

um! Ah, ha! you say; now I got you! You shake de tree 'gain, and de possum let go all his four foot. Tank God! I got you now! you say. You look on de ground—you no see de possum. Ky! you say; way de possum gone so quick? You look all round in de bush to see way he hide—you no find um. You look up in de tree, and please God, massa! you see um hangin' by de tail, laughin' at you same like white buckra laugh at poor nigger!

"Well, massa! jest so wid 'fallin' from grace' and de 'final pusseverance ob de saints.' You see de ole debble come to de Christian. Mebbe he high up in de tree, on de berry top ob de cross. De ole debble shake de cross; he throw stones; he hit um on de foot, on de hand, in de head! De Christian sin one time, two time, tree time. At last he sin one big sin. De debble trip um up now! He git poor Christian down flat in de mud! He beat um and beat um wid his big stick, till he tink poor Christian dead and nebber can git up any more! All poor Christian's friends gib um up for dead too; for de debble goes to dem and fools 'em. He tell 'em all, 'No use to pray for him any more, for he's nottin' more dan a rottin, stinkin' carcass! He's pisoned wid de gall and bitterness ob sin! You nebber will see your friend in hebben, for he b'longs to me now!'

"Well, massa! de debble goes away, and lef de poor Christian right dere; for he ain't got no time to stay dere to watch him, and he so greedy he want to catch heap ob sinners to put 'em all in his pot at one time. He want to hab stew, and roast, and brile all togadder! 'Cause he know berry well he can't hunt for no more poor sinner arter dis world close. Well! he lef poor Christian in de mud, and go off 'bout his bizzness; for Satan got heap o' bizzness, massa! Well! jest den, when all hope gone, de poor Christian, like de Prodigal Son, come to hisself. Like de possum, he open one eye fust, den he open de odder eye, and look round. He see now; and by de grace ob God he crawl out ob de ditch on his hands and knees. And although he's bruised and sore, and can hardly creep along, and may be for a long time 'fore he can 'tand up 'traight as he used to could, yet arter a while he gits back to de berry top ob de cross! And de top ob de cross, massa, is berry high—for it reaches clean up to hebben!

"Well, God bless you, massa, for listenin' to a poor old nigger!" said the good old man; and then he cried out, in a joyous tone, "De day is breakin', Massa Poole! and please God! dere's our own home fence, and we ain't been lost at all when we fust git to dis place! Why, massa! if we had jist gone ten steps more dis way we would a bin in de ole field!"

It was even so. We had been going round in a circle for several hours. But it gave us cause for gratitude to God for the manifestation of his providence; and perhaps many of our readers will say there is much of sound theology in old Sawney's lecture on "Falling from Grace" and the "Final Perseverance of the Saints."

## THE COUNTERSIGN.

ALAS! the weary hours pass slow,  
The night is very dark and still,  
And in the marshes far below  
I hear the bearded whip-poor-will.  
I scarce can see a yard ahead,  
My ears are strained to catch each sound;  
I hear the leaves about me shed,  
And the springs bubbling through the ground.

Along the beaten path I pace,  
Where white rags mark my sentry's track,  
In formless shrubs I seem to trace  
The foeman's form with bending back.  
I think I see him crouching low,  
I stop and list—I stoop and peer—  
Until the neighboring hillocks grow  
To groups of soldiers far and near.

With ready piece I wait and watch,  
Until mine eyes, familiar grown,  
Detect each harmless earthen notch,  
And turn guerrillas into stone.  
And then amid the lonely gloom,  
Beneath the weird old tulip trees,  
My silent marches I resume,  
And think on other times than these.

Sweet visions through the silent night!  
The deep bay-windows fringed with vine;  
The room within, in softened light,  
The tender, milk-white hand in mine,  
The timid pressure, and the pause  
That oftentimes overcame our speech—  
That time when by mysterious laws  
We each felt all in all to each.

And then, that bitter, bitter day,  
When came the final hour to part,  
When clad in soldier's honest gray,  
I pressed her weeping to my heart.  
Too proud of me to bid me stay,  
Too fond of me to let me go,  
I had to tear myself away,  
And left her stolid in her woe.

So rose the dream—so passed the night—  
When distant in the darkness glen,  
Approaching up the sombre height,  
I heard the solid march of men;  
Till over stubble, over sward,  
And fields where lay the golden sheaf,  
I saw the lantern of the guard  
Advancing with the night relief.

"Halt! who goes there?" my challenge cry:  
It rings along the watchful line.  
"Relief!" I hear a voice reply.  
"Advance, and give the countersign!"  
With bayonet at the charge, I wait,  
The corporal gives the mystic spell;  
With arms at port I charge my mate,  
And onward pass, and all is well.

