

WILD THORN BLOSSOMS.

Deep within the tangled wildwood,
Where the tuis sing,
And the dreaming pine trees whisper
In their steep a tale of spring;
When the laughing brook goes leaping
Down the mountain's mossy stair,
There the wild white thorn is flinging
Its sweet fragrance everywhere.

Rough and rugged are its branches,
But its bloom is white as snow;
And the roaming bees have found it,
In their wanderings to and fro.
And they gather from its sweetness
Heavy freight the living day,
And go singing homeward, singing
Their thanksgivings all the way.

All unheeded fall the blossoms,
Like sweet snowflakes through the air,
And the summer marches onward
With its fragrance rich and rare;
But the grateful bee remembers,
As he winds his mellow horn,
That the spring time was made sweeter
By the blossoms of the thorn.
—Julian S. Cutler in Boston Transcript.

THE BOAT.

Sky and water. Both motionless; two immensities that extend as far as the eye can reach. Not a breath of air ruffles the mirror-like surface of the sea. There is no rent in the opaque curtain of clouds through which the sunbeams might glint. The atmosphere is heavy and the air seems hardly sufficient for the birds that are flying low, grazing the water in their flight. All nature is overwhelmed by an enormous fatigue. These indications would deceive a seaman accustomed to these tropical seas, who would immediately recognize the sequel and the results of one of the terrible hurricanes which are so disastrous in these latitudes.

In fact, it was a terrific gale. All night long the whistles of the steamers have sounded during the tempest their lugubrious, shrill shrieks, which were overwhelmed by the more powerful voice of the wind. In vain have men blasphemed the name of God; in vain have weeping women implored his aid. Pitiless in its rioting, the sea has in an hour's time crushed and swallowed everything from the humble fishing smack to the gigantic steamer; and now, all that is to be seen is a few planks drifting along on its placid surface.

However, in the distant horizon appears a black speck, which grows larger every minute. As it draws near enough to be distinguished it proves to be a ship's boat, a sorry skiff, so badly constructed, so badly put together that a store clerk, out for a holiday at Asnières, would think twice before venturing out in it. How has it been possible for this mere nutshell to resist the power which has destroyed so many giants? Probably by one of those happy accidents, those chances which accompany all great upheavals brought on by the forces of nature. Does it not sometimes happen that, after a conflagration which has destroyed a whole town, the green painted box, with a gilly flower, that bedecked some working girl's window, is found intact on a heap of smoking ruins, having passed scathless through the flames which have spread desolation far and wide?

On the stern of the boat there is a name, La Belle Julie. In it are two men, one rowing, the other lying like a log in the bottom of the craft. The rower, a small, dimpled, dried up man, tugs at his oars with all his might, while his anxious eyes scan the gray immensity which surrounds him on all sides. By the rise and fall of his panting chest and the great drops of perspiration which bead his sunburnt brow, it is evident that he has a heavy task and that he has been laboring at it for a long time.

From time to time his gaze rests on the inert mass at his feet, his companion. The latter seems quite a colossus, judging from the room he takes up in the bottom of the boat, and from his loud snoring, which keeps time to the splash of the oars as they dip into the sea.

While the arms of the rower ply the oars his thoughts fly far, far away. In his mind he sees that little out-of-the-way corner nestled between two cliffs, the lower of which is capped by a chapel of the Virgin, and which on bright days allows one to see the distant roofs of Dieppe basking in the warm sunshine.

He thinks of his childhood, of his boyish romps among the rocks at low tide with Mark, the one who is there snoring on the bottom of the boat, his great friend, already quite strong and much feared by the other youngsters, and who had declared himself his protector.

Then it was his first communion, still with Mark, in his holiday garb at the chapel on the cliff, and then the first fishing party with his father and friends. After that he recalled his wedding day—his marriage with Claudine Vatinel, one of the prettiest girls in the country, very white like an apple blossom in mid April. As a matter of course his best man on this occasion was Mark, who looked grand in his Sunday clothes.

Ah! how these memories flit through Remy's brain, while his tired arms tug at the oars.

There are sad memories too. The death of his mother, carried off by pneumonia, kissing with her already cold lips her grandson Yvon, and stretching her thin, trembling arms above his curly head as she pronounced a blessing upon it. This was the beginning of misfortune, the first of many dark days. There was that other tempest more terrible even than the one of last night in which a mighty wave carried off the old man, his father, and shattered to pieces the Claudine, that beautiful boat which he had bought in partnership with Mark, who lost his all at the same time. Dear Mark! how strong, how superb he had seemed as he wrestled with the storm.

