

THE NEBRASKA ADVERTISER

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DIRGE FOR A SOLDIER.

In the east the morning comes,
Hear the rolling of the drums
On the hill.
But the heart that beat as they beat
In the battle's raging day heat
Lies still.
Unto him the night has come,
Though they roll the morning drum.
What is in the bugle's blast?
It is: "Victory at last!
Now for rest."
But, my comrades, come behold him
Where our colors now enfold him,
And his breast
Bares no more to meet the blade,
But lies covered in the shade.
What a stir there is to-day!
They are laying him away
Where he fell.
There the flag goes draped before him;
Now they pile the grave sod o'er him
With a knell.
And he answers to his name
In the higher ranks of fame.
There's a woman left to mourn
For the child that she has borne
In travail.
But her heart beats high and higher,
With a patriot mother's fire,
At the tale.
She has borne and lost a son,
But her work and his are done.
Flung the flag out, let it wave;
They're returning from the grave—
"Double quick!"
And the cymbals now are crashing,
Bright his comrades' eyes are flashing
From the thick
Battle-ranks which knew him brave,
No tears for a hero's grave.
In the east the morning comes,
Hear the rattle of the drums
Far away.
Now no time for grief's pursuing,
Other work is for the doing,
Here to-day.
He is sleeping, let him rest
With the flag across his breast.
—Paul Laurence Dunbar, in Youth's Companion.

The Flower of the Air

By Katherine Tynan.

THEY had been little goat-herds together on a Sicilian hillside, Giuseppe and Maddalena. There, where the magic of Theocritus yet lingers, the brown children are as beautiful as Graces among the olive groves and vineyards. Maddalena, dancing with her ragged skirt held high, and her brown bare feet twinkling in the grass where the cicala sings, might have made a living part of an idyll. It was always Maddalena who danced, and Beppo who sat on the scorched hillside piping her music, his brown eyes mysterious with dreams.

They were both orphans and perhaps the loneliness was a link to draw them closer together. For such there was the stick if the goats strayed, or they forgot to be home by sundown. Maddalena had her own share of beatings, yet she would have borne them doubly, trebly, if Beppo could only have gone free, for Beppo was fragile and gentle, and the stick that only enraged her and made her obstinate, had, on the contrary, made Beppo ill for days. Yet, if Maddalena had not kept her wits about her, they would have been in trouble much oftener than they were. It was Beppo who would forget on the warm hillside the sickness of his last beating, and the chill of his empty stomach, making tunes for Maddalena to dance to, while the goats invaded the vineyards, or the dews and night found them yet far afield.

It was good while the summer lasted, and the children could forget the beatings in the comfort of the sun on their half-clad bodies. But harder when it was winter, sharp and bright, and there were more children, real children of the house, than the house could hold, and Beppo's starvation and nakedness told upon him, so that he coughed and grew hollow-eyed, while Maddalena was only exhilarated by the clear air and the unwinking sunlight.

Maddalena was always the little mother, ready with compassion and comfort for her Beppo, when they wandered apart from the other children, who looked at them askance, because they were orphans, and had to bear the blame and the blows.

She was very much stronger than the boy, and their positions were quite reversed, she bearing the heavy burdens and taking the rough roads; he accepting this state of things, as though he were the girl and she the boy. No one but Maddalena knew as the boy himself did the aches and the weariness that made him lean on his friend as a sick child on the bosom of its mother.

But there was neither sickness nor chill in the air the day Antonio came that way. It was a brilliant day, and the joy of the world had got into Beppo's fluting and Maddalena's dancing. The little, lean, golden-brown girl in her ragged frock of brown and orange and scarlet, was gay as a hummingbird. Lightly as one she poised and floated and swayed over the burnt grasses, and danced faster and faster as Beppo, with eyes of rapture, made wilder music.

Suddenly the pipe fell from his lips and the dancer came to earth.

"Arava, bravissima!" from the lips

of a stranger, had sufficed to break the spell.

The newcomer was a bearded, dark fellow of middle age, with a wide mouth, and a smile of extreme enjoyment that fell on the children with a suffusing friendliness. He was extravagantly dressed, with a profusion of bright colors and a hat hung with ribbons. The children thought him very fine and gazed at him open-mouthed.

