

Selected Poetry.

The Death of Flowers.

BY WILLIAM CULLEN BRYAN.

The melancholy days are come,
The saddest of the year,
Of wailing winds and naked woods,
And meadows brown and sear.
Heap'd in the hollows of the grove,
The wither'd leaves lie dead.
They rustle to the eddying gust,
And to the rabbits' tread.
The robin and the wren are flown,
And from the shrubs the jay,
And from the wood-top calls the crow,
Through all the gloomy day.
Where are the flowers, the fair young flowers,
That lately sprang and stood
In brighter light and softer airs,
A beautiful sighted?
Alas! they all are in their graves;
The gentle race of flowers,
Are lying in their lowly beds,
With the fair and good of ours.
The rain is falling where they lie,
But the cold November rain
Calls not, from out the gloomy earth,
The lovely ones again.
The wind-flower and the violet,
They perish'd long ago,
And the briar-rose and the arches died,
Amid the summer glow;
But on the hill the golden-rod,
And the aster in the wood,
And the yellow sun-flower by the brook,
In autumn beauty stood,
Till fell the frost from the clear, cold heaven,
As falls the plague on men,
And the brightness of their smile was gone,
From upland, glade, and glen.
And now, when comes the calm, mild day,
As still such days will come,
To call the squirrel and the bee
From out their winter home;
When the sound of dropping nuts is heard,
Though all the trees are still,
And twinkle in the smoky light
The waters of the rill,
The south wind scurries for the flowers
Whose fragrance late he bore,
And sighs to find them in the wood
And by the streams no more.
And then I think of one who in
Her youthful beauty died,
The fair, meek blossom that grew up
And faded by his side;
In the cold, moist earth we laid her,
When the forest cast the leaf,
And we wept that one so lovely
Should have a life so brief;
Yet not unmet it was that one,
Like that young friend of ours,
So gentle, and so beautiful,
Should perish with the flowers.

Joys and Sorrows.

"Still where rosy pleasure leads
See a kindred grief pursue—
Behind the steps that misery treads
Approaching comforts view."
Life is a continued succession of joys
and sorrows, and journeying through a diversified land, successively meets with wearisome and delightful scenery; so we, travellers on life's high way, are the recipients now of pleasurable sensations, now of those that cause us lassitude and disquiet! Never should the youthful heart impose upon itself, with the treacherous hope of passing a life untroubled by incidental storms!
"Into each life, some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary."
Nor should one, whose lot perchance for a time has seemed unpropitious, suffer himself to become the sport of fears and apprehensions that his life is to be made up wholly of sorrow. "The web of our life is of a mingled yarn," joy and grief alternate. By some undetected provision of Nature, sadness and pleasure are made to succeed each other. And with what wisdom; for intermingled woes serve but to impart to pleasures a sweetened flavor. As the light bursts upon us with more beautiful effulgence when the sun-excluding clouds have passed away, so the bosom is filled with deeper thrills of joy, when the murky gatherings of misery in the soul yield to the benignant sunbeams of prosperity!
In the chalice of life there seems not to be the same mixture for all. Here, an individual seems to be struggling through an incessant storm of ills—there, to be calmly at rest in a stormless and sunny clime. And is it safe to suppose, though the exterior is by no means a sure criterion of the inward emotions, that the evils do not beset the pathway of all! But since pleasure, recurring at long intervals, is therefore the more grateful to the heart, let each one bear patiently the misfortunes incident to life, and from the sunny hours of pleasure, he will gather the most exquisite delight!
Not Enumerated.—A wag has made up the following summary of what he calls the "inalienable rights of Americans," and which are enumerated in the Declaration of Independence:
To know any trade or business without an apprentice or experience.
To marry without regard to fortune state of health, position, or opinion of parents or friends.
To have wife and children dependent on contingencies of business, and, in case of sudden death, leave wholly unprovided for.
To put off upon hiring strangers the literary, moral, and religious education of children.
To enjoy the general sympathy when made bankrupt by reckless speculation.
To cheat the Government, if possible.
To hold office without being competent to discharge its duties.

Unhappiness in Families.

It is obvious to observant persons that almost all serious difficulties between married parties grow out of the most insignificant beginnings, that might have been swept out of existence at the outset.

In too many cases of marriage one party is apt to expect the other perfect. The husband looks for traits in his wife which he has long since despaired of ever discovering in himself; and the wife often calculates on finding a model in the character of her husband which is morally inconsistent with human nature. Much of the torture of the disappointment met with on both sides might be removed, if the thousand and one disguises, not to call them deceits, which are practiced with so fatal a success by both parties before matrimony, were all torn away. If two persons will not use their practical common sense in their acquaintance with each other before marriage, they must expect to find a mass of rough experience in store for them after its consummation. If parties who desire to join their fortunes for life have any good sense, they ought to employ it in making discoveries with reference to each other's disposition.

