

Poetry.

ENGLAND! DEAR ENGLAND!

Where is the slave, who, of England despairing,
Aids not her cause when she summons her sons?
Where is the knave, who, when fœmen are daring,
Parleys for safety, or crouches and runs?
England ne'er grew them,
Her soil never knew them;
Wholesome's the earth in our Isle of the sea!
Our maidens would flout them,
Our children would scout them;
We'd hoot them with scorn from our land of the free!

Fœmen may dare us with haughty defiance,
Low as Sebastopol's towers shall they fall;
Strong in the right, in immortal alliance,
England and France shall o'ermaster them all.
Shame and perdition
Shall trace their ambition;
Justice shall gleam in the glaive that we bear,
And nations benighted,
To victory lighted,
Shall learn from our greatness, what freemen can dare.

England! dear England! Our fathers before us
Bled for thy freedom, and left us their fame;
England our darling! the mothers who bore us
Gave us their blessings entwined with thy name.
Ours be the glory,
To better thy story;
Lofty and pure be thy banner unfurled,
If great we receive thee,
Still greater we'll leave thee,
England! dear England! the Queen of the world!

Select Tale.

A SHREWD WIFE,

OR,

AN UNPROFITABLE TRIP TO THE GOLD REGIONS.

BY WILLIAM H. THOMAS.

"I think," said Mr. Dana, as he pushed back his chair from the breakfast table, and looked hard at his wife, a pretty little woman, with large, blue eyes. "I think I should like to go to California, and try my luck. Darn it all, every one is going about here. Do you think you could spare me for a year, Nelly?"

Mrs. Dana made no immediate reply, she appeared to be very busy turning out a cup of tea, altho' a keener observer than her husband would have observed an unusual tremulousness in her hands, as Mr. Dana ceased speaking.

"I think I might do well there," the husband continued, as though speaking to himself.

"Are you not doing well here on your farm?" the wife at length asked.

"I'm making a living perhaps, but it's only by hard work. Now if I should go to California, and be lucky, why, we could have a great many more comforts than we are blessed with at present."

"We have every thing that we could wish for to make us contented, and I'm sure I sigh for no luxuries, excepting what we can well afford," Mrs. Dana replied.

"Yes, we have enough to eat, and clothes to wear, but we can't buy lots of good furniture, and have a piano, like Squire Bolton. Darn it, I want to be as rich as he is, and then I should be contented," Mr. Dana said, rising from his chair, and walking back and forth in the kitchen with energy.

"Mr. Bolton is far from being happy, with all his wealth," said the wife.

"Well, I know that; but then who could be contented with such a wife as he has got? She's either crazy half of the time, or else—"

"Hush!" cried Mrs. Dana, with a reproachful look; "remember if she have faults, so have we all."

"But what I meant, Nelly, is that if he had such a wife as I have got, and with his wealth, he could not help being happy."

"And yet you want to leave a wife you think so highly of," Mrs. Dana said, with a reproachful look.

"But don't you see that it is for your comfort and benefit in the end. You know, Nelly, that nothing in the world would induce me to quit you, unless it was the hope of making a fortune in a short time. I wouldn't be gone longer than a year, and if I liked the country, and I thought you would be contented out there, I'd send for you."

The young wife struggled hard to retain her composure, as she asked—

"And what will you do with the farm while gone?"

"I will get my youngest brother to come and live here and carry it on. You shall be left in full charge, Nelly, with power to do as you please."

"Give me a week to think of it," the wife replied, "at the end of that time I'll make up my mind whether to consent to your going or not."

Mr. Dana was too well pleased to obtain even this concession, to argue any further that day, and after bidding his wife read the accounts in the newspaper, containing the latest news from California, he started off to his work.

Mr. Dana owned a farm of about one hundred acres, near the town of Windsor, Vermont. He was a young man and a person of considerable energy, and had during his minority, saved a small sum of money, which he had safely deposited in the savings' bank, until such time as he should want to use it.

After he became of age he had added to his capital, and when he thought he should like Jane Perkins for a wife, and proposed for her, and was accepted, he bought the farm which we find him occupying, and was doing as well as any young farmer in the neighborhood.

He had been married two years when the gold fever of 1848 and '49 broke out, sweeping off thousands of our most industrious mechanics and farmers, and leaving many an hearthstone desolate, and many a wife to mourn for her absent husband.

How few have returned with their anticipations fulfilled? Thousands who left the New England States, expecting to win a competency in a short time, have been too glad to work their passage back in some slow sailing tub, while others, too proud to return empty handed, have toiled on, barely gaining a livelihood, and now rest from cares and troubles by the bank of some river, with nothing but a rude board to mark their grave.

After Mr. Dana left his wife, she washed her dishes and put them away, and sat down to read the glowing accounts of the gold discoveries. The more she read, the more fascinated did she become, until she at last came to the conclusion that if she was a man she would be tempted to go and try her luck.

