TO SLEEP.

To sleep! to sleep! The long bright day is done,
And darkness rises from the fallen sun.
To sleep! to sleep!

Whate'er thy joys, they vanish with the day;
Whate'er thy griefs, in sleep they fade away.
To sleep! to sleep!

Sleep, mournful heart, and let the past be past!
Sleep, happy soul! all life will sleep at last.
To sleep! to sleep!

—Lord Tennyson in New York Truth.

THE GOLD NUGGET.

It was given to Effie to take care of. It was not a great prize, for it weighed only seven ounces, but it represented the only result of a strong man's toil for many weeks, and as nuggets go it was considered by no means a bad "find."

John Archer decided that the nugget would be safer in his little daughter's keeping than in his own. There were thieves and lawless men at this new gold rush, as at all new gold rushes, and they would know of his prize. They would probably try to secure it.

They would search all sorts of cunning hiding places in the neighborhood of his tent; they might even creep into the hut at night, to feel under his pillow and among his rough bedding for the yellow earth that folk hated each other for. If he caught the thief he would shoot him, but better not to run the risk of losing his treasure, and so he gave it to Effie to put in her old workbox. The thieves of the T—— diggings would be too cunning to think of examining such an improbable hiding place.

"You must take great care of it, darling," said John Archer. "It is for your mother." And Effie stowed the little nugget away in a corner of the old work box—which had been her mother's—under the cotton and the socks she was darning for her father. She felt duly weighted with the responsibility. She knew that this yellow earth was of great value, for her father, leaving her mother, who was very delicate, with some friends in Brisbane, had come a long, weary way to find it, and she had seen his sorrow, his despair, as day after day he had eagerly worked with pick and spade without finding what he sought.

Having hidden the little nugget away, Effie came out of the hut to look round and see if any one was near who might have seen her. No. No one was near who might have seen her—only Billy the black—King Billy, the aboriginal monarch, who loved rum and tobacco, and who was chopping firewood for her. King Billy evidently had not seen, for he was wielding the ax with quite exceptional vigor; and if Billy had seen it wouldn't have mattered very much, for Effie trusted him.

The little girl's reason for trusting King Billy, the black, was somewhat strange, and is worthy of being recorded. She trusted him because she had been kind to him.

But Effie was only twelve.

As the child stood in the broad light, her tumbled hay hued hair kissed and illumined by the bold rays of the sun, and her round, trustful blue eyes shaded from the glare by two little brown hands, watching King Billy at his work, a flock of laughing jackasses alighted in a neighboring gum tree, and set up a demoniac cachination. What made the ill omened birds so madly merry? What was the joke? Effie's trust? Billy's gratitude? They failed to explain, but their amusement was huge and sardonic.

"Drive them away, Billy," cried Effie, and the obedient king dropped his ax and threw a faggot of wood at the tree, which stopped the laughter and dispersed the merry makers.

"Billy tired now," said the black grinning; "too much work—plenty wood," and he pointed to the result of his labor.

"Yes, that will be enough, thank you. You're a good boy. I'll give you some tobacco."

"Billy's thirsty."

"Then you shall have some tea."

"No tea. Rum."

"No, Billy. Rum isn't good for you."

"Good for misses; good for Billy."

"No, it's not good for misses," said Effie emphatically; "it makes them fight and say wicked things."

"Makes black feller feel good," declared Billy, rolling his dusky eyes.

This last argument was effective. Effie went into her hut—her father had returned to his work—and poured a little spirits from John Archer's flask into a "pannikin." Billy drank the spirits with rolling eyes, smacked his lips, and then lay down in the shadow of the hut to sleep.

The long afternoon passed very slowly for Effie. Her few trifling duties as housekeeper were soon done. The little hut was tidied and the simple evening meal prepared, and some hours must pass before her father returned. How could she pass the time? She had only two books—a Bible and a volume of stories for little girls, which she had won as a prize at school in Brisbane. But she was too young to appreciate the first, especially as the type being very small it was difficult reading, and she had grown beyond appreciating the stories for little girls, having known them by heart three years before. She would like to have slept.

Everything around her suggested and invited the siesta—the steady heat; the brightness of the light without the hut; the distant murmur of miners' voices, which came from beyond yonder belt of wattle gums; the monotonous hum of the locusts in the forest; the occasional fretful cry of a strange bird, and the regular snores of the fallen king, who slumbered in the shade of the hut. Even the buzz of the annoying flies assisted the general effect and brought drowsiness.

To remain still for a few minutes would have meant inevitably falling asleep. Effie felt this, and remembered the little gold nugget. If she slept some thief might come and take it. And so she put on her hat, and, forsaking the seductive cool and shade of the hut, went out into the brightness and heat.

Archer's hut stood on the edge of the valley, over against the foot of the low, heavily timbered hills. About fifty yards distant from it, hidden among the trees, was a high moss grown rock, at the base of which Effie had discovered the smallest and sweetest of natural springs. Thither the child ran—looking back often to see that no one approached the hut in her absence—to bathe her face. In a few minutes she returned, drying her face in her apron and shaking her wet hair in the sun. No one had come; but King Billy was now awake, and was slouching lazily off toward the bush.

