

## Literature, &amp;c.

## THE TOILER'S HYMN TO GOD.

BY S. H. BRADBURY (QUALLON.)

Oh! Glorious God, what beauty dwells  
On earth in summer hours;  
When rain-drops, like to diamonds glow,  
And crown the spangled flowers;  
And sweets come from the blossomed boughs,  
The birds sing lays of love;  
And, though I walk this lower world,  
I feel the world above.

When morning's rose blush tints the East  
My soul is filled with song,  
And earnest thoughts, like sunset flames,  
About my fancy throng.  
And yet I mourn that 'mid these scenes  
There should be cause for tears;  
Ah! burning tears that fall from eyes  
As moments fall from years.

Oh! I would have the world as bright  
As yon vast summer skies;  
Enrich its throbbing heart with joy,  
And teach it how to rise!  
I'd clasp it with a mighty creed,  
One universal hymn;  
And make its glowing words round men  
Like waves of music swim.

And as I walk in Nature's realm,  
When sunlight floods the sod,  
My soul is thrilled with beauty's spells.  
The radiant beams of God;  
And wish that all the woes of life  
Their jarring race had ran;  
That man would never more forget  
To bless his fellow man.

Yet, full of thy great glory, God,  
I'm clasped with splendid thoughts,  
And feel more royal joy at heart  
Than all earth's vainest kings.  
Then make, oh! God, an age of love  
For labour's trampled crowds,  
And make the world bright as the moon  
Above the drooping clouds.

From Frank Leslie's Gazette for June

## CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE.

A TALE.

In the reign of an ancient king of Great Britain, whose name was George, and who consequently is supposed to have flourished on this side, both of the Conquest by the Norman William, and the Reformation of our Church under the renowned British Bluebeard, Henry the Wife-killer; and about the period at which the British stage-coach first sprung into existence, under the form and condition of a snail, and the title of a diligence, there appeared—by the side of a highway, which ran along the southern coast of England, and led to that spot with an awful name, still called the Land's End—a solitary public house, with a little circular piece of ground before it, and an apple orchard thickly planted with trees behind it; beyond which, again, was a place called The Garden; though it must be acknowledged, that those who did call it so were very courteous and liberal in their epithets. Every one who has seen Mount Edgcombe, knows well that the most luxuriant vegetation which it is possible to imagine, can be produced at the very verge of old ocean's reign; but no such pains as are there bestowed had been given to the vegetable kingdom of the garden of which I speak, and a scanty array of cabbages, turnips, and carrots, was all that the spot of ground could boast. Even that was looked upon in those days all but miraculous, considering that the garden crept to the very edge of the cliff which overhung the sea; the Neptune as if indignant at the presumption of the thing, would come angrily up to the very bottom of the bank at high water, during all seasons of the year, but when he got choleric in the spring and autumn, would bestow a buffet with his trident upon the cliff itself, which swept away from time to time, a row of cabbages or a bed of onions, together with the soil in which they were planted. The house itself had an aspect somewhat gloomy, as its gables were turned towards the road, the entrance being reached by a step, not up but down.

The face of the landlord was a merry face and a gay, but with all that he was a prudent man, took care that his wit should go as far as it would, made one joke serve many customers, had a loud laugh to answer any question that he did not choose to give a more definite reply to, eked out his meaning by a knowing look, which is not tangible to the fangs of the law, and always spoke well of the justice of the peace. His wife looked as if she could have been a quaker: she was an Ana-baptist, however, and it is supposed, or at least was supposed by the people in the neighbourhood that the beer in that house turned more rapidly sour than in any other in the country.

It was a nasty, rainy, squally afternoon; and the diligence was winding slowly along upon the foresaid road, at the average pace of three miles and a half an hour; while the rain kept beating it at various points of the crazy and ill-contrived vehicle, when one traveller in the inside said to another—

'Forty miles more, Frederick, forty miles more.'

'Aye,' said the other, 'and this snail of a machine goes on as if it never intended to arrive at the end of the journey.'

