

VALENTINES—FOR MY TWO.

FOR FAY.

FAIRY! Fairy! fair and fine,
 Will you be my Valentine?
 Little sprite of flame and dew,
 Fairy fingers fashioned you!
 Spun their flax for shining hair,
 Sun-lit snow for forehead fair;
 Painted soft each crimson lip
 With the rose-dew that they sip;
 Set the pinkness of a shell
 On those rounded cheeks to dwell;
 Drew from some pure tiny lake
 Shadows water-spiders make,
 Crystal clear and diamond bright,
 For those eyes of dauntless light,
 Tempered with a fairy tear
 Lest their brightness shine too clear;
 And for that sweet sudden smiling,
 Every hardest heart beguiling,
 Caught the splendor of the sun,
 When his day-long race is run,
 And the space 'twixt cloud and hills
 All his rapid glory fills.
 Ah! my love, my sweet, my baby,
 Did the fairies give thee, maybe,
 All these gifts, and add the smart
 Of a loving human heart,

Lest so many gracious things
 Should too early give thee wings?
 Fairy! Fairy! fair and fine,
 Be my darling Valentine!

FOR BIRDIE.

I want a Valentine!
 Who will be mine?
 She must have lips as red, as red,
 As strawberries in the garden bed;
 She must have eyes as blue and sweet
 As speedwell blossoms at her feet;
 Two cheeks as soft as summer roses;
 The tiniest, funniest of noses;
 A chin as round as apples are,
 And dimples twinkling like a star;
 A forehead smooth and very fair,
 With shining, shadowy, tumbled hair;
 A look both saucy and coquettish,
 Sometimes too sweet, sometimes too pettish;
 A laugh like any bobolink,
 Too gay to scold, too glad to think:
 A little, willful, mortal thing,
 That to its sweetheart's arms will spring,
 And kiss and tease in equal measure—
 Birdie! can this be you, my treasure?

ROSE TERRY.

Editor's Easy Chair.

THE most conspicuous and painful event of the month was the sudden and tragical death of Horace Greeley. On the last day that he was at his office, after the death of his wife and his defeat in the election, he wrote this pathetic letter to one of his political friends:

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am a man of many sorrows, and doubtless have deserved them; but I beg to say that I do not forget the gallant though luckless struggle you made in my behalf. I am not well.
 Yours,
 HORACE GREELEY."

He was not well, indeed. The sorrows that stung his heart and brain banished sleep. He declined swiftly. But the truth was not known. It was only evident, although he had formally announced his return to his old post, that he was not there. There was a certain public forbearance of inquiry—a profound sympathy for a man so stricken. His wife had died a month before, and he had been an unwearied watcher by her side. The election followed, which was not only a defeat, but which left him wondering what his relations were, and must hereafter be, with those with whom he had always acted, and with whom he really most sympathized. Then, as is understood, the heaviest of blows fell upon his oldest daughter. The storm was pitiless; and although he was an old and tough sailor who had weathered many a furious tempest, and had cried to them ha! ha!

as the war-horse to the trumpets, this conquered him, and sad, exhausted, broken-hearted, with weakened body and clouded brain, he sank suddenly, and the whole country rose from its Thanksgiving feast shocked and grieved to know that Horace Greeley was dead.

There seemed to be no striking and dramatic incident wanting to add to the common feeling. For at the very moment in which, under the heavy-hanging sombre draperies in the church, and among the flowers which were heaped profusely around his bier, and in the presence of the most conspicuous citizens, his friends Mr. Beecher and Mr. Chapin were speaking of his life and of his death with the true eloquence of the heart, the electoral colleges in the various States were casting their votes for the President, who sat, touched with manly grief, by the coffin of his opponent. "Should I be elected—" said Mr. Greeley only a few weeks before. And now the final record of the votes that had overwhelmed him was being made, and he lay white and thin and forever silent. Indeed, the incessant restless activity of his life had been so familiar to the country that, with all the shock and sorrow at his death, there was doubtless also a feeling of satisfaction as if he rested at last, and rested utterly.

If there seemed something extravagant in the tone of eulogy that followed—if genuine feeling

seemed to gush in a torrent of sentimental rhetoric—if there seemed to be even a strain of compunction or remorse—if those whose estimate of his character and career could not be changed by his death listened with a kind of incredulous contempt to the praise that deified but did not discriminate—it was not surprising. For death, under circumstances that deeply impress the imagination, is happily often the sudden disappearance of all but the best characteristics of the man. The saying, *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*, is not wholly sentimental. Death seems often to free men of all accidents, and the *bonum* remains as the essential quality of the man. Errors of judgment, like imperfect knowledge, disappear with death. They do not affect our feeling of the future. It is the good that lives after us, because the evil is often shallow and evanescent.

