

Verses Grave and Gay in Tone

IN THE OLD PASTURE.

Old lilacs dying together, sweetening the purple air.
Wilding in wind and weather of half a hundred years;
A rose whose blooms have sadly forgotten they once were fair,
While a bird song gushing gladly is the only sound one hears.

The weed grows rank in the hollow—ah, many a bitter leaf!
The seasons follow and follow with idle suns and snows;
And the lonely place is haunted by shades of an ancient grief,
And something of sorrow is chanted on every breeze that blows.

Here on the stone slow sinking in tangles of eager grass,
Husband and wife, to my thinking, sat sending their dreams afar,
Or, folded close in the gloaming, it may be, lover and lass
Made them an end of roaming and kissed 'neath the evening star.

Here tremors of love and longing and the laughter close on tears,
Sweet hopes and strange ones thronging and the sacrament of birth,
Here children with one another played, guarded by tender fears,
To her baby sang the mother the sweetest songs of earth.

A door-stone long forsaken, a lilac thicket, a flower,
And the dewy dawns that waken in the blue and boundless dome
And the mighty stars dark wheeling with wide indifferent power,
And a trustful wanderer feeling the life and lapse of home.

—Harriet Prescott Spofford, in November Scribner.

A MOTHER-SONG.

Within the hushed throne-room of Life
Spent I shall lie, and still,
Whilst thou thy small, indignant breast,
O, Little Soul, shalt fill
With breath of strange mortality;
And send thy homeless cry
A-groping for thy mother's heart,
Where, spent and still, I lie.
Oh, if God, entering, should leave
That august Door ajar,
And let the wind that stirs His robe,
Chill-blowing from afar,
Puff out my spirit like a flame
That dieth in the night—
God shield thee with His hollowed hand,
O, Little, little Light!

—Charlotte Wilson.

HER LIFE FOR YOU.

She has lived her life for you, given you all her best,
Toiled with you and dreamt with you and sung you to your rest,
Done without and sacrificed
And waited time by time—
She has lived her life for you,
Tender and sublime.

Maybe in her hair and heart gray is creeping on,
She has lived her life for you since her love's first dawn,
Saved and skimmed to make ends meet,
Planned and dreamed away,
She has lived her life for you,
What have you to pay.

What have you to give her now. Have you thought of that?
Have you dreamed and planned it out as alone you sat,
Measured with an honest will
Heaping measures full
Of the things that make a life
Glad and beautiful?

She has lived her life for you down through all the years,
Patient, faithful, trusting, true in the smiles and tears,
Waited, wondered, sung and borne,
Yielded, suffered, bled—
She has lived her life for you
Since the day you wed.

—Baltimore Sun.

'SPACIALLY JIM.

I was mighty good lookin' when I was young,
Peert an' black eyed an' slim,
With fellers a-courtin' me Sunday nights,
'Spacially Jim.

The liveliest one of 'em all was he,
Chipper an' han'som' an' trim,
But I tossed up my head an' made fun o' the crowd,
'Spacially Jim.

I said I hadn't no 'ninion o' men
An' I wouldn't take stock in him!
But they kep' on a-comin' in spite o' my talk,
'Spacially Jim.

I got so tired o' havin' 'em roun',
'Spacially Jim,
I made up my mind I'd settle down
An' take up with him.

So we was married one Sunday in church,
'Twas crowded full to the brim,
'Twas the only way to get rid of 'em all,
'Spacially Jim.

—Bessie Morgan.

Stories at Which You Will Smile

"IT'S NOT everybody I'd put to sleep in this room," said the motherly old landlady to her lodger, who had come to that remote district on account of a serious nervous breakdown.

"This room is full of tender associations to me. My first husband died in that bed, with his head on that very pillow. My dear father passed away on that sofa under the window. He was a spiritualist and he vowed he would appear in this room again after death, though I've never seen anything of him yet. My poor nephew, William, fell dead with heart disease right where you are standing. He was studying to be a doctor and there are two whole skeletons and six abnormal livers preserved in spirits in that press yonder, while that bottom drawer is full of odd bones and skulls. He used to do a lot of vivisection up here when he was alive.

"Well, good night, and pleasant dreams."

LITTLE Willie had been very naughty. So much so, in fact, that after having reprimanded him several times his mother was at last forced to severely punish him.

