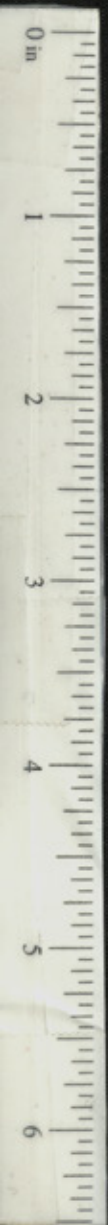


Pam

no 43

Subject  
The Bridge of Moshir-love  
[2007]







T H E   B R I D G E

or

M O T H E R - L O V E .

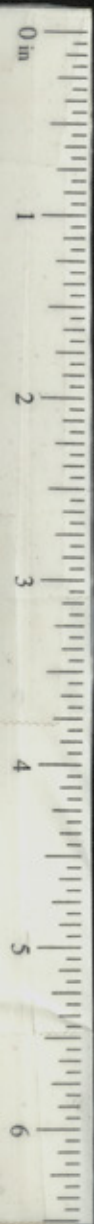
Along the side of rocky steeps,  
Abrupt by many spring-cascades,  
Beside a ridge of stony heaps,  
Extends a ~~pasture~~ *field* of mountain glades.

Against an oak, whose arms are wide,  
A shepherd leans in thoughtful mood;  
His faithful dog stays by his side  
To watch the master, sheep and food.

To-day how hot the mid-day sun!  
How parched the surface of the mead!  
The panting sheep in groups now run  
For springs to search and fresher feed.

In vain with bleatings oft, they go  
To knolls so green in ferns and brake  
Or rush to hollows smooth and low,  
With hope their urgent thirst to slake.





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"Poor flock! poor flock!" the pastor's cry,  
 As now he springs to wonted sense;  
 "They hunger, thirst and almost die,  
 In-hemmed this way by rugged fence!"

"For knolls and little vales are dry;  
 The leaves and bushy tufts are gone;  
 And streamlets 'neath this lurid sky  
 To sea or upper air have flown."

"So all the day the sheep go round,  
 And with their plaints my ears they fill;  
 They've gnawed the rootlets of the ground  
 And dried the very springs and rill."

"Well, Rover, come! let's search the glen,  
 The canyon-slope and other shore,  
 Perchance there's grass or moist'ned fen  
 Beyond "the cut" in ample store!"

*neath*

Then out from ~~under the~~ shady oak,  
 The sturdy man, with knowing friend,  
 Away beyond the restless flock  
 The two with zeal their footsteps bend.





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While ~~over~~ the hills and 'cross the sands

See, how he scans the distant fields;

With back to ~~the~~ mount, <sup>swinging hands</sup> his dog he leads

With hope, <sup>in his new</sup> to ~~a~~ step which quickness yields.

<sup>on the</sup> But all of a sudden the two now meet

A canyon-like gulch; obstructing them sore;

The stones <sup>let</sup> ~~are~~ loose plunge down the steep,

And waken <sup>around</sup> thereby a continuous roar.

<sup>waiter's</sup> The good dog examines that puzzled face;

While searches the man the deep ravine.

<sup>quick</sup> And see, how he ~~quicken~~s his lengthy pace,

<sup>unrolls</sup> As a bridge ~~is~~ revealed to his vision keen.

<sup>ball'n</sup> Some ~~huge~~ rocks fallen from either shore,

Have high in air once met half way;

'Gainst these abutting, some logs, just four,

<sup>They make</sup> Had made a bridge with rocky "stay".

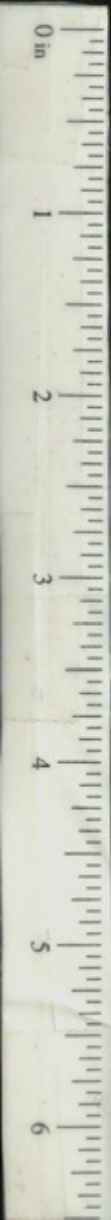
<sup>that foot-path</sup> Over ~~this~~ foot-bridge quickly they went,

And found for ~~the~~ flock their choicest greed;

For grasses in plenty, and water unspent

Were ~~there~~ widely spread for all their need.







