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J. Addison

ANGILA MERVALE

OR

SIX MONTHS BEFORE MARRIAGE.

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ANGILA MERVALE;

OR SIX MONTHS BEFORE MARRIAGE.

BY F. E. F., AUTHOR OF "AARON'S ROD," "TELLING SECRETS," ETC.

"They say Miss Morton is engaged to Robert Hazlewood," said Augusta Lenox.

"So I hear," replied Angila Mervale, to whom this piece of news had been communicated. "How can she?"

"How can she, indeed?" replied Augusta. "He's an ugly fellow."

"Ugly! yes," continued Angila, "and a disagreeable ugliness, too. I don't care about a man's being handsome—a plain black ugliness I don't object to—but *red* ugliness, ah!"

"They say he's clever," said Augusta.

"They always say that, my dear, of any one that's so ugly," replied Angila. "I don't believe it. He's conceited, and I think disagreeable; and I don't believe he's clever."

"I remarked last night that he was very attentive to Mary Morton," continued Augusta. "They waltzed together several times."

"Yes, and how badly he waltzes," said Angila. "Mary Morton is too pretty a girl for such an awkward, ugly man. How lovely she looked last night. I hope it's not an engagement, for I quite like her."

"Well, perhaps it is not. It's only one of the *on dits*, and probably a mere report."

"Who are you discussing, girls?" asked Mrs. Mervale, from the other side of the room.

"Robert Hazlewood and Miss Morton," replied Augusta, "they are said to be engaged."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Mervale. "Is it a good match for her?"

"Oh, no! chimed in both the girls at once. "He's neither handsome, nor rich, nor any thing."

"Nor any thing!" repeated Mrs. Mervale, laughing. "Well, that's comprehensive. A young man may be a very respectable young man, and be a very fair match for a girl without being either handsome or rich; but if he is positively 'nothing,' why, then, I grant you, it is bad indeed."

"Oh, I believe he is respectable enough," replied Augusta, carelessly, for, like most young girls, the word "respectable" did not rank very high in her vocabulary.

"And if he is not rich, what are they to live on," asked Mrs. Mervale.

"Love and the law, I suppose," replied her daughter, laughing. "He's a lawyer, is he not Augusta?"

"Oh!" resumed Mrs. Mervale, "he's a son, then, I suppose, of old John Hazlewood."

"Yes," replied Augusta.

"Then he may do very well in his profession," continued Mrs. Mervale, "for his father has a large practice I know, and is a very respectable man. If this is a clever young man, he may tread in his father's footsteps."

This did not convey any very high eulogium to the young ladies' ears. That young Robert Hazlewood might be an old John Hazlewood in his turn and time, did not strike them as a very brilliant future. In fact they did not think more of the old man than they did of the young one.

Old gentlemen, however, were not at quite such a discount with Mrs. Mervale as with her daughter and her friend; and she continued to descant upon the high standing of Mr. Hazlewood the elder, not one word in ten of which the girls heard, for she, like most old ladies, once started upon former times, was thinking of the pleasant young John Hazlewood of early days, who brought back with him a host of reminiscences, with which she indulged herself and the girls, while they, their heads full of last night's party and Mary Morton and Robert Hazlewood, listened as civilly as they could, quite unable to keep the thread of her discourse, confounding in her history Robert Hazlewood's mother with his grandmother, and wondering all the while when she would stop, that they might resume their gossip.[122]

"You visit his sister, Mrs. Constant, don't you?" asked Augusta.

"Yes, we have always visited the Hazlewoods," replied Angila, "but I am not intimate with any of them. They always seemed to me those kind of pattern people I dislike."

"Is Mr. Constant well off?" inquired Mrs. Mervale.

"No, I should think not," replied Angila, "from the way in which they live. They have a little bit of a two-story house, and keep only a waiter girl. How I do hate to see a woman open the door," she continued, addressing Augusta.

"So do I," replied her friend. "I would have a man servant—a woman looks so shabby."

"Yes," returned Angila. "There's nothing I dislike so much. No woman shall ever go to my door."

"If you have a man servant," suggested Mrs. Mervale.

"Of course," said Angila; "and that I will."

"But suppose you cannot afford it," said her mother.

"I don't choose to suppose any thing so disagreeable or improbable," replied her daughter, gayly.

"It may be disagreeable," continued Mrs. Mervale, "but I don't see the improbability of the thing, Angila, nor, indeed, the disagreeability even. The Constants are young people with a small family, and I think a woman is quite sufficient for them. Their house is small, I suppose."

"Oh, yes, a little bit of a place."

"Large enough for them," replied Mrs. Mervale, whose ideas were not as enlarged as her daughter's.

"Perhaps so," said Angila, "but I do hate low ceilings so. I don't care about a large house, but I do like large rooms."

"You can hardly have large rooms in a small house," remarked Mrs. Mervale, smiling.

"Why, Mrs. Astley's is only a two-story house, mamma, and her rooms are larger than these."

"Yes, my dear, Mrs. Astley's is an expensive house; the lot must be thirty feet by—"

But Angila had no time to go into the dimensions of people's "lots." She and Augusta were back to the party again; and they discussed dresses, and looks, and manners, with great *goût*.

Their criticisms were, like most young people's, always in extremes. The girls had either looked "lovely" or "frightful," and the young men were either "charming" or "odious;" and they themselves, from their own account, had been in a constant state of either delight or terror.

"I was so afraid Robert Hazlewood was going to ask me to waltz," said Angila; "and he waltzes so abominably that I did not know what I should do. But, to my delight, he asked me only for a cotillion, and I fortunately was engaged. I was so glad it was so."

"Then you did not dance with him at all?"

"No—to my great joy, he walked off, angry, I believe."

"Oh, my dear!" remonstrated her mother.

"Why not, mother," replied Angila. "He's my 'favorite aversion.' Well, Augusta," she continued, turning to her friend, "and when do you sail for New Orleans?"

"On Monday," replied Augusta.

"On Monday!—so soon! Oh, what shall I do without you, Augusta!" said Angila, quite pathetically. "And you will be gone six months, you think?"

"Yes, so papa says," replied the young lady. "He does not expect to be able to return before May."

"Not before May! And its only November now!" said Angila, in prolonged accents of grief. "How much may happen in that time!"

"Yes," returned her friend, gaily, "you may be engaged before that."

"Not much danger," replied Angila, laughing.

"But remember, I am to be bridemaid," continued Augusta.

"Certainly," said Angila, in the same tone, "I shall expect you from New Orleans on purpose."

"And who will it be to, Angila," said Augusta.

"That's more than I can tell," replied Angila; "but somebody that's very charming, I promise you."

"By the way, what is your *beau ideal*, Angila, I never heard you say," continued Augusta.

"My *beau ideal* is as shadowy and indistinct as one of Ossian's heroes," replied Angila, laughing; "something very distinguished in air and manners, with black eyes and hair, are the only points decided on. For the rest, Augusta, I refer you to Futurity," she added, gayly.

"I wonder who you will marry!" said Augusta, with the sudden fervor of a young lady on so interesting a topic.

"I don't know, only nobody that I have ever seen yet," replied Angila, with animation.

"He must be handsome, I suppose," said Augusta.

"No," replied Angila, "I don't care for beauty. A man should have a decided air of the gentleman, with an expression of talent, height, and all that—but I don't care about what you call beauty."

"You are very moderate, indeed, in your requirements, my dear," said her mother,

laughing. "And pray, my love, what have you to offer this *rara avis* in return for such extraordinary charms."

"Love, mamma," replied the gay girl, smiling.

"And suppose, my dear," pursued her mother, "that your hero should set as high an estimate upon himself as you do upon yourself. Your tall, elegant, talented man, may expect a wife who has fortune, beauty and talents, too."

Angila laughed. She was not vain, but she knew she was pretty, and she was sufficiently of a belle to be satisfied with her own powers if she could only meet with the man, so she said, playfully.

"Well, then, mamma, he won't be *my* hero, that's all."

And no doubt she answered truly. The possession of such gifts are very apt to vary in young ladies'[123] eyes according to the gentleman's perception of their charms. And heroes differ from one another, according as the pronouns "mine and thine," may be prefixed to his title.

"And such a bijou of a house as I mean to have," continued Angila, with animation. "The

back parlor and dining-room shall open into a conservatory, where I shall have any quantity of canary-birds—"

"My dear," interrupted her mother, "what nonsense you do talk."

"Why, mamma," said Angila, opening her eyes very wide, "don't you like canaries?"

"Yes, my dear," replied her mother, "I don't object to aviaries or conservatories, only to your talking of them in this way, as matters of course and necessity. They are all very well for rich people."

"Well, then, I mean to be rich," continued Angila, playfully.

"That's the very nonsense I complain of," said her mother. "It's barely possible, but certainly very improbable, Angila, that you ever should be rich; and considering you have been used to nothing of the kind, it really amuses me to hear you talk so. Your father and I have lived all our lives very comfortably and happily, Angila, without either aviary or conservatory, and I rather think you will do the same, my love."

"Your father and I!" What a falling off was there! for although Angila loved her father and mother dearly, she could not imagine herself intent upon household occupations, an excellent motherly woman some thirty years hence, any more than that her *beau ideal* should wear pepper and salt like her father.

