DEATH.

Dark dread'ful death! that comes our hearts to wither.
With blighted woe;
That points its finger to the hidden "whither?"
And bids us go.
That breathes upon our buds of promised gladness
Its fatal breath,
And hangs the skies in sombre shades of sadness—
Dark, dreadful death!

Glad, gracious death! that comes to souls that sorrow
Without surcease,
And points them to the bright and fair to-morrow
Of perfect peace
That takes the faded flowers, sweet and olden,
To one who saith
"Well done!" and plants them in a garden golden—
Glad, gracious death.
—Chicago Post.

SKRIMP'S INVESTMENTS.

"WHAT did the hogs fetch, Sime?" Mrs. Skrimp asked her husband on his return from driving the fatted hogs to market.

"Six hundred an' seventy-five dollars," Simon Skrimp replied at the same time rubbing his hands together and smiling contentedly. "It was a good price I got, Liza, an' I never see hogs weigh up better than they did. They brought at least a hundred dollars mor'n I expected they would. An' then I got their money right off. I struck it just right in selling when I did."

"I'm glad you did, Sime."

"In co's we're all glad to do the best we kin."

"Yes o' course. What yer goin' ter do with ther money?"

"I hain't fairly settled in my own min' yit, just what I will do with it. I'm sorter haltin' atwixt buyin' of that tembered twenty acres of old Mike Allen, and loanin' it to them Herringtons. I kan't well make up my min' as to whether er ther two'ud be ther best."

"You hain't no use for the timbered twenty, Sime, sein' es how you have more la n' now than is profitable an' if you buy it, you'll jest have that much more to pay taxes on for nothing."

"Yas, that's so. I hain't no partic'lar use for it, but its down cheap at five hundred, an' I dunno if it would be er good speculation ter buy it. But at the same time I kin lend ther money to Rob Herrington for ten per cent's, an' I suppose that mout be as good er thing es I kin do."

"It 'peres to me, Sime, like 'sif you've let them Herrington's have enough money, a'ready."

"They owe me nigh a'most two thousand dollars, it's true, but what's the difference 's 'long es we get the intrust?"

"But have you got the intrust?"

"No, I hain't never got it in money, but I get ther notes for it, an' it'll only be all the more when it's paid; and es we don't need it, hedn't it es well be a drawing of more intrust?"

"Yes, I s'pose it had. But some way I feel es if it hain't best to let that money out to them speculators. You hain't got no kin' o' scurity, es I kin see, 'ceptin' that one ov 'em goes security for tother, and 'spose they wuz ter bust up, then how'd you get yer money from 'em?"

"Tain't no wise likely es they'll burst up, s'long's they've got thousands o' acres of the fine lands in ther country. Other people's mouty willin' ter trust 'em and I rekon I needn't be scart about loaning to 'em. Asides, I don't see whut else I kin do with ther money, fer es yer say, Mike's twenty is someting we don't need, and I've pondered over the matter several days an' kaint figger out nothin' else that 'ud be profitable ter invest in. We don't want any more stock."

"No, we don't want any more stock, ner land, fer it keeps you o'ther boys a diggin' from mornin' 'till night to keep up with whut we hav."

"Then whut am I going ter do with ther money if I don't loan it?"

For a moment Mrs. Skrimp was silent and she plied her needle with unwonted rapidity. A faint flush came to her pale face, faded, care-furrowed cheeks. Then with a timid, half-scared air she came up and said:

"Sime, mightn't we buy the girls a pianer? You know the Allens' have one, an' our gals air jist crazy fer one, too. It looks like paying out lots of money, but I've been thinking over it o'late, an' it 'pears like it 'ud only be just right toards 'em. We've got as much as Allen or Smith, and can just as well afford a pianer fer our girls es they kin fer thern."

"Yes, we could, but jes because Allen an' Smith wants to go an' waste money in foolishness, it don't foller that we have ter do it.

A pianer don't do work an' it don't draw no interest, an' when a thing hain't no profit, it's a clear waste o' money ter buy it, an' I han't goin' ter throw erway money in such a manner."

"The gals worked hard, Sime, an' denied themselves right along, an' I feel as if I orter do somethin' fer em. Ii course, if we couldn't eford it, it wouldn't be right, but we kin eford a pianer an' never miss the money."