And when the hurricane had destroyed their boat, he had thrown Remy upon the floating mast, and with one hand he helped him maintain his hold upon this fragment of the wreck, while, with the other, he steered it to the rock which they reached, and where they had awaited ebb tide to return with mournful steps to the village from which they had so gayly departed. Times like these

and sharing such dangers unite men more closely, cement them to each other as it were!

After this Mark and Remy had not quitted each other. A Bordeaux ship owner, sojourning on the coast of Normandy, had heard of the disastrous end of the Claudine, and, seeing her two masters without resources, offered to take them into his service. Then Remy had left his wife and his little one in the small, smoke begrimed cottage of his forefathers. Ah! how he had kissed those two well beloved ones when they parted! The separation was a hard trial to him, but then the place he had been offered was a good one. Little by little he had been able to restore to his family all the comforts that had been lost, and when between trips he returned home they all seemed to love one another doubly, as if to make up for lost time.

Anyhow, he had just had a very narrow escape. A little more and the storm would have settled his account and Remy would have gone to meet the old man, beneath the green waves. Again it was Mark who had saved him, just as he had done before! How greatly he was indebted to that kind friend! But, pshaw! what did that matter? Wasn't his heart there ever ready to pay back in kind? And Remy lived anew those past few hours. What terror there was on board of the Belle Julie during the last panic. No more orders, no officers, no differences of rank. Nothing but a set of brutes famishing for life, and ready to kill in order to escape death! They had crowded into the three life boats. The ship's boat was despised as too unsafe, too likely to be dashed to pieces by those furious waves. The captain had shouted to Mark and Remy, who were busy gathering up the ship's paper and money.

His voice was probably lost in the roar of the tempest, for when they did hear it, it was too late. A cabin boy had cut the rope which kept the craft in place, and in the twinkling of an eye the two men found themselves abandoned and alone upon the deck of the vessel, which was slowly sinking with them.

Then they had rushed to the ship's boat, their last resource! Thanks to a lucky chance as well as to the energy, strength and skill of Mark, they are safe, for the time being; no indeed, safe forever, for Mark is no stranger in those parts. He knows exactly where they are. Thanks to his skill and knowledge, they will be able to steer clear of the rocks that fringe that forbidding coast and reach a safe haven. Thanks to him, Remy's heart may still beat high with the hope of seeing again his native land and embracing once more his loved ones.

With this thought tears well up in Remy's eyes; and he casts upon his heart a lingering look of love and gratitude.

Mark still sleeps. The sun, which has at last pierced through the heavy clouds, bathes him in its golden rays.

All of a sudden Remy, who has not ceased rowing, feels a tremor shake his frame.

The coarse shirt of his friend is open, exposing to view a species of cloth scapular lying upon his bosom. Some too abrupt motion during the storm had probably severed the silken cord by which it was attached to his tanned, sunburnt neck, and had even torn the scapular itself, as from one of its ends appears something of a dingy white color, resembling a paper or a card discolored by age. The sleeper, in stretching himself out on the bottom of the boat like a wornout beast, had not noticed the mishap.

It is upon this something that Remy fixes his gaze. Although he cannot clearly make out what it is, it still affects him in a most singular manner.

It seems to him that the card is a picture which resembles the charming and well beloved features of his wife, of his Claudine.

He shakes his head to dispel the illusion, closes his eyes, reopens them and casts them once more upon the picture. The vision will not be driven away.

Then, to satisfy himself, he lets go his oars, bends over Mark, who snores on, and grasps the object.

He felt faint. He plunges one hand into the sea and bathes his fevered brow and temples with the icy water.

It is really her picture. It is Claudine, and on the back of the soiled paste board he finds written in that large, irregular handwriting which he knows so well these two lines:

To my well beloved Mark, my only love, the father of our Yvon. From His Claude.

Remy was as pale as death. In a second's time all his hopes, all his love, and all his happiness have been wrecked. He puts both hands to his head; his brain is tortured by a most acute pain; his temples throb as if they would burst, while a cold sweat gathers upon his forehead. He feels that he is going mad.

Come, now! such a crime is not, cannot be possible. His wife, his child, his brother, all lost by the same blow! No! No! He must be dreaming; he must be under the influence of a horrid nightmare.