"I am sorry," he said, making a bow to Maddalena, "to have interrupted the signorina's delicious performance. See here"—he took from his breech-pocket a handful of small coins and scattered them—"tis a tribute to beauty and genius; but gold it should be, gold and gems, if Antonio Romano could but follow the promptings of his heart."

He seated himself on the grass by Beppo, with the manner of one coming critically to the theater.

"Dance now, my beauty," said he; "dance again and let me delight myself with your grace! And you, Sig. First Violin, will you not tune up again?"

By degrees he won the confidence of the shy children, and Maddalena danced for him untiringly, and afterwards went through the acrobatic performances copied from what she had seen at a traveling circus.

"Ah!" he cried, and again "Ah!" with deep breaths of satisfaction. And at last, having applauded vigorously, he begged them to lead him to their mothers in the cottage below.

"Ah!" said Maddalena, "I have no mother, nor has Beppo. None cares for us, except the Mother of God. So we love each other and make pets of the goats."

She started suddenly, and springing up, looked distractedly about the hillside.

"They have wandered again," she cried, "and to-night there will be beatings and no supper for thee, Beppo, and for me. Alas! it is my fault, and it is only last night that she beat thee, and starved thee, caro."

She ran to Beppo and caught his head to her breast as might a mother, quite unheeding the presence of the gay stranger, who was the cause of their transgression.

But Antonio Romano swore an oath which the recording angel might well blot out.

"Per Bacco!" he cried. "Who is she, this monster that beats and starves motherless babes? And thou, Flower of the Air, dost thou also go hungry as well as thy flute-player?"

Maddalena nodded energetically. A smile broke over the stranger's expressive face.

"Come away, my children," he said, "and let the goats wander home unguided at evening. Come; we have room for both in the great caravan below there. We go to Palermo, where the signorina shall dance in the square and the signor shall pipe to her."

He spread his hands out above their heads.

"Come, little ones," he said, "my good wife shall feed and clothe you. If Papa Antonio is ever harsh or cruel with you, may the little one he gave to Heaven forget him!"

He took a hand of each, and the children, fascinated, went away with him. Down below the hillside, in the shadow of the woods, the oxen that drew the great yellow and scarlet caravans made siesta for the midday.

Everywhere about the grass men attired like Antonio had flung themselves to rest. Girls in short skirts and spangles, with flowers in their hair, sat in the shade and chattered like the cicalas, while they stitched at some tawdry finery or played with round-limbed children.

Antonio led his two goat-herds to where by the door of the biggest caravan a buxom, kind-faced woman, with long earrings, cooked something savory over a little stove.

"See, my beloved, what I have brought thee," he said. "These are two little orphans, rescued from hunger and the whip, to be thine own instead of the angel we have lost."

"They have no mother?" she asked, already opening her arms.

"Nor father, my beautiful. They are the little children of the good God, and now they are ours."

A little later the white oxen were once more put in the yoke. The whips cracked, the great caravan lumbered heavily, and Beppo and Maddalena sat snugly within Antonio's wheeled house, lest any should see and recognize them, and held each other's hands, and looked in each other's eyes, full of delight and wonder at their adventure, and fearing nothing so long as they were together.

Antonio was as good as his word. No father and mother could have been more tender to the little waifs than he and Teresita.

There was no lute and cry upon their track. Who cared for them, poor little human crickets, when the goats came home alone at evening. At first, the stick stood ready to the stout peasant hands to punish them when they should come. But presently it was realized that they would not come; and none grieved, since Beppo was a weakling, and Maddalena passionate and obstinate.

The years passed very happily, journeying up and down the strange countries, with Antonio and Teresita and their troupe of mimmers. Maddalena brought prosperity of a kind to Antonio. She was no ordinary dancing-

girl, no common acrobat. The strength and suppleness which had made Antonio call her "Flower of the Air" retained her name, and everywhere the caravans halted, drew crowds to see her dance on the tight-rope and disport herself at giddy heights as secure and graceful as any bird.

