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BEYOND RECALL

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CHAPTER XXXIII.

LIFE IN A DESERT.

"It's spoilt the table, anyhow," said I in a tone of discontent; "however, I can manage to plane it down. I daresay."

"No, no," said my wife hastily. "Oh, no, don't. The table in my room is just large; let me have this."

"Well, if you're so fond of your porridge all that, I'm not unreasonable. Not I, either. I have made up my mind to all that I can."

"Very well, then; you'd better see about your dinner. I'm hungry."

"Yes, this I do," lifted the flaps of the table, and carried it up stairs. Her bed was made, the room nearly arranged. These things I did in submission, pleased me. I took a stronger line, however, when she proposed that I should carry the table on my head, and carried in the pitcher and three parts full of water.

"You managed to open your skylight this morning," said I.

"Yes, I could not lift it yesterday. Oh, it was stronger this morning."

Hence spoke she truth in vain with both hands to break a stick from the faggot that I was to make manage easily with a couple of fingers.

"What are you trying to do there?" I asked.

"I am going to light the fire to cook my dinner for your breakfast," said I, remembering that I had left a chip from the table in the room. "You'll find the things in the cupboard."

"Have any tablecloth," she said, "and put out the drawers upstairs."

"Shall you be able to eat one if you hanker after it? I won't be so particular when you've tasted it a bit." And I broiled slight and the pan on when my own crowd.

"How many rashers can you eat?" I asked, as she was fetching the bacon and cutting off a rasher herself.

"Oh, I don't eat much," she said, looking at it with a little gesture of disgust. "I don't eat much," exclaimed, in unconscious tone, to it still seemed to me.

"No, you must not think me stupid. I have been ill. My digestion is bad for two months. I have taken nothing but milk and food. A little bread and milk, three times a day, is still a good deal in proportion to what I was."

I remembered what Mr. Northcote had said of my wife's weak health. I took the pitcher out, emptied it, washed the spoon, and refilled it with the water of the morning.

"Up to now," I said, "Eve did all the work." But my mummery was restored on returning to the room my wife had taken the bacon off and set it on a clean dish. I made no to stop to the table without touching my hands, but the look of the white flesh and my wife shamed me, and I washed my grimy fingers. I made an apologizing journey to the stream and back. Also when I re-entered the room I took off my hat and put on my cap.

We sat down presented a strange contrast to one another, each other at the table. My wife elegantly dressed, her face the perfect embarcation of delicate refinement, and I with my close-cropped and beard face, looking like a convict in a recently shaved condition.

"Why, I have not told me your name yet," I said.

"Gregory," said I, with my mouth full.

"Well, you that, I let me pour it out." I took the pitcher which she had filled from the glass, grumbling that I was playing the part of a master.

"Back work. Why did you fill up the pitcher, enough."

"Enough milk; I threw the other away. Never drink to a thing with it." I exclaimed, he might not think I had made a mistake.

"Well, Gregory, and skim milk and our own butter. You scald the cream with your hand. I have seen it."

"Yes, all right," I said, carelessly; but inwardly I was delighted with the notion, and have been in attempting anything of the sort ever since, I flatter myself, with an apron."

"Looked at her dress already torn, ruined and soiled.

"Have and some thing amongst the rags, and put an apron and a pair of sleeves."

"Ah, dress more suitable to your occupation than the rags."

"Thank you, I can never find enough stuff to make you well. I shall have to make way to favor back for it. Those sleeves are all knocked out; they're rags. And we ought to have a flat pan for the sick. Food won't last over to-day. Can you make bread?"

"Can make a beef-steak pie."

"Can you," said I, eagerly; quite put up by a recollection of this delicacy in my mouth watering.

"Yes, and cutards too;" her face lighted up suddenly.

"Custards! You can keep them for me. How about bread?"

"I am doubtful of her capacity in this direction, but she ventured to try it, and said I; its nothing but water baked."

"Yes, we should need soda or cream of tartar in cakes, to lighten it."

"Oh, I don't care for pudding."

"We get it every Wednesday. Puddings, and rice, are the strangest feeling to me. It was like opening a long-forgotten book and reading the passages that pleased the past.

"Pudding, and currant dumplings, and enumerating her list.

"Oh, I don't care for them."

"I exclaimed, again I make that if I had the sack at the

"Well, reflecting, "and a

"There's the spoke

"There will make a fine

"Will do for a paste-

"Yes, that up."