More than half the little bickerings that constantly arise between husband and wife under the infirmities of human nature, would all die out of themselves or dry up like thin grass before the genial warmth of natural affection, if they were not studiously, but in a most mistaken manner, paraded before the attention of others. We know that a bruised spirit needs sympathy and consolation. That is natural. But what sort of sympathy is that which mere busy-bodies show one who takes advantage of the confidence reposed in them only to widen the breach they have discovered, and to swell the torrent of passion they know they never could diminish! Those who are least interested in the matter—those who create and report scandal for their own gratification—busy-bodies and fast-talkers who insinuate themselves where they should never be allowed to go—these are the ones who, in too many instances, help on the misunderstanding and trifling disaffection between married parties, and their triumph is only complete when the rupture has become notorious and final. If such persons could have less to do with the family matters of others, there is but little doubt that those matters would take much better care of themselves.

The married state is by no means a state of perfect happiness. We must enter upon it resolved and expecting to have to "bear with one another's infirmities." We are but mortal, and they who generally expect and demand the nearest approach to perfection in others, will generally be found to have a very indefinite idea of the term themselves. The nearest we may go to real happiness in the married and social state is by practising a system of mutual forbearance and concession. If more of this were practised, and less broodings over wrongs and neglects, too often imaginary, were indulged in, we should hear far less of troublesome cases, and see much more of unalloyed enjoyment in families.—*Hartford Courant.*

HINTS FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS.—A parent, in any station of life whatever, may and ought bestow half an hour, or an hour, every day, in instructing his children in the most useful of all knowledge nor is there anything to hinder a master of a private seminary of education to bestow generally an hour every day, and more on Sundays, in instructing the youth under his care in the principles of prudence, morality, and religion. This may be digested into a scheme of twenty or thirty lectures, beginning from the very foundation, and going through all the principal particulars of our duty to God, our neighbor, and ourselves, and from these proceeding to a view of fundamental doctrines, evidences, and laws of revealed religion. In all which there is nothing but what may be brought down to the apprehension of very young minds, by proceeding gently and suiting one's expressions to the weak capacities of the learners.

INDUSTRY.—All exertion is in itself delightful, and active amusement seldom tires us. Helvetius owns that he could hardly listen to a concert for two hours, though he could play on an instrument all day long. In all pursuits, efforts, it must not be forgotten, are as indispensable as desires. The globe is not to be circumnavigated by one wind. We should never do nothing. "It is better to wear out than to rust out," says Bishop Cumberland. "There will be time enough for repose in the grave," said Arnauld to Nicole. In truth, the proper rest for man is occupation.

ABSENCE OF FEAR NOT ALWAYS A SIGN OF COURAGE.—Every passion becomes weak in proportion as it is familiar with its object. Evil must be considered as the object of fear; but the passion is excited only when the evil becomes probable; or, in other words, when we are in danger. As the same evil may become probable many ways, there are several species of danger—that danger to which men are continually exposed, soon becomes familiar, and fear is no longer excited. This, however, must not be considered as an example of courage; for equal danger of any other kind will still produce the same degree of fear in the same mind.

The Chemistry of Nature.

If we trace back the history of our world into those remote eras of which the early rocks are records, we shall discover that the same chemical laws were operating then which control the changes of matter now. At one period the earth was a huge mass of fiery fluid, which radiating or throwing off heat into space, gradually cooled, and became surrounded with a solid crust, entombing within it a scorching chaos of intensely heated materials, which now assert their existence in the shock of the earthquake, and the awful outbreak of the volcanic fires. On later ages, when the crust had cooled still more, and the atmosphere let fall its showers, the still heated surface, hissing and roaring with the contact of the flood, was rent into enormous blocks, and dreadful abysses; which still remain all over the world, and from the wondrous monuments of an age of great convulsions. Later, still the seas gather together, the rocky masses were powdered into dust by the delicate fingers of the dew and the shower, and green herbs sprang up and monsters of the slimy deep appeared in obedience to the Creator's fiat, and the whole earth became a home of beauty in obedience to chemical law. The ceaseless play of the elements, and the intuitions of the atoms, had built up the whole into one gorgeous scene of luxuriance; and man was awakened into being to render the whole subservient to his wishes; and by tracing out the harmonies of the natural world, to arrive at the more exalted knowledge of his Maker.