But, as the snows and the storms drove the circuses into winter quarters, so the snows of age in time fell on Antonio. They had all earned for the day and saved nothing; and the time came when the troupe melted and broke up, and Antonio and Teresita were left all but alone with their children.

It was then that the English impresario saw the performance of the "Flower of the Air," and offered her an engagement at a salary that nigh took her breath away.

Maddalena danced with joy. "Now it is my turn," she said, "and you will go back to Sicily, little father and mother, and own a little vineyard, and keep a roof for Beppo and me to return to one day."

"Beppo will go with thee, child?" said Antonio. "It is well. Are you not brother and sister? And Teresita and I will be happier knowing he is near thee in the wicked world."

All these years, Beppo, sickly and dreamy, had been little use in the Romano troupe. Not that he was ever allowed to feel that his Sicilian piping was thin as the cicala's song to those who liked the blare of brazen instruments.

"He brought love for him when he came," said Teresita, to whom the children stood in place of the baby she had lost; and both she and Antonio were proud of the tall, handsome, delicate lad, who had the look of a signor, and not of a son of peasants.

"Why, father and mother mine," said Maddalena, in response to Antonio's speech, "we have a much better plan than that; a much better plan."

She blushed and dimpled all over like a brown pool in sunlight.

"We are to marry, Beppo and I. See you, we have always loved each other. Before you came to love us, we had only each other and the Madonna and the angels. And it is better that I should be Signora than Signorina in the world we go to."

So it was settled, and the little lovers of old became husband and wife and went away with the English impresario, while Antonio and Teresita went sadly back to Sicily and became proprietors, selling the caravans, and turning the white oxen to the plow.

They looked long for the children to come to them, but they did not come, although the fond and faithful letters and the money came regularly.

"A little longer," wrote Maddalena, "and we will come and will stay, and I shall forget that I was the 'Flower of the Air,' and shall be glad to remember that I am only a little withered flower on a Sicilian hillside."

The performances at the Variety drew many of the class which likes to see its fellow-creatures throw dice with death.

The most daring and most graceful of the performances was that of Signora Romano, the "Flower of the Air," with her dance at a giddy height and her wonderful flight through space.

Two men watched her from a private box as she curtsied to the audience. She was unspcakably brilliant in her doublet of gold tissue and hose of yellow satin.

"What a charming creature!" said one.

"Yes," said the other, and then lifted his hat. "Ave, for Martyrum!" he added, gravely.

"Why, Hilton," said the other, "what words in such a place!"

"I say it every time I see her," said the other. "Look, man, and you will say it, too. Don't you see the martyr in her eyes?"

"You are sentimental, Hilton."

"No, it is only that you are dull, Dalvell. One day—she will be less strong than usual, or she will be distracted—the least little wrench during her somersault, and she will break her back. I have come here day after day to see it. She knows that it will happen in all probability. She is prepared for death every time she steps on that stage. It is a race between her and death."

"I hope you are not right, Hilton. If you are the legislature should put down such performances."

"It will eventually, when some great awakening comes to our country people. Just look at their faces. Those women there have the very expression of the Roman dames when they turned up the thumb. What do you suppose brings them except the chance of seeing yonder little human flower smashed to pieces?"

"And you, Hilton?"

"I come for the same purpose, but for another reason. Do you see the handsome fellow in the wings who gloats over the signora's beauty?"

"A lover?"

"Yes, and a husband. It is for his sake the child runs a race with death every day. It is for his sake I am here."

"Tell me more."

"The man is lying on his feet. Any great shock would kill him; but, on the other hand, a life of well-being might prolong his indefinitely. This is the signora's first lucrative engagement. Every time she performs brings her one step nearer to safety for them both. She has promised me that she will take him back to Sicily after her time here

terminates. There are a couple of old people there who depend on her also."

"How much you know about her, Hilton?"

"She called me in to see him. He has been spitting blood."

"Does he know her danger?"

"He sees the performance is dangerous, but he is used to it, and he has unbounded confidence in her strength and dexterity. They keep themselves from thinking too much by planning the life in Sicily when her peril is over—all the years are provided for. They do not ask much, poor children! They have all the Italian's frugality. I pray the thing may end well. But now—ah! there she goes, like a golden butterfly."

