

"CHILDHOOD DAYS"

I spent my careless, happy, childhood days in a lovely green valley adorned with beautiful flowers. A clear brook coming from springs ran through the valley filled with trout where we children used to wade up and down seeking for flowers and watercress or other esculents that were there, catching the fish, watching the birds and squirrels and taming them. I had a tame crow that could say 'Jim' and 'want water.' I also had a pet coon caught when young. He would follow me everywhere I went, was very affectionate, but very mischievous. He would help himself to anything on the table and get into the cupboards and help himself to sweets and cream of which he was very fond and would crawl into bed with me where he wanted most to sleep. In the early spring he got the wanderlust and left me mourning but not my mother, who thought it a good riddance. I had at one time some toads for pets, dressing them up like dolls with bonnet and coat. One can imagine how comical they looked. One I called Betty who would come at my call and I fed it bugs and worms.

One day when I was in the woods, I saw a sight that many people will not credit, but is nevertheless true. I was sitting under a plum tree when I heard a peculiar twittering and looking through the branches I saw a bird fluttering its wings and stretching its neck, and gazing steadily into the eyes of a big rattlesnake which was coiled up and waving his head back and forth, the bird making fainter sounds, but going nearer. After I killed the snake, the bird dropped to the ground as if in a faint, but soon recovered and in short flights flew away with a glad chirp. I have seen that done more than once.

Mrs. Amelia Ellis, nee Van Derzee

This Too Shall Pass Away

Art thou in misery, brother? Then I pray
Be comforted. Thy grief shall pass away.

Art thou elated? Ah, be not too gay;
Temper thy joy. This too shall pass away.

Art thou in danger? Still let reason sway
And cling to hope. This, too, shall pass away.

Tempted art thou? In all thine anguish lay
One truth to heart. This, too, shall pass away.

Do rays of loftier glory round thee play?
King-like art thou? This, too, shall pass away.

Whate'er thou art, where'er thy footsteps stray,
Heed these wise words, This, too, shall pass away.

Paul Hamilton Hayne

From a poem grandma Amelia Ellis often quoted.