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ON DARK.

Abroad and afloat on the sea in a crazy frail dismal shallop,
With strong sea breath and salt with wasting or winds whence there is no stop,
As a shadow of dusk from the edge of the darkness on waters that thunder
Abroad and afloat.

At the edge is a sunless hollow and hoary for a time man's bed,
Propped open with rock and agape on the sky and sea thereunder,
But rested and refreshed as well from the wrath of them slept the dead.

Have night not a man drink regions of rest, or delight above wonder,
Belonging a sort discomfited, the days and nights that fed,
With a sense of the sound of the tempest around and above him not under,
Abroad and afloat.

—A. C. Swinburne.

ON THE BRIDGE.

When I tell you, my only friend, to whom I so rarely write and whom I more rarely see, that my lonely life has not been without love for woman, you will perhaps laugh or doubt.

"What!" you will say, "that gaunt old specter in his attic with his books, his tobacco and his three dower pots he would not know that there is such a word as love dill he not encounter it now and then in his reading."

True, I have developed my days between the books in a rich man's counting room and those in my attic. Yet, again, I have never been more than merely passable to look at, even in my best days.

Yet I have loved a woman.

During the five years when my elder brother lay in the hospital across the river, where he died, it was my custom to visit him every Sunday. I enjoyed the afternoon walk to the suburbs, where the air has more of nature in it, especially if that portion of the walk which led upon the bridge. Mere life than was usual upon the bridge moved there on Sunday. Then the cars were crowded with people seeking the parks. Many crossed on foot, stopping to look idly down at the dark and sluggish water.

One afternoon, as I stood thus leaning over the parapet, the sound of a woman's gentle laugh caused me to turn and cordially inquire its source. The woman and a man were approaching. At the side of the woman walked soberly a handsome dog—a collie. There was that in their appearance and manner which plainly told me that here were husband and wife, of the middle class, intelligent but poor, out for a stroll. That they were quite devoted to each other was easily discernible.

The man looked about thirty years of age, was tall, slender and with neither strong nor handsome, but amiable face. He was doubtless a clerk fit to be something better.

The woman was perhaps twenty-four. She was not quite beautiful, yet she was more than pretty. She was of good size and figure, and the short plush coat that she wore, and the manner in which she kept her hands thrust in the pockets thereof, gave to her a dauntless air which the quiet and affectionate expression of her face softened.

She was a brunette, her eyes being large and distinctly dark brown, her face having that peculiar complexion which is most quickly affected by any change in health.

The color of her cheeks, the dark rim under her eyes, and other indefinable signs indicated some radical ailment. In the quick glance that I had of that pair, while the woman was smiling, a feeling of pity came over me. I have never detected the exact cause of that emotion. Perhaps in the woman's face I read the trace of past bodily and mental suffering; perhaps a subtle mark that death had already set there.

Neither the woman nor her husband noticed me as they passed. The dog regarded me cautiously with the corner of his eye. I probably would never have thought of the three again had I not seen them upon the bridge, under exactly the same circumstances, on the next Sunday.

So these young and then happy people walked here every Sunday, I thought. This, perhaps, was an event looked forward to throughout the week. The husband, doubtless, was kept a prisoner and slave at his desk from Monday morning until Saturday night, with respite only for eating and sleeping. Such cases are common, even with people who can think and who have some taste for beauty, and who are not devoid of love for the beautiful.

The sight of happiness which exists despite the cruelty of fate and man, and which is temporarily unconscious of its own liability to interruption and extinction, invariably fills me with sadness. And the sadness which arose at the contemplation of these two beings beat in me a strange sympathy for and interest in them.

On Sundays thereafter I would generally to the bridge and wait until they passed, for it proved that this was their habitual Sunday walk. Sometimes they would pause and join those who gazed down at the black river. I would, now and again, remark my presence toward the hospital while they thus stood, and I would look back from a distance. The bridge would then appear to me an abrupt scene, rising to the dense city, and their two figures would stand out clearly against the background.

It became a matter of care to me to observe each Sunday whether the health of either had varied during the previous week. The husband, always pale and slight, showed little change, and that infrequently. But the fluctuations of the woman, as indicated by complexion, gait, expression and otherwise, were notorious and pronounced. Often she walked brighter and more robust than on the preceding Sunday. Her face would be then rounded out, and the dark crescents beneath her eyes would be less marked. Then I found myself elated.

But on the next Sunday the cheeks had receded slightly, the healthy luster of the eyes had given way to an ominous glow; the morning of death had returned. Then my heart would sink, and, sighing, I would murmur inaudibly:

"This is one of the bad Sundays."

There came a time when every Sunday was a bad one.