"Yes, I recken we could eford, if we was so a mind, but I 'low we won't. Money comes too hard to be given out fer sech thrash, an' fer humerin' thir gals, its all bosh. It 'ud jes be the spilin' ov 'em for work. They doan' have no need uv no pianer, an' they won't get none."

Mrs. Skrimp saw that it was useless to argue with Sime, so she refrained from saying more, and the next morning early, he rode over to Bob Herrington's to loan the money he received for the hogs.

Simon Skrimp was well to do, and every year he had reaped rich harvests from his many broad acres of productive land. But so far as his family was concerned he might as well have been the poorest man in the settlement. He never had any money to spare for the purchase of luxuries, and even the little that even went for absolute necessaries went so grudgingly as to make it painful. Her wife felt herself fortunate if she possessed a print gown fit to wear in church, and the boys and girls had long ceased to go out in company for the want of desired apparel. All of Skrimp's money went for more land, or into the hands of the Herringtons.

Six months passed away since Skrimp sold his fatted hogs, when one day while he was engaged in reroofing his naked old barn, Squire Beeson rode up and said:

"Mornin' Sime."

"How're Squire."

"Have ye heard the news, Sime?"

"No; what news?"

"Erbout them Herringtons."

"No, I hain't." Sime said, turning suddenly pale with an unconscious dread. "What erbout 'em?"

"Wal, it's er bad piece uv business, lemme tell ye, an' many er bones' man's a-goin' ter suffer from it."

Then the squire stopped, and squinting one eye, very deliberately chewd away on his tobacco, while he left Scrimp agonizing on the rack of suspense.

"What is it man?" Simon demanded, "Speak out."

"Ther long an' ther short uv it is, them Herrington's is busted higher ner er kite."

Down went Skrimp's hammer, but in his excitement he missed the nail and hit his thumb squarely, smashing it almost into a jelly.

"D'ye reckon it's so?" he gasped when he was recovered from the shock.

"Yas, I reckon it air," the squire went on coolly. "Yisterday I was down to the county seat, an' heern them talkin uv it on every corner, an' ther lawyers waz er flyin' erbout like tater bugs on a hot skillet. Ther hain't no doubt uv it, Sime, es how they hed borryed o' you I thought it proper ter ride over an' let yer know.

"But ther lan'," Simon said, all them acres."

"Yas, I know, but thet's kinder mortgaged an' deeded around among theirselves an' their wives, till there hain't no doin' nothin' with it. Leastwise their creditors can't tech it."

Simon Skrimp got down to the ground in some way though he could never tell afterwards how. All that day he felt like one in a dream, and for years after, that time rose up before him as a horrid nightmare.

It was several days before he was able to ride, but when he felt equal to it he had a horse saddled, and rode over to Bob Herrington's. He was shown into the best room, and told to wait until Mr. Herrington came up from dinner. It was a good half hour that Sime had to wait, and in the meantime his eyes wandered about the richly furnished rooms.

"These fine fixin's," he mused, "are bought with my money. Them easy chairs, an' that cyarpet, my money paid fer. An, them pictures, too, and that pianner, I've been humpin' myself day in an' day out, year arter year, a making and savin' money jest so's Bob Herrington's wife and gals could have all them pooty things, while Liza an' my gals has never had nothin'."

Bob Herrington came in at last, as smiling and as affable as you please.

"Good morning, Mr. Skrimp," he said, "I am glad to see you. I hear you have not been well."

"No, I ain't been very well lately."

"Well, what can I do for you today Mr Skrimp?"

"I rode over," Skrimp began to say, "to see about that money."

"Yes, yes, I am glad you came, but you see we are not in a position to do anything now. The matter is in the courts and will be adjusted in time. All you can do is to wait." And before Mr. Skrimp hardly realiz'ed it he was gently worked out o the room and the door closed afterf him.

As Skrimp rode slowly along on his homeward way, he fell to pondering very seriously over what had transpired the last few days and at last he asked himself:

"What is a feller ter do with his money? if he buys lan' he don't need, it is er cumbrance upon 'im, an' the taxes eats it up. Ef he loans it he gets beat outten it. An' ef he buys too much stock it eats its head off," and he shook his head disparingly.

