SELECT POETRY.

"OLD TIMES."

[Here is an exquisite poem, which appeared in the Chicago Journal, and is probably from the pen of B. F. Taylor:]

There's a beautious song on the slumbrous air,
That drifts through the valley of dreams;
It comes from the clime where the roses were,
And a tuneful heart and bright brown hair,
That waves in the morning beams.

Soft eyes of azure and eyes of brown,
And snow-white foreheads are there;
A glimmering Cross and a glittering Crown,
A thorny bed and a couch of down,
Lost hopes and leaflets of prayer.

A breath of Spring in the breezy woods,
Sweet wafts from the quivering pines—
Blue violet eyes beneath green hoods,
A bubble of brooklets, a scent of buds,
Bird warblers and clambering vines.

A rosy wreath and a dimpled hand;
A ring and a glittering vow—
Three golden links of a broken band,
A tiny track on the snow white sand,
A tear and a senseless brow.

There's a tincture of grief in the beautiful song
That sobs on the slumbrous air,
And loneliness felt in the festive throng,
Sinks down on the soul as it trembles along
From a clime where the roses were.

We heard it first at the dawn of day,
And it mingled with matin chimes,
But years have distanced the beautiful lay,
And its melody floweth from far away,
And we call it now Old Times.

SELECT STORY.

From the Fairy Book of All Nations. By Edouard Laboulaye, Member of the Institute of France.—Translated by Mary L. Booth. Published by Harper and Brother.

YVON AND FINETTE,

A FAIRY TALE OF BRITTANY.

(Concluded.)

When the steward, the bailiff, and the seneschal were experiencing these little unpleasantnesses, of which they did not think it proper to boast, preparations were being made for a great event at Kerver Castle, namely the marriage of Yvon and the fair-haired lady. Two days had passed in those preparations, and all the friends of the family had gathered together for twenty leagues round, when, one fine morning, Yvon and his bride, with the Baron and Baroness Kerver, took their seats in a great carriage adorned with flowers, and set out for the celebrated church of St. Madore.

A hundred knights, in full armor, mounted on the horses decked with ribbons, rode on each side of the betrothed couple, each with his vizor raised and his lance at rest in token of honor. By the side of each baron, a squire, also on horseback, carried the seignorial banner. At the head of the procession rode the seneschal, with a gilded staff in his hand. Behind the carriage gravely walked the bailiff, followed by the vassals, while the steward railed at the serfs, a noisy and curious rabble.

As they were crossing a brook, a league from the castle, one of the traces of the carriage broke, and they were forced to stop. The accident repaired, the coachman cracked his whip, and the horses started with such force that the new trace broke in three pieces. Six times this provoking piece of wood was replaced, and six time it broke anew, without drawing the carriage from the hole where it was wedged. Every one had a word of advise to offer; even the peasants, as wheel-wrights and carpenters, were not the last to make a show of their knowledge. This gave the steward courage; he approached the baron, took off his cap, and, scratching his head,

"My lord," said he, "in the house that you see shining yonder among the trees, there lives a woman who does things that nobody else can do. Only persuade her to lend you her tongs, and, in my opinion, they will hold till morning."

The baron made a sign, and ten peasants ran to the cottage of Finette, who very obligingly lent them her gold tongs. They were put in the place of the trace; the coachman cracked his whip, and off went the carriage like a feather.

Every one rejoiced, but the joy did not last long. A hundred steps father, lo! the bottom of the carriage gave way; little more, and the noble Kerver family would have sunk quite out off sight. The wheel-wrights and the carpenters set to work at once; they sawed planks, nailed them down fast, and in the twinkling of an eye repaired the accident. The coachman cracked his whip, and the horses started, when behold, half of the carriage was left behind; the Baroness Kerver sat by the side of the bride, while Yvon and the baron were carried off at full gallop. Here was a new difficulty. Three times was the carriage mended, three times it broke anew. There was every reason to believe that it was enchanted.

Every one had a word of advice to offer. This gave the bailiff courage. He approached the baron, and said, with a low tone,

"My lord, in the house that you see shining yonder among the trees, there lives a woman who does things such as nobody else can do. Only persuade her to lend you her door for the bottom of the carriage, and, in my opinion, it will hold till morning."

The baron made a sign, and twenty peasants ran to the cottage of Finette, who very obligingly lent them her golden door. They put it in the bottom of the carriage, when it fitted as if it had been made expressly for it. The party took their seats in the carriage, the coachman cracked his whip, the church was in sight, and all the trouble of the journey seemed ended.

