

Poetry.

THE NEW-MOWN HAY.

BY PARK BENJAMIN.

Talk not to me of southern bowers,
Of odors breathed from tropic flowers,
Or spice-trees after rain;
But of those sweets which freely flow
When June's fond breezes stir the low
Grass, heaped along the plain.

This morning stood the verdant spears,
All wet with diamond dew—the tears
By night serenely shed;
This evening, like an army slain,
They number the pacific plain
With their fast-fading dead.

And where they fell, and all around,
Such perfumes in the air abound
As if long-hidden hives
Of sudden richness were unsealed,
When on the freshly-trodden field
They yielded up their lives.

In idle mood I love to pass
These ruins of the crowded grass,
Or listlessly to lie,
Inhaling the delicious scents
Crushed from these downcast, verdurous tents,
Beneath a sunset sky.

It is a pure delight, which they
Who dwell in cities, far away
From rural scenes so fair,
Can never know in lighted rooms,
Pervaded by exotic blooms—
This taste of natural air!

This air, so softened by the breath
Exhaled and wafted from the death
Of herbs that simply bloom,
And, scarcely noted, like the best
Dear friends, with whom this world is blest,
Await the common doom,—

And leave behind such sweet regret
As in our hearts is living yet,
Though heroes pass away.—
Talk not to me of southern bowers,
Or odors breathed from tropic flowers,
But of the new-mown hay.

Select Tale.

THE GHOST RAISER.

A CAPITAL STORY.

My uncle Beagly, who commenced his commercial career very early in the present century as a bagman, will tell stories. Among them he tells a single Ghost Story so often that I am heartily tired of it. In self-defence, therefore, I publish the tale, in order that when next the good, kind old gentleman offers to bore us with it, everybody may say they know it. I remember every word of it:

One fine autumn evening, about forty years ago, I was travelling on horseback from Shrewsbury to Chester, I felt tolerably tired, and was beginning to look out for some snug wayside inn, where I might pass the night, when a sudden and violent thunder-storm came on. My horse, terrified by the lightning, fairly took the bridle between his teeth and started off with me at a full gallop, through the lanes and cross-roads, until at length I managed to pull him up just near the door of a neat-looking country inn.

"Well," thought I, "there was wit in your madness, old boy, since it brought us to this comfortable refuge."

And alighting, I gave him in charge to the stout farmer's boy who acted as hostler. The kitchen, which was also the guest-room, was large, clean, neat and comfortable—very like the pleasant hostelry described by Isaac Walton. There were several travellers in the room already—probably, like myself, driven there for shelter—and they were all warming themselves by the blazing fire while waiting for supper. I joined the party. Presently, being summoned by the hostess, we all sat down, twelve in number, to a smoking repast of bacon and eggs, corned beef and carrots.

The conversation naturally turned upon the mishaps occasioned by the storm, of which every one seemed to have his full share. One had been thrown off his horse, and another, driving in a gig, had been upset in a muddy dyke; all had got a thorough wetting, and agreed unanimously that it was a fearful weather—a regular witch's sabbath.

"Witches and ghosts prefer for their sabbath a fine moonlight night to such weather as this!"

These words were uttered in a solemn tone, and with strange emphasis, by one of the company—He was a tall, dark-looking man, and I set him down in my own mind as a travelling merchant or pedlar. My next neighbor was a gay, well-look-

ing, fashionably-dressed young man, who, bursting into a peal of laughter, said:

"You must know the manners and customs of the ghosts very well, to be able to tell that they dislike getting wet or muddy."

The speaker, giving him a dark, fierce look, said: "Young man, speak not so lightly of things above your comprehension."

"Do you mean to imply that there are such things as ghosts?"

"Perhaps there are, if you had courage to look at them."

The young man started up, flushed with anger. But after a moment he resumed his seat, saying, calmly:

"That taunt would cost you dear, if it were not such a foolish one."

"A foolish one!" said the merchant, throwing on the table a heavy leathern purse. "There are fifty guineas. I am contented to lose them, if, before the hour is ended, I do not succeed in showing you, who are so obstinately prejudiced, the form of any one of your deceased friends; and if, after you have recognized him, you will allow him to kiss your lips."

We all looked at each other, but my young neighbor, still in the same mocking manner, replied:

"You will do that, will you?"

"Yes," said the other. "I will stake these fifty guineas, on condition that you will pay a similar sum if you lose."

After a short silence the young man said, gaily:

"Fifty guineas, my worthy sorcerer, are more than a poor college sizar ever possessed; but here are five, which, if you are satisfied, I shall be most willing to wager."

The other took up his purse, saying in a contemptuous tone:

"Young gentleman, you wish to draw back!"

"I draw back!" exclaimed the student. "Well, if I had fifty guineas, you would see whether I would draw back!"

"Here," said I, "are four guineas which I will stake on your wager."