"It was all very well for papa and mamma," but to persuade a girl of eighteen that she wants no more than her mother, whose heart happens to be like Mrs. Mervale, just then full of a new carpet that Mr. Mervale is hesitating about affording, is out of the question.

And, unreasonable as it may be, whoever would make a young girl more rational, destroys at once the chief charm of her youth—the exuberance of her fresh imagination, that gilds not only the future, but throws a rosy light upon all surrounding objects. Her visions, I grant you, are absurd, but the girl without visions is a clod of the valley, for she is without imagination—and without imagination, what is life? what is love?"

Never fear that her visions will not be fulfilled, and therefore bring disappointment—for the power carries the pleasure with it. The same gift that traces the outline, fills up the sketch. The girls who dream of heroes are those most ready to fall in love with any body—and no woman is so hard to interest as she who never had a vision, and consequently sees men just as they are; and so if Angila talked nonsense, Mrs. Mervale's sense was not much wiser.

Angila was a pretty, playful, romantic girl, rather intolerant of the people she did not like, and enthusiastic about those she did; full of life and animation, she was a decided belle in the gay circle in which she moved.

Miss Lenox was her dearest friend for the time being, and the proposed separation for the next six months was looked upon as a cruel affliction, only to be softened by the most frequent and confidential correspondence.

For the first few weeks of Augusta's absence, the promises exchanged on both sides were vehemently fulfilled. Letters were written two or three limes a week, detailing every minute circumstance that happened to either. But at the end of that time Angila was at a party

where she met Robert Hazlewood, who talked to her for some time. It was not a dancing party, and consequently they conversed together more than they had ever done before. He seemed extremely amused with her liveliness, and looked at her with unmistakable admiration. Had Augusta Lenox been there to see, perhaps Angila would not have received his attentions so graciously; but there being nothing to remind her of his being her "favorite aversion," she talked with animation, pleased with the admiration she excited, without being annoyed by any inconvenient reminiscences. And not only was Miss Lenox absent, but Miss Morton was present, and Angila thought she looked over at them a little anxiously; so that a little spirit of rivalry heightened, if not her pleasure, certainly Hazlewood's consequence in her eyes. Girls are often much influenced by each other in these matters—and the absence of Miss Lenox, who "did not think much of Robert Hazlewood," with the presence of Miss Morton who did, had no small influence in Angila's future fate.

"Did you have a pleasant party?" asked Mrs. Mervale, who had not been with her daughter the evening before.

"Yes, very pleasant," replied Angila; "one of the pleasantest 'conversation parties' I have ever been at."

And "who was there—and who did you talk to?" were the next questions, which launched Angila in a full length description of every thing and every body—and among them figured quite conspicuously Robert Hazlewood.

"And you found him really clever?" said her mother.

"Oh, decidedly," replied her daughter.

"Who," said her brother, looking up from his breakfast, "Hazlewood? Certainly he is. He's considered one of the cleverest among the young lawyers. Decidedly a man of talent."

Angila looked pleased.

"His father is a man of talent before him," observed Mrs. Mervale. "As a family, the Hazlewoods have always been distinguished for ability. This young man is ugly, you say, Angila?"

"Yes—" replied Angila, though with some hesitation. "Yes, he is ugly, certainly—but he has a good countenance; and when he converses he is better looking than I thought him."

"It's a pity he's conceited," said Mrs. Mervale, innocently; her impression of the young man being[124] taken from her daughter's previous description of him. "Since he is really clever, it's a pity, for it's such a drawback always."

"Conceited! I don't think he's conceited," said Angila, quite forgetting her yesterday's opinion.

"Don't you? I thought it was you who said so, my dear," replied her mother, quietly.

"Yes, I did once think so," said Angila, slightly blushing at her own inconsistency. "I don't know why I took the idea in my head—but in fact I talked more to him, and became better acquainted with him last evening than I ever have before. When there is dancing, there is so little time for conversation; and he really talks very well."

"He is engaged to Miss Morton, you say?" continued Mrs. Mervale.

"Well, I don't know," replied Angila, adding, as she remembered the animated looks of admiration he had bestowed upon herself, "I doubt it—that is the report, however."

"Hazlewood's no more engaged to Mary Morton than I am," said young Mervale, carelessly. "Where did you get that idea?"

"Why every body says so, George," said Angila.

"Pshaw! every body's saying so don't make it so."

"But he's very attentive to her," replied Angila.

"Well, and if he is," retorted Mervale, "it does not follow that he must be in love with her. You women do jump to conclusions, and make up matches in such a way," he continued, almost angrily.

"I think she likes him," pursued Angila. "I think she would have him."

"Have him! to be sure she would," replied George, in the same tone; not that he considered the young lady particularly in love with his friend, but as if any girl might be glad to have him—for brothers are very apt to view such cases differently from sisters, who refuse

young gentlemen for their friends without mercy.

"But he's ugly, you say," continued Mrs. Mervale, sorrowfully, who, old lady as she was, liked a handsome young man, and always lamented when she found mental gifts unaccompanied by personal charms.

"Yes, he's no beauty, that's certain," said Angila, gayly.

"Has he a good air and figure?" pursued Mrs. Mervale, still hoping so clever a man might be better looking after all.

"Yes, tolerable—middle height—nothing remarkable one way or the other." And then the young lady went off to tell some piece of news, that quite put Mr. Hazlewood out of her mother's head for the present.

When Angila next wrote to Augusta, although she spoke of Mrs. Carpenter's party, a little consciousness prevented her saying much about Robert Hazlewood, and consequently her friend was quite unsuspicious of the large share he had in making the party she described so pleasant.

Hazlewood had really been pleased by Angila. She was pretty—and he found her lively and intelligent. He had always been inclined to admire her, but she had turned from him once or twice in what he had thought a haughty manner, and consequently he had scarcely known her until they met at this little *conversazione* of Mrs. Carpenter's, where accident placed them near each other. The party was so small that where people happened to find themselves, there they staid—it requiring some courage for a young man to break the charmed ring, and deliberately plant himself before any lady, or attempt to talk to any one except her beside whom fate had placed him.

Now Angila had the corner seat on a sofa near the fire-place, and Hazlewood was standing, leaning against the chimney-piece, so that a nicer, more cosy position for a pleasant talk could hardly be conceived in so small a circle. Miss Morton was on the other side of the fire-place, occupying the corresponding situation to Angila, and Angila could see her peeping forward from time to time to see if Hazlewood still maintained his place. His back was turned

toward her, so if she did throw any anxious glances that way, he did not see them.

Angila met him a few evenings after this at the Opera, and found that he was a passionate lover of music. They talked again, and he very well, for he really was a sensible, well-educated young man. Music is a favorite source of inspiration, and Hazlewood was a connoisseur as well as amateur. She found that he seldom missed a night at the Opera, and "she was surprised she had not seen him there before, as she went herself very often."

"He had seen her, however;" and he looked as if it were not easy not to see *her* when she was there.

She blushed and was pleased, for it evidently was not an unmeaning compliment.

"Mr. Hazlewood's very clever," she said the next day; "and his tastes are so cultivated and refined. He is very different from the usual run of young men." (When a girl begins to think a man different from the "usual run," you may be sure she herself is off the common track.) "There's something very manly in all his sentiments, independent and high-toned. He cannot be engaged to Mary Morton, for I

alluded to the report, and he seemed quite amused at the idea. I can see he thinks her very silly, which she is, though pretty—though he was two gentlemanly to say so."

"How, then, did you find out that he thought so," asked George, smiling.

"Oh, from one or two little things. We were speaking of a German poem that I was trying to get the other day, and he said he had it, but had lent it to Miss Morton. 'However,' he added, with a peculiar smile, 'he did not believe she wanted to read it, and at any rate, he would bring it to me as soon as she returned it. He doubted whether she was much of a German reader.' But it was more the smile and the manner in which he said it, than the words, that made me think he had no very high opinion of her literary tastes."

"He may not like her any the less for that," said George, carelessly. "I think your clever literary men rarely do value a woman less for her ignorance."[125]

But there was an expression in Angila's pretty face that seemed to contradict this assertion; for, like most pretty women, the was vainer of her talents than her beauty—and she thought

Hazlewood had been quite struck by some of her criticisms the night before.

However this might be, the intimacy seemed to progress at a wonderful rate. He called and brought her books; and they had a world to say every time they met, which, whether by accident or design, was now beginning to be very often.

"You knew old Mr. Hazlewood, mamma, did not you?" said Angila. "And who did you say Mrs. Hazlewood was?" And now she listened very differently from the last time that her mother had launched forth on the topic of old times and friends. Angila was wonderfully interested in all the history of the whole race, for Mrs. Mervale began with the great grandfathers, maternal and paternal; and she kept the thread of the story with surprising distinctness, and made out the family pedigree with amazing correctness.

"Then they are an excellent family, mamma," she said.

"To be sure they are," replied Mrs. Mervale, "one of the oldest and best in the city."

It was wonderful what a quantity of books Angila read just about this time; but Hazlewood was always sending her something, which she seemed to take peculiar pleasure in surprising him by having finished before they met again. And her bright eyes grew brighter, and occasionally, and that not unfrequently, they had an abstracted, dreamy look, as if her thoughts were far away, occupied in very pleasant visions—whether they were now of Ossian-heroes, dark-eyed and dim, we doubt.