"Have a flat pan to set the

"Wait a minute's consideration.

"There can we stand it to

"Look back there, in that pile

"Yes, there's a set of drawers where two

"Yes, that would be the very

"Yes, I think of putting the cow in

"Yes, I thought it might be too cool for

"Yes, I don't think the cats will get at it,

"Yes, I can stop up one end with loose

"Yes, and put a door at the other," I replied, as fast as she in this new excitement, that there was as little likelihood of

"Yes, you really think you could do that

"Yes, I am having a man," she asked dropping

"Yes, you'll see." I replied confidently, although strangely in my mind where I should

"Yes, door posts. I rose, feeling the necessity of finishing the stable at once in order to begin on the dairy.

"Yes, but the pans," suggested Hebe.

"There's a pan-tile, and I'll give you a good piece of deal if you come out to the

"Yes, and you can make a list of all the things you want on it. I'll go over to Tavistock as soon as I've finished nailing up the

"Yes, Don't forget the suet and some

"Yes, that pastebord must be rabbeted.

"Yes, work round and put down everything, so that I don't have to go again for some time."

She promised to forget nothing, and I set off to my work with a feeling of exhilaration that I was ashamed of later on when I was cooler. But my eagerness to finish the stable gave me no time for reflection or cooling, and I was absolutely glad to see my wife when she came to the door later

"What time would you like tea, Gregory?" she asked.

"I shall be ready for it in ten minutes."

"Why, you have nearly stopped up the hole." (She referred to the partition.)

"Two more boards to nail on, that's all, and a bit of stuff to knock up here for a manger."

"Is that end for the cow or the pony?"

"It don't matter which."

"I should think the pony ought to go inside, because there'll be more light near the door for seeing to milk the cow."

"Why, that's true; I didn't think about that."

"Two heads are better than one," said she, with a faint smile. "I'll go and get tea at once."

There was something pathetic, though I failed to see it then, in her endeavor to conciliate me—to sink herself to a level which even I might attain. But I presently had a proof that she still maintained womanly dignity.

The tea things were neatly set on the table; the teapot stood on the stove. Between us she had set a tumbler of water, in which were two or three wild flowers.

"There is no butter yet awhile," she said, as I seated myself.

"Oh, I can do without; pass us the bread," said I, stretching out my hand.

She glanced at my hand, and then looked steadily in my face without moving a hand. I perceived that I had not washed the grim off my hands.

"Oh, I forget that I am to be a gentleman," said I, sourly, as I got up.

"Or perhaps you forget what I am," she answered, without raising her voice, but rather in a tone of gentle reproach.

"After all," thought I, going back from the stream after giving my face and hands a good wash, "one feels all the better for being clean."

When I had finished ten I said I led the pony and brought him to the gate of the cinclsure.

Hebe stood there with the list in her hand.

"Shall you be long?" she asked.

"Yes; four or five hours."

We looked at each other in silence for a moment. Her air was so noble that it required more courage than I could muster at the instant to tell her I intended to look her up in her room before I started; she, read my thoughts, spared herself and me the indignity of such an avowal.

"I will say good-night now;" I shall not be up when you return," she said; and with a slight inclination of the head she turned and entered the house.

When I followed a minute afterwards she had gone up to her room.

I must have felt I was doing a shameful thing, for I went as noiselessly as I could up the stepsland shot the bolt in the trap she had already closed.

Her pale, thin, lovely face haunted me as I rode moodily over the moor, and if the sinking of my heart was not due to remorse I know not what it was.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

LESS MASTER THAN SERVANT.

I had to trudge it home, the pony having pretty well as much as he could carry without me. For, in addition to the things Hebe had set down on the list, I had bought a lot of clothing for myself, a weighty packet of nails, holdfasts, etc., a washing tub, and five live fowls. With a dozen parcels hanging on each side, two large tin milk pans, and the washing tub containing the fowls on top, one could see nothing of the pony but his extremities.

I was waked in the morning by the vigorous crowing of the cock in the stable below and I can say with confidence that I had heard no sound for eleven years which gave me such a feeling of unclouded delight.

It would puzzle me to explain this feeling or all of the emotions which accompanied the changing conditions of my life; I can only attempt to set down the leading incidents which marked those changes, and leave the reader to draw his own conclusions as to their origin.