When his father arrived home in the evening he at once perceived that Willie's eyes were suspiciously red.

"What's the matter, sonny?" he cried.

"Oh, nothing," responded Willie, unobtrusively.

"Come, don't be frightened," said the father in coaxing tones. "Tell me all about it; I want to know."

Willie remained silent for some time, then he suddenly burst out:

"Well, if you must know, I've had a thundering row with your wife."

THEY were joint-owners of an apartment house, and one day the junior partner sought his colleague in some trepidation.

"The janitor wants \$10 more a month or he'll leave. I hate to give up the money, but we can't spare him."

The senior partner disappeared and returned in a few moments.

"It's all right," said he. "I've satisfied him, and it didn't cost us anything."

"How's that?"

"The janitor is now the superintendent."

"Good work!" declared the junior partner. "But why didn't you make him superintendent in the first place?"

"Because," answered the senior member, "I knew he'd want a promotion eventually. Every man wants a promotion some time, and, to my mind a good man deserves one."

—Judge.

Returning a Favor.

"It's going to be war to the knife," declared the suburban man, who was feeding his chickens.

"What now?" asked the friend.

"Why, Blinks sent me a box of axle-grease and advised me to use it on my lawn mower."

"Well?"

"Well, I sent it back and told him to use it on his daughter's voice."

It Wasn't Old Age.

"How are you today?" said a Scottish landlord to one of his tenants on meeting him on the road. "Vera weel, sir, vera weel," answered John in his usual way, "gin it wisha for the rheumatism in my right leg."

"Ah well, John, be thankful, for there is no mistake you are getting old like the rest of us, and old age does not come alone." "Auld age, sir," replied John. "I won'er to hear ye. Auld age has naething to do wi't. Here's my ither leg jist as auld, an' it is quite soond and soople yet."

He Knew the Answer.

His name was Tommy, and he came home from school looking so down in the mouth that Mother asked him severely what was the matter!

Out of his little trousers pocket he fished a note from the teacher, which said, "Tommy has been a very naughty boy. Please have a serious talk with him."

"What did you do?" asked mother.

"Nothing," sobbed Tommy. "She asked a question, and I was the only one who could answer it."

"H'm," murmured Mother. "What was the question?"

"Who put the dead mouse in her desk drawer?" answered Tommy.

They Were Cheap.

An elderly lady from the country one day decided to adopt two children from the county orphan asylum. She walked several miles before reaching the car line. It was the first time she had been on a car. She stared wide-eyed at everything she saw, then her gaze stopped on a sign she read thus:

"The Ohio Traction Company—Children under twelve years of age three cents, or two for 5 cents."

"Well," she said, "that is the best bargain ever. Calling the conductor, she said: 'Young man, I'll take two of those children for five cents right now, a boy and a girl, please.'—National Monthly.

"Here, sir," said the antique dealer, displaying a huge sword to a clerical looking collector, "ever see anything more interesting than that? That's Balaam's sword."

"But, my good man, that cannot be," said the domineer. "Balaam never had a sword. He only wished for one."

"Quite right, sir," said the dealer. "This is the one he wished for!"

The teacher was hearing her class of small boys in mathematics.

"Edgar," she said, "if your father can do a piece of work in seven days, and your Uncle William can do it in nine days, how long would it take both of them to do it?"

"They would never get done," answered the boy, earnestly. "They would sit down and tell fish stories."

Mrs. Hoolihan—This paper says there do be sermons in stones. Pshaw! I'd 'zez think of that!

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Mr. O'Hoolihan—Oi dunno about the sermons, but many a good argument has coom out av a brick, Oi'm thinkin'.

Polly (to big sister's admirer)—Guess what father said about you last night.

Adolphus—Oh, I couldn't guess, weally.

Polly—I'll give you a peach if you can guess.

Adolphus (flustered)—Oh, Polly, I haven't an idea in the world.

Polly—Urr—you was listening.

The leaves will soon be turning yellow. The porch's charm will soon have died.

Ere long fair Gladys and her fellow Will whisper silly stuff inside.

A carload of hogs from Patros and a car of wool from Tonasket arrived in Wenatchee, Wash., over the new up-river branch of the Great Northern railroad. These are the first carload shipments from the upper country over the new railway.