Silently the men watched her as she swung from bar to bar, till she was the center of the patch of golden limelight in the roof. For awhile she disported herself there in movements of the most aerial delicacy.

"I like this part," said the doctor; "it is safe enough, and she is, as you say, a charming creature."

"I feel a hound to be here," said Dalvell. "No, I shall not see her leap. It is playing with flesh and blood. And, good God, there are children here as well as women!"

"Watch the husband's face, then," replied the doctor. "He is rapturously in love with her, and yet their happiness is so quiet. They were children together."

Dalvell looked at the man in the wings. Unseen by the rest of the house, he was kissing his hand to the woman in the flies. His slender figure leaned forward a little; his eager eyes were full of light.

It must have been the moment of the leap. Dalvell heard the low sigh of suspense of the people about him. He still watched the husband.

Suddenly—he could not tell how it happened, it was in a flash of time—the man in the wings staggered and lurched forward. He had the impulse to rush to his aid. But there rang through the hall the most terrible cry, and then everyone rose up; there was a hoarse shout, a pressing forward, a swaying, a breaking out of many voices, and the mass of people was rushing confusedly in one direction.

"Come with me," said Hilton. "What I feared has happened. I'm afraid I can hardly do much for her. It is damnable she should have been allowed to kill herself. But that poor lad!"

"I don't think he will know," said Dalvell, in a hushed voice, looking towards the huddled-up figure in the wings. "At least, he did not see her fall. Thank God for that!"

The "Flower of the Air" had been carried behind the scenes.

Dr. Hilton hurried there, made a hasty examination.

"Her back is broken," he said; "she will not live very long. She is smashed to pieces."

"Come with me," said Dalvell. "I think they have not found him, but her husband is lying in the wings."

"He saw her fall?"

"No. I am afraid she saw him. It must have been that that caused the accident."

"Ah! I saw her poor little face. Then she came . . . crash!"

Beppo was carried to the dressing-room. There was nothing to be done for him. He had died quite suddenly.

"Angina pectoris, no doubt," said Dr. Hilton. "Perhaps, poor lad, he realized suddenly that she was in deadly peril. Perhaps not. Anyhow, he has gone before her."

In the broken little figure of the "Flower of the Air" life stirred. The eyes, that seemed the only things uninjured, opened, and fixed themselves after a minute on Dr. Hilton's face.

"Beppo?" she cried, with difficulty. "I saw him fall."

The doctor held something to her lips.

"Be brave, my child. You are dying; but he has gone before you."

"Ah! he need not know. It will be better than Sicily . . . and there are none sick there. The money is for the old people . . . you will find it . . . Dr. Hilton . . . at my lodgings."

The voice died off in sing-song.

"I am so glad . . ." she panted again—"that he . . . has gone first . . . I could not have left . . . him."

"Come, Dalvell," said Dr. Hilton. "We can do no more. She will not speak again."—London Sketch.

"All Right, Gov'nor."

A grand wedding was being solemnized at St. Peter's, Eaton Square. On each side of the strip of carpet that extended from the church door to the curb was a crowd of well-dressed people watching the guests arrive. In the wake of a procession of equipages of the most aristocratic and well-appointed character came a four-wheeled cab, dingy and disreputable beyond belief. "Here! here!" shouted the policeman in charge. "You can't stop here! We're waiting for the bishop of—"

The cabman regarded the officer with a triumphant leer, as he climbed down from his seat and threw a ragged blanket over his skeleton steed.

"It's all right, gov'nor," he said. "I've got the old duffer inside!"—London Spare Moments.

Cheap Tours.

Englishmen may now spend a fortnight in Paris or Switzerland for \$35, or enjoy a Norwegian tour for \$50.

CUBA IS IMPROVING.

Gen. Fitzhugh Lee, Just Home from the Island, Says American Military Restraint Has a Salutary Effect.

