,
Some time we shall come to a country
In the light of God most high.
We shall leave behind the sorrows
And come with our passing years,
And the hand that guided our earthly
lives

Shall wipe away our tears.
We shall pass from these earthly man-
sions
To the realms of light above,
From the weakness of earthly affection,
To the fulness of Jesus' love.
And the feet so oft grown weary,
That the earthly mountains trod,
Shall never grow weary or falter
On the eternal hills of God.

The Old Well.

Under the shady apple trees,
Looking up to the sun and the breeze,
Walled about with its mossy bands,
The ancient well of the homestead stands.

Its time-worn curb in the grass sunk deep,
High in the air its tall well-sweep,
Where the sailing swallows come and go,
Or sun themselves in a slanting row.
Feather ferns wave over its edges,
Lichens cling to the stony ledges,
And all the stars of the evening sky
In its silent darkness seem to lie.

Wayfaring men with weary feet
Stop to drink of its waters sweet—
To watch the bucket with crystal drip
Bring up its comfort for eye and lip.

And the laborers come when the sun is
high,
With their dinner pails, from the fields
near by.

And resting there, will sometimes tell
Of Michael Griswold, who dug the well.

He did not know that the well's smooth
face
Would bear the pictures of all his race;
That long after he had passed away,
His children's children would round it
play!

When I was a child I used to see
Pleasant faces looking with me;
Father and mother—kith and kin—
Shadowed its quiet depths within.

Now when I lean and look, ah me!
What is the picture that I see?
A weary face, some tresses gray,
And the tranquil heavens—far away.

—M. H. BURDITT, in *Harford Times*.

Sunshine and Shadow.

Only a bank of weeds, of simple weeds,
Of sweet wild thyme and yellow, scented broom,
Of tangled grass, and slender wind-blown reeds,
Of brown notched ferns and tall spiked fox-glove
bloom.

And yet a world of beauty garners there,
Low-twitting birds, soft accents and colors fair.

Only a narrow mound, a long, low mound,
Snow-covered, 'neath a wintry, leaden sky,
Unlit by moon or stars; and all around
Through bare, brown trees the night-winds moan
and sigh.

And yet a world of love lies buried there,
Passion and pain, bright hopes and dull despair.

Oh, golden bank, where sunbeams glint and play,
Bloom out in fragrance with a hundred flowers!
Oh, narrow mound, keep till the judgment day
The mournful secrets of these hearts of ours!
Then in God's light let joy and sorrow fade,
For near his brightness both alike are shade.

—C. L. PERKINS, in *Temple Bar*.

Paper-making was in a flourishing
condition in Bavaria as early as the year
1390.

Good-For-Nothing Kester.

Kester was one of a family of eight
children—stirring, busy little folks, as
one would expect the children of Ja-
cob and Anna Seiler to be. But Kes-
ter liked better to wander about the
fields and lie upon the grass and see
the clouds float by than to go to
school; so his brothers and sisters did
his work for him, and revenged them-
selves by calling him "good-for-noth-
ing."

When he was fourteen years old his
father died, and his mother, finding it
difficult to provide food for so many
mouths, bound him out to a farmer.

"My Kester is a wool-gathering-
loon," said she to him; "but he is
gentle and has a kind heart, and what
you can make him do will pay for his
keep."

Kis tried hard in his clumsy fashion
to please his new home, and he suc-
ceeded; for after a time the farmer's
wife, though she called him "good-for-
nothing," always sought him when she
wanted sympathy or advice. Whether
it was the color of a new gown that
was to be decided, or the kind of oint-
ment that was best for the stiffness of
the knees of the gray horse, she said,
"I'll ask Kester, and see what he
says." And the farmer, though he
also called him "good-for-nothing,"
found him so useful that when the
whole family emigrated to America
he persuaded Kester to accompany
them. Perhaps he would not have
succeeded had not the lad visited his
mother, and been told by her when he
asked her if he had better go to Cana-
da, "Oh, yes! go, my son, if he wants
you. You'll forever be good for noth-
ing here."

Ten years had rolled away since
Kester left his native land, and he
was a tall young man of twenty-five,
with dark gray eyes that had a far-
away look in them, and brown hair
that waved and stood out about his
face. The rough fishermen among
whom the farmer had settled said of
him, "He is looking for fish, but he
will never throw his line." They all
liked him, and made him useful, for
using any pair of willing hands that
offer their service without reward is
common all over the world. But if
you asked anyone of them his opinion
of Kester, he would have replied, "oh,
he's good for nothing; not worth a
herring."

Christmas, the season of rejoicing,
of love and gifts, was almost come
again, and sometimes when Kester
passed the shops, and saw the toys and
trinkets prepared for the festival, his
heart gave a throb and came into his
throat, he felt so lonely. One feels the
want of kindred and family-love keen-
ly at such times.

On the morning of the twenty-fourth
of December the air was full of falling
snow, and he could not see three yards
ahead, much less could he see the sun.
All day long the wind whirled and
roared and drove the snow before it
toward the west, and in the little vil-
lage that night scarcely a soul lay
down to sleep without a thought or a
prayer for those who go down to the
sea in ships.