Effie laughed at the new idea—his great head bent forward, and his lean, narrow shoulders bowed. She laughed to think of his laziness, and that he should look so tired after such a very little wood chopping.

She was still laughing at King Billy as she opened the old workbox to take another peep at the yellow treasure, and to make quite sure that the heat hadn't melted it away. And it was quite slowly that the laugh died from the pretty eyes and mouth—quite slowly, because of the moments it took to realize and accept a misfortune so terrible—when she lifted the coarse socks and looked, and saw no little gold nugget—saw nothing! Then horror and great fear grew in the blue eyes, and pale agony crept over the childish face and made it old, and the poor little heart seemed to stop beating.

Effie said nothing and made no cry, but she closed her eyes tightly for a moment, and looked in the box again. No, it was no illusion; the little nugget was not there—the first gold her father had found, which had been intrusted to her care, which was to have been taken to her mother—it was gone. She put down the box quite quietly and walked out into the day, but the sun was shining very strangely and mistily now, and the blue sky had grown black, and the trees seemed to move weirdly, and the breeze had ceased breathing from fear, but the strange bird was somewhere near repeating brazenly: "What will father say? What will father say?"

But as the child stood there, despairing, her sight grew clearer, and she saw a black figure among the trees and she was conscious of a pair of dusky eyes watching her through the leaves. Then only she remembered, and she knew who had done this cruel thing. King Billy! And she had been kind to him. Effie suddenly burst into passionate sobbing. The black figure still hovered among the trees, often changing its position, and the dusky eyes still peered through the leaves, and the laughing jackasses flew down in the old tree again, and laughed more madly than before—laughed at Effie's trust—at Billy's gratitude!

* * * * * *

It was 10 o'clock, and darkness and quiet reigned in John Archer's hut. Over among the tents behind the wattle gums a few gamblers and heavy drinkers were still awake, and their voices, raised in anger or ribald merriment, might occasionally have been faintly heard from the hut. But Archer, who had sown his wild oats, was a true worker; and he had his little daughter, for whose sake he had built the hut away from the noisy camp.

Archer had come home late and weary, as usual, had eaten his supper and gone to rest without, to Effie's intense relief, speaking of the little gold nugget. The child was afraid to speak of the loss, and she was not without vague hopes that a beneficent providence would restore the nugget during the darkness and save her from this great trouble.

For this she prayed very earnestly before she lay down to sleep. Or did she sleep at all that night? She never quite knew. But she thinks that it was then that she first experienced that terrible, purgatorial condition which is neither wakefulness nor sleep, when the body and mind are weary enough to bring the profound sleep which they require, but which the brain is too overladen and too cruelly active to allow; when dreams seem realities and realities dreams. It must have been a dream when she saw something small and yellow float through the tiny window on the ghostly silver moonbeams. And yet, when, having closed her eyes, she opened them again, it was still there hovering about in the darkness—less bright now, and with a pale yellow halo. But it faded quite away; it was a cruel, mocking dream.

Then was it a dream when the old curtain which divided her corner of the hut from her father's moved near the ground—bulged slightly toward her? It would be curious to see, and she lay still. From under the curtain seemed to come a thin arm, and slowly, cautiously, after the arm, a head with a great shock of hair. And the moonbeams just touched a face. I think they kissed it, though it was black, for they found in a black hand the little yellow object which had floated in the first dream.

It was all so real, so beautiful, that the child lay still, scarce daring to breathe lest the vision should melt away, and when in her dream came the voice of her father, with the words, "Speak or I'll fire!" her lips refused to open.

But it was no dream when the shot came, and the Black King rolled over on the earth, dead, with the little gold nugget he had come to restore pressed in the death agony against his heart, where, too, was a little gold.

And the laughing birds in the old tree, startled from their sleep by the shot, laughed once more, wildly and madly, at Billy's honesty; but there was bitterness in their merriment, for their master, the devil, had been cheated of the soul of a Black King.—C. Haddon Chambers in Oak Bough and Wattle Blossom.

A Queer Superstition.

"My father believes in divining rods," said one urchin solemnly to another.

"Not honest?"

"Yep. Every time he wants me to 'fess up he takes the rod to me. I guess that must be a divining rod."—St. Joseph News.

Papa's Old Coats.

"My father gave me five this morning," said Jimpsey.

"I wish mine would give me some," said Georgie, who wears trousers made from the paternal sleeves. "All I get is smacks."—Harper's Bazar.

Baby's Appetite.

When we consider the thousand and one things that baby partakes of during the first two or three years of its existence we are inclined to think that it outdistances a cat in the number of lives it possesses. Fortunately for baby it samples everything upon which it can lay its hands in delightful innocence. Probably if the little one could speak it would tell you that it enjoyed the dust out of the coal scuttle equally as well as the preserves out of the jam pot. It will simply eat anything it can get its hands to. Old paper, rags, socks, gloves are all in turn tasted by baby, and the probability is, as some one [illegible], that if its mouth were big enough it would prefer to swallow the piano or the umbrella stand in the hall rather than anything else.—London Tit-Bits.

