

Literature, &c.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

From Household Words.

A WOMAN'S QUESTION.

Before I trust my fate to thee,
Or place my hand in thine,
Before I let thy future give
Color and form to mine,—
Before I peril all for thee, question thy soul to-
night for me.

I break all slighter bonds, nor feel
One shadow of regret;
Is there one link within the past
That holds thy spirit yet?
Or is thy faith as clear and free, as that which
I can pledge to thee?

Does there within thy dimmest dreams
A possible future shine,
Wherein thy life could henceforth breathe,
Untouched, unshared by mine?
If so, at any pain or cost, O tell me before all
is lost!

Look deeper still. If thou canst feel
Within thy inmost soul
That thou hast kept a portion back,
While I have staked the whole,
Let no false pity spare the blow, but, in true
mercy, tell me so.

Is there within thy heart a need
That mine cannot fulfil?
One chord that any other hand
Could better wake or still?
Speak now, lest at some future day, my whole
life wither and decay.

Lives there, within thy nature hid,
The demon-spirit, Change,
Shedding a passing glory still
On all things new and strange?
It may not be thy fault alone, but shield thy
heart against thy own.

Couldst thou withdraw thy hand one day,
And answer to my claim?
That fate, and that to-day's mistake,
Not thou, had been to blame?
Some sooth their conscience thus; but thou—
O surely thou, wilt warn me now!

A THORN IN THE MEMORY.

HARTLEY BANCROFT was, in the general ac-
ception of the term, a kind-hearted man.
His feelings were easily reached, and these gave
usually, a ready impulse to his actions. But
quick feeling has, in most cases, a two-fold
range—warming now into kindly emotion, and
now burning with sudden anger. Your so called
kind-hearted men are often betrayed into
cruel words, and even cruel actions. But there
is this merit about them, when the heat of pas-
sion subsides they repent and sometimes seek to
heal where they have wounded.

Such a man was Hartley Bancroft. While
the current of events ran smoothly along, the
surface of his life reflected the unvarying sun-
shine; but a very little obstruction sufficed to
ripple the waters, and then their aspect dark-
ened.

One day Mr Bancroft was sitting at his desk,
with a pile of checks and bills before him, the
sum of which he was taking preparatory to a
deposit in bank. It was late in the day for him
to be figuring up his account; but he had un-
usually heavy payments to make, and the amount
necessary to lift his notes had been obtained
with difficulty. Mr Bancroft felt both hurried
and worried, as his quick nervous movements
showed.

Just at this inauspicious moment a man en-
tered the store, and walked back to where Mr
Bancroft was sitting.

'Good-day Mr Cartwright!'

There was not a very cordial tone in the voice
of Mr Bancroft, although the other was a
customer who had bought of his goods free-
ly.

'Good-day.'

There was an embarrassed air about Mr Cart-
wright.

'What can I do for you?' It was only a
form of speech on the part of Mr Bancroft, or
rather a new form of saying, 'Don't ask me for
anything.'

Now it happened that Mr Cartwright was on
that day in a very 'tight place,' as it is called.
It was two o'clock, and all his efforts to get the
full amount of money needed had failed. Several
notes had matured, and among them one
of seven hundred dollars given to Mr Bancroft.
All but this he had succeeded in lifting; and,
frightened at the aspect of things, he had come
very reluctantly to his creditor, whom he only
knew as a kind-hearted man, to state the extre-
mity of his case, and ask a check for the amount
of his note as a temporary loan.

'I am short seven hundred dollars. Can you
help me?'

'No!' was the answer, made in an emphatic
tone, and with a knitting of the brows.

Mr Bancroft noticed that his words seemed to
stagger the applicant for money; he also noti-
ced that he grew pale, and had a look of singu-
lar distress. But Mr Bancroft was too much

excited and annoyed for these to have upon
him at that time any right influence.

'Then,' said Mr Cartwright, 'you will have
to withdraw my note from the bank. I cannot
lift it.'

'I shall do no such thing,' angrily replied Mr
Bancroft. 'Take up your notes as I take up
mine.'

'I have failed in all my efforts to get money;
and if you do not withdraw this note it will be
protested.' Mr Cartwright said this very deli-
berately, and in a firm voice, yet with a face
like ashes.