Twice during the forenoon did she peruse the paper, and each time her resolution of not consenting to her husband's departure grew weaker, until she finally made up her mind, if he asked her consent again, she would give it.

Mrs. Dana was a woman of considerable energy of mind. Ever since a child she had been obliged to labour, and by her contact with the world had acquired a knowledge of business, which did not, however, impair or detract from the natural modesty of a good woman's heart or mind.

A week had not passed before the husband again alluded to the subject uppermost in his mind. A company was about to leave Windsor, and many of the young men of the town were enrolling their names. Mr. Dana thought it would be a good chance for him, as he would have acquaintances to lend him a helping hand, in case he was taken sick. His wife thought the same thing, and delighted her husband by giving her consent to his going.

They were not aware of the selfishness exhibited in the gold regions, where each man struggled for himself, and thought it waste of time to help his feverish friend to a cup of cold water, or make him a mess of gruel to keep him from starving.

Mr. Dana's arrangements were soon made. He had some money on hand, and with it he determined to cross the Isthmus, in company with his townsmen, as he thought he could make enough in a week's time, after his arrival, to pay his passage.

They wrote to engage steerage berths, and received answer that the steamer would sail on such a day. This caused them to hurry their arrangements, and the day before they were to start, Mr. Dana requested his wife to accompany him to a lawyer's.

"I'm going a long journey," he said, "and may be gone longer than I anticipate; I shall leave you the farm to do with as you please. If you get tired carrying it on, sell it to the best advantage; I shall make money enough while gone to buy a larger one when I return. But I hardly think I shall live on a farm when I return. We'll get one of the grand new houses in town, and live like Squire Bolton."

His wife thought at the time there might be a failure in his schemes; but she was hopeful, and would not say a word to dash his bright anticipations.

The day of parting came, and with it tears and mournful looks; but it was not until Dana left the house, perhaps never to return, that the young wife felt the loneliness of her condition.

For a week or two she was low spirited and sad, but as she received letters from her husband in New York, written in a lively vein, and bidding her be of good cheer, as he would certainly rejoin her in the course of a year, she became more composed and reconciled to his absence.

We will not follow him in the crowded steamer, nor across the Isthmus, where he narrowly escaped

drowning, while ascending the river; nor will we tell of his arrival at San Francisco, and departure for the mines, where he worked in the bed of the river, and was quite fortunate, until attacked with the fever and ague, which roasted him at one moment, and froze him the next.

He would lie in his tent, and wish that the gentle hand of his wife could wipe the moisture from his brow, or cover him with blankets when shivering with cold. All of his adventures might be written out, and perhaps Mr. Dana will some day give the world an account of his doings in the land of gold. They will, possibly, serve as a warning to other husbands, and thus prevent many a heart from recurring for the absent.

Mr. Dana's fever got no better, and at last the doctor told him he had better seek a change of climate, as he might shake himself to death. Dana thought the same thing, for it appeared to him, when the chills came on, that every bone in his body would be wrenched apart, and when the fever returned, he imagined himself in an oven.

He considered the subject one day, and determined to start for home. A team was to leave the next day for Sacramento city, and as soon as his resolution was formed, he engaged a passage, sold all of his clothes, excepting enough to reach Vermont, and found that he was the master of a capital of only five hundred dollars, after working in the mines for four months. To be sure his sickness had cost him a large sum, and his doctor's bill was frightful to contemplate.

He started the next day for home. He determined to live a farmer and die one, if the Lord spared his life. He had seen enough of the gold mines, and as he was going in the cart, and jolted over the uneven roads, he thought what a ninny he had been, to leave a comfortable home, and a loving wife in the hope of accumulating a fortune.

The jolting of the cart may have benefited him, for by the time he reached San Francisco he was a new man. He had a mind to turn back and try it again, but he thought of his wife, and nature and love triumphed. He went immediately to the steamship company, and secured a passage home.

It was a cold, blustering day in the middle of winter when Dana reached Windsor. He pulled his cap over his eyes to prevent his being recognized, and then started on foot for his home. He had heard from his wife but once since he had been absent, and he hardly dared to hope that she was well. He quickened his pace; and came in sight of the house in which he had spent so many happy hours. He glanced over his farm, and saw that every thing appeared to be well cared for. The stone walls were in good order, the barns looked neat and well repaired, and just as he was thinking that his wife and brother had done remarkably well, the train on which he had ridden from Boston whizzed past, directly across his farm. He groaned in anguish at the sight. His beautiful meadow was ruined, he thought, and it was all owing to his wild goose chase for a fortune. His wife could not be expected to know how to attend to such a thing, and he had no doubt but the railroad company had swindled her.