As the light coming under the eaves was yet but a slaty grey, I lay for some time listening; as pleased as a boy with his first watch, to the crowing of the cock, at the same time, turning over in my mind the many alterations that must be made in the house before the rough weather set in. With so much to be done it was impossible for a man of my restless disposition to lie idle long, and so in the middle of his sixth crow I startled the cock, and sent off his hens with a screech by descending the ladder on which they were perched.

I had made up my mind to leave all the house work to Hebe. "She'll have to do all the sweeping and fire-lighting and that sort of thing," said I to myself. "That's her work, and it's best to begin as we're going on. There's no nonsense about me, and that I'm not going to stand any nonsense on her part. She's not a fine lady now. As soon as I've had a sense in the stream I'll begin on that dairy."

But when I went in the house to unbolt the trap and get my packet of nails, the sight of all the parcels on the floor, where I had thrown them down higgledy-piggledy after my tiring walk, offended my prisoned sense of propriety, so I proceeded to stack them neatly against the wall. In doing this I came upon the parcel of beef-steak and suet. This reminded me that I had the material for a beef-steak pie, but no pasteboard and no rolling pin. Well, there was the table I had brought down from the room above. With a few turns of the plane I could give it a clean surface that would do for to-day. So I fetched the jack plane, but wanting light I opened the shutters, which was a job I intended for Hebe. I couldn't leave the shavings on the floor—that looked worse than the parcels. I got the broom and swept the floor. Then when I had put the shavings in the stove, it struck me that the mere act of striking a match and setting them alight was not worth a consideration; but after the shavings had caught, I found there was no wood and had to run out sharp for a faggot; then I had to fetch turf to keep the fire in. It was useless letting the fire burn for nothing, but finding the kettle empty, and no water in the pitcher, I had to go down to the spring and fill it.

"A good hour wasted," I grumbled; "never mind, I'll make up for it now." But no sooner had I got into the shed with my ironmongery than I bethought me the cow had to be milked. Hebe certainly couldn't do that; so I must.

"Now I can begin the dairy," thought I, as I set down the pail of milk in the kitchen; but glancing across to see if the fire was going on all right, I caught sight of the planed table, which reminded me I had forgotten the rolling pin.

"Oh, I'll soon knock that off," said I, going out to find the old spoke. But a harder piece of oak I never touched with a spoke-shave, and to get it nicely round, tapering in just proportion to the end, and scraping it down smooth with a piece of broken glass, took me fully two hours, and I had only just tied a string loop on the top to hang it up by when Hebe came to tell me that breakfast was ready.

"You have been up a long while, Gregory," she said. "Have you done a great deal?"

"No," said I, savagely: "I've made a rolling pin—that's all."

"Did you get up so early in order to do that?"

"No, I didn't," I growled; "I had to plane the table for a pastebord; and now," I added, with increased acerbity as I heard a whinnying from the stable, "there's that pony wants feeding."

"Oh, you have bought some fowls," she cried, cheerfully, when following me to the stable door she caught sight of them scratching over the straw.

"Cuk-cuk! cuk-cuk! cuk!" cried the cock; pulling himself up, shaking his wattle and fixing one red eye on Hebe.

"Oh, you fine fellow" she said: "we shall have some eggs now."

"Can't make custards without 'em, can you?" said I, gruffly. There's some grain in that bin; throw some down for them outside."

"But you don't care for custards, Gregory," she said, in a low tone, as she went to the bin.

"Get over, do!" I cried to the pony who was sticking his haunches in my way. "The fowls ran eagerly out after Hebe. It gave her pleasure to feed them. I saw a sunny light in her face as I passed the door: but her mind seemed absorbed in another reflection when I came down from the loft with an armful of hay for the cow. She walked in silence beside me towards the cottage, but on the threshold she said, as if nothing had occurred since she last spoke to me—

"That was very kind of you."

After breakfast we undid some of the parcels, for they were all so much alike that I couldn't make out which contained the things I had bought for myself. The first was the draper's. My wife was pleased with everything she found in it but most with a couple of ready-made print dresses.

"Here is something that was not down on my list, I am sure," she said: "what are they?"

"The map called them peignoirs. I took 'em in order that you might have something suitable to work in at once."

"They are very pretty," she said, taking no notice of my ungracious explanation. "And what are these?"

"Bonnets. You can't go out without something on your head."