'While your heart flies on with the wings of love,' replied the first who spoke; 'and yet cannot reach Mary's feet any faster than the diligence.'

The two gentlemen who thus conversed were the sole tenants of the machine, and they were both young men of five or six-and-twenty years of age. The one who was called Frederick, and whose name was, moreover, Prevot, was by far the handsomest of the two, and upon the whole a very good looking man, though there was a certain grave and anxious look about his countenance, which those who loved him—and his friend's sister Mary, was one of those who loved him most—called deeply interesting; while those who did not love him pronounced it to be gloomy and sullen. Sullen he was not, for his was, in truth, a very quick and impetuous nature; but he had a strong imagination, and was by no means addicted to over bright hopes. After his friend had spoken, he remained silent for a minute or two, and then said—

'Well, Willy, when will the diligence arrive after all?'

'Not till this time to-morrow,' replied his companion, laughing.

'Nonsense, William Gore,' you do not mean to say that the wretched thing will take four-and-twenty hours to go forty miles,' said Frederick.

'Why, it stops at a little inn a mile or two further,' replied William Gore, 'for eight hours to sleep, as it is called, and you may think yourself very lucky if you do the rest of the journey in sixteen hours more.'

Frederick Prevot bit his lip, and said—'Cannot we get a chaise?'

'Not in such a night as this,' replied his companion. 'Besides, there is none to be had here. However, in consideration of your loverlike anxiety, I'll tell you what we will do. We will sleep here this night; have a good bottle of Burgandy if it can be procured; let our things follow by the diligence; hire two horses, and in five hours we will be at home.'

This was all agreed to by his companion, although, to say the truth, Frederick, if he had had his own will, would have mounted a horse as soon as he got to the inn, and ridden on at full speed towards the end of his journey. By this time it was beginning to grow dusk, so that he would have a darksome ride; it was raining as hard as it could pour, so that he would have had a cold one, and he himself was already extremely tired; so that everything seemed to show that, though contrary to his own inclination, his stay at the inn would be for his benefit.

On arriving at the place of public reception we have described, the travellers made known their purpose, both to the driver of the diligence and to the landlord of the inn. The first of these two personages, as he intended to charge full price for the whole way, cared very little whether they went on with him or not. The landlord, on his part, vowed that he could give the travellers the best of everything; but that the gentlemen must put up with a large double-bedded room, as every other room in the place was occupied. Frederick said, that he hoped that it was at the back, as they should be out of the way of the noise and disturbance which was even then going on in front. This the landlord declared was quite impossible; there was but one room that they could have, and that was in front. It was a capital room, however, he said, large and roomy; and they were consequently obliged to make up their minds to their fate.

As to the food set before them, the landlord kept his word. The dinner was most excellent, and though either Claret or Burgandy was an unknown commodity in the place, yet mine host declared that he had some Port of a very superior quality, some Madarie which had made more voyages round the world than Cook and Anson together, and some brandy, which also had been as much improved by travelling as any peer's son in the realm.

A crackling fire of dry wood, cheerful lights, though they were but tallow candles, some excellent fish, some game, for it was now autumn, with a broiled fowl, and other accompaniments of the sort, greatly cheered the travellers; and although the landlord could produce no wine, except the port which proved of a very doubtful and unpleasant character, and a portion of which might well be suspected of growing upon English hedges rather than in Portuguese vineyards, he offered to bring forth rum of such a sort as they had never tasted before in their days. That was in an age in which punch was considered as one of the most urbane and polished of all beverages; the travellers willingly agreed to betake themselves to the bowl, and the rum produced by the landlord even exceeded his promise in excellence, and made both the travellers marvel at finding anything so excellent in a country inn. They were deep in their potations when the landlord entered with the coachman of the diligence, who, knowing that the travellers did not intend to proceed with him, now appeared to demand his fare. Both put their hands into their pockets, and William Gore speedily settled his own part of the fare. Frederick Prevot, however, felt in his pockets in vain; he drew out a number of letters and

papers, and then said, with a laugh, 'Lend me some money, William, I must have left my pocket-book in my portmanteau.'