She was rather unpleasantly roused to a waking state, however, by a passage in one of Augusta Lenox's last letters, which was,

"What has become of your 'favorite aversion,' Robert Hazlewood? When are he and Mary Morton to be married? I give her joy of him—as you say, how can she?"

Angila colored scarlet with indignation as she read this, almost wondering at first what Augusta meant.

She did not answer the letter; some consciousness, mixed with a good deal of vexation, prevented her.

Hazlewood's attentions to Angila began to be talked of a good deal. Her mother was congratulated, and she was complimented, for every body spoke well of him. "A remarkably clever young man with excellent prospects," the old people said. The young girls talked of him probably pretty much as Angila and Augusta had done—but she did not hear that, and the young men said,

"Hazlewood was a devilish clever fellow, and that Angila Mervale would do very well if she could get him."

That the gentleman was desperately in love there was no doubt; and as for the young lady—that she was flattered and pleased and interested, was hardly less clear. Her bright eyes grew softer and more dreamy every day.

Of what was she dreaming? What could her visions be now? Can she by any possibility make a hero of Robert Hazlewood? Sober common sense would say "No!" but bright-eyed, youthful imagination may boldly answer, "Why not?" Time, however, can only decide that point.

Two more letters came from Augusta Lenox about this time, and remained unanswered.

"Wait till I am engaged," Angila had unconsciously said to herself, and then blushed the deepest blush, as she caught the words that had risen to her lips.

She did not wait long, however. Bright, beaming, blushing and tearful, she soon announced the intelligence to her mother, asking her consent, and permission to refer Mr. Hazlewood to her father.

The Mervales were very well pleased with the match, which, in fact, was an excellent one, young Hazlewood being in every respect Angila's superior, except in appearance, where she, as is the woman's right, bore the palm of beauty. Not but that she was quick, intelligent, and well cultivated; but there are more such girls by hundreds in our community, than there are men of talent, reading, industry and worth to merit them; and Angila was amazingly happy to have been one of the fortunate few to whose lot such a man falls.

And now, indeed, she wrote a long, long letter to Augusta—so full of happiness, describing Hazlewood, as she thought, so distinctly, that Augusta must recognize him at once—so she concluded by saying,

"And now I need not name him, as you must know who I mean."

"I must know who she means!" said Augusta, much perplexed. "Why I am sure I cannot imagine who she means! Talented, agreeable, with cultivated tastes! Who can it be? 'Not handsome, but very gentlemanlike-looking.' Well, I have no idea who it is—I certainly cannot know the man. But as we sail next week, I shall be at home in time for the wedding. How odd that I should be really her bridemaid in May after all!"

Miss Lenox arrived about two months after Angila's engagement had been announced, and found her friend brilliant with happiness. After the first exclamations and greetings, Augusta said with impatient curiosity,

"But who is it, Angila—you never told me?"

"But surely you guessed at once," said Angila, incredulously.

"No, indeed," replied her friend, earnestly, "I have not the most distant idea."

"Why, Robert Hazlewood, to be sure!"

"Robert Hazlewood! Oh, Angila! You are jesting," exclaimed her friend, thrown quite off her guard by astonishment.

"Yes, indeed!" replied Angila, with eager delight, attributing Augusta's surprise and incredulous tones to quite another source. "You may well be surprised, Augusta. Is it not strange that such a man—one of his superior talents—should have fallen in love with such a mad-cap as me."

Augusta could hardly believe her ears. But the truth was, that Angila had so long since forgotten her prejudice, founded on nothing, against Hazlewood,[126] that she was not conscious now that she had ever entertained any such feelings. She was not obliged, in common phrase, to "eat her own words," for she quite forgot that she had ever uttered them. And now, with the utmost enthusiasm, she entered into all her plans and prospects—told Augusta, with the greatest interest, as if she thought the theme must be equally delightful to her friend—all her mother's long story about the old Hazlewoods, and what a "charming nice family they were," ("those pattern people that she hated so," as Augusta remembered,

but all of which was buried in the happiest oblivion with Angila,) and the dear little house that was being furnished like a bijou next to Mrs. Constant's, (next to Mrs. Constant's!—one of those small houses with low ceilings! Augusta gasped;) and how many servants she was going to keep; and what a nice young girl she had engaged already as waiter.

"You mean, then, to have a woman waiter?" Augusta could not help saying.

"Oh, to be sure!" said Angila. "What should I do with a man in such a pretty little establishment as I mean to have. And then you know we must be economical—Mr. Hazlewood is a young lawyer, and I don't mean to let him slave himself to make the two ends meet. You'll see what a nice economical little housekeeper I'll be."

And, in short, Augusta found that the same bright, warm imagination that had made Angila once dream of Ossian-heroes, now endowed Robert Hazlewood with every charm she wanted, and even threw a romantic glow over a small house, low ceilings, small economies, and all but turned the woman-servant into a man. Cinderella's godmother

could hardly have done more. Such is the power of love!

"Well," said Augusta, in talking it all over with her brother, "I cannot comprehend it yet; Angila, who used to be so fastidious, so critical, who expected so much in the man she was to marry!"

"She is not the first young lady who has come down from her pedestal," replied her brother, laughing.

"No, but she has not," returned Augusta, "that's the oddest part of the whole—she has only contrived somehow to raise Hazlewood on a pedestal, too. You'd think they were the only couple in the world going to be married. She's actually in love with him, desperately in love with him; and it was only just before I went to New Orleans that she said—"

"My dear," interrupted her mother, "there's no subject on which women change their minds oftener than on this. Love works wonders—indeed, the only miracles left in the world are of his creation."

"But she used to wonder at Mary Morton's liking him, mamma."

"Ah, my dear," replied her mother, "that was when he was attentive to Mary Morton and not her. It makes a wonderful difference when the thing becomes personal. And if you really love Angila, my dear, you will forget, or at least not repeat, what she said six months before marriage."

A NEW ENGLAND LEGEND

BY CAROLINE F. ORNE.

[The subject of the following ballad may be found in the "Christus Super Aquas" of Mather's Magnalia.]

"God's blessing on the bonny barque!" the gallant seamen cried,As with her snowy sails outspread she cleft the yielding tide—"God's

blessing on the bonny barque!" cried the landsmen from the shore,As with a swallow's rapid flight she skimmed the waters o'er.Oh never from the good old Bay, a fairer ship did sail,Or in more trim and brave array did court the favoring gale.Cheerily sung the marinere as he climbed the high, high mast,The mast that was made of the Norway pine, that scorned the mountain-blast.But brave Mark Edward dashed a tear in secret from his eye,As he saw green Trimount dimmer grow against the distant sky,And fast before the gathering breeze his noble vessel fly.Oh, youth will cherish many a hope, and many a fond desire,And nurse in secret in the heart the hidden altar-fire!And though young Mark Edward trode his deck with footstep light and free,Yet a shadow was on his manly brow as his good ship swept the sea;A shadow was on his manly brow as he marked the fading shore,And the faint line of the far green hills where dwelt his loved Lenore.Merrily sailed the bonny barque toward her destined port,And the white waves curled around her prow as if in wanton sport.Merrily sailed the bonny barque till seven days came and past,When her snowy canvas shivered and rent

before the northern blast,And out of her course, and away, away, careered she wild and fast.Black lowered the heavens, loud howled the winds, as the gallant barque drove on,"God save her from the stormy seas," prayed the sailors every one,But hither and thither the mad winds bore her, careening wildly on.Oh, a fearful thing is the mighty wind as it raves the land along,[127]And the forests rock beneath the shock of the fierce blasts and the strong,But when the wild and angry waves come rushing on their prey,And to and fro the good ship reels with the wind's savage play,Oh! then it is more fearful far in that frail barque to be,At the mercy of the wind and wave, alone upon the sea.Mark Edward's eye grew stern and calm as day by day went on,And farther from the destined port the gallant barque was borne.From her tall masts the sails were rent, yet fast and far she flew,But whither she drove there knew not one among her gallant crew,Nor the captain, nor the marineres, not one among them knew.Now there had come and past away full many weary days,And each looked in each other's face with sad and blank amaze,For ghastly Famine's bony hand was stretched to clutch his

prey,And still the adverse winds blew on as they would blow alway.And dark and fearful whispered words from man to man went past,As of some dread and fatal deed which they must do at last.And night and morn and noon they prayed, oh blessed voice of prayer!That God would bring their trembling souls out of this great despair.And every straining eye was bent out o'er the ocean-wave,But they saw no sail, there came no ship the storm-tost barque to save.The fatal die was cast at length; and tears filled every eyeAs forth a gentle stripling slept and gave himself to die.They looked upon his pure white brow, and his face so fair to see,And all with one accord cried out, "Oh, God! this must not be!"And brave Mark Edward calmly said, "Let the lot fall on me.""Not so," the generous youth exclaimed, "of little worth am I,But 'twould strike the life from out us all were it thy lot to die.""Let us once more entreat the Lord; he yet our souls may spare,"And kneeling down the gray-haired man sent up a fervent prayer.Oh mighty is the voice of prayer! to him that asks is given,And as to Israel of old was manna sent from heaven,So now their prayer was answered, for, leaping

from the sea,A mighty fish fell in their midst, where they astonished be."Now glory to the Father be, and to the Son be praise!Upon the deep He walketh, in the ocean are His ways,'Tis meet that we should worship Him who doeth right always."And then from all that noble crew a hymn of joy arose—It flowed from grateful hearts as free as running water flows.