They were the ordinary poke sun bonnets worn by the Devonshire peasants. Anything more ugly in it-self it would be difficult to invent; and yet when Hebe, after unfolding them with amused curiosity, put one on her head to try it, I thought nothing could be prettier. It was the soft of head dress she would have chosen for a fancy dress ball. Her face looked smaller than ever in the deep white hood; her eyes deeper and more lustrous; the long hair that fringed her brow and temples darker. It added to the quaint gravity of her expression as she turned timidly towne for approval, half fearing, I think, that I should burst into derisive laughter; and then, again, it lent a piquant fascination to the arch smile that twinkled in her features when she perceived the effect was not ridiculous. I turned away to open another parcel that she might not see my admiration, not unconscious of my own weakness in yielding to its influence.

"This is just what I wanted for aprons. I shall make them to come right round and with a bib."

"These are your shoes."

"Fours. I forgot to put down the number. How did you guess it?"

It would have been strange if I had forgotten the proportions of a figure that was better known to me than my own.

"I took the first that came to hand," said I; "they're stout, and that's the main thing."

"House shoes, too."

"You couldn't do without 'em—That's grocery."

"How did you carry all these things home?"

"The pony carried 'em: I didn't."

"Did he carry you as well?"

"No, I walked."

She was silent for a moment; then she said regretfully—

"It was thoughtless of me to make such a long list without considering how the things were to be carried. And you added to the list instead of reducing it."

"That doesn't concern you," said I, seizing my parcel.

"You'll find me among the rocks when you want me: I'm going to see about the dairy."

"That does concern me," she said, attempting to smile. "May I come and see what you are going to do?"

"Yes, if you like."

She followed me to the rocks, and looked with interest at the cavern formed by the two great blocks of granite.

"How cool it is in here," said she; and I can almost stand upright."

"Oh, there'll be plenty of head room when I have cleared away the rubble on this side. I shall stack it up neatly along there for the pans to stand on."

And I daresay you could find a nice flat stone to lay at one end to roll the butter on.

"How would that one over there do?" I asked, warming up.

"Why that is the very thing, if you could only move it."

"Oh, that's nothing; which end would you like it?"

"Up here, I think, Gregory, lighter, and there's more room."

"Yes, the other end I shall fill up with stones. Here I shall set up a rough door."

"If you could fix a shelf anywhere, we could use this as a larder as well as a dairy."

"Why, so we could. There's a bit of inch stuff up in the loft will just do, nicely planed up; and I can put a few hooks up to hang things on."

"Oh, that will be capital! Hark! what is that?" she asked, suddenly turning and raising her finger.

I listened: the fowls were making a terrible clatter.

"They've laid an egg amongst 'em!"

"Do you think so, already?"

"We'll go and see."

A fowl on the threshold of the stable was proclaiming her achievement, and the others were congratulating her.

"Here it is," said I, finding the egg in a corner of the manger.

Hebe, coming to my side, took it with an exclamation of delight.

"There's an old basket or two in the shed. I'll nail them against the wall for nests," said I.

She suggested that I should put up a perch also for the fowls to roost on, and then turning to caress the full-eyed cow she said—

"I must learn to milk the cow; will you show me how?"

"Yes, and I'll make you a proper stool with three legs."

"Thank you, Gregory."

Then she turned to caress the pony, who, jealous of her attentions to the cow, had jogged her elbow with his nose.

"What kind-looking creatures they are," she said. "What is the pony's name?"

"He hasn't got one yet; but we can call him Kit."

"Kit" she murmured; "poor Kit!" and putting her arm under his neck, she laid her pale, delicate cheek against his rough hide.

She was dressed in one of the print dresses, and wore a sun bonnet when she came to tell me that dinner was ready. She looked like a princess playing the part of a peasant and nothing else; the plainness of her attire only serving as a foil to her natural charms of face and figure. As she stood there, with the blue sky and summer clouds beyond, she was to me a vision of purity and grace. I could not think of her impurity. My mind recoiled from the attempt. It seemed like looking down from a flower to seek the corruption of which it fed. It was well that I stood deep in the shadow of the cave, and that I had time to recover my senses before I came out into the light.

"You are not going back to work," she said, when I rose from the table.

"Why not?" I asked, brusquely.

"It is Sunday."

That had not occurred to me, though I might have guessed it by the bustle in the town over night.

"Well, I shan't shock the susceptibilities of any one by employing my time to advantage here."