After affecting for a moment to refuse, so as to make his companion somewhat angry, William Gore gave the money that was wanted, and they went on with their supper. The lender ate and drank more than the borrower, and towards ten o'clock they retired to rest in the double-bedded room which the landlord had mentioned. Frederick Prevot had one quality, which is not very unusual with quick and impetuous men, he slept, when he was asleep, like a stone, though it was often long after his head touched the pillow ere slumber visited his eyes. It was thus on the night which I have mentioned; for an hour or more he lay awake listening to all the noises of the inn, and they were many; but after that he fell into a sleep which seemed as sound as that of death itself.

We must now take up a new personage in the drama, and speak of the Boots of the inn who at an early hour of the following morning went to the door of the travellers' room to wake them, as he had been told. At first he modestly knocked, but no answer being returned, he went in and opened the window shutters. What was his surprise, however, to find the bed next to the windows, in which William Gore had slept, if the poor wretch, indeed, had been, allowed to sleep at all, now vacant, though sadly tossed and tumbled about: the pillow and the bed clothes deluged in gore, and all the signs, in fact, of some terrible act having been committed.

The Boots looked round the room and into the other bed; and then quitting the chamber in haste, told the landlord what he had beheld. The landlord, the landlady, the chambermaid, and the ostler, all instantly rushed towards the stairs, but the landlord stopped the progress of the ostlers, by sending him immediately for a constable and a neighbouring justice. The rest of the party then returned with the Boots to the double-bedded room, where they found everything as Boots had described; and, moreover, discovered that the towel and basin which Frederick Prevot had used the night before, were stained with blood; and on peeping into the bed, where he lay sound asleep, his face and pillow were found to be slightly blooded, while his right hand and arm, which was stretched out above the bed-clothes, had a good deal of blood upon the fingers and upon the shirt. The landlord wisely determined not to wake him till the constable came, and in the meantime further perquisitions were made. The stairs were covered with drops of blood; traces of the same kind were met with all the way through the garden to the top of the bank above the sea; footsteps were seen deeply sunk in the splashy ground, as if a man heavily laden had passed along; and in some places long trailing marks were found, which might very well have been produced by a person dragging along a dead body to throw it into the sea below. At length the constable arrived; Frederick Prevot was awakened with difficulty, and gazed round with a look of astonishment, which if feigned, was certainly very well put on. That look of astonishment changed into indignation on being charged with the murder of his friend, and he had well nigh knocked down the man who had made the accusation, but he refrained; and what was his horror, when on rising and dressing himself, as he was told to do, the pocket-book of William Gore, marked with a bloody thumb and finger, was found under his pillow!

Were we to follow the fashion of the day, we should dwell upon the examination before the magistrates, and his trial before a jury of his country; but, for the sake of being singular, or rather, perhaps, of going a step even beyond our contemporaries, we will pass over all the painful incidents of his trial, and dwell still more upon the painful incidents of his execution. Yes, reader, upon his execution; for the chain of circumstantial evidence was so strong, that the additional facts which came out on the day of his trial, namely, that he had no money on the preceding night to pay the coachman, that the pocket-book which he pretended was in his portmanteau could not be discovered there, and that the chambermaid had heard a man go out and come in, were quite sufficient to convince the jury of his guilt. Not a doubt indeed remained on the mind of any person but one, and that was the sister of the murdered man—the promised bride of him who was about to end his days upon the scaffold. She did not believe him guilty; she knew him well, she had loved him long, and it would have taken evidence ten times more strong even to have raised a doubt in her mind. She openly and boldly declared her conviction of his innocence; she visited him in prison; she took leave of him with tenderness and devotion: she consoled him with reiterated assurances that she was as certain of his innocence as of her own.

The fatal morning dawned at length, and as it was then the custom to execute persons condemned for murder in chains, near the place as possible, the sentence of Frederick Prevot declared that he was to be hung in chains upon spot where the deed had been committed as the moor, about half a mile from the inn where he had passed that inauspicious night. The prison in which he had been confined, was at

some distance, and though the time appointed for his execution was early in the day, the gazing spectators, who had assembled to witness the agony and death of a fellow-creature, were disappointed for some hours of that pleasant pastime by various accidents and misadventures which took place, and interrupted the march of the sad procession from the far off county town.