Day after day still passed away, gaunt Famine pressed again,Each turned away from each, as if smit with a sudden pain.They feared to meet each other's eyes and read the secret there,And each his pangs in silence strove a little yet to bear.The eye grew dim with looking out upon the weary main,Wave rolling after wave was all that answered back again.But night and morn and noon they prayed—oh blessed voice of prayer!That God would bring their trembling souls out of this great despair.Again the fatal die was cast; a man of powerful frameSlowly and with reluctant step to the dread summons came.Large drops of anguish on his brow—his lips were white with fear—Oh 'tis a dreadful death to die! Is there no succor near?They looked around on every side, but saw no sight of cheer."It is not for

myself I dread," the sailor murmured low,"But for my wife and little babes, oh what a tale of wo!""It shall not be," Mark Edward cried, "for their dear sakes go free.I have no wife to mourn my fate, let the lot fall on me.""Not so, oh generous and brave!" the sailor grateful said,"The lot is mine, but cheer thou her and them when I am dead."And turning with a calmer front he bade the waiting crewWhat not themselves but fate compelled, to haste and quickly do.But who shall do the dismal work? The innocent life who take?One after one each shrunk away, but no word any spake.Still hunger pressed them sore, and pangs too dreadful to be borne."Be merciful, oh Father, hear! To thee again we turn."Then in their agony they strove, and wrestled long in prayer,Till suddenly they heard a sound come from the upper air,A sound of rushing wings, and lo! oh sight of joy! on highA great bird circles round the masts, and ever draws more nigh.In lightning play of hope and fear one breathless moment passed,The next, the bird has lighted down and settled on the mast.And soon within his grasp secure a seaman holds him fast."Now glory be unto our God—and to His name be praise!Upon the deep he walketh,

in the ocean are his ways,From ghastly fear our suppliant souls he royally hath freed,And sent us succor from the air in this our sorest need."

But day by day still passed away, and Famine fiercer pressed,And still the adverse winds blew on and knew no change or rest.Yet strove they in their agony to let no murmuring wordAgainst the good and gracious Lord, from out their lips be heard.But with their wildly gleaming eyes they gazed out o'er the main.Wave rolling after wave was all that answered back again.On the horizon's distant verge not even a speck was seen,But the cresting foam of breaking waves still shimmering between.And fiercer yet, as hour by hour went slowly creeping by,The famine wrung their tortured frames till it were bliss to die.And hopes of further aid grew faint, and it did seem that theyOut on the waste of waters wide of Heaven forgotten lay.But night and morn and noon they prayed—oh blessed voice of prayer!That God would save their trembling souls out of this great despair.[128]Again the fatal die was cast, and 'mid a general gloom,Mark Edward calmly forward came to meet the appointed doom.But when they saw

his noble port, and his manly bearing brave,Each would have given up his life that bold young heart to save.They would have wept, but their hot eyes refused the grateful tear,Yet with sorrowful and suppliant looks they drew themselves more near.Mark Edward turned aside and spoke in accents calm and low,Unto a man with silver hair, whose look was full of wo,And bade him if the Lord should spare, and they should reach the shore,To bear a message from his lips to his beloved Lenore."Tell her my thoughts were God's and hers," the brave young spirit cried,"Tell her not how it came to pass, say only that I died."Then with a brief and earnest prayer his soul to God he gave,Beseeching that the sacrifice the lives of all might save.Each looked on each, but not a hand would strike the fatal blow,It was a death pang but to think what hand should lay him low.And sick at heart they turned away their misery to bear,And wrestled once again with God in agony of prayer.As drops of blood wrung from the heart fell each imploring word,Oh, God of Heaven! and can it be such prayer is still unheard?They strained once more each aching orb out o'er the gloomy main,Wave rolling

after wave was all that answered back again.They waited yet—they lingered yet—they searched the horizon round,No sight of land, no blessed sail, no living thing was found.They lingered yet—hope faded fast from out the hearts of all.They waited yet—till black Despair sunk o'er them like a pall.They turned to where Mark Edward stood with his unblenching brow,Or he must die their lives to save, or all must perish now.They lingered yet—they waited yet—a sudden shriek rung out—"A sail! A sail! Oh, blessed Lord!" burst forth one joyful shout.New strength those famished men received; fervent their thanks, but brief—They man their boat, they reach the ship, they ask a swift relief.Strange faces meet their view, they hear strange words in tongues unknown,And evil eyes with threatening gaze are sternly looking down.They pause—for a new terror bids their hearts' warm current freeze,For they have met a pirate ship, the scourge of all the seas.But up and out Mark Edward spake, and in the pirates' tongue,And when the pirate captain heard, quick to his side he sprung,And vowed by all the saints of France—the living and the dead—There should not even a hair be harmed upon a single

head,For once, when in a dismal strait, Mark Edward gave him aid,And now the debt long treasured up should amply be repaid.He gave them water from his casks, and bread, and all things store,And showed them how to lay their course to reach the destined shore.And the blessing of those famished men went with him evermore.

Again the favoring gale arose, the barque went bounding on,And speedily her destined port was now in safety won.And after, when green Trimount's hills greet their expectant eyes,New thanks to Heaven, new hymns of joy unto the Lord arise.For glory be unto our Lord, and to His name be praise!Upon the deep he walketh, in the ocean are his ways.'Tis meet that we should worship him who doeth right always.

SONG OF SLEEP.

BY G. G. FOSTER.

Oh the dreamy world of sleep for me,With its visions pure and bright,—Its fairy throngs in revelry,Under the pale moonlight!Sleep, sleep, I wait for thy spell,For my eyes are heavy with watching wellFor the starry night, and the world of dreamsThat ever in sleep on my spirit beams.

The day, the day, I cannot 'bide,'Tis dull and dusty and drear—And, owl-like, away from the sun I hide,That in dreams I may wander freer.Sleep, sleep, come to my eyes—Welcome as blue to the midnight skies—Faithful as dew to drooping flowers—I only live in thy dreamy bowers.

The sun is purpling down the west,Day's death-robes glitter fair,And weary men, agasp for rest,For the solemn night prepare.Sleep, sleep, hasten to me!The shadows lengthen across the lea;The birds are weary, and so am I;Tired world and dying day good-bye!

THE CRUISE OF THE RAKER.

[129]

A TALE OF THE WAR OF 1812-15.

BY HENRY A. CLARK.

(*Continued from page* 74.)

CHAPTER III.

The Chase and the Capture.

On the deck of the pirate craft stood a young man of powerful frame, and singularly savage features, rendered more repulsive by the disposition of the hair which was allowed to

grow almost over the entire mouth, and hung from the chin in heavy masses nearly to the waist. With his elbow resting against the fore-mast of the vessel, he was gazing through a spy-glass upon the brig he had been so long pursuing. A burly negro stood at the helm, holding the tiller, and steering the brig with an ease which denoted his vast strength, scarcely moving his body, but meeting the long waves, which washed over the side of the vessel, and rushed in torrents through the hawse-holes, merely by the power of his arm.

"Keep her more in the wind," shouted the commander, with an oath, to the helmsman.

"Ay, ay sir," responded the negro gruffly.

"Don't let me hear a sail flap again or I'll score your back for you, you son of a sea-cook."

With this pleasant admonition the young man resumed his night-glass.

The captain of the pirate brig was an Englishman by birth; his history was little known even to his own crew, but it was remarkable that though always savage and blood-thirsty, he was peculiarly so to his own countrymen, evincing a hatred and malignancy

toward every thing connected with his native land, that seemed more than fiendish—never smiling but when his sword was red with the blood of his countrymen, and his foot planted upon her conquered banner. It was evident that some deep wrong had driven him forth to become an outcast and a fiend. A close inspection of his features developed the outlines of a noble countenance yet remaining, though marred and deformed by years of passion and of crime. His crew, which numbered nearly fifty, were gathered from almost every nation of the civilized world, yet were all completely under his command. They were now scattered over the vessel in various lounging attitudes, apparently careless of every thing beyond the ease of the passing moment, leaving the management of the brig to the two or three hands necessary to control the graceful and obedient craft.

For long hours the captain of the pirate brig stood following the motions of the flying merchantman; he thought not of sleep or of refreshment, it was enough for him that he was in pursuit of an English vessel, that his revenge was again to be gratified with English blood.

He was roused by a light touch of the arm—he turned impatiently.

"Why, Florette."

A beautiful girl stood beside him, gazing into his face half with fear and half with love. Her dress was partly that of a girl and partly of a boy; over a pair of white loose sailor's trowsers a short gown was thrown, fastened with a blue zone, and her long hair fell in thick, luxuriant masses from beneath a gracefully shaped little straw hat—altogether she was as lovely in feature and form as Venus herself, with an eye blue as the ocean, and a voice soft and sweet as the southern breeze.

"Dear William, will you not go below and take some rest?"

"I want none, girl; I shall not sleep till every man on yonder vessel has gone to rest in the caves of ocean."