He approached the house, and knocked timidly at the door. It was opened, and there stood his wife, as handsome as ever, but she looked at him with surprise. He had forgotten that he had not shaved since he left her.

He spoke, held out his hand, and then his arms. There was a shriek, and then the latter were well filled. Two hours afterwards they were talking seriously and soberly upon matters of business.

"I am sorry that the railroad passes over our meadow," he said, "it renders it almost useless."

"They have the right of way; but it has not injured it as much as you think," she replied.

"I don't suppose they paid you more than one hundred dollars for the land."

"There is where you are mistaken. They gave me twelve hundred dollars for merely the right of way."

"I suppose they paid you in stock!" Dana said, surprised to think that she had got so large a sum.

"Yes, they gave me part stock and part cash," the wife replied, trying not to look triumphant.

"And the stock, that is worth a mere song, I suppose."

"I sold mine the very day I received it at an advance. It is not worth so much per share now. I thought I had better have the money than trust to an uncertainty."

The husband was slightly astonished. He had received for a narrow strip of land as much as he had given for the whole farm.

"And what did you do with the money, Nelly?"

"I took six hundred dollars, and bought the rich mowing of Squire Bolton's. You remember how you used to wish you owned it?"

Dana did remember perfectly well. He had tho't

of the land when in California, and was in hopes of getting back with money enough to buy it.

"The other six hundred and fifty I placed in the Savings' Bank, where it is at interest."

"You are the best wife in the State," the husband cried with admiration.

"But I have not given a full account of my stewardship as yet. You remember the forest of pines on the hill just back of the meadow?"

Dana nodded an assent, wondering what was to come next.

"Well, there is no longer any forest there, I sold every tree just as it stood."

"Why, who was fool enough to buy pine wood?" Dana asked, with a laugh.

"The railroad company. They must have wood to get up steam. They gave me four hundred dollars for the privilege of chopping down the trees, and I was glad to get rid of them, for the purpose of making a sheep pasture."

"A sheep pasture!" the husband cried in astonishment.

"Yes, it makes a very fine one. I bought one hundred and fifty sheep, and then had some left, which I added to that in the bank. Last summer I sold four hundred pounds of wool at forty cents per pound."

"That amounted to one hundred and sixty dollars," said Dana, after a slight calculation.

"Precisely; without counting the increase of lambs, I think I did very well by this trade."

"You are a better manager than I am, Nelly.— Hereafter you shall be the head of the house."

"Thank you, but I am perfectly contented to resign, now that you have arrived."

"Then you have no more wonderful bargains to relate?" he asked.

"Yes," she replied, with a slight hesitancy, "I have made one more trade, but perhaps, it is one that will displease you."

"What, after my warm welcome? You can do nothing in future that I'll not approve of. Remember, Nelly, I've returned poor in pocket, and none too well in health."

"I will take such excellent care of you that your health will be quite restored in the spring, and as for being poor, why that is absurd, when you have a good farm well stocked, and nearly a thousand dollars in the bank."

"Besides a treasure of a wife."

"Thank you. But will you step into the parlor, and see my last trade."

Dana followed his wife, and as she opened the door, she pointed significantly to a dark object in one corner of the room.

"A piano!" cried he astonished.

"Yes, a good, well toned piano. But before you express surprise, let me tell you how I earned it. I sold all the butter that I made during the last nine months, and invested the proceeds in an instrument that I knew you longed for, and, to tell the truth, I was rather anxious to own one myself, but I never said so, and until I found myself able, I never even thought of buying one. Now, are you angry?"

"Angry!"

There was a peculiar sound in the parlor, as tho' Dana was kissing his wife. At any rate when she again entered the kitchen, her face looked uncommonly flushed, as though her husband's rough beard had chafed her soft skin.

Mr. Dana has never expressed a wish to roam again. He is perfectly satisfied that he can find more happiness on his farm, and in the society of his wife, than he could if surrounded by all the gold mines of California.

A FINE STREAM.—A good story is told of a Philadelphia judge, well known for his love of jokes.—He had advertised a farm for sale, with a fine stream of water running through it. A few days afterwards a gentleman called on him to speak about it.

"Well, Judge," said he, "I have been over that farm you advertised for sale the other day, and find all right, except the fine stream of water you mentioned."

"It runs through the piece of woods in the lower part of the meadow," said the Judge.

"What that little brook! Why it does not hold much more than a spoonful. I am sure if you empty a bowl of water into it, it would overflow.—You don't call that a fine stream, do you?"

"Why, if it were much finer you couldn't see it at all," said the Judge blandly.

We never heard whether the gentleman bought the farm, but we rather suspect he didn't.

A drunken man was recently trying to get a watchman to arrest his own shadow. He complained that an ill-looking scoundrel was following him.

If you wish to have your wood go a good ways, just leave it out of doors over night. A neighbour says some of his went over half a mile one night.