

ONLY A YEAR AGO.

I saw the colors waving high,
Only a year ago,
And saw the men in blue go by,
Yet never wondered where or why,
Only a year ago,
But now I pause in the crowded street
Whenever a man in blue I meet,
For I've lost a friend whose smile was sweet—
Only a year ago.

Sweet to me in shade or shine,
Sweeter to me than song or wine—
A friend whose heart kept march
mine,
Only a year ago.
—neath the shade of yonder tree
Only a year ago,
My friend and soldier sat with me,
And all was peace on land and sea,
Only a year ago,
But peace, it seems, is a golden sheath,
A scabbard that hides the blade be-
neath,
And the oak prepares a soldier's
wreath—
Honor, truth, and love entwined,
Beauty and faith and fame com-
bined—
So short was sight and hope so
kind,
Only a year ago.

My friend his dearest friend had lost,
Only a year ago,
His heart, I knew, was tempest tossed
When Death the line of living crossed,
Only a year ago,
We spoke of Hope and of Death and
Grief,
Of life as the fragile flower or leaf,
And of Death who garners the grain in
sheaf.
Grief, the cloud of kindly rain,
Hope, the lord of tears and pain—
Our saddest song had a glad refrain
Only a year ago.

Along the lane of leaves we went,
Only a year ago,
Above the listening branches bent
Their wealth of fruited hue and scent,
Only a year ago,
A clasp of hands, but no word of fear,
A parting devoid of pain or tear,
And a friend was gone whose smile was
dear—
Dear to me in shade or shine,
Sweeter to me than song or wine—
A friend whose heart kept march
with mine,
Only a year ago.
—Edward F. Burns, in Boston Globe.

HIS LETTERS.

I had been three months married,
and lived in the blessed expectancy of
a secretaryship which I had been
promised on a commission appointed to
inquire into some abuses the govern-
ment did not want to find out, but the
preliminaries dragged, and I found
myself doomed to a period of enforced
idleness which did not improve my
temper, and I fear tried my wife's
sorely, for, though happy, we were hu-
man. Our first, and thank heaven, our
only tiff, took place one memorable
day when we were both gardening on
a plot of soot blackened ground at-
tached to our modest dwelling. In
making a border I had planted a num-
ber of carnations and proteas together,
contrary to my wife's directions, and
on discovering the mistake she said
what I suppose nine out of ten women
would have said. I answered tartly,
being preoccupied with bitter thoughts,
and so acrimonious did our discussion
become that Edith went into the house.

After some minutes reflection I felt
the childishness of my conduct and
followed to make it up. She was not
in the little atticlike boudoir at the top
of our mansion, so I descended to
search for her in the drawing room,
which had doors opening on the con-
servatory and hall. By chance I chose
the first and had almost entered the
room when I heard the sound of a well
remembered voice, and, drawing the
portiere aside cautiously saw my wife
face to face with Arbucula.

"I daresay you know who I am?" the
latter was saying.
Edith denied the implied honor.
"Then is your state the more gra-
tious," retorted Arbucula. "But your
husband does, and that is the chief
point. The servant told me he was at
home." She looked just as splendid as
ever and swept our modest little apart-
ment with a scornful glance.

"My husband is engaged," said Edith.
"Anything you have to say may be
said to me."

"Indeed?" replied Arbucula. "Well,
I have got a good many things to say."
My wife folded her hands and, find-
ing one of her gardening gloves on,
pulled it off and threw it on the table.
"Guard!" thought I.

"And first," continued Arbucula, "I
want to say that your husband is the
writer of those letters." And she de-
posited a formidable bundle on the
table beside the glove. "They were
written to me. You may read them if
you choose."

"I have no desire to do so," replied
my wife valiantly.
"They would interest you," the other
went on. "You could compare them
with those he has, I dare say, written
to yourself."

"I fear you misunderstand, though
the error is a natural one—for you," re-
plied my wife considerably.
A spot of light shone in Arbucula's
eye. "They would be useful," she con-
tinued, "if you wanted to make things
hot for him—as you undoubtedly will."

My wife was silent; she played with
her wedding ring.
"Or perhaps you won't care to see
them in the public press," the other
added viciously. "I know a literary
chap who would dress 'em up well;
they'd want a little draping for a paper
I know of."

"I conclude then, that the lawyers
have marked 'no case?'" observed
Edith, and Arbucula glanced curiously
at her.

"I do not take any—wrong to a law
court," she said magnificently.
"In that you show your wisdom," re-
plied my wife. Arbucula looked at her
again, with something approaching re-
spect, but there was a sparkle beneath
the eyelids.