"But you will eat?"

"Pshaw! Florette, leave me; your place is below."

The girl said no more, but slowly glided to the companion-way and disappeared into the little cabin.

The long night at length wore away, and as the clear light of morning shone upon the waters the merchant vessel was no longer visible from the deck of the pirate.

"A thousand devils! has he escaped me. Ho! the one of you with the sharpest eyes up to the mast-head. Stay, I will go myself."

Thus speaking, the captain mounted the main-mast and gazed long and anxiously; he could see nothing of the vessel. He mounted still higher, climbing the slender top-mast till with his hand resting upon the main-truck he once more looked over the horizon. Thus far his gaze had been directed to windward, in the course where the vanished brig had last been seen. At length he turned to leeward, and far in the distant horizon his eagle eye caught faint sight of a sail, like the white and glancing wing of a bird. With wonderful rapidity he slid to the deck, and gave orders to set the brig before the wind. The beautiful little bark fell off gracefully, and in a moment was swiftly retracing the waters it had beaten over during the night.

"The revenge will be no less sweet that it is deferred," exclaimed the pirate captain, as he

threw himself upon the companion-way. "Thirty English[130] vessels have I sunk in the deep, and I am not yet satisfied—no, no, curses on her name, curses on her laws, they have driven me forth from a lordly heritage and an ancient name to die an outcast and a pirate."

Pulling his hat over his dark brow, he sat long in deep thought, and not one in all his savage crew but would have preferred to board a vessel of twice their size than to rouse his commander from his thoughtful mood.

Captain Horton for some hours after it had become dark the preceding night, had kept his vessel on the same course, perplexing his mind with some scheme by which he might deceive the pirate. At length he gave orders to lower away the yawl boat, and fit a mast to it, which was speedily done. When all was ready, he hung a lantern to the mast, with a light that would burn but a short time, and then putting out his own ship-light, he fastened the tiller of the yawl and set it adrift, knowing that it would keep its course until some sudden gust of wind should overcome its steerage way. As soon as he had accomplished this, he fell off

before the wind, and setting his brig on the opposite tack, as soon as he had got to a good distance from the light of the yawl, took in all sail till not a rag was left standing. He kept his brig in this position until he had the satisfaction of seeing the pirate brig pass to windward in pursuit of his boat, whose light he knew would go out before the pirate could overtake it. When the light of the chase had become faint in the distance, he immediately crowded on all sail, and stood off boldly on his original course.

None of his crew had gone below to turn in, for all were too anxious to sleep, and his passengers still stood beside him upon the quarter-deck; John with a large bundle under his arm, which, in answer to an inquiry from the merchant, he said was merely a change of dress.

"I think we have given them the slip this time, Mr. Williams," said Captain Horton.

"I hope so, captain."

"You can sleep now without danger of being disturbed by unwelcome visiters, Miss Julia."

"Well, captain, I am as glad as my father you have escaped. I wish we had got near enough to see how they looked though."

"We ought rather, my dear girl, to thank God that they came no nearer than they did," said her father half reproachfully.

"True, father, true," and bidding Captain Horton good-night, they retired to the cabin.

"You did fool them nice, didn't you, captin?" said John.

"Yes, John, it was tolerably well done, I think myself," replied the captain, who, like all of mankind, was more or less vain, and prided himself peculiarly upon his skill in his own avocation.

"I shouldn't ha' been much afraid on 'em myself if they had caught us," said John.

"You wouldn't, ah!"

"No! I should ha' hated to see all the crew walk on the plank as they call it, specially Dick Halyard, but I thinks I should ha' come it over 'em myself."

"Well, John, I hope you'll never have such occasion to try your powers of deceit, for I

fear you would find yourself wofully mistaken."

"Perhaps not, captin, but I'm confounded sleepy, now we've got away from the bloody pirates, so I'll just lie down here, captin; I haint learned to sleep in a hammock yet. I wish you'd let me have a berth, captin, I hate lying in a circle, it cramps a fellow plaguily."

John talked himself to sleep upon the companion-way, where the good-natured master of the brig allowed him to remain unmolested, and soon after yielding the helm to one of the mates, himself "turned in."

As the morning broke over the sea clear and cloudless, while not a sail was visible in any quarter of the horizon, the revulsion of feeling occasioned by the transition from despair to confidence, and indeed entire assurance of safety, was plainly depicted in the joyous countenances of all on the Betsy Allen. The worthy captain made no endeavor to check the boisterous merriment of his crew, but lighting his pipe, seated himself upon the companion-way, with a complacent smile expanding his sun-browned features, which developed itself into a self-satisfied and happy laugh as Mr.

Williams appeared at the cabin-door, leading up his daughter to enjoy the pure morning air, fresh from the clear sky and the bounding waters.

"Ha! ha! Mr. Williams, told you so, not a sail in sight, and a fine breeze."

"Our thanks are due to you, Captain Horton, for the skillful manner in which you eluded the pirate ship."

"Oh! I was as glad to get out of sight of the rascal as you could have been, my dear sir, I assure you; now that we are clear of him, I ain't afraid to tell Miss Julia that if he had overhauled us we should have all gone to Davy Jones' locker, and the Betsy Allen would by this time have been burnt to the water's edge."

"I was not ignorant of the danger at any time, Captain Horton."

"Well, you are a brave girl, and deserve to be a sailor's wife, but I'm married myself."

"That is unfortunate, captain," said Julia, with a merry laugh, so musical in its intonations that the rough sailors who heard its sweet cadence could not resist the contagion, and a

bright smile lit up each weather-beaten countenance within the sound of the merry music.

"Well, I think so myself, though I wouldn't like Mrs. Horton to hear me say it, or I should have a rougher breeze to encounter than I ever met round Cape Horn—ha! ha! ha! You must excuse me, Miss Julia, but I feel in fine spirits this morning, not a sail in sight."

"Sail ho!" shouted the look-out from the main cross-trees.

"Ah!—where away?"

"Right astern."[131]

"Can it be that they have got in our wake again. I'll mount to the mast-head and see myself."

Seizing the glass the captain ascended to the cross-trees, where he remained for a long time, watching the distant sail. At length he returned to the deck.

"They've got our bearings again somehow, confound the cunning rascals; and, by the way they are overhauling us, I judge they can beat us as well afore the wind as on a tack."

"Well, Captain Horton, we must be resigned to our fate then. It matters not so much for me, but it is hard, my daughter, that you should be torn from your peaceful home in England to fall a prey to these fiends."

"They are a long way from us yet, father; let us hope something may happen for our relief, and not give up till we are taken."

"That's the right feeling, Miss Julia," said the captain. "I will do all I can to prolong the chase, and we will trust in God for the result."

Every device which skillful seamanship could practice was put in immediate operation to increase the speed of the brig. There was but a solitary hope remaining, that they might fall in with some national vessel able to protect them from the pirate. The sails were frequently wet, the halyards drawn taut, and the captain himself took the helm. When all this was done, each sailor stood gazing upon the pirate as if to calculate the speed of his approach by the lifting of his sails above the water. The greater part of his top-sails were already in sight, and soon the heads of her courses appeared above the wave, seeming to sweep up like the long, white wings of a lazy bird, whose flight clung

to the breast of the sea, as if seeking a resting-place.

By the middle of the day the pirate was within three miles of the merchantman, and had already opened upon her with his long gun. Captain Horton pressed onward without noticing the balls, which as yet had not injured hull or sail. But as the chase approached nearer and nearer, the shots began to take effect—a heavy ball made a huge rent in the mizzen-topsail—another dashed in the galley, and a third tore up the companion-way, and still another cut down the fore-topmast, and materially decreased the speed of the vessel.

Noticing this the pirate ceased his fire, and soon drew up within hail of the merchantman.

"Ship ahoy—what ship?"

"The Betsy Allen, London."

"Lay-by till I send a boat aboard."

Captain Horton gave orders to his crew to wait the word of command before they altered the vessel's course, and then seizing the trumpet, hailed the pirate.

"What ship's that?"

"The brig Death—don't you see the flag?"

"I know the character of your ship, doubtless."

"Well, lay-by, or we'll bring you to with a broadside."

Perceiving the inutility of further effort, Captain Horton brought-to, and hauled down his flag.

In a short time the jolly-boat of the pirate was lowered from the stern, and the commander jumped in, followed by a dozen of his crew.

The vigorous arms of the oarsmen soon brought the boat to the merchantman, and the pirate stood upon the deck of the captured vessel.

"Well, sir, you have given us some trouble to overhaul you," said he, in a manner rather gentlemanly than savage.

"We should have been fools if we had not tried our best to escape."

"True, true—will you inform me how you eluded our pursuit last night. I ask merely from motives of curiosity?"

Captain Horton briefly related the deception of the boat.

"Ah! ha! very well done. Here Diego," said he to one of the sailors who had followed him, "go below and bring up the passengers."

The swarthy rascal disappeared with a malignant grin through the cabin-door, and speedily escorted Mr. Williams to the deck, followed by Julia, and, to the surprise of Captain Horton and his crew, another female.

"Now, captain," said the pirate, with a fiendish smile, "I shall proceed to convey your merchandize to my brig, including these two ladies, though, by my faith, we shall have little use for one of them. After which I will leave you in quiet."

