

SONG OF THE SWORD.

I remember the day that she hung me here
On the wall by the musket's side
And kissed my blade with a reverent touch

She came to me in the dark alone,
As the long years fluttered by,
And I heard her song and I felt her kiss

I leaped to the life of the battle-roar,
The spirit of strife awoke;
I danced in the light of my blade that shone

Through the flame of the battle-smoke,
My steel rang clear on the foeman's steel,
Then, stiffened and cold and still,

I am hanging again on the chimney wall;
The summers have bloomed and fled;
There are two "neath the hill that are slumbering sweet—

Her lips are warm with the breath of love;
Oh! woman who gave her brave
To her country's call and the battle thrall

Her gray head bends to the song, the dusk
Steals silently through the room;
The birds are asleep in their little nests

THREE RINGS
MANY years ago there lived in an Eastern land a nobleman who owned a ring of priceless value.

The nobleman, who was the happy owner of the ring, never removed it from his finger, and was resolved that after his death it should also remain in the possession of his own family.

After being handed down in this way through several generations, the ring came at last into the possession of a father who had three sons, all equally obedient and loving and all equally dear to him.

Being one day, alone with his eldest son he promised him that he should inherit the ring, and at another time to the second son, seeming to him the most worthy, he made the same promise, and even did the same another day to the third son.

The jeweler was very skillful, and succeeded so well in his task that when he brought the two rings he had made, and showed them to the nobleman with the original ring, the latter could not discern which of the three was the true one.

His sons buried him with great pomp, and when the funeral was over the eldest son spoke to his brothers and to the friends who were assembled and claimed to be the head and ruler of the family, as being the possessor of the ring.

"It was a mean trick," said Jones, with a smile, "but I wanted my wife to come home, and it was the only way that I could think of to get her back."

"I worked as I thought it would," My wife returned by the first train with a strange gleam of inquiry in her eyes and a set about her lips that boded trouble for me if she confirms the horrible suspicions that she is laboring under.

There are millions of feet of flooring in the Philippine Islands which have been hewed with the adz. Some of the floors of the best houses of Manila are of this nature.

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It is gratifying to learn that the effort to acclimatize the reindeer in Alaska has been successful. Although most of the 520 animals imported from Lapland nearly three years ago died en route from the over-richness of the diet of hay, on which they were fed because of the impossibility of providing the tundra-moss on which they thrive, a small number survived.

CALIFORNIA'S BIG TREES.

The Department of Agriculture has issued a report on investigations of the big trees of California that brings out some interesting and new conclusions. It shows that the dimensions of the big trees are unequalled and that their age makes them the oldest living things.

The report says the bark of the big trees often is two feet thick and almost non-combustible. "The oldest specimens felled," it says, "are still sound at the heart, and fungus is an enemy unknown to it."

The only grove now thoroughly safe from destruction is the Mariposa, and this is far from being the most interesting. Most of the other groves are either in process of or in danger of being logged.

The rest of the scanty patches of big trees are in a fair way to disappear—in Calaveras, Toulona, Fresno, and Tulare Counties they are now disappearing—by the axe. In brief, the majority of the big trees of California, certainly the best of them, are owned by people who have every right and in many cases every intention, to cut them into lumber.

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When the next war looms up the English press purposes a joint note to the War Office asking that experienced journalists be made censors in the place of insolent, underdone subalterns and cocky officers.

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NEW IDEA ABOUT BOXERS.

Writing of "The Revolution in China and Its Causes," in the Century, R. Van Bergen gives considerable information as to the Boxers.

Any intelligent man who has lived at Pekin for six months knows of these so-called Boxers, and has, knowingly or not, employed one or more of them. By the term "intelligent" is meant a man who does not suppose that every human being must necessarily understand his own language, but admits the fact that there are other tongues, and also that, when he travels or resides in foreign countries, it becomes him to familiarize himself with such foreign languages.

Every resident of Pekin employs a watchman or doorkeeper, and that person is, in every instance, a member of the Ta-chuan (literally, "Big Fist"); or, as it is now called, "Boxer," society. Properly considered, it is not a secret society, but bears a great resemblance to our labor unions. Its purpose is mainly benevolent, namely, to provide for old or disabled members.

The society of the Boxers is made up of men whose physical and muscular strength has been trained purposely and from early youth, not that they may enter the athletic arena, but that they may engage in a perfectly lawful and recognized career. They are engaged as watchmen by wealthy residents and as guards by travelers carrying a large amount of money, or to convey species for great distances.

Such a guard or watchman insures perfect safety, for it places the property or person under the protection of the Ta-chuan Union, and thieves or malefactors dread arousing its vengeance. Not a single instance is on record where a member of the Ta-chuan was faithless to his trust.