Just then he came even with Smith's and Smith being in front invited Sime to step in for dinner.

"Thankee," he said, "but I guess I'd better go along."

But Smith insisted and Sime yielded and followed into the house.

He was introduced to Mrs. Smith and was struck with her happy, healthy, contented look and he could not help contrasting her with his own pale-faced, tired and patient wife. Then there came floating in from the adjoining room sweet strains of music—a mingling of sweet, young voices with the vibrations of the piano, and it smoothed him and rested him. Then he looked at Smith with his jolly broad face and his beaming smile and he envied him. Simon could but contrast the surroundings—the air of sweet content and peaceful quiet—with his own home life.

"Did you lose anything by the Herringtons?" Sime asked.

"Not a cent," Smith replied, "though I might if I'd had money to lend. As it was I used all I had to spare from the farm, in repairing and furnishing the house. I hear you lost quite a sum, and you have my sympathy."

"I don't wan't no sympathy," Simon said. "I've been er fool all my life, an' now I've come to my senses, an' I dunno if it hain't er good thing fer us that the money is gone. Some people won't never learn nothin' 'thout payin' well fer it, I'm one o' that kind."

Skrimp returned home more cheerful than he had been for years. The next morning early he hitched the horses to the big lumber wagon and drove off to town, but before leaving he came and put his arms about his wife and kissed her—something that he hadn't done for so long that it surprised and startled her, and the tears came to her eyes.

"I 'pear to be mighty light hearted." Simon mused as he jogged along the lanes, up hill and down. "I hain't felt so happy for ten years, an' I reckon some other folks'll feel lifted up to-night when I get back.

For hours old Sime poked around among the stores in the city, and somehow everybody looked happier and lighter hearted than he had ever seen them.

"Looks like the ole world is gittin' brighter, some way." Simon mused as he drove homeward in the cool of the evening. "I never see the sun shine to bright, an' even that little brook down in the edge of the woods sings merrily 'long its way. I never noticed that afore."

It was getting dark when Simon drove up over the last hill on his return home. Mrs. Skrimp and the girls were out at the gate watching the rumble of the wagon and looking up the road, they saw that a great box filled the big wagon bed.

"Wonder what Sime's been buyin'?" the mother said.

"Looks like a big box," one of the girls replied.

"Yes, I know, but there must be something in it."

"Oh, I reckon it's just to put the wheat in when he threshes. I heard him say he would need one."

"Hi, ther," Schrimp shouted. "Clare outen the road an open ther gate thar. I gotter drive inside with this ere box. Here, you boys fly erroun' you rascals, an' help get this out." And Skrimp tried his best to appear as sour as possible, but made a most miserable failure of the effort.

"What have you got, Sime?" the wife asked.

"Nuther box fer wheat. Just the thing I need."

"Feels mighty heavy," one of the boys remarked, after lifting at an end of it. Must be something in it."

Simon was unable to hold back the smiles any longer, for his happiness kept bubbling up, and refused to be kept down.

"It's a pianer," the boy shouted, it's a pianer."

And it was a piano, as they all soon discovered, when the great box was rolled out and opened. For a moment they all stood about speechless, motionless, while Simon watched them, a smile, the while playing about his features. Then, one by one, they came and kissed him—the good, patient wife and the uncomplaining daughters, and Simon was so happy that he actually cried.

"There is more things," Simon said at last.

And a search in the deep bed revealed a new carpet for the best room and some dress patterns, and some clothing for the boys.

"How did you come to do it, Sime?" the wife asked as they were retiring that night.

"Wall, Liza, it was them Herrington's and what I seed yisterday. I've been ponderin' over, matters, an' I concluded I've done enuff fer Bob Herrington's folks, an' that it was time to do somethin' fer my own family. So I determint to turn over er new leaf an' frum this time on I'm fer enjoyin' some of what we earn, 'stid o' lettin' other people hev it all, while you an ther children work an' slave an' git nothin'. I found a power of happiness in that pianer, Liza—mor'n' I ever found in all the lan' I ever bought, an' it hain' nigh over yet."

A Wonderful Baboon.