No sooner had I made this proposition, than the rest of the company, attracted by the singularity of the affair, came forward to lay down their money; and in a minute or two the fifty guineas were subscribed. The merchant appeared so sure of winning that he placed all the money in the student's hands, and prepared for his experiment. We selected a small summer-house in the garden, perfectly isolated, and having no means of exit but a window and a door, which was carefully fastened, after placing the young man within. We put writing materials on a small table in the summer-house, and took away the candles. We remained outside with the pedlar among us. In a low solemn voice he began to chant the following verses:

"What riseth slow from the ocean caves,
And the stormy surf?
The phantom pale set his blackened feet
On the soft green turf."

Then, rising his voice, solemnly, he said:

"You ask to see your friend, Francis Villiers, who was drowned three years ago, off the coast of South America; what do you see?"

"I see," replied the student, "a white light arising near the window; but it has no form; it is like an uncertain cloud."

We—the spectators—remained profoundly silent.

"Are you afraid?" asked the merchant in a loud voice.

"I am not," replied the student, firmly.

After a moment's pause, the pedlar stamped three times on the ground, and sang:

"And the phantom white, whose clay-cold face
Was once so fair,
Dries with his shroud his clinging vest
And his sea-tossed hair."

Once more the solemn question:

"You who would see revealed the mysteries of the tomb—what do you see?"

The student answered in a calm voice, but like that of a man who described things as they passed before him:

"I see the cloud taking the form of a phantom; its head is covered with a veil—it stands still."

"Are you afraid?"

"I am not!"

We looked at each other in horror-stricken silence, while the merchant, raising his arms above his head, chanted in a sepulchral voice:

"And the phantom said, as it rose from the wave,
'He shall know me in sooth!
I will go to my friend, gay, smiling and fond,
As in our first youth!'"

"What do you see?" said he

"I see the phantom advance; he lifts his veil—'tis Francis Villiers! he approaches the table! he writes! 'tis his signature!'"

"Are you afraid?"

A fearful moment of silence ensued; then the student replied, but in an altered tone:

"I am not."

With strange and frantic gestures the merchant sang:

"And the phantom said to the mocking seer,
'I come from the south!
Put thy hand in mine, thy heart on mine,
Thy mouth to my mouth!'"

"What do you see?"

"He comes—he approaches me—he pursues me—he stretches out his arms—he will have me! Help! Save me!"

"Are you afraid now?" asked the merchant, in a mocking voice.

A piercing cry, and then a stifled groan, were the only reply to this terrible question.

"Help that rash youth!" said the merchant bitterly. "I have, I think, won the wager; but it is sufficient for me to have given him a lesson. Let him keep his money and be wiser for the future."

He walked rapidly away. We opened the door of the summer-house, and found the student in convulsions. A paper, signed with the name of "Francis Villiers," was on the table. As soon as the student's senses were restored, he asked vehemently where was the vile sorcerer who had so cruelly subjected him to such a horrible ordeal—he would kill him. He sought him through the house in vain; then, with the speed of a madman, he dashed off across the fields in pursuit of him, and we never saw either of them again. This, children, is my Ghost Story!

"And how is it, uncle, that after that you don't believe in ghosts?" said I, the first time I heard it.

"Because, my boy," replied my uncle, "neither the student nor the merchant ever returned; and the forty-five guineas belonging to me and the other travellers continued equally invisible. Those two swindlers carried them off, after having acted a farce, which we, like ninnies, believed to be real."

Miscellaneous.

Whence it came into the Drawer we cannot say, or we would; but mightily amused the "funny man" has been with the live yankee who came to a clothing "emporium" in Lewiston, Maine, to buy him a wedding suit. His name was Nehemiah Newbegin, and he was about to make a new beginning in buying clothes as well as in keeping house. Having selected coat, vest, and pants that seemed to be about right as to price, he tried the store man in way of barter, in this style:

"Dew you ever take prujice for your clothing?"

"Take what?"

"Prujice—garden sass and sich; don't do it, dew you?"

"Well, occasionally we do. What have you to sell?"

Oh, almost anything; little of every thing, from marrowfat peas to rye straw; got the alikillnest dried pumpkins yee ever sot your eye on—"xpect now you'd like some of that dried punkin, squire?"

The proprietor declined negotiating for the dried punkin; but inquired if he had any good butter.

"G-o-o-d butter! now, squire, I expect I've got some of the nicest and yellereest you ever sot your eyes on. Got some coat here now—got some in a shooger box, coat in dad's wagon. Brought it down for Kernel Waldron, but you can have it. I'll bring it rite strate in here, darned ef I don't!"

On the strength of the butter a dicker was speedily contracted, for which Nehemiah was put in immediate and absolute possession of a coat, vest, and pants.

But would they fit? Nehemiah was willing to trust the coat and vest; indeed, he could put them on and off in a minute, and they were neat as wax. Where could he try the pants on? Not right there in the store, with the street door open, and women coming and going all the time. Now it happened well that the new clothing store had a corner curtained off for the purpose, and Nehemiah was speedily closed therein.

