

Land Poor.

I've had another offer, wife—a twenty acres more,
Of high and dry prairie land, as level as a floor.
I thought I'd wait and see you first, as Lawyer Brady said,
To tell how things will turn out best a woman is ahead.

And when this lot is paid for, and we have got the deed
I'll say that I am satisfied—it's all the land we need,
And next we'll see about the yard, and fix the house up some,
And manage in the course of time to have a better home.

WIFE.

There is no use of talking, Charles—you buy that twenty more,
And we'll go scrimping all our lives, and always be *Land Poor*.
For thirty years we've tugged and saved, denying half our needs,
While all we have to show for it is tax receipts and deeds!

I'd sell the land if it were mine, and have a better home,
With broad, light rooms to front the street, and take life as it come,
If we could live as others live, and have what others do,
We'd live enough sight pleasanter, and have a plenty, too.

While others have amusements, and luxuries and books,
Just think how stingy we have lived, and how this old place looks,
That other farm you bought of Wells, that took so many years
Of clearing up and fencing in, has cost me many tears.

Yes, Charles, I've thought of it, a hundred times or more,
And wondered if it really paid to always be *Land Poor*;
That had we built a cozy house, took pleasure as it come,
Our children, once so dear to us, had never left our home.

I grieve to think of wasted weeks, and years and months and days,
While for it all we never yet have had one word of praise.
Men call us rich, but we are poor—would we not freely give
The land, with all its fixtures, for a better way to live?

Don't think I'm blaming you, Charles—you're not a whit to blame,
I've pitied you these many years, to see you tired and lame,
It's just the way we started out—our plans too far ahead;
We've worn the cream of life away, to leave too much when dead.

'Tis putting off enjoyment long after we enjoy,
And after all too much of wealth seems useless as a toy,
Although we've learned, alas too late! what all must learn at last,
Our brightest earthly happiness is buried in the past.

That life is short and full of care, the end is always nigh,
We seldom half begin to live before we're doomed to die.
Were I to start my life again, I'd mark each separate day,
And never let a single one pass unenjoyed away.

If there were things to envy, I'd have them now and then,
And have a home that was a home, and not a cage or pen.
I'd sell some land if it were mine, and fit up well the rest,
I've always thought, and think so yet—
small farms well worked are best.

Forrest's "Idiot Boy."

Colonel Forney, in his "Reminiscences of Public Men," gives the following interesting sketch of Forrest, the great actor, who has just died:

Edwin Forrest was one of us whenever he visited Washington, and as I said in a former number, was the toast and the star of the night. He gave liberally to the Union cause, without being a Republican. Though he did not unite with us when we sung "John Brown," none could have been more graceful and ready in contributing to the general pleasure. One dramatic night I shall never forget. Forrest was in royal condition. He came early and stayed late. He seemed prepared to make everybody happy. He needed no solicitation to display his varied stores of information. Sketches of foreign travels; photographs of Southern manners, alike of the master and the slave; his celebrated French Criticisms upon Shakspeare, his imitation of the old clergyman of Charleston, South Carolina, who, deaf himself, believed everybody else to be so; his thrilling account of his meeting with Edmund Kean, at Albany, when Forrest was a boy; his incidents of General Jackson; his meeting with Lafayette at Richmond in 1825. Few that heard him can ever forget that night. But nothing that he did will be remembered longer than the manner in which he recited "The Idiot Boy," a production up to that time unknown to everybody in the room except Forrest and myself, and to me only because I heard him repeat it seven years before, when I lived on Eighth street, in the house lately known as the Waverly. These lines are so beautiful and so unique that I print them for the benefit of the readers of these hasty sketches:

THE IDIOT BOY.

It had pleased God to form poor Ned
A thing of idiot mind;
Yet, to the poor unreas'ning boy,
God had not been unkind.

Old Sarah loved her helpless child,
Whom helplessness made dear:
And he was everything to her,
Who knew no hope or fear.

She knew his wants, she understood
Each half-articulate call.
For he was everything to her,
And she to him was all.

And so for many years they lived,
Nor knew a wish beside;
But age at last on Sarah came,
And she fell sick—and died.

He tried in vain to waken her,
He called her o'er and o'er;
They told him she was dead!
The words to him no import bore.

They closed her eyes and shrouded her,
While he stood wond'ring by,
And when they bore her to the grave
He followed silently.

They laid her in the narrow house,
They sung the fun'ral stave;
And when the fun'ral train dispersed
He lingered by the grave.

The rabble crowd that used to jeer
Whene'er they saw poor Ned,
Now stood and watched him by the grave,
And not a word they said.

They came and went and came again
Till night at last came on,
Yet still he lingered by the grave
Till every one had gone.

And when he found himself alone
He swift removed the clay,
Then raised the coffin up in haste,
And bore it swift away.

He bore it to his mother's cot,
And laid it on the floor,
And with the eagerness of joy
He barred the cottage door.

Then out he took his mother's corse,
And placed it in a chair;
And soon he heaped the hearth,
And made the kindling fire with care.

He put his mother in HER chair,
And in his wonted place,
And then he blew the fire,
Which shone reflected in her face.

And pausing now, her hand would feel,
And then her face behold:
"WHY, mother do you look so pale,
And why are you so cold?"

It has pleased God from the poor wretch
His only friend to call;
Yet God was kind to him, and soon
In DEATH restored him ALL:

And when the neighbors on next morn
Had burst the cottage door,
Old Sarah's corpse was in the chair,
And Ned's upon the floor.

Under the Beautiful Moon.

Under the beautiful moon, to-night,
Silently sleeps the crowded town,
Tenderly, dreamily floats the light,
Over the wanderers up and down;
Echoing faintly along the street,
Ever are heard the restless feet,
Plodding so wearily;
Sadly and drearily,
Onward the last of a hope to meet.

Under the beautiful moon there sleeps
Many and many a fair young face,
Many and many a mother weeps
Bitterly over her child's disgrace;
Smiles be they false, till the sun is set,
Under the moon may the cheeks be wet,
Sighing tearfully,
Sadly and fearfully,
Many a heart would fain forget!

Under the beautiful moon there go,
Flaunting their shame in its holy light,
Faces of loveliness to and fro,
Straying from purity far by night,
Goodness and truth for the light of day,
Under the moon may the bad have sway:
O! could the beautiful
Ever be dutiful,
Loving might gladden their hearts away.

Under the beautiful moon there rest
Vicious and pure, and the hours go on,
Souls that in love and life are best,
Faces of wretchedness, pale and wan;
Happiness under the moon may sleep,
Misery under the moon may weep,
Grievingly, sobbingly,
Painfully, throbbingly,
Hearts may make mean over sorrows deep.

Under the beautiful moon, to-night,
Many will dream of the loved and lost,
Many live over with sad delight
Hours when they suffered and sorrowed
most;
Tears for the lost when the day is fled,
Under the moon may their names be said:
Fondly, endearingly,
Never so cheerfully,
Memory breathes of the loved and dead.

Reflection.

The past—where is it? It has fled.
The future? It may never come.
Our friends departed? With the dead.
Ourselves? Fast hastening to the tomb.
What are earth's joys? The dews of morn.
Its honors? Ocean's wreathing foam.
Where's peace? In trials meekly borne.
And joy? In Heaven, the Christian's
Home.