Now back in ~~the~~ heat ~~as~~ fast as he could,  
 Our shepherd staunch, betook his return;  
 And Rover tripped on, as ever he would,  
 His master's <sup>thought ~~then~~ clear</sup> ~~main~~ object to discern.

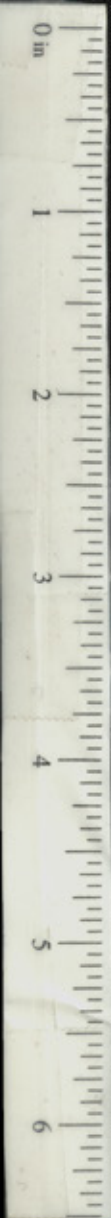
~~The~~ bleating sheep were gathered fast,  
 And to the gulch were driven apace;  
 But <sup>far</sup> the ~~long~~ bridge they hurried past,  
 Nor man nor dog could check the race.

Again the shepherd sought his sheep,  
 And gathered them slow~~y~~, as bees their queen.  
 He coaxed and called them to the steep,  
 And strove to master the wide ravine.

But, no, indeed! each knowing ewe  
 Would break from Rover's ready start,  
 And away, away! the whole flock flew,  
 To worry again the shepherd's heart.

~~So~~ Over and over the patient guards  
 Endeavored, in might, to save their sheep;  
 But vain the <sup>effort</sup> ~~the effort~~, because their wards  
 Ne'er guessed the tender blades to reap.







At last the gentle heart bethought  
 A plan by him as yet untried:  
 "Like mother-love, there sure is naught,  
 So good, so true, so strong beside!"

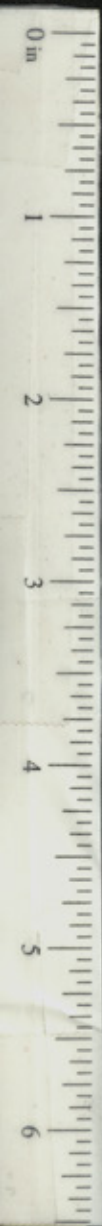
He, sprightly, seized a little lamb  
 And hugged him safely to his breast,  
 And walked before the bleating dam,  
 And thus led over ~~the deep abyss.~~ *the farther crest.*

With mother-heart above her fear,  
 She followed close her lamb beloved,  
 And other sheep, the way so clear,  
 Then took in flock the road improved!

Then, Oh! the joy of pastures new!  
 And water fresh, with browsing good,  
 The danger past, the fears are few,  
 And glad the sheep partake their food!

May not the better Shepherd high,  
 Enwrap to gentle breast a child,  
 And take him far, above the sky,  
 Across all torrents, threat'ning wild?







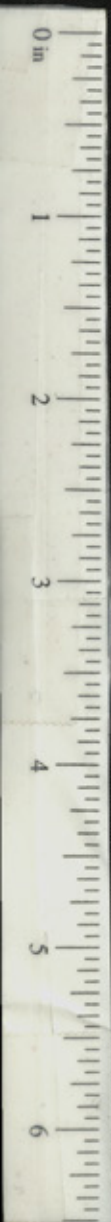
May not the mother's deepest love,  
By faith and instinct see the bridge  
From lower earth to Heaven above,  
And so to hope give strongest pledge?

May not a father choked with grief,  
Who of his best has been bereaved,  
~~Behold~~ <sup>See</sup> In vision, by clear relief,  
The chasm passed, the child redeemed?

Up-lift thy soul, thou stricken friend!  
To catch the beauty of the scene!  
Prepare thy stubborn will to bend,  
And let such glory lead thee in!

O. O. H O W A R D.





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