The Government recognized the union and frequently employed it to convey treasure. The father of Prince Tuan, and grandfather of the heir apparent, is, and has been for years, the official patron of the union.

It is evident from this explanation that a member of the Ta-chuan corresponds somewhat to the modern calling of private detective in our social arrangements. This is further confirmed, since, in either case, men may be hired for specific purposes, and not always in strict conformity to law.

The history of the United States contains instances where corporations, in fear of deprecations by striking workmen, have engaged a body of private detectives to repel any attack upon their plants. A man in possession of a well-filled purse could, at Pekin, engage any number of Ta-chuan members for purposes which would not bear publicity.

WORDS OF WISDOM.
All our progress is an unfolding like the vegetable bud. You have first the instinct, then an opinion, then a knowledge, as the plant has root, bud and fruit. Trust the instinct to the end, though you can render no reason. It is vain to hurry it. By trusting it to the end, it shall ripen unto truth, and you shall know while you believe.

A good conscience is to the soul what health is to the body. It preserves a constant ease and serenity within us, and more than counterbalances all the calamities and afflictions which can possibly befall us.

He who asks of life nothing but the improvement of his own nature, and a continual moral progress toward inward contentment and rightful submission, is less liable than any other to miss and waste his life.

If you want to be miserable think about yourself, about what you want, what you like, what respect people's ought to pay you and what people think of you.

Some of the best lessons we ever learn we learn from mistakes and failures. The error of the past is the wisdom and success of the future.

Mere ideals, unsecured by deeds, are like unframed pictures. They do not long retain their freshness and wholeness and beauty.

It is a maxim that those to whom everybody allows the second place have an undoubted right to the first.

Self-knowledge is that acquaintance with ourselves which shows us what we are, and what we ought to be.

Hope is like the sun, which, as we journey toward it, casts the shadow of our burden behind us.

If we could but conquer our inmost enemies we could stand thousands of our outward ones.

Providence has given us hope and sleep as a compensation for the many cares of life.

GOOD ROADS NOTES.

Solving a Vexatious Question, ORISEMEN, bicyclists and automobile owners are still trying to solve the vexatious question of good roads.

It has been decided that the prairie dogs injure land and must be poisoned. After the prairie dog is extinct scientists will probably discover that he is much needed in order to kill off some worse pest.

"Autocarette" is the latest verbal horror. The thing itself may be admirable. The name makes its author worthy of imprisonment for the remainder of his natural life, at hard study of English grammar.

Hereafter the gold miner in Alaska will not have to spend all he earns, for the necessities of life are becoming as abundant and cheap in many parts of the Territory as they are in the older sections of the United States.

Professor Koch is now convinced that, in consequence of the discovery of the important role played by mosquitoes in the conveyance of the malarial poison, it will be possible by means of judicious measures to eradicate malaria in most localities.

Young Mr. Lemon, of Bloomsburg, Penn., has married a young lady of Orangeville. This has not been beaten since Mr. Stump, of Maryland, who was married to Miss Post by the Rev. Mr. Lockwood in a church in Garrison Forest, celebrated his wooden wedding.

The number of lives lost at Johnstown has never been accurately determined, but including those missing and who are believed to have perished in the flood the total is about 2300, while the damage done there to property is conservatively estimated at \$3,750,000.

A comely young woman in Ohio has been sent to an insane asylum because she imagines that her face is ugly. More of this same sort of feminine insanity, judiciously distributed, would do no harm. The victims should not be locked up, but should be exhibited as moral examples.

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CONVICTS AND GOOD ROADS.

The agitation of the League of American Wheelmen to have convicts used in building public roads is slowly making headway. On this subject the New York Post recently contained the following:

The League for Good Roads, in Oneida County, reports favorably on the experiment of employing convicts on road-making. Under the direction of the Board of Supervisors and the superintendence of a trained engineer, the county prisoners have constructed a macadam road, one and three-tenths miles long, through the village of New York Mills, near Utica.

The county authorities made a contract with the road district, whereby it was to furnish laborers at twenty-five cents a day, and allow the use of its stone crusher, steam-roller, etc., free of charge. The road district furnished the necessary fuel and material, and paid for supervision. The cost of the road was about \$575, or \$450 a mile, and the total cost was only three times the amount of the annual road tax.

As it will cost only \$250 a year to keep the new road in repair, the annual saving will amount to about \$1850, and after the cost has been repaid the taxpayers will be delivered to this extent, or the money can be devoted to other improvements. While this road was building the State authorities were constructing a similar one of equal length, which was to cost, at the contract price, \$3000.

Saved by a High Collar. A high collar saved the life of a young woman of Vermont when her husband tried to cut her throat. This shows that high collars have their uses—if young women do not learn to use more dignified means in the choice of husbands.—Pittsburg Dispatch.

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