The atom of charcoal which floated in the corrupt atmosphere of the old volcanic ages, was absorbed into the leaf of a fern when the valleys became green and luxuriant; and there in its proper place, it received the sunlight and the dew, aiding to fling back to heaven a reflection of heaven's gold, and at the same time to build the tough fibre of the plant. That same atom was confined to the tomb when the waters submerged the jungled valleys. It had lain thousands of years, and a month since was brought into light again, imbedded in a block of coal. It shall be consumed to warm our dwelling, cook our food, and make more ruddy and cheerful the earth, whereon our children play; it shall combine with a portion of the invisible atmosphere, ascend upward as a curling wreath to reveal in a mazy dance up high in the blue ether—shall reach earth again, and be entrapped in the embrace of a flower—shall live in the velvet beauty on the cheek of an apricot—shall press into the human body, giving enjoyment to the palate, and health to the blood—shall circulate in the delicate tissues of the brain, and aid, by entering into some new combination, in causing the thoughts which are now being uttered by the pen. It is but an atom of charcoal—it may dwell one moment in a stagnant ditch, and the next be flushing to the lip of beauty—it may now be a component of limestone rock, and the next moment an ingredient in the field of potatoes—it may slumber for a thousand years without undergoing a single change, and the next hour pass through a thousand; and after all, it is only at atom of charcoal and occupies only its own place, wherever it may be.

KINDNESS.—That there is stored up in every human breast a great deal more kindness than is ever spoken—a latent disposition, which is ready and often eager, to manifest itself on suitable occasions in generous sympathy for our fellows, and in kind actions, is a truth of easy and daily verification. Some are endowed with it in a larger, others in a smaller degree; circumstances foster its activity in one class, and repress it in another; but there is not, perhaps a bosom so cold, so crushed, that has not its gentle moments, and to whose good offices there is not some avenue of approach, could we but clearly discern it. Indeed, the world knows not the wealth of the loving and lovable nature it contains. We often remain for years unsuspecting the kindness that exists in some one of the comparatively few who are personally known to us, until an accident reveals it. How much, then, of mute, unnoted goodness must lie in the boundless sea of the unknown that hems us round.

THE ROMAN SENTINEL.—When Pompeii was destroyed, there were many buried in the ruins of it, who were afterwards found in very different situations. There were some found who were in the streets, as if they had been attempting to make their escape. There were some found in deep vaults, as if they had gone thither for security. There were some found in lofty chambers. But where did they find the Roman sentinel? They found him standing at the city gate, with his hand still grasping the war weapon, where he had been placed by his captain; and there, while the heavens threatened him: there, while the earth shook beneath him: there, while the lava stream rolled, he had stood at his post; and there, after a thousand years had passed away, was he found.

A COMMON ENEMY.—The evils inseparably annexed to the present condition of man are so numerous and afflictive, that it has been, from age to age, the task of some to bewail, and of others to solace them; and he, therefore, will be in danger of seeing a common enemy, shall attempt to depreciate the few pleasures and felicities which nature has allowed us.

THE ANNUAL RESURRECTION.—As the day dies into night, so doth the summer into winter. The sap is said to descend into the root, and there it lies buried in the ground. The earth is covered with snow, or crusted with frost, and becomes a general sepulchre; when the spring appears, all begin to rise; the plants and flowers peep out of their graves, revive, grow and flourish. This is the annual resurrection. The corn, by which we live, and for want of which we perish with famine, is, notwithstanding, cast upon the earth, and buried in the ground with a design that it may corrupt, and being corrupted, may revive and multiply. Our bodies are fed with this constant experiment, and we continue this present life by a succession of resurrections. Thus all things are repaired by corrupting, are preserved by perishing, and revive by dying. And can we think that man, the lord of all these things, which thus die and revive for him, should be detained in death, so as never to live again? Is it imaginable that God should thus restore man to himself? If there were no other means, but of the principles of human nature, of the liberty and remunerability of human actions, and of natural revolutions and resurrections of other creatures, it were abundantly sufficient to render the resurrection of our bodies highly probable.—*Bishop Pearson.*

VIVID CONTRAST.—See the wrathful thunder cloud—the fiery bed of the lightning and hissing hail—the cradle of tempests and floods? What can be more dark, more dreary, more dreadful? Say, scoffing skeptic, is it capable of any beauty? You pronounce, 'no.' Well, very well, but behold while sneering denial curls your proud lips, the sun with his sword of light shines through the sea of vapors, in the West, and laughs in your incredulous face with his fine golden eye. Now, look again at the thunder-cloud! See where it was blackest and fullest of gloom, the sunbeams have kissed its hideous cheek; and where the kiss fell there is now a blush brighter than ever mantled on the brow of mortal maiden—the rich blush of crimson and gold, purple and vermilion—a pictured blush, fit for the gaze of angels—the flower-work of pencils of fire and light, wrought at a dash by one stroke of the right hand of God! Aye, the ugly cloud hath given birth to the rainbow, that perfection and symbol of unspeakable beauty.—*Bascom.*