But his eyes again gaze upon the picture in his hand, a rude photograph taken in a shanty one holiday when all three had gone there together on a pleasure trip. Oh! he remembers well, and he feels the blood rush to his temples as an atrocious thirst for revenge stirs his heart.

Oh! yes, he will revenge himself! First on him, the infamous scoundrel! He has him there in his power fast asleep! God is just!

And grasping with both hands one of the heavy oars that he had dropped but a moment ago, he whirls it about his head to crush in the sleeper's skull.

But suddenly he stops! Why end it all in that way, so quickly? Let that scoundrel, that thief, that monster, unconsciously pass away in his sleep! Pshaw! that was no way to revenge himself. He will not even have time to suffer. What Remy wants for the wrist is a refined torture, an atrocious, slow, inhuman agony similar to the one he is passing through himself. An idea flashes through his brain. Quickly he unrolls the long woolen sash which is

wound several times about his waist; with his pocketknife he cuts it into four equal parts. He tugs with all his might on each piece to prove its strength. No danger! it is strong.

He then glides like a snake on the bottom of the craft to the side of the giant upon whose lips flits a smile. "Probably it is her image that he sees in a dream," thinks Remy! And with infinite precaution, with all the care of a nurse who dreads to awaken her sick baby, he binds the sleeper's feet and hands and ties him to the strong seats of the boat.

Having done this the avenger stands up in his triumph and sets to thinking.

How is he going to kill him? What combinations of cruelty shall he invent? It must be a long, long suffering, for each cry that he extorts from his enemy will be like balm dropping upon his own horrible wounds.

First, he will with one blow put out

Mark's eyes. Remy already seems to feel his two fingers plunging through the lids and pupils of his friend's eyes and bathing in his warm blood, and his soul seemed filled with effable joy.

Only after this has been accomplished will he reveal the truth to Mark and tell him his sentence. The scoundrel is so strong that he cannot be too careful! Once blinded he will be harmless, and besides the movements of the Hercules will be paralyzed by the bands with which he has secured him.

Then, with a stab of his knife every minutes, beginning by parts where there can be no danger of causing death. And, when the pierced, riddled, mangled body will be writhing in convulsions he shall pour brandy into each of his gaping wounds. Both have well filled flasks, so there is enough to make the fun last a long time.

All of a sudden the avenger, who had bent over to strike, arises to his feet. His pallid countenance seems paler than ever. His hand, which was feeling for his knife, falls inert to his side, without the weapon. Then slowly he drops upon a seat. He is shivering, his teeth chattering.

After he has taken his revenge what will he do himself? He will be alone then. Alone to row for whole days and nights, perhaps, he who cannot handle the oars more than three hours at a time; alone to meet tempests which Mark might overcome, but which would crush him like a straw; alone to seek the shore of that immense ocean which is to Mark like an open book, and if perchance he does reach land, he will be all alone to meet wild beasts and perhaps wilder men! It would be death! Certain death! And what a death!

As he thinks of these things Remy trembles from head to foot and his throat becomes parched from fear.

Then, with still greater care than he had used in the first place, Remy bends over the sleeper, returns the picture to the scapular, cuts the four bands that bind the sleeper, casts them into the sea and returns to his oars.

He is none too soon. The sleeper himself, sits up and rubs his eyes.

His looks fall upon his breast. He notices the broken string and the picture, a corner of which is sticking out. He becomes slightly pale and casts a glance toward Remy, whose impassive eyes seem to be scanning the distant horizon.

Mark quietly pushes everything back and buttons up his shirt, after which he stands up in the boat and stretches out his Herculean arms.

"Ah!" says he, "I have had a good nap! Well old fellow, anything new?"

"Nothing new," replies Remy, very cordially.

"B-r-r-r! It is quite chilly. Suppose we take a drink, eh?"

And taking from his side the gourd which hangs there at the end of a leather strap, he strikes it against the one his companion holds out to him.

"Well! here's to you, little brother!"

And Remy replies: "Here's to you!" Translated from the French for The New Orleans Picayune.

TO MUCH DANDELION.

California has a new grievance—the dandelion. Some years ago it is said that a citizen imported from the east the seed of the old fashioned dandelion. He wanted something to remind him of his early home. Like the man who imported the sparrow, he did worse than he knew. The sparrow is everywhere, so is the dandelion. The seed drifts in the wind like that of the thistle, the down is built into the nests of birds, and every seed which gets a lodgement on a lawn or grass plot will, in due time, produce a million more. Now the solitary dandelion is very attractive in bloom, and hardly less so when after the blossom the gauze globe appears, and a few days afterward goes sailing off before the wind like a small balloon. But the citizen who is forced to dig up his lawn because a million dandelion roots have strangled the grass will utter no benediction over this rich golden blossom.