Not at all! Suddenly the horses stopped, and refused to draw. There were four of them. Six, eight, ten, twenty-four more were put to the carriage, but all in vain; it was impossible to stir them. The more they were whipped, the deeper the wheels sunk into the ground like the coulter of a plow.

What were they to do? To go on foot would have been a disgrace. To mount a horse, and ride to the church like simple peasants, was not the custom of the Kerver. They tried to lift the carriage, they pushed the wheels, they shook it, ut all in vain. Meanwhile the day was eclining, and the hour for the marriage d passed.

Every one had a word of advice to offer. This gave the seneschal courage. He approached the baron, alighted from his horse, raised his velvet cap, and said,

"My lord, in the house that you see shining yonder among the trees, there lives a woman who does things such as nobody else can do. Only persuade her cow to draw the carriage, and, in my opinion, she will draw it till morning."

The baron made a sign, and thirty peasants ran to the cottage of Finette, who very obligingly lent them her golden-horned cow.

To go to church drawn by a cow was not, perhaps, what the ambitious bride had dreamed of, but it was better than to remain unmarried in the road. The heifer was harnessed, therefore, before the four horses, and every body looked on anxiously to see what this boasted animal would do.

But before the coachman had time to crack his whip, lo! the cow started off as if she were about to go around the world anew. Horses, carrage, baron, betrothed, coachman—all were hurried away by the furious animal. In vain the knights spurred their horses to follow the pair; in vain the peasants ran at full speed, taking the cross-road and cutting across the meadows. The carriage flew as if it had wings; a pigeon could not have followed it.

On reaching the door of the church the party, a little disturbed by this rapid journey, would not have been sorry to alight. Every thing was ready for the ceremony, and the bridle pair had long been expected; but instead of stopping, the cow redoubled her speed. Thirteen times she ran round the church like lightning, then suddently made her way in a straight line across the fields to the castle, with such force that the whole party were almost shaken to pieces before their arrival.

VII.

No more marriage was to be thought of for that day; but the tables were set and the dinner served, and the Baron Kerver was too noble a knight to take leave of his brave Bretons until they had drank according to custom—that is, from sunset till sunrise, and even a little later.

Orders were given for the guests to take their seats. Ninety-six tables were ranged in eight rows. In front of them, on a large platform covered with velvet, with a canopy in the middle, was a table larger then the rest, and loaded with fruit and flowers, to say nothing of the roast hares, and the peacocks smoking beneath their plumage. At this table the bridle pair were to have been seated in full sight, in order that nothing might be lacking to the pleasures of the feast, and that the meanest peasants might have the honor of saluting them by emptying his cup of hydromel to the honor and prosperity of the high and mighty house of Kerver.

The baron seated the hundred knights at his table, and placed their squires behind their chairs to serve them. At his right he put the bride and Yvon, but he left the seat at his left vacant, and calling a page, "Child," said he, "run to the house of the stranger lady who obliged us only too much this morning. It was not her fault if her success exceeded her good-will. Tell her that the Baron Kerver thanks her for her help, and invites her to the wedding-feast of his son Lord Yvon."

On reaching the golden house, where Finette, in tears, was mourning for her beloved, the page bent one knee to the ground, and, in the baron's name, invited the stranger lady to the castle to do honor to the wedding of Lord Yvon.

"Thank your master for me," answered the young girl, proudly, "and tell him that if he is too noble to come to my house, I am too noble to go to his."

When the page repeated this answer to his master the Baron Kerver struck the table such a blow that three plates flew into the air.

"By my honor," said he, "this is spoken like a lady, and for the first time I own myself beaten. Quick! saddle my dun mare, and let my knights and squires prepare to attend me."

It was with this brilliant train that the baron alighted at the door of the golden cottage. He begged Finette's pardon, held the stirup for her, and seated her behind him on his own horse, neither more nor less than a duchess in person. Through respect, he did not speak a single word to her on the way. On reaching the castle he uncovered his head, and led her to the seat of honor that he had chosen for her.

The baron's departure had made a great excitement, and his return caused still greater suprise. Every one asked who the lady could be that the baron treated with such respect. Judging from her costume, she was a foreigner; could she be the Duchess of Normanda or the Queen of France? The steward, the bailiff, and the seneschal were appealed to. The steward trembled, the bailiff turned pale, and the seneschal blushed, but all three were as mute as fishes. The silence of these important personages added to the general wonder.