The pants had straps and the straps were buttoned. Nehemiah had seen straps before, but the art of managing them was a mystery. On consideration, he decided that the boots must go on first. He then mounted a chair, elevated his pants at a proper angle, and endeavored to coax his legs in them. He had a time of it. His boots were none of the smallest, and the pants were none of the widest; the chair, too, was rickety, and bothered him; but bending his energy to the task, he succeeded in inducing one leg into the "pesky things." He was straddled like the Colossus of Rhodes, and just in the act of raising the other foot, when whispering and giggling in his immediate vicinity made him alive to the appalling fact that nothing but a chintz curtain separated him from twenty or thirty of the prettiest and wickedest girls that ever were caged in one shop.

Nehemiah was a bashful youth, and would have made a circumbendibus of a mile any day rather

than meet those girls, even if he had been in full dress; as it was, his mouth was much ajar, at the bare possibility of making his appearance among them in his present dishabille. What if there was a hole in the curtain? What if he should fall?—It wouldn't bear thinking of; and plunging the vacant leg with a sort of frantic looseness, he brought on the very catastrophe he was so anxious to avoid. The chair collapsed with a sudden scrouch, pitching Nehemiah heels over head through the curtain, and he made a grand entrance among the stitching divinities, on all fours, like a fattened rhinoceros.

Perhaps Collier himself never exhibited a more striking *tableau vivant* than was now displayed.—Nehemiah was a "model," every inch of him, and, though not exactly revolving on a pedestal, he was going through that movement quite as well on his back—kicking and plunging; in short, personifying in thirty seconds all the attitudes ever chiselled! As for the girls, they screamed, of course, jumped upon chairs and cutting boards, threw their hands over their faces, peeped through their fingers—perfectly natural!—screamed again, and declared they should die—they knew they should!

"O Lord!" blubbered the distressed young man; "don't, gals, don't! I didn't go tew, I swan to man I didn't—it's all owing to these cursed trousers—ev'ry mite on't. Ask your boss; he'll tell you how it was. Oh, dear! won't nobody liver me up with old clothes, or turn the wood-box over me? Oh, Moses in the bulrushes! what will Nancy do."

He managed to raise himself on his feet, and made a bold plunge toward the door; but the entangling alliances tripped him up again, and he fell kerslap upon the goose of the pressman. This was the unkindest cut of all. The goose had been heated expressly for thick cloth seams, and the way it sizzed in the seat of the new pants was afflicting to the wearer. Nehemiah riz in an instant, and seizing the source of all his troubles by the slack, he tore himself from all save the straps and some fragments that hung about his ankles, as he dashed through the "Emporium" at a 2-40 rate, and "made tracks" for him.—*Harper's Magazine.*

CHURCH STRUCK BY LIGHTNING!—HOOPS MELTED!—Sabbath before last, a violent thunder storm passed over New Jersey. At Jamesburg, near Annapolis, the Sabbath School of the Presbyterian Church was holding its meeting in the afternoon, when the fluid struck the building. It entered the roof, making only a small hole, and descended by the chandelier to the centre of the church, where it exploded. Quite a number of adults, as well as children were prostrated by it, and their clothes burnt.—Yet no fatal results followed, although some hours, and even, days, elapsed before perfect restoration took place. But the remarkable feature of it remains to be told, and this is given by a clergyman who received it from one present. It is stated that the ladies who wore brass hoops in their dresses, were uninjured, but the hoops themselves were melted! The electric fluid was thus diffused, and perhaps lives saved by this novel species of conductor.—*N. Y. Evangelist.*

THE ORIGIN OF THE WORD BOGUS.—Incidentally in a case before the Supreme Court yesterday, the Judge took occasion to manifest his abhorrence of the use of slang phrases, in the course of Judicial proceedings, by saying that he did not know the meaning of the phrase "bogus transaction," which some one had indecorously uttered during the trial. The word "bogus," we believe, is a corruption of the name of one "Borghese," a very corrupt individual, who, some twenty years ago, or more, did a tremendous business in the way of supplying the great West, and portions of the South-West, with a vast amount of counterfeit bills on fictitious banks, which never had an existence outside of the "forgetive brain" of him, the said "Borghese."—The western people who are rather rapid in their talk, when excited, soon fell into the habit of shortening the Norman name of Borghese to the more handy one of "Bogus," and his bills, and all other bills of like character, were universally styled by them "bogus currency." By an easy and not very unnatural process of transition to metaphorical tendency, it is now occasionally applied to other fraudulent papers, such as sham mortgages, bills of sale, conveyances, &c. We believe it has not been inserted in any dictionary. At least we do not find it in either Webster's or Worcester's. Although we do not think that the use of this phrase "bogus transaction" was likely to mislead the jurists, the cultivated lovers of pure undefiled English will, no doubt, duly appreciate the expression of disapprobation of the Court, at the introduction of a vulgarism in a tribunal of justice.—*Boston Courier.*