"I could expect no better terms," said Captain Horton, resignedly.

"O, you will soon be relieved from my presence."

Julia clung to her father, but was torn from his grasp, and the good old man was pushed back by the laughing fiends, as he attempted to follow her to the boat. The father and daughter parted with a look of strong anguish, relieved in the countenance of Julia by a deep expression of firmness and resolution.

John was also seized by the pirates, but he had overheard the words of their captain that they would soon be left in quiet, and had already commenced throwing off his woman's dress.

"Hillo! is the old girl going to strip? Bear a hand here, Mike," shouted Diego, to one of his comrades, "just make fast those tow-lines, and haul up her rigging."

Mr. Williams, who immediately conceived the possible advantage it might be to Julia to have even so inefficient a protector with her as John, addressed him in a stern tone.

"What, will you desert your mistress?"

John stood in doubt, but he was a kind-hearted fellow, and loved Julia better than he did any thing else in the world except himself; and without further resistance or explanation, allowed himself to be conveyed to the boat, though the big tears rolled down his cheeks, and nothing even then would have prevented his avowing his original sex, but a strong feeling of shame at the thought of leaving Julia.

For hours the pirate's jolly-boat passed backward and forward between the two brigs;

the sea had become too rough to allow the vessels to be fastened together without injury to the light frame of the pirate bark; and night had already set in before all the cargo[132] which the pirates desired had been removed from the merchantman; but it was at length accomplished, and once more the pirates stood upon the deck of their own brig.

In a few words their captain explained his plan of destruction to his crew, which was willingly assented to, as it was sufficiently cruel and vindictive. Three loud cheers burst from their lips, startling the crew of the Betsey Allen with its wild cadence, and in another moment the pirate-captain leaped into his boat, and followed by a number of his crew, returned to the merchantman.

Still preserving his suavity of manner, he addressed Captain Horton as he stepped upon the deck, after first ordering the crew to the bows, and drawing up his own men with pointed muskets before the companion-way.

"Captain Horton, as you are, perhaps, aware it is our policy to act upon the old saying that 'dead men tell no tales,' and after consultation among ourselves, we have concluded to set

your vessel on fire, and then depart in peace, leaving you to the quiet I promised you."

"Blood-thirsty villain!" shouted the captain of the merchantman, and suddenly drawing a pistol, he discharged it full at the pirate's breast. The latter was badly wounded, but falling back against the main-mast, was able to order his men to pursue their original design before he fell fainting in the arms of one of his men, who immediately conveyed him to the boat.

The savages proceeded then to fire the vessel in several different places, meeting with no resistance from the crew, as a dozen muskets pointed at their heads admonished them that immediate death would be the consequence.

As soon as the subtle element had so far progressed in its work of destruction that the hand of man could not stay it, the pirates jumped into their boat, and with a fiendish yell, pulled off for their own vessel.

For a very short time the crew of the merchantman stood watching the flame and smoke which was fast encircling them, then rousing their native energies, and perceiving the utter impossibility of conquering the fire,

they turned their attention to the only resource left—the construction of some sort of a raft that would sustain their united weight.

The progress of the flames, however, was so rapid, that though a score of busy hands were employed with axes and hatchets, the most that could be done was to hurl overboard a few spars and boards, cut away the bowsprit and part of the bulwarks, before the exceeding heat compelled them to leave the brig.

Mr. Williams, who had remained in a state of stupor since the loss of his daughter, was borne to the ship's side, and hurriedly fastened to a spar; and then all the crew boldly sprung into the water, and pushing the fragments of boards and spars from the burning brig, as soon as they attained a safe distance, commenced the construction of their raft in the water. This was an exceedingly difficult undertaking; but they were working with the energies of despair, and board after board was made fast by means of the rope they had thrown over with themselves; and in the light of their burning vessel they managed at length to build a raft sufficiently strong to bear their weight.

Then seating themselves upon it, they almost gave way to despair; they had lost the excitement of occupation, and now, in moody silence, watched the mounting flames. They were without food, and the sea ran high; their condition did, indeed, seem hopeless—and their only refuge, death.

CHAPTER IV.

The Escape.

The fire had made swift work during the time the unfortunate crew were occupied in building the raft, and the little brig was now almost enveloped in smoke and flame. A burst of fire from her main hatchway threw a red glare over the turbulent waters, and showed the vessel's masts and rigging brightly displayed against the dark sky above and beyond them. The main-sail by this time caught fire, and was blazing away along the yard fiercely; and the flame soon reached the loftier sails and running rigging; the fire below was raging between decks, and rising in successive bursts of flame from the hatchways. The vessel had been filled with combustible

material, and the doomed brig, in a short space of time, was one mass of flame.

To a spectator beholding the sight in safety, it would have been a magnificent spectacle—the grandest, the most terrific, perhaps, it is possible to conceive—a ship on fire at night in the mid-ocean. The hull of the vessel lay flaming like an immense furnace on the surface of the deep; her masts, and the lower and topsail-yards, with fragments of the rigging hanging round them, sparkling, and scattering the fire-flakes, rose high above it, while huge volumes of smoke ever and anon obscured the whole, then borne away by the strong breeze, left the burning brig doubly distinct, placed in strong relief against the dark vault of heaven behind. The lofty spars, as their fastenings were burnt through, fell, one by one, into the hissing water, and at length the tall masts, no longer supported by the rigging, and nearly burnt into below the deck, fell over, one after the other, into the deep.

Suddenly Captain Horton started to his feet,

"It is, it is a sail—look, do you now see it coming up in the light of the brig?"

"It is so, captain," responded his men one after the other.

"Thank God we shall yet be saved! If the pirate had scuttled the ship we should have had no chance; but his cruel course has saved us, for the flame has attracted some vessel to our succor."

"Perhaps the pirate returning," remarked Mr. Williams.

"No, that kept on before the wind, and this is coming up. God grant it be an English vessel, and a swift one, and we may yet save your daughter!"

This remark struck a chord of hope in the heart of Mr. Williams, and roused him to his native manliness.[133]

"But," said he, "our own vessel has drifted far from us, and we shall not be seen by this one."

"I think they will come within hail; they will at least sail round the burning vessel, in the hopes of picking up somebody. Come, my men, let's make some kind of sail of our jackets, a half a mile nearer the ship may save us all our lives."

With a cheer as merry as ever broke from their lips when on board ship, the reanimated sailors went to work, and soon reared a small sail made of their clothing, which caught enough wind to move them slowly onward.

"Steer in the wake of our own vessel, my men, and the strange sail will come right on to us—get between them."

"Ay, ay, sir!"

As the approaching vessel drew nearer, the crew of the Betsy Allen sent up a cheer from their united voices which, to their great joy, was answered from the strange sail.

"Ahoy, where away?"

"Three points on your weather bow—starboard your helm, and you'll be on us."

"Ay, ay."

In a very short time the shipwrecked crew stood on the deck of the privateer Raker, which, attracted by the light of their burning brig, had varied somewhat from its course, to render assistance if any were needed. Captain Greene and his men soon became acquainted with the history of the crew of the lost brig, and every attention was shown to them.

Captain Horton gave them a brief account of the pirate's assault, and the abduction of Julia.

"O Captain Greene, save my child, if possible. She is my only one," exclaimed Mr. Williams.

"Which way did she steer, Captain Horton?"

"She went off right before the wind, sir, and is not three hours ahead of us."

"Mr. Williams I will immediately give chase, and God grant that I may overtake the scoundrels."

"A father's thanks shall be yours, sir."

"Never mind that—you had all better turn in; I will steer the same course with the pirate till morning, sir; and if he is then in sight, I think he is ours—for there are few things afloat that can outsail the Raker."

The crew of the Betsy Allen, whose anxiety and exertions during the last few hours had been excessive, gladly accepted the captain's offer, and were soon snoring in their hammocks. Captain Horton and Mr. Williams remained on the deck of the Raker, the one too anxious for revenge upon the pirate who had destroyed his brig, to sleep, and the other too much afflicted by the loss of his daughter, and

the painful thoughts which it engendered, to think of any thing but her speedy recovery.

The long night at length wore away, and with the first beams of the morning sun the mists rolled heavily upward from the ocean. To the great joy of all on board the Raker, the pirate-brig was in sight, though beyond the reach of shot from the privateer.

Although the captain of the Raker had sufficient confidence in the superior speed of his own vessel, yet to avoid the possibility of being deceived, he decided to pretend flight, well assured that the pirate would give chase. He accordingly bore off, as if anxious to avoid speaking him, and displaying every sign of fear, had the satisfaction of perceiving the pirate change his course, and set all sail in pursuit.

In order to test the relative speed of the two vessels he did not at first slacken his own sail, but put his brig to its swiftest pace. He had reason to congratulate himself upon the wisdom of his manœuvre when he perceived that in spite of every exertion the chase gained upon him, and it was evident that unless he was crippled by a shot, he might yet escape.

As the pirate bore down upon his brig, Captain Greene perceived, by aid of his glass, that the number of the crew on board was considerably superior to his own, even with the addition of the crew of the Betsy Allen. In consideration of this fact, he determined to fight her at a distance with his long gun. This he still kept concealed amidships, under the canvas, desiring to impress fully upon his opponent the idea of his inferiority.