'Very well,' was the unyielding answer, 'let
it be protested, then; if you can bear the ope-
ration, I think I can.'

Coldly, almost sneeringly, were these cruel
words said. Mr Cartwright urged his case no
farther, but turned away and went from the
store of his unyielding creditor. Scarcely had
he passed into the street before the better na-
ture of Mr Bancroft rose in ascendancy, and he
repented his unkindness.

'William,' he called to a clerk.

The young man came instantly.

'Make this deposit, William, and at the
same time withdraw Mr Cartwright's note, due
to-day. Money is hard to get just now, and he
is burdened with heavy payments. We must
give him a helping hand. The merchant spoke
kindly not fretfully. The clerk departed with
the bank book and a check of sufficient amount
to lift the notes that were due. Mr Bancroft
remained sitting at his desk, and from his atti-
tude and the aspect of his countenance, it was
plain that self-approval was not the pleasant
state of mind in which he was indulging. The
veil of a momentary angry excitement was re-
moved, and now plainly before the eyes of his
humbled and distressed debtor, toward whom
not a single impulse of kind feeling had stirred.
He tried to find a refuge from self up-
braidings in the fact that he had done all his
debtor asked—the note was withdrawn.

'Yes,' said a voice within him, 'you have
cast a bone, with curses, into the face of a
beggard!'

Mr Bancroft started up hurriedly from his
desk, walked the length of his store, returned
and sat down again. A long, deep sigh parted
his lips.

'What could have possessed me that I so far
forgot both duty and kindness? I would give
twice seven hundred dollars to recall this act,
were it possible to do so.'

Drawing a sheet of paper before him Mr
Bancroft took up a pen and wrote:

'MR EDWARD CARTWRIGHT.—My dear
sir:—I have withdrawn your note. Forgive my
rough unkindness. I was worried about money
matters, and had just made up my own bank
account. We are not always proof against
petty annoyances. They sometimes disturb us
more than larger things. Come in to-morrow,
and we will arrange for the renewal of the
note, if you desire it, making the time suit your-
self.'

Mr Bancroft signed this apologetic letter,
and dispatched it forthwith. He felt more com-
fortable after that. Still he suffered some pain
for having given pain, and no little humiliation
for the unamiable weakness he had manifested.

'Did you see Mr Cartwright?' he inquired of
the lad who had taken the note.

'No sir, he was not there was the answer.'

'You left my note?'

'Yes sir.' The boy looked agitated. He
stood a moment, as if waiting for further ques-
tions and then said:

'They were just driving him away in a
carriage.'

'What?' Mr Bancroft turned pale.

'They said he had broken a blood vessel.'

Mr Bancroft started to his feet with an ex-
clamation of mingled surprise and pain.

'There was blood on the floor.'

Mr Bancroft groaned aloud. After reflecting
for a moment, he took up his hat and went out
hurriedly. A walk of five minutes brought
him to the store of Mr Cartwright.

'What was the cause of this?' he asked of one
of the clerks. 'Did he fall? or was he lifting
anything?'

'No,' answered the clerk. He was sitting at
his desk, resting his head upon his hands, when
I heard him call, in a quick voice, and turning
round, I saw the blood flowing from his mouth.

'Had anything disturbed him?' asked Mr
Bancroft.

'Money had been hard to get during the past
week,' the clerk answered, 'and Mr Cartwright's
payments were unusually large. There is one
note not lifted yet, and it is a few minutes of
three o'clock.'

The clerk pointed to a bank notice lying on
Mr Cartwright's book.

Mr Bancroft leaned over, and saw that it was
a note due to him.

'This is withdrawn from the bank,' said he.

'I am glad to hear it,' replied the clerk. 'I
think it was your note that did the harm. He
had taken up the others, and went out two
hours ago, after having been all the morning on
the street to try to get the sum required to lift
this one, but he failed, and the consequences
were more than he had strength to look at
calmly. He is a just and kind-hearted man,
Mr Bancroft. We who live with him can bear
that testimony.'

Mr Bancroft stood nearly motionless for a
long time.

'Where does Mr Cartwright live?' he in-
quired at length.

'At number—Fifteenth-street.'