Thus the moment that Mr. Greeley died the figure that filled the memory was not the positive and at last fatally deceived politician, nor the man of queer personal eccentricities and weaknesses, with whom, living, his contemporaries had to deal, and must accept as he was, but it was the honest American citizen, laboriously industrious, the friend of the oppressed, of the working-man, of education, of liberty, and progress. He was instantly idealized by death, as conspicuous public characters often are. Whittier, in one of his poems, had called Mr. Greeley "our later Franklin," and the title had become very familiar from a certain obscure feeling of its fitness. And certainly death has idealized nobody more than the earlier Franklin. He is the popular American god of simplicity, frugality, and honesty. Theodore Parker calls him upon the whole the greatest of Americans hitherto. But his contemporaries saw, and the student of history may see now, qualities in him that were not altogether celestial. Yet who doubts the substantial justice of the popular estimate of Franklin? And it was the same kind of instinct that, in the hour of Mr. Greeley's death, saw that his characteristic qualities were essentially admirable.

It is painful to think that his death was largely due to his inability to see, what nobody else in the country doubted, that for all the noble purposes to which his life, and doubtless his heart, were devoted, the position to which his own peculiar genius had called him was infinitely more desirable than the position which he sought. He was by common consent the tribune of the people. There was no man in the country better known. There was general confidence in his upright character and honest intention. His ability was shown by the great journal that he had founded, which was unquestionably the first and most powerful in the country. A blunt, aggressive, sturdy editorial tone, touched at times with racy and even grim humor, and a tenderness of feeling and nature that was feminine, added to personal eccentricities which are always grateful to the public, gave him a popularity which was not affected by what seemed to many the crudeness and fallacy of many of his opinions, and his apparent faith that every body can do any thing. The great results of the later days in this country were those for which he had striven, and with which his name was identified. He was in a peculiar sense the *Tribune*, and he was well named.

But Mr. Greeley had always a singular fancy for official distinction, and certainly it is not always to be blamed. John Adams, one of the most valuable public servants this country ever had, had a passion for office, and justified it with many reasons. If, as Napoleon was fond of saying, the tools should be given to those who can use them, there is no reason why those who are conscious that they can use them should not aspire to hold them. And, indeed, if only those who can use them aspired! But Raphael should distrust himself when he turns from the "Transfiguration," the "Sistine Madonna," and the "Stanza," to take the clay to model a statue; and Dante might well pause when asked to build a cathedral instead of the lofty rhyme. Had Mr. Greeley preferred to remain in the position for which he had so triumphantly shown his vocation, he would have continued not only to influence the government, but to mould the nation. But his theory was often announced. It was that no citizen should decline any public duty which his fellow-citizens chose to require of him. Yet that is a theory which assumes that public demand, or even intrigue and caprice, shall take the place of individual consciousness, and that all duties, however sacred and paramount, shall be sacrificed to what can only be a duty under favorable conditions. This, however, was the feeling of Mr. Greeley, and to this he was faithful to the end.

Those who at an earlier day have had the freedom of the *Tribune* office will always pleasantly recall the humorous traditions that were even then rife of the editor in chief. He had always a ready answer; and when, one morning, a "temperance" article had appeared in the paper, which spoke of claret, hock, Heidsieck, Champagne, and other pernicious liquors, there was a general laugh and chaffing of the editor when he appeared. He listened tranquilly to the good-natured gibes of the younger men, and then said, with twinkling eyes, and with the familiar drawl in the high-keyed voice, "Well, gentlemen, I suppose that I am the only man in this office who could possibly make that mistake." The memories of his associates of many years must be rich in racy reminiscences of him. For Mr. Greeley was signally what is called "a character." His "individuality" was very strongly marked, and he was not averse to encouraging by his conduct the impression which it made upon the popular mind. Certainly during our entire history there has been no American—and in this connection we can not except even Franklin—whose individuality has made so striking an impression upon his contemporaries.

The tragic and pathetic circumstances of his death naturally affected the eulogies that immediately followed. But Mr. Greeley was a man whose sympathies were so generous, whose life was so industrious and pure, and whose personality was so peculiar, that he deeply impressed the popular imagination, and the general estimate that was so universally and tenderly expressed will remain the judgment of history. He was one of the men who easily represent to the common imagination what it wishes conspicuous public characters to be. His friend and pastor, Mr. Chapin, said that it was goodness, which is better than greatness, that distinguished him. And how true it is that the conviction of good-

ness in a man who is gone makes the grief for him a hundredfold deeper and sincerer than the consciousness of mere greatness. It was not the mere shock of Mr. Lincoln's death, nor the public regard for his sagacity and steadiness—it was the general feeling that instinctively expressed itself in the phrase, "Father Abraham," which explained the profound sincerity of grief, the sorrowing heart, that were every where apparent. There was something of the same sentiment in the "Uncle Horace," which was a familiar name for Mr. Greeley. It showed itself at the funeral, which was not a sombre ceremony, but a service of great and general affection.