Jack the Baboon, so well known to all who have ever had occasion to pass through the Uitenhage (Cape Colony) Railway station, has, says a writer in the Colonies and India, gone to that bourne from which no baboon ever returns, much to the regret of the country side. Jack was one of the most intelligent specimens of the ape tribe ever captured, and he was regarded as quite a regular railway employe at Uitenhage. He took his turn at working the signals and shoving trolleys about. when required to do so, he would go to his master's cottage, hunt for and find any article required, and then, after carefully locking the door, he would remove the key, and bring both it and the article he was sent to fetch to his master. The latter had lost both his legs, and consequently found Jack a valuable helpmate.

The baboon was also noted through the district as a fair lightweight boxer, and he had also been trained to use the singlestick with singular adroitness. He never drank anything stronger than water, and was unmarried.

Seven Days of Terror.

London Telegraph.

A remarkable story of the sea comes from St. Malo, the narrator being an ancient mariner named Bauche, whose painful experience in a small boat on the ocean ought to be a warrant for the truth of his tale. Banche had signed articles with the captain of a vessel called the Mathilde, in which he sailed to Martinique. While in the harbor of St. Pierre in a boat with the cabin boy one day he was driven oceanward by a gale of wind, and was knocked about for a week on the the waves before he was rescued by a Norwegian bark.

After the first night at sea Bauche says that the cabin boy became partly delirious. Water was filling the boat every instant, and in order to prevent the dying lad from being drowned in it, the old sailor made pails of the legs of his pantaloons, and was thus enabled to keep the bottom of the little craft tolerably dry. He had also to deprive himself of his shirt, which he utilized as a flag of distress. On the third day the cabin boy died, and hardly was the breath out of his body before even or eight ferocious black sharks began to circle round the boat, which they sometimes almost touched. Rather than deliver up the dead body to the monsters of the deep, Bauche kept it until it became decomposed.

Being afraid of illness he at length threw it overboard, after having said his prayers over it, and the prey was speedily seized by the sharks, which disappeared with it, and did not show up again for about twenty-four hours or so. Bauche now felt so utterly miserable that he was thinking of throwing himself overboard when he was disuaded from his intention by the reappearance of the sharks, which, after eying him ravenously for some time, actually began to gambol before him as if in anticipation of a good feed off his body.

"I did not want to be eaten alive," remarked Bauche in his perilous adventures, "so I remained where I was and awaited assistance." On the seventh day the sailor lost consciousness, fell down in the boat, and was rescued in an insensible condition by Capt. Paderson, of the Wladimir.

In his mouth the Norwegian sailors found what they first thought was an old quid of tobacco, but which proved to be part of the horn handle of his knife, which Bauche was crunching to stave off hunger when he became unconscious. The rescued sailor, after having been taken to New Orleans, obtained a passage home to St. Malo. Only the other day he went down to the port to meet his old shipmates of the Mathilde, who had been wrecked off the coast of Newfoundland, whither they had made another voyage since Bauche disappeared at Martinique. The crew of the Mathilde had been rescued off the banks of Labrador by an English vessel. They had long, of course, given up Bauche and the cabin boy as lost in midocean, and great was their surprise when they beheld the former in flesh, and as hale and hearty as if he had never been without food on the deep for full seven days in an open boat, and in perilous contiguity to the teeth of the tigers of the ocean.

Not True American.

Fred. Perry Powers, in a letter to America, very sarcastically characterizes a certain class of Americans—who are Americans only by birth and residence, not by instinct and actions:

I observe that the people who guessed right on the price of wheat and railroad stocks, and their children, are growing more and more unwilling to have people who guessed wrong, or who never guessed at all, come within recognizable distance of them unless they come in the capacity of servants.

Mr. Powers then goes on to complain of the way in which rich and ostentatious property-owners at Newport have fenced in pretty places so that passers-by can see from the road nothing but bleak and monotonous close fences. There is a good deal of ground for his objection to this sort of thing. It is an incivility to the public which is incompatible with the belief in the universal brotherhood of man which is a fundamental article of every American's creed.

We Eat Lots of Peanuts.

The average yield of peanuts appears to be about fifty bushels to the acre, although it sometimes goes as high as seventy-five and falls as low as twenty-five. The value to the producer of the crop of 1889-90 is estimated at not less than $2,000,000. A simple calculation will show that the daily consumption of peanuts in the United States is about 200,000 pounds, or ten carloads, representing an expenditure by the consumer of from $20,000 to $30,000 daily.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Precocity.