To the dwelling of Mr Cartwright he went
in all haste. He found everything there to
confirm his worst apprehensions. The hem-
orrhage had been very profuse. Already so
large a quantity of blood had been lost that the
sick man was reduced to a state of insensibility
and still the bleeding continued. The family
were, of course in the deepest distress. He
saw Mrs Cartwright for a moment, and in
that moment the impression of her white
grief-stricken face was transferred to a page
in memory that no after event could dim
or obliterate. A beautiful daughter just
on the verge of womanhood, glided past him
once, and her face of terror remained to haunt
him for life. He saw the physician, and to his
inquiries received no hopeful answer.

When Mr Bancroft left the house of sorrow,
he went forth almost stealthily, and with a
feeling of guilt in his heart.

'My work! my work!' a voice within kept
repeating; and, do what he would, he found it
impossible to silence the accusing spirit.

'I can never forgive myself if he should die!
said Bancroft to himself. 'O what evil is
sometimes wrought by passion in an unguarded
moment; why did I not think before speaking?'

Alas! the dreaded evil came. Mr Bancroft
was at his store an hour earlier than usual on
the next morning.

'Have you heard from Mr Cartwright?' he
inquired anxiously of a clerk.

'Yes sir.'

'How is he?'

'Dead.'

'Dead! Mr Bancroft stepped back a pace or
two, as if a hand were beating against him.'

'Yes sir. He died at seven o'clock last even-
ing; so the newspaper says.'

Mr Bancroft sighed heavily; and then walk-
ed back to his desk, sat down, and remained
in trouble thought for a long time. There was
only a single aspect of the case that gave him
any relief, and this was the probable ignorance
of every one but himself of the immediate
cause of Mr Cartwright's death. He had not,
it was presumed, mentioned the unfeeling re-
pulsive which he had received, when at the
eleventh hour, and as a last resort, he had
gone to one from whom he had confidently ex-
pected not only kind consideration, but prompt
relief; and so the secret had died with him.

Mr Bancroft did not visit the house of mourn-
ing. He could not look upon the distress
which his own conscience charged him with
originating; but his heart was assailed with
gloomy shadows.

There was no one to represent Mr Cartwright
in his business, which had to be closed. An ac-
tive, hard-working merchant, he had succeeded,
through many disadvantages; in establishing a
trade that, prosecuted with industry for a few
years, would have given his family a moderate
fortune. But he was stricken down at an in-
auspicious moment. Serious losses occurred in the
settlement of his affairs, and when all his debts
were finally paid there was nothing over for his
family.

'Poor Mary Cartwright!' said Mrs Bancroft
to her husband one day, about six months after
the death of Mr Cartwright. 'I saw her at Mrs
Marvin's to-day. She gives music lessons
to her daughter Helen. How changed she
is!'

Mr Bancroft made no reply, and his was in
some doubt as to whether he really heard her
remark.

'She says that her mother has never
been out of the house since her father's
death.'

Still Mr Bancroft made no response. But
how the words did smite him! Ah! there was
a thorn in the memory that time could never
extract.

There was not a dollar left for the family
from poor Cartwright's estate! said a fellow
merchant.

'So I have heard.'

Mr Bancroft answered with seeming indiffer-
ence, but his heart quivered as if a blow had
been given.

'It is said that the failure to raise money
to lift one of his notes killed him!' said ano-
ther.

'People will say almost anything,' replied
Mr Bancroft with assumed coolness.

Time moved steadily onward. The seething
spot on the surface of trade where Mr Cart-
wright went down was obliterated by the onward
moving currents; and he was scarcely remem-
bered in the business circle where once his busy
face was a familiar object.

But there was one man who could never
thrust aside his image; one man in whose mem-
ory his presence was a rankling thorn. Many
times had he tried to pluck out this thorn by se-
cret acts of kindness to the family of Mr Cart-
wright. But the effort only seemed to make
the anguish more intense; for the little he of-
fered by stealth contrasted so poorly with the
all-sustaining life deeds of a husband and
father, that he was shamed back into impo-
tence.

The case was hopeless. That single act of
unkindness, so fatal in its consequences, was

done forever. It had gone beyond his utmost
reach, and there was no surgeon skilled enough
to extract the thorn it had left to rankle in his
memory.

ERUPTION OF A VOLCANO,
3000 LIVES LOST.