"It is good to rest one day in the week," said my wife, quietly. "If you would like to go for a walk over the moors, Gregory," she added, after a pause, "I shall be quite content to—to stay in my room until you come back."

The proposal staggered me.

"It's pretty hot up there," I said.

"I have put up the skylight."

"You can't look out of the window."

"That is a pity. The moor looks lovely to-day."

"You have nothing to read."

"No."

"And you are willing to be locked up there?"

"If you think it necessary."

I asked myself if I should submit to this self-sought suffering.

"No," said I, getting up; "I prefer to work. You can go out if you choose."

But when I got back to the cave I found that the spirit had gone out of me. More than once to-day a feeling had been revived in my heart that I thought was dead for ever; perhaps the disinclination to work on Sunday was the resurrection of an old sentiment.

For half an hour or more I sat in the cave balancing in my hand the hammer I had taken up, thinking over my wife's offer to be shut up in that oven of a room.

Her submission perplexed me: it was entirely contrary to what I expected, and in consequence I found it contrary to reason. Why had she given in so readily? Why did she seek to conciliate me? I could not make out, and in vainly looking for an explanation there was that confusion in my mind that the aspect of new surroundings conveys after a heavy sleep. No wonder: my mind was but just regaining its faculties after a sleep of six years.

The hammer slipped from my hand, and I took up the parcel of clothes from the shed into the loft. I would do as she suggested, since I could not work—all except locking her up. I couldn't do that. I changed my clothes, putting on the new tweed suit and flannel cap I had bought the night before. I did not perceive even then that in putting on decent clothes for Sunday wear I had unconsciously fallen into another habit of the past.

My wife was sitting in the shade of a boulder by the brook when I went out. She did not see me, and I strode off in another direction.

I could think of nothing but Hebe. As I went over all that had happened—pretty much as I have written it here—I was struck by the naive simplicity of our conversation; but I failed to see that while my simplicity was artless as a Bootian's here was the disguise of astute intelligence.

"One of us must be a fool," I said, without, however, regarding myself as the fooled one.

She had found herself a delicate and frail woman, pitted against a savage. Quick to see that stubborn opposition would entail nothing but discomfiture to herself, she had pursued the wise task of subduing me through my own weakness. Her first appeal was to my lowest animal instinct. She had stimulated and gratified my appetite for good things. I had accepted her guidance as unsuspectingly as the bear who climbs to the top of a pole for a bun. She had made further progress by flattering my vanity and then made an adroit appeal to my generosity by offering a condition that otherwise I myself might have demanded. I had refused to imprison her, and given her a certain amount of liberty which could never be retracted.

I saw all this later on, but my intellect was too torpid to grasp it then.

I had lost myself amongst the rocks in returning, when, mounting a block higher than the rest to discover if I could find the course of the stream, a faint cry reached my ear. Looking about me I saw in the distance the mound that marked the cottage, a patch of silver where the brook spread into a pool, and then midway between them a white figure that I knew must be Hebe. I recognised her voice when she called again. I flourished my cap in answer, and hurried along, wondering what had happened to make her call to me.

I lost sight of her for some time after getting down from the rock; but as she cried from time to time the sound of her voice grew more distinct. What was it she cried? Not Gregory; the word was shorter than that.

Presently, getting clear of the larger boulders, I saw her struggling through the heath not a hundred yards off. Seeing me she stopped dead short. She pushed her hair back as if to see clearer, and stood there immovable, straining her eyes as I approached. Then when I spoke she covered her face with her hands and burst into tears.

"I thought it was my husband!" she sobbed.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

ODDS AND ENDS

Chess is taught in Vienna public schools.

In the British Parliament there are eighteen brewers.

The town of Forsythe, Mo., is fifty years old and never had a church.

About ten thousand gros of pens are produced from a ton of steel.

Scales are now made that will weigh the flame of a candle or the smallest strand of hair plucked from the eyebrow.

The fleeces of ten goats and the work of several men for half a year are required to make a genuine cashmere shawl a yard and a-half wide.

Probably the heaviest rudder on record is that made for the torpedo boat Vulcan. It was forged in single pieces and weighes twenty-two tons.

A drying house for lumber has been erected at Ottawa in which electricity is the heating power. This is the first establishment of the kind in the world.

Champagne owes its equality to soil, a mixture of chalk, silica, light clay and oxide of iron, and the great care and delicate manipulation in manufacture.