HAVING EYES HE SAW NOT.

But He Was Clever at Fraud and He Profited by His Blindness.

A young man blind in one eye and partially so in the other, walked into an office at 1 Broadway, and approaching the first desk said that he had come to thank the man there for what he had given to him some months before.

"You may not remember it, but I was asking money with which to buy a book of raised print such as the blind read," he said, "and you gave me fifty cents. Other gentlemen in the building gave me more, and I got the book. I learned to read, and now my one eye is better and I am at work. I am living in Baltimore, where I am making ten dollars a week working on wicker baskets. I want to thank you for your kindness."

The man behind the desk did not recall the circumstance, but accepted the thanks and said that he was glad to learn of the unfortunate's improved circumstances. He made a mental note that the man's gratitude was a commendable thing—something to be admired.

"Now I want to do something to show you that I appreciate your kindness," the young man continued. "I am going to send a little fancy colored waste basket to each of the gentlemen who helped me. I have them all made. I am going to put a silk lining into each, and if you will buy sixty cents' worth of silk and send to my address in Baltimore the basket will be here within a week."

The man behind the desk said he would send the silk along.

"Or," went on the grateful young man, "if you allow me to buy the silk, I can get enough to finish the basket for fifty cents, buying a large quantity, and so make ten cents myself. I would buy the silk for the linings myself but I can't afford to do it."

The man behind the desk gave the other sixty cents for the lining. The grateful young man said that it was a pleasure to repay those who had aided him, and promised that the fancy basket would be sent in three or four days.

Before leaving the grateful one showed the business cards of a half dozen men who were each soon to receive a token of his remembrance. Each had given sixty cents for silk for lining, he said.

But the baskets have not yet come, and the men who were to receive them believe that they are the victims of a confidence game, and that the half blind, grateful young man is a rank fraud. But he was certainly a clever fellow.—New York Times.

Great Guns.

The forging of the immense guns is a most interesting process. The rifled guns of the present are made by reenforcing the tube with rings and repeated layers of steel called jackets, which are fitted one over the other over the original tube or barrel of the gun. The jackets or hoops must fit as closely to the guns as if forming an integral part of its composition. The only way to get them on is, of course, by heating, and thus enlarging them. When they cool they fit snugly. It is evident that the exact size of the jacket and ring when heated so that it can be put in its place must be a matter of the nicest mathematical calculation.

The coarse powder now used makes such havoc with the rifling of the largest guns that 100 charges are about all that can be expected from them. The jackets and rings can then be removed and fitted to another tube.

The various parts of a gun are sent to Washington, to a department of the arsenal called the assembling room, where the tube is rifled and the gun is finally completed. A steel gun of the largest caliber costs about $100,000. The ordnance of our modern navy is therefore one of the most costly items.—Harper's Weekly.

Old American Families.

In Peru there are families claiming descent from the Incas whom Pizarro murdered and despoiled, and in Mexico both the name and the image of the gentle Montezuma are preserved, with some estates conceded to the family of the Mexican emperor by the Spaniards. Here are two families with living descendants who trace their origin to an antiquity which reduces that of the aristocratic houses of Europe to insignificance.—Chicago Times.

Indian names are not alone in "meaning something." Animals' surnames are really not uncommon among Americans, though they are inherited and not freshly assumed. To say nothing of such names as Fox, Wolf, Hogg and others derived directly from animals, we have names whose original significance is quite lost, as, for instance, Owen, a lamb; Griffith, a dragon; Arthur, a bear, and Everett and Evarts, both derived from a Celtic word meaning swine.

The little king of Spain very much dislikes being seated upon the throne at state ceremonials. He tries to climb down, and on one occasion declared with tears that he would rather sit on his mother's lap.

The greatest care is necessary in washing between the toes where the exhalations of the pores are confined. These if not properly washed away are likely to engender all varieties of unwholesome conditions.

A fresh egg will sink in water because of the water in it. It will lie on its side also rather than endwise. Should the yolk be plainly distinguishable upon being held up to a strong light the egg is good.

Bell's Messenger, London, states that [illegible] Jersey cattle are, as a rule, thin skinned.

For Noble Features.

Student—Did Stanley discover the African Pygmies, do you suppose?

Professor di Gammo—Yes; he and Herodotus.—Puck.

Now Is the Time

To purify your blood and fortify your system against the debilitating effects of spring weather. At no other season is the bitter taste in the mouth more prevalent, the breath so offensive, the drowsy dizziness so frequent, or that extreme tired feeling so prevalent. Hood's Sarsaparilla is just the medicine to purify the blood, cure sick headache, biliousness and overcome that tired feeling.

"I have been troubled a good deal with headache, had no appetite, no strength, and felt as tough as any one could, and be about my work. Since taking Hood's Sarsaparilla I have not had the headache, my food has relished, and seemed to do me good, and I have found myself growing stronger every day." M. A. Stevens, 19 Grand Avenue, Grand Rapids, Mich.

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