Mr A. Perry presented to the Academy of
Sciences, a few days since, an interesting ac-
count of a Volcano, as witnessed in the larger
of the Sanguair Islands situated near the Cele-
bes Islands, not far from Borneo, by Mr S. F.
Tansen, the Dutch resident at Manado, who has
sent an official account of it to his government.
For several years past the Volcano Awoe had
given no signs of an approaching eruption, ex-
cept a slight shock of earthquake occasionally.
The inhabitants had come to the conclusion that
there was nothing more to be feared, and had
extended their Rice fields to the very slopes of
the mountain. On the night of the 2nd of
March, however, a violent detonation announc-
ed an impending eruption, and immediately af-
terwards torrents of lava came rolling down the
steeps, destroying everything in their way, and
causing the waters to boil wherever they touch-
ed them. Springs of hot water broke out in
several places, scorching and destroying what-
ever the lava had spared. Agitated as if by a
submarine earthquake, the waves of the sea
rose to an enormous height, and at length, over-
stepping the shore, partly quenched the flames
occasioned by the lava. Meanwhile violent
claps of thunder rent the sky; a black column of
stones and ashes was vomited from the crater,
and fell in a dense shower on the sides of the
mountain. The darkness was impenetrable
save when broken by vivid flashes of lightning.
The dwellings and crops that had escaped the
flames were hurled under the stones and ashes,
while the lava, arrested here and there by local
obstacles, spread itself out into lakes of fire, un-
til, breaking through the natural dams which
opposed its progress, it continued its work of
destruction with renewed impetus. After a
few hours, this tumult of the elements subsi-
ded, but only to be renewed on the following
day, when the shower of ashes became so dense
as to be impenetrable even to the rays of the
sun. Ashes and stones were carried over,
by a violent southwest hurricane, to the Island
of Mindanae, a distance of 2 degrees (128 miles.)
About a fortnight after, on the 16th, a fresh
eruption took place, causing further damage on
another side, and the volcano subsided. The
villages of Tarpena and Randhar escaped with
comparatively little damage, owing to a series of
eminences that formed a barrier to the lava; but
the village of Kalugan was completely destr-
oyed, and the rich plantations and forests extend-
ing along the slope of the Awoe, running be-
tween Tarpena and Kandhar, have been turned
into a desert covered with stones and ashes, and
intersected with seven large streams of lava.
Had the inhabitants of those two villages stayed
in their houses their lives would have been spar-
ed; as it was, most of them, seized with panic,
had fled to the gardens and fields, thinking
themselves safer there; but the lava soon en-
circled them, or overtook those who attempted
to flee, and destroyed every soul. The number
of dead belonging to Toroena was 722 men,
women, and children; to Kandhar, 45; to To-
boekan, 2,039; total of three provinces, 2,806
men, women and children. Of the fugitives,
most of those who did not lose their lives, lost
their senses, and fell into a state of idiocy.

ADVANTAGE OF USING TO-
BACCO.

The following was communicated to Com-
modore Wilkes, of the Exploring Expedition,
by a savage of the Feejee Islands. He stated
that a vessel the hull of which was still lying on
the beach, had come ashore in a storm, and that
all the crew had fallen into the hands of the
Islanders. 'What did you with them?' enquir-
ed the Commodore. 'Killed 'em all,' answer-
ed the savage. 'What did you do with them
after you had killed them?' 'Eat 'em—good!' re-
turned the cannibal. 'Did you eat them all?'
inquired the half-sick Commodore. 'Yes, we
eat 'em all but one.' And why did you spare
one? 'Because he taste too much like tobacco.'
Couldn't eat him no how! If the tobacco-
chewer should happen to fall into the hands of
New Zealand savages, or get shipwrecked some-
where in the Feejee group, he will have the
consolation of knowing that he will not be cut
into steaks and buried into the unconsecrated
stomach of a cannibal.—*New York Journal
of Commerce.*

SCRAPS.

Never carry a sword in your tongue to wound
the reputation of any man.

The lady whose sleep was broken, has had it
mended.

Why is a pig's tail like a carving-knife?—
Because it is flourished over a ham.

A French writer is represented as calling
dyspepsia 'the remorse of a guilty stomach.'

Learning makes a man fit company for him-
self as well as others.

'Look out for paint,' as the girl said when
the fellow went to kiss her.

The prettiest lining for a bonnet is a smiling
face.

From Mr. I.

THE F.

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