What made me love this woman? Simply the unmistakable complaisance and constancy of her devotion to her husband—the absorption of the woman in the wife. Had the strange ways of chance ever made known to her my feeling, and had she conceived from that devotion even to render me back love for love, then my own adoration for her would surely have departed.

Yes, I loved her—I, to fill one's life with thoughts of a woman, if to fancy to see her face by day and night, if to have the will to die for her or to bear pain for her—if these and many more things mean love.

My utmost joy was to see her mother with her husband, and the darkest woe of my life was to anticipate the termination of their happiness.

So the months passed. One afternoon I waited until almost dusk, yet the couple did not appear.

For seven Sundays in succession I did not meet them upon their wonted walk.

On the eighth Sunday I saw the dog. Ere, then the man. The latter was looking over the railing. The woman was not with him. Apprehensively I sought with my eyes his face. Much grief and loneliness were depicted there.

Was he or I the greater mourner? I wonder.

I suppose ten years passed after that day ere I again beheld the widower—whose name I do not and probably never shall know—upon the bridge. The dog was not with him this time. It was a fine, sunny afternoon in May. Grief was no longer in his face. By his side was a very pretty, animated, rosy little woman whom I had never seen before. They walked close to each other, and she looked with the utmost tenderness into his face. She evidently was not yet entirely accustomed to the wedding ring which I observed upon her finger.

I think that tears came into my eyes at this sight. Those great brown eyes, the plush sack, the lovely face that had borne the impress of sorrow and so speedily had felt death—these might never have existed so soon had they been forgotten by the one being in the world for whom that face had worn the aspect of a perfect love.

Yet one upon whom those eyes never rested has remembered. And exactly the memory of her is mine to wot, since he whom right it was to cherish it, had allowed himself to be divorced from it in so brief a time.

The memory of her is with me always, like my soul, beautifies my life, makes green and radiant this existence which all who know me think solid, times empty, repellent.

You will not laugh then, my friend, when I tell you that love is not to me a thing unknown.

* * * * * *

So runs a part of the last letter to my father from the old bookkeeper ever wrote.—H. S. in Philadelphia Press.

Physical Development as a Guide.

A paper on the scientific measurement of children was read before the Brandon (England) Naturalists' society. The author, Rev. H. A. Soames, said he found such measurements as he described, taken every term, a good guide as to whether his pupils could be pressed with work or not. If the increase is regular and the weight fair, according to the height, he does not fear to press them; but if, on the other hand, the weight is low, or if the height increases and not the weight, or if the increase in height is too rapid, he thinks it a very fair, excuse for lateness, and takes great care that too much work is not exported from them.

What a "Filled" Case Is.

To save the gold and throughout the case of watches, Joseph Fahy, a clever lad, born in French Switzerland nearly half a century ago, rolled out two plates of gold and putting a plate of composition metal between made a "filled case." Since then he has brought the process to perfection, and his filled cases are now known to every jeweler on earth. They are not plated cases. They would, without the composition metal filling, be a double case thicker than heavy writing paper.—New York Truth.

All Curves to Be Made Straight.

Some day railroads will have as them no dangerous and deadly curves. Over half the disastrous collisions and a large percentage of run-offs are caused by curves. Of course, it will sometimes be found difficult to straighten out a curve and keep a legitimate grade; but if the laws required all railroads to go straight in all cuts and other dangerous places some plan would be devised by which this could be done.—Dallas (Tex.) News.

Working for Their Board.

Two famous philosophers—Menedemus and Asclepiades—when pursuing their studies at Athens, were enabled to pay for their support and schooling by acting as nullers after school hours, receiving the munificent sum of thirty-six cents (two drachmas) per night. Happily their fellow students, upon hearing this, raised a subscription sufficient to defray the expenses of these deserving young men.—Detroit Free Press.

Poultry Lore.

Grain is too high to feed to colts.

Two meals a day are sufficient, except for the late broods.

Whole grain is better than wet mesh for warm weather.

Fresh water daily and clean drinking vessels will do much toward preventing disease.

Put a brood or two of late hatched chicks in the asparagus patch to catch beetles and slugs.

Open sheds should take the place of coops now. They afford shelter by night and shade by day and ventilation at all times.

The high price of grain will be a real benefit if it leads poultry keepers to utilize more perfectly the products of the garden and dairy as poultry food.

Yarded fowls should have a daily run of an hour or two. They can do little damage if allowed the freedom of the lawn or garden for an hour in the evening.

While it is not well to count chickens before they are hatched, it is prudent to count them frequently afterward. If a brood grows less by degrees, or all at once, investigate until you know the reason why.—Farm Journal.

THE ROT IN LATE POTATOES.

Remedies Mistaken and Other Copper Compounds as Preventives.