All eyes were fixed on Finette, who felt a deadly chill at her heart, for Yvon saw but did not know her. He cast an indifferent glance at her, then began to talk in a tender tone to the fair-haired lady, who smiled disdainfully.

Finette, in despair, took from the purse the golden bullet, her last hope. While talking with the baron, who was charmed with her wit, she shook the little ball in her hand, and repeated, in a whisper:

"Golden bullet, precious treasure,
Save me, if it be thy pleasure."

And behold, the bullet grew larger and larger, until it became a goblet of chaced gold, the most beautiful cup that ever graced the table of baron or king.

Finette filled the cup herself with spiced wine, and calling the seneschal, who was shrinking behind her, she said, in her gentlest tones: "My good seneschal, I entreat you to offer this goblet to Lord Yvon. I wish to drink his health, and I am sure that he will not refuse me this pleasure."

Yvon took the goblet, which the seneschal presented to him on a salver of enamel and gold, with a careless hand, bowed to the stranger, drank the wine, and setting the cup on the table before him, turned to the fair-haired lady who occupied all his thoughts. The lady seemed anxious and vexed. He whispered a few words in her ear that seemed to please her, for her eyes sparkled, and she placed her hand again in his.

Finette cast down her head and began to weep. All was over.

"Children," cried the baron, in a voice of thunder, "fill your glasses. Let us all drink to the noble stranger who honors us with her presence. To the noble lady of the golden cottage!"

All began to huzza and drink. Yvon contented himself with raising his goblet to a level with his eyes. Suddenly he started and stood mute, his mouth open and his eyes fixed, like a man that has a vision.

It was a vision. In the gold of the goblet Yvon saw his past life as in a mirror: the giant pursuing him; Finette dragging him along; both embarking in the ship that saved them; both landing on the shore of Britany; he quitting her for an instant; she weeping at his departure. Where was she? By his side, of course. What other woman than Finette could be by the side of Yvon?

He turned toward the fair-haired lady, and cried out like a man treading on a serpent. Then, staggering as if he were drunk, he rose and looked around him with haggard eyes. At the sight of Finette he clasped his trembling hands, and, dragging himself toward her, fell on his knees and exclaimed, "Finette, forgive me!"

To forgive is the height of happiness. Before evening Finette was seated by the side of Yvon, both weeping and smiling.

And what became of the fair-haired lady? No one knows. At the cry of Yvon she disappeared; but it was said that a wretched old hag was seen flying on a broomstick over the castle walls, chased by the dogs. And it was the common opinion among the Kervers that the fair-haired lady was none other than the witch, the godmother of the giant. I am not sure enough of the fact, however, to dare warrant it. It is always prudent to believe, without proof, that a woman may be a witch, but it is never wise to say so.

What I can say on the word of an historian is, that the feast, interrupted for a moment, went on gayer than ever. Early the next morning they went to the church, where, to the joy of his heart, Yvon married Finette, who was no longer afraid of evil spirits; after which they ate, drank, and danced for thirty-six hours, without any one thinking of resting. The steward's arms were a little heavy, the bailiff rubbed his back at times, and the seneschal felt a sort of weariness in his limbs, but all three had a weight on their conscience which they could not shake off, and which made them tremble and flutter, till finally they fell on the ground and were carried off. Finette took no other vengeance on them; her only desire was to render all happy around her, far and near, who belonged to the noble house of Kerver. Her memory still lives in Brittany; and among the ruins of the old castle any one will show you the statue of the good lady, with five bullets in her hand.

THE DUTY O SOCIETY.—Society may aid in making the laborers virtuous and happy, by bringing children up to labor with steadiness, with care and with skill; to show them how to do as many useful things as possible: to do them all in the best manner; to set them an example in industry, sobriety, cleanliness and neatness; to make all these habitual to them, so that they shall never be liable to fall into the contrary.

"Good morning, Uncle Jim."
"Good morning!"
"Well, you got your daughter married off, have you?"
"Yes."
"Really, Providence smiles upon you."
"Smiles! no, bless you, she laughed right out."

A teacher asked a bright little girl, "What country is opposite us on the globe?"
"Don't know, sir," was the answer.
"Well, now," pursued the teacher, "if I were to bore a hole through the earth, and you were to go in at this end, where would you come out?"
"Out of the hole, sir," replied the pupil, with an air of triumph.