"Boom! Boom!"
The sound was muffled but there
was no mistaking it.

"Boom! Boom!"
Again it came from the sea, through
the storm; "A ship freighted with
fathers, mothers, and perhaps little
children is in distress," was what that
sound said to every one who heard it.

The coast at the point toward which
the wind blew fiercest presents sea-
ward a perpendicular wall of rocks, at
the base of which, communicating in
no way with the heights, is a wild
ledge, just above the reach of the full
tide. Early in the evening great fires
had been kindled on the most dan-
gerous points of the cliff, and now
about them gather not only fishermen
and wreckers, but shopkeepers from
the little town, and even women.
There was an agonized appeal in that
signal gun no one could withstand,

but the sharpest eye could not sight a
ship, even with a powerful glass, in
such a storm; and the watchers could
only keep up the fires, and make
guesses on the probable position of the
wreck.

"She must be directly off these
rocks," said one of the oldest skippers,
"nothing can save a soul on board."
"Unless some of them float to the
ledge below us," said another.

"To freeze to death," said a third.
He would be a bold man who would
attempt to help them while this storm
lasts."

At the dawn of day the wind abat-
ed a little, but the snow continued
falling, and it grew colder. Then a
new sound came to the ears of the
watchers—a wailing cry, seemingly
from the depths of the sea. Men
shouted, and again, out of the abyss
came the wailing cry. It was only
the ghost of a sound; but like the
boom of the signal gun it had a terri-
ble meaning.

"Some have gained the ledge!"
cried one.

"'Twas the wind!" cried another.
"Save them!" for the love of God
save them!" cried a withered old wo-
man. "I who have lost father, hus-
band and sons in the sea, beg of you
to save them!"

The men stood silent and looked
the question "Who will go?" into one
another's faces. Fishermen, wreckers,
men used to the dangers of the sea
hesitated.

"Let me go," said a voice, and a
tall figure stepped forward.

"You!" they cried in astonishment.

"But you are a landsman, Kester."
"One man can save life as well as
another," he said steadily. "Maybe
they are my countrymen who are
freezing and dying down there this
Christmas morning. Anyway they
are poor human souls. Let me go!"

"Hurrah! Hurrah for Kester!" they
cried, but their shouts were faint, their
hearts were full.

Then they set to work quickly and
skillfully as only such men can, to
prepare for the perilous task. When
all was ready, many of the women
cried, "God bless and keep you, Kes-
ter!" and tears stood in the eyes of
more than one tough old sailor.

The signal was given, and Kester
swung himself over the edge of the
cliff. Twelve wreckers held the ropes
and they handled them as carefully as
a mother holds her baby. The sweat
ran down their cheeks and froze in
beads upon their beards and clothing,
and they spoke in whispers. It is a
solemn thing to hold a man's life in
your hand.

At last the rope grew slack. Then
came three quick thrills along it, and
a faint cry, the sign agreed upon if
there were any survivors of the
wreck upon the ledge. Again the
signal came. How they cheered.
They knew if they did their work
well a life was saved.

Twenty persons, men and women,
and one piteous little dead body were
drawn up the rocks. The last, a half-
frozen man, said,

"Only our deliverer remains be-
low."

But the rope hung slack, and no an-
swer came to the anxious men, who
sent shout after shout into the now
still air.

"Let me go! Let me go!" they
cried, one after another, so eager were
all to save the man who had so gener-
ously given himself for others.

They reached the slippery ledge in
vain. No one was there. Bodies of
the dead cast ashore, but loving
watchers looked without avail, for
never from its embrace did the sea
yield Kester, who on that Christmas
morning gave life to twenty souls, and
died a hero's death, though he was
good-for-nothing.—ELIZABETH CUM-
MINGS, in *Golden Rule*.

—This is the time of year when the
college senior tells everybody how to
run the world.

Why no One Looked at the Bride.

I don't know as it is much of a sto-
ry, but the telling of it one hot May
afternoon brightened us all up won-
derfully.

"We were rather largely discussing a
wedding we had attended that morn-
ing, and were criticising, good-natur-
edly, the looks and appearance of the
bride, when Aunt Gratia, who had
been busy over her sewing, spoke up
and asked,

"Did you ever hear of a wedding
where no one looked at the bride?"

"Such a thing would not be likely
to happen unless it was at an asylum
for the blind, only patients admitted,"
said Mabel.

"It might have been the couple who
were married under the window in
stormy weather," said Vira.

"We never heard of such a thing.
Did you, Aunt Gratia? Was it a real
wedding, or is it a conundrum?"

"The wedding to which I refer,"
went on the old lady, "was in a church
and the seats were all filled, for it was
a general invitation. It was a real
floral wedding. Being the 17th of
June, there was no lack of material,
and as the Sunday school scholars
took the matter of decoration in hand,
there was plenty of helpers. The
huge old wooden ark of a country
meeting house was transformed into a
veritable bower of beauty. The girls
were all dressed in white gowns loop-
ed up with flowers, and the boys wore
roses in the button-holes of their
white vests. Every guest carried a
bouquet, even to the oldest grandfath-
er and grandmother of them all, and
pretty children scattered flowers in the
bride's pathway as she walked from
her childhood's home near by to the
church.