THE CONTRAST.—There is a place on earth, where pure joys are unknown—from which politeness is banished, and has given place to selfishness, contradiction and half-veiled insults. Remorse and indignation, the passions that are never weary of assailing, torment the inhabitants. This place is the house of a wedded pair, who have no mutual love nor even esteem. There is a place on earth, to which strife has no entrance—where the gloomy passions have no empire—where pleasure and innocence live constantly together—where care and labor are delightful—where every pain is forgotten in reciprocal tenderness—where there is an equal enjoyment of the past, the present, and the future. It is the house, too, of a wedded pair; but a pair who, in wedlock, are lovers still.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF DISSIPATION.—Those who see something charming in being "a buster," and delight in the fascinations of such draughts of bliss as milk punch, egg-nog, Tom-and-Jerry, port wine sangaree, etc., will think well, and possibly do well, by remembering the following "sad calamities" which attend upon the career of the "hard drinker":—Headaches, sickness at the stomach, empty pockets, debts, quarrels, enemies, disgrace, remorse, idleness, loss of business, and loss of friends, shame, domestic unhappiness, indigestion, poor appetite, base companions, rusty clothes—including shocking bad hats, bursted boots, ventilation stockings, awful shirts, darned bad vests, threadbare coats and discouraged pantaloons—bad name with the grocer, butcher and milkman.

GENIUS.—It is interesting to notice how some minds seem almost to create themselves springing up under every disadvantage, and working their solitary but irresistible way through a thousand obstacles. Nature seems to delight in disappointing the assiduous of art, with which it would rear dullness to maturity! but to glory in the vigor and luxuriance of her chance productions. She scatters the seeds of genius to the winds, and though some may perish among the stony places of the world, and some may be choked by the thorns and brambles of early adversity, yet others will now then strike root even in the clefts of the rock, struggle bravely up into sunshine, and spread over their sterile birth-place all the beauties of vegetation.—*Irving.*

A GREAT MAN.—A great man commonly disappoints those who visit him. They are on the look-out for his thundering and lightning, and he speaks about common things much like other people; nay, sometimes he may even be seen laughing. He proportions his exertions to his excitements; having been accustomed to converse with deep and lofty thoughts, it is not to be expected that he will flare or sparkle in ordinary chit-chat. One sees no pebbles glittering at the bottom of the Atlantic.

THE WIND.—Let me ask, who among us does not feel a sad sensation steal over them, as they hear, whistling through the surrounding trees and over the hill tops, and even through our dwellings, the sighing and mourning wind? At one time, it comes low and thrilling, like the moan of departing spirits going to their long and silent home, never to return. It then reminds us of our friends that have gone before us; it tells the mournful tale that we, too, must meet them in their abode, where we shall rest secure from all the cares and delusions of this cold and unfeeling world, and of our ungracefulness to Him, the author of our being and the preserver of our lives. We are living on, days, weeks, months, and even years, unmindful of the many blessings we receive, unconsciously of the flight and rapidity of time. The mourning winds recalls to our minds the long buried thoughts of years gone by, when some dear friend was present to sympathize with us in all our troubles, cares and griefs, mingling alike with us in our joys and sorrows; now, alas! that friend lies cold in the tomb! In the holy bonds of friendship we lived happily, unmindful of the fell destroyer, Death, thoughtless of the morrow; yet the whispering and a calm retreat, far away from the cares of this earthly abode, carrying us in thought on the vale where sorrow and weeping are unknown. The sighing of the winds of Heaven, often calls tears unbidden from the eyes of the tender-hearted and thoughtful, yet it is relief to mind of happiness gone for ever.

Boston Post.

FLOWERS.—Among all the pleasant things of life—the all-bountiful hand of Providence, has scattered the path of our days with innumerable pleasant things, if man would but enjoy them—among all the pleasant things of life, there are few more pleasant than a walk in a flower garden before breakfast on a sunny morning. To see those mute and still, though not motionless creatures—we mean the blossoms opening their painted bosoms to the beneficent rays which give them their color and their loveliness—welcoming the calm blessing of the light, as if with gratitude, and seeking, in their tranquil state of being, for nothing but the good gifts of God, might well afford a monitory lesson; for every thing in nature has its homily, to us, the eager hunters after fictitious enjoyment.

BEAUTIFUL ALLUSION.—I remember once, says Lamartine, in allusion to his parents, to have seen the branch of a willow which had been torn by the tempest's hand from the parent trunk, float in the morning light upon the angry surges of the overflowing Saone. On it a female, with a white veil covered her nest, as drifted down the foaming stream, and the male on the wing followed the wreck, which was bearing away the objects of love.

MUSIC OF NATURE.—The universal disposition of human beings, from the cradle to the death-bed, to express their feeling in measured cadences, of sound and action proves that our bodies are constructed on musical principles.

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