Jimmy—"Ma, can I have that candy on your dressing case?"

Mother—"Yes."

(Jimmy makes no motion toward taking it.)

Mother—"Why don't you take it if you want it? Why, I declare its gone!"

Jimmy—"Yep. I ate it before I asked you for it."—Lawrence American.

His Hair Like a Circassian Girl's.

Charles R. Cummins, of Montague Lewis county, is a freak, in that he has a head of hair like that of the Circassian girl of side show fame and is going to join a circus. Mr Cummins is a son of Foss Cummins, and was born on October 10, 1852. He has always resided in Lewis county and is a farmer by occupation. His hair, unlike that of his four brothers, has always been very heavy and curly, and for this very reason has been kept closely cut. Six months ago a lady friend persuaded him to let his hair grow to a suitable length, in order that she might be provided with frizzes that would not have to undergo the curling iron process occasionally. Inside of three months the hair had grown about three inches and was hard to mannage, but the growth was allowed to continue, and now the hair will average seven inches in length. It is, in all respects, as before stated, similar to that of the Circassian girl, and Mr. Cummins being unable to find a hat large enough, is compelled to go bareheaded, The hair is as fine as silk, dark brown in color, and inclined to curl.—Rome Sentinel.

Greased it Once.

From the New York Sun.

I had been looking over the battle fields around Mariette, Ga., and was five miles from the town when a cracker came along with an ox and a cart and offered me a lift. After riding some distance I realized that both wheels were sadly in need of grease, and I asked him why he didn't lubricate.

"What fur?" he asked.

"To make the cart draw more easily."

"Sho! This yere ox doan' mind. He 'un doan' know."

"But it would stop the squeaking."

"Yes, I reckon, but the squeakin' doan hurt."

"It should save your wheels," I finally said.

"Sho! This old cawt ain't wuth savin'."

"Didn't you ever grease it?" I persisted.

"Once. A Yankee rode to town with me and bought me a box of stuff."

"How did it work?"

"Mighty slick, but we dun spread it on hoe cake, and ate it all up in a week."

Big Rattler on a Saloon Doorstep.

Nashville American.

As R. D. Averitt put the key in the door of his saloon, on the corner of First and Woodland streets, he discovered an enormous rattlesnake lying on the stone sill. The snake struck at him, and he narrowly escaped being bitten. He jumped back, however, and escaped.

The snake remained in undisputed possesion of the premises until Averitt procured a crowbar from some hands working on the street railroad, and chopped his head off.

The snake was measured and found to be four feet eight inches, an unusual length for the species, and was three inches in diameter though the thickest part of his body. He had 12 rattles and a button.

There was much speculation as to where the serpent came from, but no one could give the plausible theory. It is supposed it came down on a raft, and crawled up to the saloon during the night.

Difficulties of Running a Show.

"I can tell you a good story." said a local professor. "A friend of mine was running a snide spiritualistic show up in New Hampshire. He had a man under the stage to make the raps. This man was tongue tied, and only now and then could say anything when occasion required. The show was free the first night, but cost a quarter the second night. The house was packed. My friend stood on the stage and called for the spirit of Capt. Kidd and Pirate Gibbs. They answered at first and then they failed to materalize. Something had gone wrong. 'Is the spirit of John Slade here?" said the medium. Silence followed. The audience could hear a pin drop. Then it was broken by a sepulchral voice from the hollow caverns of the stage, saying, 'I can't do a thing, cap'n, this fish line's gone and broke."—Lewiston Journal.

Our Flag Abroad.

"Here, for the first time since leaving New York, I saw the Stars and Stripes. It was floating over the gateway to the American consulate. It is a strange fact that the further one goes from home the more loyal one becomes. I felt that I was a long ways off from my own dear land; it was Christmas day, and I had seen many different flags since last I gazed upon our own. The moment I saw it floating there in the soft, lazy breeze I took off my cap and said: 'That is the most beautiful flag in the world, and I am ready to whip any one who says it isn't.'

"No one said a word. Everybody was afraid. I saw an Englishman in the party glance furtively toward the Union Jack, which was floating over the English consulate, but in a hesitating manner, as if he feared to let me see."—Nellie Bly's Book.