Telephotography is at present interesting Parisian experimenters and causes the *Figaro* to predict that "soon may be seen in Paris the image of a man smoking in St. Petersburg."

It is asserted that waterproof sheets or paper, gummed and hydraulically compressed, make a material as durable as leather for the soles of shoes. It also makes serviceable horseshoes.

The common snail is said to have 150 rows of stout serrated teeth. The whole palate contains about 21,000 teeth, it is claimed, while a full-grown slug has over 26,000 of these silicious spikes.

At Minorca the fisherman simply dives to a depth of seventy feet with a weight in one hand to carry him down. With the other hand he picks up as many oysters as he can carry and brings them up to the boat.

A new marine light which will soon be in place near Havre will be the most powerful in the world. It will be visible at sea a distance of from twenty-two to fifty-two miles, according to the condition of the weather.

London requires some women to act as sanitary inspectors, in the opinion of Dr. Corner, medical officer for Popular. With the help of efficient women working among the poor he thinks epidemics might be nipped in the bud. Glasgow already has six women inspectors, who are doing an admirable work.

A New Rain Story.

F. W. Aldrich, a hotel proprietor in Fitchburg, never lost an opportunity to play a practical joke or spring some witty story on his guests.

One miserable rainy morning I was sitting in the hotel office talking with Aldrich while waiting for his breakfast, when a man entered whose appearance indicated that he had been fished out of a duck pond. This man answered to the name of Dan Bemis.

On this particular morning he came into the office and, after selecting a desirable seat near the stove, he said:—

"Well, Aldrich, this is a cold, wet rain."

Aldrich looked at him and smiled, and then a happy thought striking him, he remarked:—

"Yes, it is; but did you ever hear of a warm, dry rain?"

"Well," said Bemis, "I should say I had. When God rained fire and brimstone on Sodom and Gomorrah, I should call that a warm, dry rain."

The Moscow papers have been informed that Count Leon Tolstoi, having disposed of large sums of money in favour of the famishing peasants, has distributed his vast estates among the members of his family and practically beggared himself.

The latest advices from St. Petersburg and other parts of Russia show that the persecution of the Jews, and the inhumanity of the Czar's officials towards that unhappy race, are greater than ever before.

Shipwrecked Crew on an Iceberg.

A most extraordinary discovery is reported to have been made by the crew of the barque Gladys, while on her voyage from Iquique for Hamburg. When in 43 deg. south, 33 deg. west, the vessel was completely hemmed in by immense icebergs, and had to lay to all night, for fear of collision with them. For three days the vessel was in danger through the presence of icefields and icebergs, and it required the greatest care and skill to run her clear. On the last day a very large berg was passed, and, to the astonishment of those on board the barque, there appeared to be signs of human beings having been on it. Quite plainly a beaten track could be seen on the north-west side of the berg, and on that side was a shelter, apparently cleft in the ice. The crew also saw what appeared to them to be the dead bodies of five people, lying on various parts of the berg. One of the bodies lay just outside the shelter, and another in the pathway leading to it. No actual signs of life could be seen, but it gave the impression that the dead bodies were those of shipwrecked people, whose vessel had probably been sunk by contact with the iceberg, and who then clambered on the iceberg for safety, and died from exposure and want. Night was then coming on, and the place being densely packed with icebergs, it was not thought safe to stop, and the Gladys continued on her course, and got clear of the floating dangers.

Only That.

A barrister entering the court with his wig very much awry was obliged to endure a round of remarks on his appearance.

At last, addressing a gentleman, he said, "Do you see anything ridiculous in this wig?"

"Nothing but the head," replied the other.

Ten days per annum is the average amount of sickness in human life.

Music, of all the liberal arts, has the greatest influence over the passions, and is that to which the legislator ought to give the greatest encouragement.—(Napoleon.

The "Death Notices" published in the Scotch newspapers afford curiously interesting testimony of the obiquity of the Scot. It is an oft-noted fact that wherever the foot of man may wander there surely will the Scotchman be found, established and prospering, and usually running things generally. In a single recent issue of the Edinburgh *Scotsman*, are notices of the death of Scotchmen, presumably all late residents of Edinburgh, at Gibraltar, Ravello, Italy; Tarkastad, South Africa; Jefferson, Wisconsin; La Patria, South America; Kurrachee, India; Valparaiso, Rar pore, Bengal; Staten Island, Murree, India, and Melbourne, Australia.