"Come, what will you give to pre-
vent it?" she asked.
"Nothing," responded Edith quietly.
"He would be of a different opinion!"
observed Arbucula.

"Hardly," said my wife. "He is not
a fool."
"You are the first woman who ever
said that of him," retorted Arbucula.
"I do not doubt it," replied my wife,
with much significance, and the other
reddened slightly. "Under the guard,"
thought I.

"All women are the same to him,"
continued Arbucula, recovering her-
self. "What is the difference between
you and me? A wedding ring."

"And all it symbolizes," rejoined my
wife softly.
"That's a house on a fifth rate ter-
race, with only one stopcock for eight
of ye, and the lady next door cuts off
the water when she has had a few
words with you over the hedge—I know
it!" sneered the other.

"Oh, it symbolizes more," said Edith,
but her tone was weaker. The thrust
had gone home, for the study of hydro-
statics had been forced upon us of late.
"And what is that, pray?" demanded
Arbucula insolently.

"To explain would be to insult your
intelligence—and yourself," replied
Edith. "Beat in carte, lunge in tierce!"
thought I.

"Oh, I am not thin skinned!" laugh-
ed Arbucula.
"I made allowance," rejoined my
wife.

Arbucula's lips became a thin line
of scarlet. They parted, and she
smiled. I knew that she had always
possessed a most unfeminine sense of
humor, but I was not prepared for its
assertion at this supreme moment.
The two women stood looking at each
other across the table. Arbucula's
dazzling smile lighting her face, my
wife's pale, yet never so beautiful, I
thought, though now, enlightened by the
contrast, I noted the lines of anxiety
which had been creeping there during
the past months, and violet shadow
under the sweet eyes. The other gath-
ered up the letters and began to shuffle
them as one would a pack of cards.
"You are dying to read them!" she
said.

My wife's voice said, "No." Her face
was not so explicit.
"Here's one—it's poetry," continued
Arbucula. "It was written for astays
I invented, the Arbucula busk—you
might have heard of it?"

"No, it must have been before my
time," said Edith innocently.
"Possibly you came rather late in the
day," retorted the other.
"But come to stay," answered my
wife.

Arbucula laughed. Edith put her
hand upon the bell.
"You surely will not compel me!"
she said, "I have been very patient."

"You'll want all the patience you
have in the good time coming," rejoined
the other.
"And you, what will your future be
without patience?" asked Edith.

"My future can take care of itself,"
cried Arbucula, laughing a laugh short
as the snap of a breaking sword blade.
"I'm a woman with a past, the sort mo-
tality humbly chatters about," but if
I had a future like you, by —, I'd try
to get something better than the butt
en of a rouse."

"Using the Hilt," thought I.
My wife laughed gaily now. "You
know the old adage," she said, "the
best husband is a reformed rake."
Men's follies often serve as beacons to
guide them past the other shoals and
shallows of life. Experience enables
them to appreciate things—it is a good
light for a man."

"And a useless one for a woman,"
answered Arbucula, with a sudden
change of tone. "It's like the poon light
which shows the foam upon the reef
that has just torn the poor ship's side
out—much good, when the masts are
going by the board."

She gathered the letters together.
Whatever had been her purpose in com-
ing, I could see her grasp upon it was
gone. Catching at that moment the re-
flection of my own face in a mirror op-
posite, I was so ill pleased by the sight
that I stole down stairs, hearing an-
other hacking laugh and the tinkle of
a bell as I went.

I returned to the garden and com-
menced to patiently dig up the border.
Presently Edith came out also with an
armful of plants she began to sort,
singing a cradle song I much admired
the while.

I went over to her. "I got those car-
nations up," I said, "but for the life of
me I can't say which is which!"
She ran to the border. "Ah, you took
far too much trouble, dear," she said
softly. "And after all your labor, too,
I'm so sorry!" She pressed my arm,
and the touch covered more than the
words.

"But the line was not straight," I
answered, averting my eyes.
I passed my arm around her waist
and kissed her. She put both her own
around my neck.

"My wife!" said I.
"You old goose," she whispered, bit-
ing my ear. "I saw you all the time!"
—Black and White.

Needless invention.
"If I ever tackle anything in the line
of inventions," he said, "I shall en-
deavor to devise some scheme by which
a person getting on an open street car
can do it without sitting in the lap
of the fellow who sticks to the out-
side seat."

"Pshaw!" she exclaimed, "do you
want to spoil all the fun?"
If you would make a self-made man
any more, ignore him.