Mr. Greeley was sorely smitten. "My wife still lingers with us, but is very feeble," he writes to his friend Leslie Coombs, at the end of October. "She may drop off any day. I wish she were well, and I lay where she does." And on the same 10th of November when he wrote the letter saying "I am not well," he wrote to General Coombs: "My dear old Friend,—My sky is black. I may never write you again. I thank you for your letter of the 4th, and pray that the evening of your days may be bright and sunny, and that you may be blessed in your friends and your family." To the broken heart, to the overwrought brain, death seems a precious boon—an infinite relief. As the winter evening fell he was buried at Greenwood; and in his grave lies the dust of the man who has probably had a wider and deeper influence in this country than any whom he has left behind.

It was with amazement that the Easy Chair heard a voice say in the city of Boston as the crowd was thronging out of the Music-hall after a Harvard classical concert, "This Bach business is a fashion that has nearly gone out!"

"Shame!" said a severer voice; "some of us will stand by the ark to the last. Don't you know that Rubinstein will never play in a concert where Strauss's name and music are upon the programme?"

"He is ill at those 'numbers,' I suppose," said a sarcastic voice, emphasizing the "numbers" in derision of the pedantry of musical criticism which describes the various pieces by that word.

But another voice began to hum the *Blue Danube waltz*.

"Shame, I say again," exclaimed Severity. "How can a rational being with a soul for music profess pleasure in the shallow tum-ti-tum tum-ti-tum of Strauss's waltzes! Why, I remember in other days, when Ralph Yale, fresh from his musical studies in Germany, jumped up from his seat in the parquet during *Norma*, and said that the tum-ti-tum tum-ti-tum of the accompaniment would drive him mad if he did not leave the theatre. And he departed."

"Good riddance," said the Blue Danube, intermitting the humming only long enough to say it.

"I repeat," said the first voice, firmly, "that the Bach business is gone by. There are fashions in music, as there are in painting and architecture and oratory and bonnets. Thank mercy, Bach is going with the old pokes and the coal-scuttles."

The Easy Chair trembled as it heard such musical blasphemy in the very adytum of the temple. It had been listening in the lofty but

dim and melancholy hall to the performance of a noble orchestra, and to singing and virtuoso-playing. The audience sat in grim propriety, and there was an occasional sound of grave applause. But as the Easy Chair listened to the music and watched the other listeners, it became conscious of some spell, as often in a church when every body painfully attends to the preacher, and yet it is folly to pretend that any body cares for the sermon. The audience gradually became a congregation engaged in unwilling worship, and as the eyes of the observer wandered about the hall they suddenly saw the colossal bronze statue of the great master Beethoven standing before the great organ. The huge figure fronting the audience with thunders upon its tremendous brow, its hands clasped, and with an aspect of Titanic defiance, suddenly became in the frightened imagination of the Easy Chair an enormous idol sternly glaring at its worshipers, and seeming to say, "Cease to worship at your peril!"

Simultaneously there was a prolonged fugue movement in the orchestra, a series of unmelodic vanishings of sound, giving the impression of frightened instruments escaping pell-mell in every direction from that awful presence. The audience assumed an appearance of grotesque anxiety to placate the offended deity; and the Easy Chair, with imagination now seriously disordered, fancied that the attention of the worshipers had momentarily swerved from their devotions, and that, half suspecting the colossus had perceived it, they now redoubled the grimness of their propriety, that he might believe himself deceived.

"What thunders upon that majestic brow!" remarked the Easy Chair, with a sense of awe, to a young neighbor.

"Yes, a thundering scowl," returned the young neighbor, aggressively, as if his thoughts were impatiently, and even indignantly, wandering from the solemn theme.

"How very Bach-like!" suggested the Easy Chair, anxious to be Roman in Rome, and to recall its erring neighbor.

"If 'twere only Bacchic, the subscriber would shout hallelujah," was the astounding reply. It was a young man evidently capable of liking the *Blue Danube waltz* or of any similar sin.

The Easy Chair found itself looking furtively about, and wondering whether there were other scoffers of the same reckless character. But it lost its breath when its young neighbor wantonly whispered, "I wish those confounded fiddles would stop wallowing and floundering in the inexpressible and the unattainable, and play a waltz."

The instinct of the Easy Chair was to make the sign of the cross, but after a few moments of recovery it answered that it thought melody was accounted sacrilege and profanation in that temple of harmony.

"Certainly it is," said the young neighbor, in a tone of anguish; "it is absolutely forbidden. We are not allowed to have it." Then lowering his voice and looking apprehensively around, like a Spaniard in the days of the Inquisition, or a Venetian trembling before the Teu, he said in a startled whisper, "There's one that rules us with a rod of iron. He thinks melody is wicked! He's all for what I call mummied music—nothing but actual ancient mummies or their modern imita-