Leaving the vessels thus situated, let us visit the pirate again.

Julia, and John in his disguise, were conveyed to his deck, where they were speedily separated. Julia was conducted below, where, to her surprise and joy, she found a companion of her own sex, in the person of Florette.

The wounded commander of the pirate was also conveyed to his berth, where Florette, with much grief, attended to nurse him. It was in her first passionate burst of sorrow that Julia discovered her love for the pirate, from which circumstance she also derived consolation and relief; and having already, with the natural firmness of her mind, shaken off the deep despondency which had settled upon it when

first torn from her father, she began to resolve upon the course of action she would pursue, in every probable event which might befall her.

During the long night the pirate lay groaning and helpless; but such was the strength of his will, and the all absorbing nature of his hatred, that when informed on the succeeding morning that a vessel was in sight, he aroused his physical powers sufficiently to reach the deck, where, seating himself on the companion-way, he watched the strange sail with an interest so intense, that he almost forgot his painful wounds.

He had hardly taken his position before the captain of the Raker uncovered and ran out his long gun, and to the surprise of all on board the pirate, a huge shot, evidently sent from a gun much larger than they had supposed their antagonist to possess, came crashing through their main-sail.

Too late the pirates perceived the error into which they had fallen; and were aware of the immense advantage which the long gun gave their opponent, enabling him, in fact, to maintain his own position beyond the reach of their fire, and at the same time cut every mast

and spar on board the pirate-brig to[134] pieces, unless, indeed, the latter might be fortunate enough, by superior sailing, to get beyond the reach of shot without suffering material injury.

Perceiving this to be his only resource, orders were given on board the pirate again to 'bout ship, and instead of pursuing to be themselves in turn fugitives. But they were not destined to escape without injury. Another shot from the Raker bore away their foretop-sail, and sensibly checked their speed. To remedy this misfortune, studding-sails were set below and aloft, and for a long time the chase was continued without the shot from the Raker taking serious effect on the pirate; and, indeed, the latter in a considerable degree increased the distance between the two vessels. But while the captain and crew of the Raker were confident of eventually overtaking their antagonist, the men in the pirate-brig had already become convinced that in such a harassing and one-sided mode of warfare, they stood no chance whatever, and demanded of their captain that he should make the attempt to close with the Raker and board. This he sternly refused, and pointed out to his men the

folly of such a course, as upon a nearer approach to the privateer, his rigging and masts must necessarily suffer in such a manner as to place his brig entirely at the command of the Raker. His men admitted the truth of his reasoning, but at the same time evinced so much dissatisfaction at their present vexatious situation, that their captain plainly perceived it was necessary to pursue some course of action to appease their turbulent spirits.

With a clouded brow he returned to his cabin with the assistance of Florette, who had watched with a woman's love to take advantage of every opportunity to aid him.

Reaching the cabin, his eyes fell upon the form of Julia, eagerly bending from the little window as she watched the pursuing brig, fervently praying that its chase might be successful.

As she turned her eyes in-doors at the noise made by the entrance of the pirate, his keen glance noticed the light of hope which shone in her beautiful eyes, which she strove not and cared not to conceal.

"My fair captive," said he, with a sneering smile, "do you see hope of escape in yonder approaching vessel?"

"My hope is in God," was the calm reply of the lovely girl.

"That trust will fail you now, sweet lady."

"I believe it not; when has He deserted those whose trust was in him?"

"So have you been taught, doubtless, so you may yet believe; but you have still to learn that if there is such a being, he meddles not with the common purposes of man. It is his government to punish, not prevent; and man here on earth pursues his own course, be it dark or bright—and God's hand is not interposed to stay the natural and inevitable workings of cause and effect. No, no! here, on this, my own good ship, *I* rule; and there is no hand, human or divine, that will interpose between my determination and the execution of my purpose."

"Impious man! you may yet learn to fear the power you now despise."

"Ha! ha! ha!—do I look like a man to be frightened by the words of a weak girl, or by

the name of a mysterious being, whose agency I have never seen in the workings of earthly affairs."

"I have no mercy to expect from one who has consigned a whole ship's crew, without remorse, to a cruel death."

"Well, were they not Englishmen? I have not for years, lady, spared an Englishman in my deep hatred, or an Englishwoman in my lust!"

"Yet are they not your own countrymen?"

"Yes."

"Unnatural monster!"

The pirate smiled. "I could relate a history of wrong that would justify me even in your eyes. If I have proved a viper to my native land, it is because her heel has crushed me—but the tale cannot be told now. If yonder vessel overtake us, and escape become impossible, my own hand will apply the match that shall blow up my brig, and all it contains. Before that time you will be a dishonored woman, to whom death were a relief. Nothing but this wound has preserved you thus long. With this assurance I leave you."

The pirate returned to the deck, where, notwithstanding the pain of his injuries, he continued to take command of the brig.

He had hardly vanished from the cabin before Florette stood by the side of Julia.

"Lady," said she, "I overheard your conversation with the captain of this brig, and I pity you most truly."

"Pity will little avail," replied Julia.

"That is true, yet I would aid you if possible."

"And you—do not you, too, desire to escape from this savage?"

"Alas! lady, I have learned to love him."

"*Love* him!"

"I have now been on this brig more than three years. I was taken from a French merchant vessel in which I was proceeding to French Guinea, to live with a relative there, having lost all my immediate kindred in France. While crossing the Bay of Biscay, a heavy storm drove us out to sea, and while endeavoring to return in shore, we fell in with this vessel—all on board were murdered but myself, so I have been told. I was borne to this

cabin, which has since been my home. I was treated with much respect by the captain, and being all alone, I don't know why it was, I forgot all his crimes, and at length became his willing mistress. You turn from me in disgust, and in pity—yet so it is. And now, lady, if you are bold enough to risk your life, you may escape."

"I would gladly give my life to save my honor."

Florette gazed with a melancholy smile upon her companion; perhaps thoughts of her own former purity came over her mind.

"It is a bold plan," said she, "but it is on that account that I am more confident of success, as all chance of escape will be deemed hopeless."[135]

"What is your plan?"

"Night is now approaching, and it is probable the pursuing brig will not gain on us before dark. I have noticed that the ship's boat hangs at the stern, only fastened by the painter. If you have courage enough to descend to the boat by the painter, I will cut it, and you will

then be directly in the course of the pursuing brig, and will be easily picked up."

"But how can I get to the vessel's deck without being seen?"

"I have thought of that; we will wait till dark, when you shall put on a similar dress with mine, and then you can go to any part of the vessel you choose without being suspected. You must watch your time to steal unobserved behind the man at the helm, and drop yourself into the boat; I will soon after appear on deck, and if you are successful in escaping observation, I shall be able then to cut the painter without difficulty, as the darkness will conceal my movements. Do you understand the plan?"

"I do."

"And you are not afraid to put it into execution?"

"Oh, no, no! and I thank you for your kind aid."

"I am not wholly disinterested, lady; you are beautiful, and may steal away the captain's heart from me."

Julia shuddered.

"Be ready," continued Florette, "and as soon as possible after it becomes dark we will make the attempt."

It was as Florette had called it, a bold plan, but not impracticable, as any one acquainted with the position of things will at once acknowledge. Only one man would be at the tiller, and he might or might not notice the passing of any other person behind him. This passage once accomplished, it would be an easy undertaking to slide down the strong painter, or rope which made fast the boat to the stern of the brig. It was a plan in which the chances were decidedly in favor of the success of the attempt.

The Raker had for some time ceased firing, and set studding-sails in hopes of gaining on the pirate; but the most the privateer was able to do, was to still preserve the relative positions of the two vessels.

The sun sunk beneath the waters, leaving a cloudless sky shedding such a light from its starry orbs, that if the pirate had hoped to escape under cover of the night, he speedily saw the impossibility of such an attempt eluding the watch from the privateer.

The captain of the pirate still kept his position upon the companion-way, with his head bent upon his breast, either buried in thought, or yielding to the weakness of his physical powers, occasioned by the loss of blood from his wound.

Florette, who was continually passing up and down through the cabin-door, carefully noted the state of things upon the quarter-deck, and perceiving every thing to be as favorable as could be expected, soon had Julia in readiness for her share in the undertaking.

"But first," said she, "let me put out the light in the binnacle."

The girl stood for a moment in deep thought, when her ready wit suggested a way to accomplish this feat, sufficiently simple to avoid suspicion. Seizing the broad palmetto hat of the pirate, and bidding Julia to be in readiness to profit by the moment of darkness which would ensue, she returned to the deck, and approaching the pirate, exclaimed,

"William, I have brought you your hat."

At the moment of presenting it to him, as it passed the binnacle-light, she gave it a swift motion, which at once extinguished the flame.

"Curses on the girl!" muttered the man at the helm.

"O, I was careless, Diego; I will bring the lantern in a moment;" and laying down the hat on the companion-way beside the pirate, who paid no attention to the movements around him, she glided back to the cabin.

"Here, lady," said she, "be quick—hand this lantern to the man at the helm, and then drop silently behind him while he is lighting it. I will immediately follow and take your place beside him. You understand me?"

"Yes, clearly."

"Well, as soon as I begin to speak with him, let yourself down into the boat by the painter, which I will soon cut apart, and then you will at least be out of the hands of your enemies."