Washington, Oct. 30.—Gen. Fitzhugh Lee, who arrived in Washington last night from New York, said in an interview yesterday that the people of Cuba are steadily improving under the existing protectorate of the United States and are slowly but surely rebuilding their war-wasted homes and repairing their crippled fortunes. Life and property are secure in Cuba, owing largely, he said, to the salutary restraint exercised by American military authority. He thinks the time not ripe yet, however, for a purely Cuban government. He says:

Cuba is improving. The Cubans are tractable and quiet, and the revolution has given them self-respect and self-reliance. Their impulses are generally in the right direction, but of course both in the theory and practice of self-government they are wholly without experience. There is among certain Cubans a deep-seated prejudice against some men who, the Cubans think, oppressed Cubans under Spanish rule, and if given a free rein, the Cubans would make short work of them. The United States government is pledged to grant independence to Cuba after the island has been pacified, and I believe that the promise should be fulfilled just as swiftly as we can in reason and justice. The industrial situation is improving, and money is gradually going into Cuba, but nothing like as fast as it would if investors were sure that property would remain safe for years to come and be protected by a government strong enough to enforce law and order.

PEACE BEFORE POLICIES.

The President Will Not Listen to Any Schemes for Government of the Philippines Until the Insurrection Is Over.

Washington, Oct. 30.—There is only one question before the government now concerning the Philippines—that is the putting down of the insurrection. Until that is accomplished the president will not be inclined to give much time to any other aspects of the situation. This is, in effect, what Mr. Kinley has told the members of the Philippine commission during his interviews with them. The president is willing and even anxious that the commission get to work on its report, but for himself he is concerned chiefly in crushing the rebellion. When that is done he will be ready to consider suggestions and policies for the government of the islands.

HE USED HIS FEET.

In an Exciting Prize Fight in Paris the "Knock Out" Was Made in a Kick on the Leg.

Paris, Oct. 30.—The fight for 35,000 francs between Charlemont, the French champion, and "Jerry" Driscoll, former champion of the British navy, Saturday afternoon resulted in a victory for the former. There was a great crowd present and the fighting was hot for six rounds. In the seventh round Driscoll was knocked out by a smashing kick on the leg, the Frenchman being allowed to use his feet, in accordance with the French custom. The seats sold as high as \$40 each.

Increase in Dead Letter Mail.

Washington, Oct. 30.—The annual report of the dead letter office shows that it received from all sources 6,855,983 pieces of mail matter, nearly nine per cent. increase over last year. Of these over 145,000 consisted of insufficiently paid mail. A quarter of a million were undelivered letters to hotel addresses, over 167,000 unclaimed parcels, and more than 500,000 pieces of foreign mail. Mail directed to fictitious addresses decreased by 45 per cent., indicating a notable restriction in operations of fraudulent concerns.

Hospital Aid Society at Manila.

Manila, Oct. 30.—A Hospital Aid society has been organized here by the ladies of the military circle. Mrs. Lawton, the wife of Gen. Lawton, has been elected president. It is the intention to supply to the sick and wounded first, clothing, slippers and periodicals, and to visit them personally. Tagalos, prisoners in the municipal hospital, will also receive care. A charity ball is soon to be given for the purpose of raising funds.

Oklahoma's Wonderful Fertility.

Perry, Ok., Oct. 30.—For three days this portion of Oklahoma has been deluged with rains. Frank Black, of Alva, has 75 peach trees in full bloom, and if present conditions continue much longer he will raise a crop of peaches. A second crop of potatoes is ready to use in S. B. Share's garden.

Must Respect Our Trade Rights.

Washington, Oct. 30.—The United States has demanded from the governments of Russia, Germany and France assurances that in their division of China into zones of political domination or spheres of influence the trade rights of citizens of this country shall be fully respected.

Inventor of Typesetting Machine Dead.

Baltimore, Md., Oct. 30.—Ottmar Mergenthaler, the inventor of the linotype typesetting machine, died this morning of consumption. He was born in Germany on May 10, 1854.

Bought Him for \$3,000.

Kansas City, Mo., Oct. 30.—At Saturday's sale of Herefords, K. B. Armour bought from C. C. Slaughter, of Texas, the famous prize yearling, Aaron, paying \$3,000 for him.

Six Hundred Sheep Cremated.

Kansas City, Mo., Oct. 30.—In a fire at the stock yards late Saturday night 900 sheep were cremated and three firemen were injured.