It seemed as if nature opposed herself to the hanging of an innocent man. The cart in which, loaded with heavy irons and seated upon straw, he was drawn towards the moor, broke down at the end of the first five miles, and it took a long time to repair it. It was then discovered that the man who had undertaken the terrible office of executioner, and who, notwithstanding certain savage propensities of his nature which led him that way, was so much of a novice as to be nervous and uneasy, had slipped off secretly; nor was it till long search had been made, that he was found, drinking large draughts of spirits in a public house. He was then placed in the same cart with the prisoner, and the march re-commenced; but some way farther on, in going up a very steep hill, the horse that drew the prisoner fell down dead in the harness, and a new delay took place while another horse was sent for. Thus the agony of that terrible journey was prolonged to poor Frederick Prevot for many hours, and his frame worn with imprisonment, with the struggle of hope and fear, with indignation, anguish, and despair, seemed ready to sink under the protracted suffering thus inflicted on him, and many of those who accompanied the procession seriously thought that he would die before he reached the foot of the gallows. The clergyman who went with him to afford him spiritual consolation, was of that opinion, and mentioned it to the sheriff, who rode by the side of the cart on horseback, adding that the prisoner had tasted no food that day.

The sheriff was a kind-hearted man, and instantly approaching the prisoner, he said, 'You seem faint, sir; will you take a little wine at that public house, or some brandy, or anything that you like?'

'Sir,' replied Frederick, 'I will take nothing that prolongs my misery, even for a moment; and again sunk into silence.'

During the rest of the journey, the clergyman spoke to him some time, chiefly for the purpose of giving him what comfort he could; but as they at length approached the moor, and the dark line of the gallows was seen rising in the evening air, the good man, in a low tone, urged Frederick earnestly to confess the crime. The young prisoner turned slowly round upon him, and said, 'Would you have me die with a lie in my mouth? I am innocent! and my innocence will some day be proved!'

Soon after this, the fatal spot was reached and as it was now beginning to grow twilight all the rest of the terrible proceedings were hurried as much as possible. Frederick Prevot showed firmness and readiness in all, and more strength than people had believed he possessed. Though the crowd, which had been there from the morning, was somewhat diminished, the numbers were still considerable, and while the executioner was in the act of adjusting the rope, the prisoner turned to the people, and said, in a loud clear voice, 'Remember, every one of you, that to the very last moment of my life, and with my very last breath, I declare that I am innocent! Now,' he continued, turning to the hangman, 'all is ready?'

'Yes, sir,' replied the man, drawing the cap over his face; and without waiting for any other word, Frederick Prevot threw himself violently off the ladder, and remained suspended between heaven and earth.

A low murmur ran through the people, and it was a sad one, too; for there was something in the manner of his death which shook the conviction, even of those who had previously felt most sure of his guilt. Some indeed went away, saying that he died game, but the great majority of the multitude separated with the feeling that, or that moor, an innocent man had just been murdered.

Such was the conviction of a shepherd an elderly man, who fed the flock of a neighbouring squire, the lord of the manor; and when he went home, he gave his wife an account of the whole proceedings, adding, 'They may say what they like, but I am very sure that poor gentleman did not kill the other one, and I shall not wonder if the truth was found out some day.'

As was usual with this old man, in the very grey of the dawning of the following day, he led forth his sheep to pasture, and the feelings he had experienced on the preceding night naturally made him turn his steps towards the gallows on the moor. Though it was a terrible sight, to see the body of a human being hanging there, loaded with heavy chains, yet the old man felt an interest in all that had occurred, which made him pause and look up. In the meantime, the sheep began to take a wrong direction, and he called his dog to turn them back. What was his surprise, however, when he heard a faint voice, which seemed to come from the gibbet, enquire, 'Is there any body there?' and then added, 'for God's sake! take me down, or end my life, for this is very dreadful.'

The voice evidently came from the man who