POETRY.

Nearer My God to Thee.

'Twas in the railway waiting room
With twilight shadows falling—
A score of us were neighbors
By the grace of common mood.
The dreary day was ending
And our cheerful home were calling
And the passing ones around us
Had from each but little heed.

"Please, a penny!" There beside me,
Till that moment quite unnoted,
Stood a fair-faced little maiden
With extenued, nut-brown hand,
While the other one, up-reaching,
Was in tenderness devoted
To a frail wan sightless father,
Whom she led by love's demand.

All were not unkind and selfish—
If our souls shone in our faces—
But the pennies did come slowly,
The dear child got scarce a one,
While the trembling lips and lashes
Were the quivering tensioned traces
Of the sore, hurt heart within her
When the fruitless quest was done.

Then into a quiet corner
By some guardian angel guided
Slowly went the twain together,
Courting Solitude's release.
O, I wonder if the shadows
Are not by the Lord provided
For His lonely burdened children
As a hiding place of peace!

When the light fades at the even
Heaven's kingdoms shine out clearer,
Then, alone our vision broadens
From the creatures and the clay;
Somehow in the sheltered silence
Of the darkness, hearts commune
To the tender loving sympathetic
Throbbing Fatherhood of God.

Hush! In quaint, sweet, childish treble,
Plaintive in its soulful pleading—
Like the breathing of a crushed heart
Pitted—calling from the night.
Yet that from the bonds and darkness
Reaching upward interceding,
Finds the Father's benediction
Circling downward from the light.

Came that old, old song, whose fragrance
Maketh melody immortal—
Winning weary spirits skyward
From the grieving and the strife;
They who feel its forceful faith-chords
Find within life's jewelled portal
In the present and the human,
Joy and peace and perfect life.

Then in softened tremulous basso
Joining softly in the chorus—
With his sightless eye-balls lifted
Toward the Throne-light in the song,
And his pallid face reflecting
Glimpses of the glory o'er us,
Did the poor, blind, feeble father
All the prayerful praise prolong.

Surely love—the love of Jesus—
Is the point I started from,
Is the central soul of magnet
Binding hearts above all creeds!
With one impulse, all who listened,
Seemed in unity of action,
Planning to be helpful to them
Who so sweet trust-life shamed their deeds.

Still they sang and still we waited,
While each soul with theirs in vision
Saw the "Cross" His Cross and there one—
Felt the "Sun-down" in the song;
By the "Stony griefs" sore tear-way
Reached glad Bethel's fair elysian—
Home.

Hist! That quavering, sudden ending
Must betoken something wrong;

One be side him, springing quickly
Caught the old man falling forward,
Caught, and found his journey over,
And his thankless service done:
He had heard from out the shadows,
Loving voices calling shoreward,
And he sang the hymn to ending,
Near the Father, by the Throne.

LLEWELLYN A. MORRISON.

"The Elms," Toronto.

New Year's Hymn.

I.

Our grateful songs arise
To Thee, O God above;
Ascending to the skies
In sacrifice of love.
Almighty Thou our God and King;
To Thee we bow, our praises bring.

II.

In all the flowing years
Thy hand hath safely led,
In pilgrimage of tears,
The living and the dead.
O God Most High, thou art the same;
Though mortals die, unchanged thy name

III.

With gladness here we meet,
O God, before thy face;
The new-born year to greet,
With all its wondrous grace.
Another gem along the years!
In diadem—among our tears.

IV.

The hours before thee lie;
We know not what they bring:
Or joy or glad supply,
Or ache of suffering.
Our trust in thee, Jehovah Guide,
Shall ever be; thou wilt provide.

V.

Now, through the open gate,
We pass a month our way;
To watch, to pray, or wait,
As duty of the day.
Thy Spirit give, O God of might,
That we may live and walk in light.

The Ministry of Hassan.

By a clear well, beside a lonely road,
Hassan, the humble, had his poor abode.

He could not roam abroad in search of fame
And noble deeds, for he was bent and lame.

No eyes smiled back to his at night or morn,
And evermore he moaned, "Why was I born!

"What good can I achieve? Why do I live
Who have no strength to strive, no gold to give?

"Others are opulent, beloved, renowned;
What can I reach? Why cumber I the ground

Even then a honey-bee in passing, fell,
Burdened with pollen, in his crystal well.