Dieppe basking in the warm sunshine.

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A PHOTOGRAPHER'S TRIALS.

ELEGANT DEMANDS ON HIS SKILL, PATIENCE AND GOOD NATURE.

A photographer meets with many strange characters and is witness of many curious incidents. In a recent informal talk before the Society of Amateur Photographers, Abraham Bogardus, the veteran photographer, told a number of amusing stories of incidents that happened to him in the course of his forty-one years' experience in the studio and dark room. He prefaced his talk with a few sarcastic remarks regarding young men who write long screeds in photographic papers on how to take photographs, whom the experiences of a single day "under the skylight" would cause them to wish they had never been born. He then went on to speak of the unreasonable demands which many sitters make.

"At one time," he said, "a lady brought three children, two boys and a girl, to me, to have their pictures taken. They came all prepared, with a doll for the girl and a gun and a hobby horse for the boys. Well, there was a row at the start. Both boys wanted to mount the horse. We got that settled after a time, but only to strike a new trouble. Of course you all know that the nearer together you group the objects to be photographed the better picture you will get. Well, this woman was a genius in her way; she did not want her children grouped close together as other people's were, but she wanted the little girl taken in the middle of the room and the boys in opposite corners. Of course I told her it could not be done, whereupon she said: 'Well, Mr. Bogardus, I have always been told that you were very accommodating. I have been to three or four photographers and they all told me the same thing. I don't see as you are any more accommodating than the rest of them.' At another time a man, an Irishman, of course, wanted a carte-de-visite, and he wanted it 'life size.' Some people, by the way, never seem to understand the difference between 'full length' and 'life size.' I told him that the plate wouldn't hold it. 'Then take it with the legs hanging down,' were his instructions. Gen. Logan, who used to sit for me, did not often joke, but he did occasionally. He came in one day and saw hanging on the wall a picture of a man whom he greatly disliked. He turned to me and said: 'I see you take pictures of everybody.' 'Yes,' was my answer; 'that is what I am here for.' 'I suppose you would take picture of the devil if you could get him to sit for you.' 'Of course. I suppose I could run off a good many of them in Washington!' 'Yes,' he replied; 'that's the best place in the world to sell them.'

"An old lady once came to me who wanted a picture, 'full face, but little three-cornered.' I once asked Dr. Tyng if he would not prefer a side view, and he replied: 'No, sir. I am an upright man. I don't turn to the right or left for any man.' But amid all the fun we also see some very sad things. I remember once a woman came in with a bundle in her arms which when unrolled proved to be the dead body of her little baby, which she wanted photographed. I remember once one of our venerable judges came in with his wife. I took both their pictures. He was perfectly satisfied with his, but she did not seem exactly pleased with hers, said it was too old. The judge turned to her and remarked: 'Well, mother, if you wanted a handsome picture you should have begun thirty years ago.' That settled it; she had nothing more to say. A lady came to me once to make an appointment for a friend who, she said, was very difficult to suit. She had tried dozens of photographers and had never been suited. Of course I promised to do the best I could for her. At the appointed time the lady came. She was old, and weighed at least 200 pounds. Her skin looked like a boiled lobster, and she was clad in low neck and short sleeves. I did not wonder she was never suited. Well, I did my best, but when the picture was made she agreed with me perfectly that it did look horrid. She did not order any of them." —New York Sun.

LOOKING FOR HER POCKET.

"I see you have been poking fun at women's pockets," said a lady friend to the Stroller. "I am glad of it. Why, it has got so now that a woman has to get out a search warrant to find the pocket in a dress when it comes home from the dressmaker. We had a funny case in point in our women's missionary meeting at the church. The leader of the meeting had just finished reading a most affecting appeal from our lady missionary in Caffrairia, and there was a solemn pause of expectant attention till some sister should feel moved to speak. Presently a white-haired old lady—mother in Israel—rose slowly and feebly to her feet. All eyes were turned upon her, and we waited to see whether she wished to make a few remarks or lead in prayer. One hand, incased in its wrinkled black kid glove, went fumbling and groping among the folds of her skirt. After a long pause she drew out a clean handkerchief still in its folds, and then with an air of relief, slowly sat down again. She had only risen to find her pocket." —Chicago Journal.