"There had never been such a dis-
play in that town before, and it wasn't
done for style at all, but because every
one loved the minister's daughter and
wanted to have a finger in the mar-
riage pie; but yet, after all this pa-
rade, no one looked at the bride."

Aunt Gratia smiled and went on
complacently with her sewing, while
we all broke in afresh—

"Did a sudden darkness cover all
the land?"

"Perhaps there was a prevailing
eye-distemper at the time."

"Did some fun-loving youngster
throw pepper in the eyes of the
guests?"

"O, I know! Something happened
at the very hour to prevent the cere-
mony being performed. How roman-
tic!"

"Wrong, all of you!" went on Aunt
Gratia. "It was as perfect a June
day as ever slipped graciously down
into the abyss of Time. Every one
was open-eyed with eager, breathless
expectancy. And the ceremony came
off according to the programme. I
knew, for I was there myself and
heard every word!"

"Oh! Aunt Gratia, you are too tan-
talizing. Do tell us all about it. We
give it up!"

So the dear old lady, having thread-
ed her needle, took up the story
again:

"When the bridal party were enter-
ing the church door, and the organ
was playing the wedding march, a
low, clear, childish voice piped up,
'Oh! do just look at that mouse, right
on the pulpit cushion!'"

"Everybody heard it; everybody
looked; and everybody felt it incum-
bent upon themselves, individually to
keep watch of the little intruder, for
they all knew that the silly little
bride was mortally afraid of a mouse,
and they imagined the consternation
should this pretty, bright-eyed nibbler
jump or fall upon her bare white
shoulders and arms as she stood there
almost exactly beneath him.

"The little creature behaved with
all possible decorum, however, in spite
of their forbodings, and after the holy
words had been spoken which made
the young couple one for life, the mu-

sic struck up and the mouse ran
back along the railing and into his
hole in the high platform."

"Oh, dear me! How funny; and
you saw it, Aunt Gratia?"

"No, I didn't see the mouse; I had
something more important to attend
to."

"Oh! Aunt Gratia, it was your
own wedding. Wasn't it, now?"

"Yes, my dears; and it was a lesson
in humility to me that I have always
remembered. For there, when I had
every reason to consider myself the
center of attraction, and was as self-
conscious as possible, I found that in
this most important event of my life
I was entirely eclipsed in the eyes of
all my friends by a tiny, long-tailed
mouse."—*Christian Intelligencer*.

Tales of the Telegraph.

When the news came of the revolu-
tion in Turkey and the despotism of
Abdul Aziz Queen Victoria, it is said,
lost no time in intervening in his be-
half by telegraphing to Constantino-
ple and expressing her hope that the
ex-Sultan would not be subject to any
violence or ill-treatment. "*Soignez le
bien*,"—Take good care of him—said
her Majesty; but the cruel telegraph
made her say "*Saignez le bien*,"—
Bleed him well: and how they bled
him, all the world knows. The story
is not impossible. In his last annual
report, the Postmaster General owns
that a poor woman, telegraphing to a
relative, "Mary is bad," had her mes-
sage rendered, "Mary is dead," and
that a pleasure party wishing to ad-
vise their friends at home of their
safety by the assurance that they had
"arrived all right," scandalized the
anxious ones with the announcement
"we have arrived all tight." But
many jokes are perpetrated by the
wire without receiving official recog-
nition. A lady living near London,
whose lord and master went up to
town every day, was not a little puz-
zled by a message from him telling
her he "would bring Sal on for din-
ner," nor was she quite easy in her
mind until ocularly convinced that his
only companion was a fine salmon. A
gentleman telegraphing to a book-sel-
ler at Cambridge to forward him a
copy of a book of prize poems contain-
ing Johnson's poem on Plato, was sur-
prised at receiving by the first post a
letter from the bookseller, saying he
could not find any such work; but
his surprise did not outlast the discov-
ery that by the time his message
reached Cambridge the title he had
given had become transformed into
"John Pomens on Plate Money."—
Chamber's Journal.

Morning in Japan.

"Good morning," is the first word
the stranger usually hears and learns
in polite Japan. In her bright book
Mrs. Carruthers happily suggests that
it is morning in Japan; morning after
a night of slumber twenty-five centu-
ries long; the morning of a new age
for Japan, the morning must either be
overcast by the lurid cloud of a God-
less civilization and a Christless cul-
ture, or the morning that will move
on to meridian glory and millennial
noon. And as we open the gates of
this bright morning land to our read-
ers, we feel like saying all around,
"Good morning." Let us awake to
these mighty opportunities. Truly,
"the night is far spent and the day is
at hand, let us cast off the works of
darkness and put on the armor of
light." "Surely the lord is in this
place, and we know it not." God is
moving with mighty and majestic
tread in our prophetic age, and we are
like the drowsy disciples amid the
transfiguration glory. Our eyes are
heavy with sleep. Let us awake.—
Selected.

—Many persons in our midst make
a virtue of necessity; then they hold
up their hands and thank God they
are not as other men are!