And Hassan raised it as it struggling lay,
Dried its wet wings, and sped it on its way.

And, still repining, sought his daily toil,
Digging and watering the needy soil

About his grape-vine, that he might one day
Share its rich fruit with those who came that way:

He pruned the cruel thorns and briers which bore
The feet and robes of travellers by his door;

He picked the sharp stones from the trodden way
Where barefoot pilgrims plodded, day by day.

And beggar children, with unsandalled feet,
Wandered along, in weariness and heat.

He brought them, in his carven cocoa-shell,
Draughts of sweet water from his living well.

He found the lonely lamb, wandering from its own,
And soothed its shivering by his chimney-stone;

Spared the poor moth that sought his taper's blaze,
And fed the hungry birds in winter days;

Saved the weak fledgling, fallen from the nest,
Calmed its wild fear, and, warmed it in his breast;

Rescued the fire-fly from the spider's snare,
And sent it on Pashining path in air.

And was a helper and a friend indeed
To every suffering creature in its need.—

Yet all the while bewailed his lack of worth,
And marvelled what his use could be on earth.

But when his blameless days had all gone by
And Hassan sought his bed of bought to die

A tall white angel stood beside him there,
And said, "Thou hast had many ills to bear,

"O Hassan, and hast grieved in solitude
Because thou couldst not do great deeds of good;

"But since thou hast consoled the humblest things
Which weep, or crawl on earth, or soar on wings,

"Cherishing all with thy wide charity,
Behold, beloved, thou didst it unto Me!"

Then Hassan saw how blindly he had wept
His narrow powers. And he smiled, and slept

—[Elizabeth Akers.

The Czar Charged by a Bear.

The Czar has just had a narrow escape. Although not usually a very ardent Nimrod His Majesty wished to assist in the destruction of two bears which had been observed near the village of Tokrovo, so he set out accompanied by a large suite. The animals when roused took refuge in a cave, from which it seemed impossible to dislodge them. Several shots were fired into the den, when suddenly one of the bears rushed out and made straight for the Czar. His Majesty fired, wounding the huge beast in the foot, but the injury did not stop its charge. It rushed on, reached the Czar, and knocked him down. Strange to say it did not stop, but continued on its career, only, however, to be shot down a few yards urther on. The Czar did not lose his presence of mind, and was apparently unhurt.

Misunderstood.

As an early morning train drew up at a station on an English railway line, a pleasant looking gentleman stepped out on the platform, and inhaling the fresh air, enthusiastically observed to the guard:

"Isn't this invigorating?"

"No, sir, it's Cryston," replied the guard.

A DUCK'S COURAGE.

What a Hunter Saw in the Lake Superior Region.

Three of our expedition were away in the rowboat. We had finished supper on the rocks forty feet above the cold, deep waters of the lake—Lake Superior—and were sitting chatting and talking in the various nooks in the granite and red sandstone, enjoying the magnificent view. The water was a glassy sheen stretching away to the horizon; off on our right loomed up the giant form of Outer Island, with its fifteen square miles of hemlock, cedar and pine on the red rock crags; away to our left was the Ironwood Island, a forest-covered rock of about two square miles, while in front in a dim line on the far horizon toward the north we could locate the promontories of Thunder Bay and the tracings of Isle Royale on the Canadian shore.

Suddenly a startling cry from the waters on the right of Island brought every man to his feet. The cry was repeated, and then simultaneously there came into view a mother duck with fifteen ducklings, and fifty feet behind them the rowboat leaping over the water as fast as powerful strokes could urge it.

The mother duck was in the lead. She was of the species known as the hooded merganser, and her beautiful crest, and wonderful markings, the superb military precision of her actions in her efforts to escape and at the same time cover the escape of her brood, her self-control in the midst of danger, commanded the admiration of every man of us.

"Don't shoot," cried our host in tones which echoed over the waters. "Let her alone. See, the mother can escape, but she won't leave her babies. Let them alone."

The ducks passed on. The mother duck invariably gave her command in two strangely sounding quacks, then with flapping wings and feet, which did not paddle the water, but rather whipped it with a singular rapidity, scurried ahead for ten or fifteen rods at a fearful rate. With her more powerful flight the distance between her and the chicks would be increased, but every time she would stop and paddle without using her wings, or she would turn and wait until they had overtaken her. Permitting the little birds to rest for about three seconds, the twin cry of warning and command would again be given,