CURIOUS FACTS

The emperor of China has to fast
sixty-four days in each year for the
sake of religion.

Recently a ship, of only 3,500 tons
carried from Para, Brazil, to New
York, a cargo of rubber, which was in-
sured for \$3,000,000.

Men exposed to the rigors of the
never wear moustaches. They wear
full beards to protect the throat, and
face, but keep the upper lip clean
shaven. The moisture from the
breath congeals so quickly that a
moustache becomes embedded in a
solid cake of ice and the face is frozen
in a short time.

It is averred by a famous Chinese
doctor that nervousness is kept out of
the Celestial empire by the use of
soft-soled shoes. The hard soles worn
by the Anglo-Saxon race, are said to
be the cause of their extreme nervous
temperament.

The oldest tree on earth with an au-
thenticated history is the great bho-
tree of Burmah. For twenty centuries
it has been held sacred to Buddha, and
no person is allowed to touch the
trunk. When the leaves fall they are
carried away as relics by pilgrims.

There are only seven ambassadors
representing England abroad. The
seven great powers entitled to receive
them are France, Austria, Germany,
Italy, Russia, the United States and
Turkey. The salaries range from
\$35,000 to \$50,000, the British ambas-
sador at Paris receiving the highest
sum, and holding the most coveted
post in the diplomatic service abroad.

Dr. Weir in discussing the tendency
of some insects to get drunk, says:
"An intoxicated bee was carried to my
laboratory for dissection and micro-
scopic investigation. This insect was so
drunk that when placed upon its back
it had the greatest difficulty in getting
upon its legs yet when a cosmos blos-
som was brought within two inches of
its head the bee thrust out its proboscis
and staggered toward it. It im-
mediately began to suck the nectar, and
in a few moments tumbled over a
drunken, senseless, almost inert little
mass—a victim to appetite."

Telephone communication, it is
said, has been established between a
number of farms in Australia by
means of wire fences. A correspondent
from a station near Colmar represents
that it is easy to converse with a station
eight miles distant by means of
instruments connected on the wire
fences, and that the same kind of com-
munication has been established over
a distance of eight miles. Several sta-
tions are connected in this way.

People have been poisoned with
bread containing salts of lead, which
came from the timber used to heat the
oven. The Paris Council of Hygiene
has therefore forbidden the employ-
ment of painted or unpainted wood
from old houses, old sleepers impreg-
nated with creosote or sulphate of cop-
per, and disused blocks of wood paving
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BEAT

Grind and grind and grind and grind
Was almost a snarl.

"Hold on!" said the young man with
the pale mustache. "Here's an Ital-
ian knife grinder. Or is he a Greek?"
"What of him?" asked the youth
with the dynamite necktie.

"I'm going to give him a job. Hello,
Garibaldi," he drawled, stopping to
speak to the knife grinder. "Or So-
crates! What compensation do you
exact for sharpening a satisfactory de-
gree of sharpness upon the ordinary
pocket weapon of commerce?"

"Ten cents," replied the grinder in
excellent English.
"Precisely so, Plato—or Nepos," re-
joined the young man. "You operate
upon the implement in any manner
that may be stipulated, I presume?"

"Yes, sir. Grind it any way you
want it."
"It gratifies me, Aristophanes—or
Tarquinius Superbus—beyond mea-
sure to find that we can settle upon
preliminaries with so little argumen-
tation. We will consider the contract
as awarded at the figure designated,
and will proceed to carry the specified
agreement into actual effect."

Here he took from his pocket a
pearl-handled knife with four blades.
"You observe," he said, "that this is
the file blade. The point is sufficiently
sharp already, but the rest of it, as you
cannot fail to see, is extremely dull
and in need of grinding."

"You don't expect me to sharpen the
file, do you?"
"Hippocrates, my friend—or Calli-
gula, as the case may be—permit me to
recall your attention to the terms of
the contract upon which we are now
proceeding. It was expressly stipulat-
ed and agreed that this weapon was to
be operated upon in any manner that
might be desired. It is my desire, Ap-
ollodorus—or perhaps I should say
Quintus Curtius—that this particular
file blade at which you are squinting,
if I may use a term so unclassical, be
ground down until it shall have attain-
ed a satisfactory degree of sharpness,
which degree will have been reached
when its cutting edge is as keen as
that of the other blades. Do I make
myself sufficiently definite and coher-
ent?"

"Oh, yes," responded the man with
the emery wheel, drawing his coat
sleeves across his nose.
A crowd of interested spectators had
gathered by this time, and the youth
with the dynamite necktie was begin-
ning to feel uneasy.

