

“That’s true, sir,” said Pomona thoughtfully, “an’ I made a pretty close shave of it this time, for when I was talkin’ to the earl, I was just on the p’int of tellin’ him that I had such a high opinion of his kind o’ folks that I once named a big black dog after one of ’em, but I jus’ remembered in time, an’ slipped on to somethin’ else. But I trembled worse than a pea-nut woman with a hackman goin’ round the corner to ketch a train an’ his hubs just grazin’ the legs of her stand. An’ so I promise you, sir, that I’ll put my heel on all hankerin’ after potentates. And so she made her promise. And, knowin’ Pomona, I felt sure that she would keep it—if she could.

*Frank R. Stockton.*

A WOMAN'S REASON.

I HAVE a reason now for all I do,  
 A reason that’s so sweet, so old, so new,—  
 Well, if you were not quite so near to-day  
 Or if you’d turn your eyes another way—  
 And while I let my hand a moment rest  
 With clinging touch yet light upon your breast  
 I might pretend that it was half a jest,  
 I think perhaps—I’d tell you.

’Tis this.—No, turn your eyes another way!  
 ’Tis easier so when what one has to say  
 Is half pretense—yet somehow makes one’s heart  
 Stir in one’s side, with such a soft, quick start,  
 ’Tis this—the old World has been born again,  
 Born with a strange, sweet, bitter throe of pain,  
 The sad old World I treated with disdain  
 Is new because—I love you!

In time gone by did seasons come and go?  
 And was there summer rain and winter snow?  
 Perhaps! What matter? Now the violet’s blue  
 The rose blooms red—and friends are tried and true,  
 The blossoms on the boughs are white in Spring,  
 The wind is soft, the birds spread joyous wing,  
 And soar and wheel in the blue sky—and sing,  
 Because—because—I love you.

I scarcely know my own face in the glass,  
 It almost seems to mock me as I pass,  
 Once of its few poor beauties I was vain  
 Now they can only rouse me to disdain,  
 I should be twenty thousand times as fair,  
 The stars and sun should light my eyes and hair—  
 And yet—sometimes I think I only care,  
 Because—because—I love you.

I am so changeful and so full of mood,  
 Sometimes I would not—and sometimes—I would,  
 I’m proud and humble, scornful, thoughtful, light,  
 A hundred times between the morn and night,  
 I cast you off—I try to draw you near,  
 I hold you lightly—and I hold you dear,  
 And all the time I know with joy, with fear  
 It is—because—I love you!

Will you remember this when I seem cold?  
 When what I yearn to tell is all untold—  
 When I am wayward, willful, silent, proud,  
 When if I dared to think my thoughts aloud

They would repeat my jesting—of to-day.  
 “A woman’s reason—and a woman’s way,  
 It is—because—I love you!”

There is a reason now for Life and Death,  
 A reason why one’s heart beats and one’s breath  
 Comes quicker at the light touch of a hand,  
 My reason makes it summer in the land,  
 Once from all pain I longed all earth to free,  
 But now there is a reason Pain should be,  
 Since some day I might bear it patiently  
 Because—because—I love you.

And now—my hand clings closer to your breast,  
 Bend your head lower while I say the rest,  
 The greatest change of all is this—that I  
 Who used to be so cold, so fierce, so shy,  
 In the sweet moment that I feel you near,  
 Forget to be ashamed, and know no fear,  
 Forget that Life is sad and Death is drear,  
 Because—because—I love you!

*Frances Hodgson Burnett.*

#### DESOLATION.

EACH night I at my cottage casement stay,  
 To hear the moaning waters of the Deep  
 Sound through the wind that doth complaining sweep  
 O’er sea and land, upon its wand’ring way.  
 There doth my sorrow, hidden all the day,  
 Come forth to bid me look on it and weep;  
 The trees near by their wailing vigil keep,  
 And I, lamenting with great nature, say  
 To this my heart, which throbs with bitter pain,—  
 O heart, with moaning ocean make thy moan,  
 And sob thy grief unto the sobbing wind!  
 Mourn for lost love. How canst thou love again?  
 Mourn thou thy life. How wilt thou live so lone?  
 Mourn love and life, since life leaves love behind!

*E. C. White.*

#### FARMING FOR FEATHERS.

LOOKING over the primitive brush fence of a South African ostrich camp, and watching these majestic birds so long supposed to be untamable, as they come obedient to the call of the farmer and pick the grain from his hand, one cannot help thinking on what slender threads the prosperity of a nation may hang. For here is a land on which Providence has bestowed vast wealth by means of a trifle light as air, even an ostrich feather!

The ostrich seems to have been known and valued for its feathers from the earliest antiquity. A graphic account of the bird, with special allusion to its feathers, is found in the oldest book in the Bible, the book of Job.

Representations of it have been discovered in the ruins of Theban temples contemporary with Moses. The feathers appear as decorations for robes in the days of Nimrod. Very ancient specimens of the eggs still exist in Chinese and Persian temples, but no hint occurs anywhere that the bird was ever domesticated for purposes of trade. Some reckon the ostrich a very stupid creature, but that the bird should be known and its feathers valued all these ages, and yet no attempt be made to tame it, seems to argue commercial obtuseness, at least, on the part of man.

The first serious proposition with reference