The value of the potato crop is greatly augmented if the rot is kept away and not allowed to infect the field; but during most summers this is not so easily done. As a rule, however, the potato rot does not do its greatest damage until autumnal, and even late in the fall. The destroying season begins in many sections during the sultry weather at August, and continues from that time on through September. Everything considered, then, it is always well to plant early and harvest the crop before the height of the potato rot season is upon us. On the other hand, many potato growers plant late to escape the potato rot, and also for other reasons. Late planting is beneficial, but during a wet season late planting is fatal. The only true safeguard during very wet seasons is to get the seed in early and the harvesting over as soon as possible.

In addition to early planting preventive measures may be taken to prevent the rot, and during the middle of the summer these measures should be adopted.

A farmer writing to The American Cultivator suggests that the Bordeaux mixture and other compounds of copper are all more or less effective. A good way is to mix the compound with water at Lemon, purple, and blue green, for vines with it several times during the hot months. This will prevent the fall and kill the potato beetles at the same time. A few such sprayings early enough in the season will save the foliage in an ordinary year and give a much better yield of tubers.

It is advised, even when the present indications are that potatoes will be comparatively free from the rot, that the mixture should be used, for a sudden change in the weather in the middle of summer might make the whole crop nearly worthless. The fungus feed at the leaves and afterward the joint stems and tubers. The foliage should therefore be kept in good condition until the vine ceases growing, and after that the fungicide should be used plentifully. Low, damp places are more favorable to the growth of the potato than high, dry places, and in planting late crops this matter should be taken into consideration. The higher and drier the ground the less likely are the vines to be attacked by the rot.

Keeping Over Hay and Grain.

I know some farmers who always seem to also at a loss when a considerable portion of hay and grain from one season to another. I admit that this may occasionally prove beneficial, as, in the case of grain, it has this part, but as a general rule in this country, where with good farming, we may quite confidently expect crops that will not fall greatly below the average, it will usually be found more profitable to sell the surplus every year than to hold it for a higher price. Then, in these days of railroads, a shortage in a particular crop extending over an entire state is no criterion for a farmer. Few farmers realize fully the amount of loss there is in keeping over grain.

This is especially true of corn, where, from waste by vermin and loss by surcharge, sales made soon after harvest, even at prices that seem at the time like a sacrifice, are often more profitable than those made the next season of "cold corn" at a large advance. The shrinkage in hay as hauled in from the field and weighed out from time to time the next spring is enormous, so that, taking one year with another, the season's farmer sells fresh hay for more than he can realize on that he has carried over. Of course, it will sometimes be found difficult to straighten out a curve and keep a legitimate grade; but if the laws required all railroads to go straight in all cuts and other dangerous places some plan would be devised by which this could be done.—Dallas (Tex.) News.

The Use of Honey Boards.

1. Will bees store as much honey in sections, over a honey board made of bottoms of an inch thick, with four openings, each one inch wide, connecting of frames, as if placed over the frames with not a honey board? If bees, how much? 2. Will honey boards prevent the dropping of pollen in sections? where queens remain in select and answers in The American Bee Journal.

J. E. Pond said: 1. This is one of those theoretical questions to which an answer can only be guessed at. I think, however, they will gather less, but how much less I cannot even guess. 2. Not in my apiary.

Mrs. L. Harrison replied: 1. I do not know. 2. I have put on sections without a honey board and again used a break joint one, and in neither case have I been troubled with pollen in them. I should infer that the season and locality had more to do with it than the honey boards.

The editor said: 1. The difference would be very little, if any. 2. Only partially; but the season and conditions have more to do with it than the honey boards.

Log Stalkers.

At this season of the year, and in fact until the young chicks are fully developed, they are liable to show signs of a disease called leg weakness. The Orpins are more subject to it than the smaller varieties, as they grow much faster, especially if well fed. It usually in time they can be easily cured by giving them animal food once a day, and dipping their legs for a few months once a day in cold water; also give them every day three or four grains of potassic nitrate of iron dissolved in water and mixed with their meal. While the shows will cure in most cases, it is easy to prevent the disease getting a hold on the young chicks by giving them a little meat and giving them from time to time a little granulated iron mixed in their food. It helps to form bone and to strengthen them.

It is also a good plan to give young chicks a sprinkled of some kind, such the Douglass mixture, or, still better, mix a little of the American Armadgong feed in their meal. It strengthens them and is especially good for the late hatch, as it makes the feathers grow very rapidly. It is also necessary, when the young chicks do not have a big range, to provide them with a little chopped meat and green food from day to day.—American Stockman.

A notch will help all trees, roses and shrubs as well as pots and vegetables, very Popular Gardening. Materials for a good grass less by degrees, or all at once, investigate until you know the reason why.—Farm Journal.

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