"Let's go," he said, plucking his
companion by the sleeve. "You have
had fun enough out of this. Let's get
away from here."

"Grimeshaw," replied the young man
with the pale mustache, turning a se-
verely reproachful countenance upon
him, "you are obstructing the transac-
tion of business. Aristippus—or
Scipio Africanus—it is clearly under-
stood, is it not, that the consideration
shall be one dime—10 cents?"

"Yes, that's all right."
"How long will it require to bring
that blade to the necessary thinness
and sharpness, in accordance with the
provisions of the contract previously
entered into, may I ask?"

"It will take about two hours," said
the grinder, examining the blade.
"Well, then, Cleombrotus—or Lucius
Junius Brutus—I will voluntarily
abate and moderate the terms of the
contract. To descend to the common-
place forms of speech, you may sharp-
en any blade you darn please, and your
dime's ready for you."

"That may be your idea of a con-
tract, sir," said the grinder, applying
the file blade to the wheel, "but it isn't
mine. It takes two to make a bar-
gain, and it takes two to break it. You
shall have your knife, sir, in about two
hours, with file marks all erased from
this."

"That will do, my friend," interrupt-
ed the young man with what was in-
tended to be a patronizing smile,
you've earned your dime already.
"No, sir," remarked the other, grind-
ing away. "We'll not call it square
till the provisions of the contract have
been carried out. Give yourself no
uneasiness, Grimes—or is it Ferguson?
—as regards the strict fulfillment of
the contract, in all its particulars. It
will be observed in its ground plans
and specifications, if it takes the hide-
off. I haven't a great deal of work to
do anyhow. This is rather a dull day
with me, Thompson—or Jones—and I
prefer work to idleness, even if I don't
get rich. I would hardly have taken
you, Perkins—or Snodgrass—for a
man who would voluntarily undertake
to impair the obligation of a contract.
You don't look like one of that sort.
Faithfulness to promise is one of the
cardinal virtues. You remember Al-
exander Hamilton says somewhere
that 'the best security for the fidelity
of men is to make interest coincide
with duty,' but this is a sordid view
of human nature. Latet angulus in herba,
as the French have it. 'Mine honor is
my life; both grow in one,' as Shake-
speare hath well said. 'Honor,' de-
clares Wordsworth, 'is the finest sense
of justice which the human mind can
frame.' You will readily recall, Hig-
gins—or Burnsides—what Sir William
Temple avers of an honest physician.
He says he leaves his patient when he
can contribute no further to his
health.' An honest artisan is con-
structed on a plan somewhat similar.
He finishes his job and then turns it
over. He does no further work upon
which to base a claim for further fee.
Does it not seem to you, Williams—or
Lukenheimer—that old Garth was
right in saying, 'when honor's lost 'tis
a relief to die?' Listen to old Jeremy
Taylor: 'My son, look not upon—'

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to impair the obligation of a contract.
You don't look like one of that sort.
Faithfulness to promise is one of the
cardinal virtues. You remember Al-
exander Hamilton says somewhere
that 'the best security for the fidelity
of men is to make interest coincide
with duty,' but this is a sordid view
of human nature. Latet angulus in herba,
as the French have it. 'Mine honor is
my life; both grow in one,' as Shake-
speare hath well said. 'Honor,' de-
clares Wordsworth, 'is the finest sense
of justice which the human mind can
frame.' You will readily recall, Hig-
gins—or Burnsides—what Sir William
Temple avers of an honest physician.
He says he leaves his patient when he
can contribute no further to his
health.' An honest artisan is con-
structed on a plan somewhat similar.
He finishes his job and then turns it
over. He does no further work upon
which to base a claim for further fee.
Does it not seem to you, Williams—or
Lukenheimer—that old Garth was
right in saying, 'when honor's lost 'tis
a relief to die?' Listen to old Jeremy
Taylor: 'My son, look not upon—'

"That will do, my friend," interrupt-
ed the young man with what was in-
tended to be a patronizing smile,
you've earned your dime already.
"No, sir," remarked the other, grind-
ing away. "We'll not call it square
till the provisions of the contract have
been carried out. Give yourself no
uneasiness, Grimes—or is it Ferguson?
—as regards the strict fulfillment of
the contract, in all its particulars. It
will be observed in its ground plans
and specifications, if it takes the hide-
off. I haven't a great deal of work to
do anyhow. This is rather a dull day
with me, Thompson—or Jones—and I
prefer work to idleness, even if I don't
get rich. I would hardly have taken
you, Perkins—or Snodgrass—for a
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