But in the tent that night awake,  
I think, if in the fray I fall,  
Can I the mystic answer make  
Whene'er the angelic sentries call?  
And pray that Heaven may so ordain,  
That when I near the camp divine,  
Whether in travail or in pain,  
I too may have the countersign.

CAMP CAMERON, July, 1861.

## THE POT OF GOLD.

THE sun flung wide its golden arms  
Above the dripping woods of Maine,  
And wove across the misty sky  
The seven-dyed ribbon of the rain.

An old wife at the cottage door  
Sat with her grandson by her knee,  
And watched the rainbow belt the clouds  
And span the world from sea to sea.

Then, in that quiet evening hour,  
The wondering boy a tale she told—  
How he who sought the rainbow's foot  
Would find beneath a pot of gold.

The eager boy drank in the tale—  
His eyes were filled with feverish fire;  
And in his fluttering heart there leaped  
A wild, impulsive, vague desire.

And as the gorgeous sun went down,  
And from the skies the mists were rolled,  
He stole with hurrying step away  
To seek the wondrous pot of gold.

Through lonesome woods with whispering leaves,  
That sung an endless forest hymn,  
Where shadowy cat-birds wailed unseen,  
And squirrels leaped from limb to limb,

By rivers thundering to the sea,  
By ragged hill and gloomy glen,  
Through swamps where slept the sluggish air,  
And by the pleasant homes of men,

The strange boy wandered night and day,  
His eyes still filled with quenchless fire;  
While still within his heart there grew  
That wild, impulsive, vague desire.

Men marveled as he passed them by  
With weary step and lagging pace;  
And women, as they saw him, sighed  
In pity for his child-like face.

And many asked why thus he went  
O'er hill and flood, through heat and cold;  
While he the steadfast answer made,  
"I go to seek the pot of gold."

Then people smiled, and told the boy  
That many a youth that quest had tried,  
And some had fainted by the way,  
And some had sought the end and died.

For never had the mystic goal  
By any human foot been trod;  
The secret of the rainbow's base  
Was known but to its builder—God.

He heard, but heeded not. His eyes  
Were fixed upon the horizon's brim.  
What mattered to him others' fate.  
'Twas not the fate in store for him.

And still the rainbow came and went,  
And scarf-like hung about the sun;  
And still the seeker's restless soul  
Sang of the treasure to be won.

So went the time—till one dark day,  
When flesh and blood could bear no more,  
Haggard and pale he fainting fell  
Close by the well-known cottage door.

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With quivering lips he told his tale;  
The pitying tears above him fell;  
Once more around his couch he heard  
The voice of those he loved so well.

And soon a modest, mild-eyed man,  
With quiet voice stood at his side,  
Telling a sweet, entrancing tale  
Of One who suffered and who died.

And talked about a treasure, too,  
Through pain and suffering to be won;  
One that beyond the rainbow lay—  
Ay, and beyond the parent sun.

As the boy heard the simple words,  
From out his eyes the fierce fire fled,  
And straight an unseen presence wove  
A calmer splendor round his head.

And so his young life ebbed away;  
His heart was still, his limbs were cold;  
But by the smile upon his face,  
They knew he'd found the pot of gold!

## THE CONFIDANTE.

I DO not know whether there is any thing peculiar about me or not—I have sometimes had misgivings on that point. Be that as it may, I have always had a faculty of attracting toward me not only persons of my own sex but of the opposite, and of becoming the recipient of their confidence in a way that was often both fatiguing and annoying. But although I have had many intimate and warm friends among my male acquaintances, and had reason to think many admirers, yet I must own there were few, if any, who could be called *lovers*. I never could divine precisely the reason why it was so, for I was young, not ill-looking, had a handsome little fortune of my own; but, somehow, although I have listened to many a love tale, and shed tears of sympathy with those with whom the course of true love was *not* seeking a new channel wherein to flow smoothly and placidly, but was rushing along in the old way, over obstacles and impediments that sometimes threatened to prove insurmountable—although, as I say, I have listened to many a piteous love tale, I never was the moving cause of all these distresses. Love-sick, lackadaisical school-girls used to bring me their ill-written, oftentimes misspelled missives to decipher, and frequently to answer; and though I have penned the most heart-rending accounts of the cruelty of obdurate mothers and hard-hearted fathers, the answers were never directed to my address.

I could not pretend to enumerate how many love-sick swains have sighed in my ears of their dulcineas, who so excelled all the Venuses and Cleopatras that ever existed in poet's imaginations or in reality. Half of them, I must confess, appeared to me very commonplace sort of bodies; and even with all my most earnest desire to be a good listener and sympathizer, I could not force myself to regard them in the exalted light represented.

My school-days were long since over; I was