Julia took the hand of Florette in her own, and warmly thanked her, but the girl impatiently checked her.

"Take this pistol with you also."

"But why?" inquired Julia, with a woman's instinctive dread of such weapons.

"O, I don't mean you should shoot any body, but if the boat drifts a little out of the brig's course, you might not be able to make yourself heard on her deck."

"True, true."

"The night is so still that a pistol-shot would be heard at a good distance."

"O, yes, I see it all now; I was so anxious to escape from this terrible ship that I thought of nothing else; and there is poor John."

"You must not think of him—it will be no worse for him if you go, no better if you remain. Here, take the lantern—say nothing as you hand it to the man at the tiller, but do as I told you."

Pressing the hand of Florette, Julia mounted to the deck with a painfully beating heart, but with a firm step. She handed the lantern to the steersman, who received it surlily, growling some rough oath, half to himself, at her delay, and leaning upon the tiller, proceeded to relight the binnacle-lamp. Julia fell back

cautiously, and in another moment the light form of Florette filled her place.

"I was very careless, Diego," said she.

"Yes," replied he, gruffly.

"Well, I will be more careful next time."

"You'd better."

Julia, during the short time of this conversation, had disappeared over the stern, and as the vessel was sailing before a steady wind, found little difficulty in sliding down the painter into the yawl.[136] She could hardly suppress an exclamation when a moment afterward she found the ship rapidly gliding away from her, and leaving her alone upon the waters in so frail a support. Her situation was, indeed, one that might well appall any of her sex. To a sailor it would already have been one of entire safety, but to her it seemed as if every succeding wave would sink the little boat as it gracefully rose and fell upon their swell; but seating herself by the tiller, she managed to guide its motions, and with a calm reliance upon that God whose supporting arm she knew to be as much around her, when alone in the wide waste of waters, as when beside her own

hearth-stone, in quiet and happy England, she patiently awaited the issue of her bold adventure.

She had but a short time to wait when she perceived the dark outlines of the Raker bearing directly down upon her. As it approached it seemed as if it would run directly over her boat, and excited by the fear of the moment, and the anxiety to be heard, she gave a louder shriek than she supposed herself capable of uttering, and at the same time fired off her pistol.

Both were heard on board the Raker.

"Man overboard!" shouted the look-out.

"Woman overboard, you lubber," said a brother tar; "didn't you hear that screech?"

"Hard a port!"

"Hard a port 'tis."

"Right under the lee bow."

"Well, pitch over a rope whoever it is. What does this mean?" said Lieutenant Morris, as he approached the bows.

"Can't say, sir—some deviltry of the pirates, I reckon, to make us lose way."

"By heavens! it is a woman," cried the lieutenant, "let me throw that rope, we shall be on the boat in a minute. Hard a port!"

The rope, skillfully thrown by the young lieutenant, struck directly at the feet of Julia. With much presence of mind she gave it several turns around one of the oar-locks, and her boat was immediately hauled up to the side of the brig, without compelling the latter to slacken sail.

In another moment she was lifted to the deck of the Raker.

"Julia! thank Heaven!" exclaimed her father.

With a cry of joy she fainted in his arms, and was borne below, where she speedily recovered, and related the manner of her escape from the pirate.

All admired the courage of the attempt, and Lieutenant Morris, as he gazed upon the lovely countenance, which returning sensation was restoring to all its wonted bloom and beauty, one day of intense sorrow having left but slight traces upon it, he felt emotions to which he had hitherto been an entire stranger, and sought the deck with a flushed brow and

animated eye, wondering at the vision of beauty which had risen, like Cytherea, from the sea.

[*To be continued.*

THE PRAYER OF THE DYING GIRL.

BY SAMUEL D. PATTERSON.

Oh! take me back again, mother, to that home
I love so well,Whose memory rules my
fluttering heart with a mysterious spell:I think
of it when lying on my weary couch of
pain,And I feel that I am dying, mother—Oh!
take me home again!

They tell me that this sunny clime strength to
the wasted brings,And the zephyr's balmy
breezes come with healing on their wings;But

to me the sun's rich glow is naught—the perfumed air is vain—For I know that I am dying—Oh! then, take me home again!

I long to find myself once more beside the little streamThat courses through our valley green, of which I often dream:I fancy that a cooling draught from that sweet fount I drain—It stills the fever of my blood—Oh! take me home again!

And then I lie and ponder, as I feel my life decline,On the happy days that there I spent when health and strength were mine;When I climbed the mountain-side, and roved the valley and the plain,And my bosom never knew a pang of sorrow or of pain.

And when the sun was sinking in the far and glowing west,I came and sat me by thy side, or nestled in thy breast,And heard thy gentle words of love, and listened to the strainOf thy sweet favorite evening hymn—Oh! take me home again!

How bright and joyous was my life! Night brought refreshing rest,And morning's dawn

awakened naught but rapture in my breast:Now, sad and languid, weak and faint, I seek, but seek in vain,To lay me down in soft repose—Oh! take me home again!

The hand of death is laid upon thy child's devoted head—I feel its damp and chilling touch, so cold, so full of dread—It palsies every nerve of mine—it freezes every vein—Oh! take me then, dear mother—Oh! take me home again!

There, with my wan brow lying on thy fond and faithful breast,Let me calmly wait the summons that calls me to my rest:And when the struggle's o'er, mother—the parting throe of pain—Thou'lt joy to know thy daughter saw her own loved home again!

A WRITTEN LEAF OF MEMORY.

BY FANNY LEE.

Poor Fanny Layton! Oh! how well I remember the last time I ever saw her! 'Twas in the dear old church whither from early childhood my footsteps were bent. What feelings of holy awe and reverence crept into my heart as I gazed, with eyes in which saddened tears were welling, upon the sacred spot! How my thoughts reverted to other days—the days of my early youth—that sweet "spring-time" of life, when I trod the blooming pathway before me so fetterless and free, with no overshadowing of coming ill—no anxious, fearful gazing into the dim future, as in after years, but with the bounding step that bespeaks the careless joyousness which Time, oh all too soon! brushes from the heart with "rude, relentless wing." How eagerly I would strive to subdue my impatient footsteps then to the calmer pace of more thoughtful years, as I gradually drew nearer to the holy sanctuary, although mine eyes would oft, despite my

utmost endeavors, wander to the eaves of that time-worn, low-browed church, to watch the flight of the twittering host who came forth, I fancied, at my approach to bid me welcome! How I would cast one "longing, lingering look" at the warm, bright sunshine that irradiated even those gray walls, ere I entered the low porch whence it was all excluded by the ivy which seemed to delight in entwining its slender leaves around the crumbling pillars, as if it would fain impart strength and beauty to the consecrated building in its declining years.

But a long—long time had passed since then, and I had come to revisit my village-home, and the memory-endeared haunts of my girlhood, for the last time, ere journeying to a distant land. The place was little changed, and every thing around that well-remembered spot came laden with so many sweet and early associations, that the memory of by-gone hours swept thrillingly across my heart-strings, and it was not until after I had taken my accustomed seat in the old-fashioned high-backed pew, that I was roused from my busy wanderings in the "shadowy past," by the voice of our pastor—

"Years had gone by, and given his honored headA *diadem of snow*—his eye was dim"—

his voice grown weak and tremulous with increasing years, although there was a something in its tone so full of simple-hearted earnestness, that had never failed to find its way to the most gay and thoughtless spirits of his little flock. And now how reverently I gazed upon the silvered locks of him who had been mine own faithful guide and counselor along the devious pathway of youth—feeling that his pilgrimage was almost ended—his loving labors well nigh over—and soon he would go down to the grave

"Like one who wraps the drapery of his couchAround him and lies down to peaceful dreams."

I looked around—and it was sad to see how few there were of all the familiar faces I had left—and those few—oh, how changed! But there was one to whom my glance reverted constantly, nor could I account for the strange fascination which seemed to fix mine eyes upon her. And yet, as I looked, the spring of memory seemed touched, and suddenly there appeared before me *two* faces, which I found it

impossible to separate in my bewildered rememberings—although so very unlike as they were! The one so bright and joyous, with blue laughter-loving eyes, in which an unshadowed heart was mirrored—and the other—the one on which my gaze was now fixed so dreamily—wan and faded, although it must once have been singularly beautiful, so delicate and fair were the features, and so pure and spiritual was the white brow resting beneath those waving masses of golden hair—a temple meet, methought, for all high and earnest feeling—then, too, there was a sweet—yet oh! how sorrow-shaded and subdued—expression flitting around the small mouth, as though a world-torn and troubled spirit, yet meek and long-suffering, had left its impress there! Her eyes—those large, deep, earnest eyes—how they haunted me with their eager restlessness, wandering to and fro with a perturbed, anxious, asking look, and then upturned with a fixed and pleading gaze, which moved one's very heart to see. Her dress was very simple, and yet I could not help thinking it strangely contrasted with the sorrow-stricken expression of that fair though faded face.

A wreath of orange-blossoms encircled the small cottage-bonnet, and a long white veil half concealed in its ample folds the fragile form, which, if it had lost the roundness of early youth, still retained the most delicate symmetry of outline; upon her breast lay, half hidden, a withered rose, fit emblem, methought, for her who wore it. Oft-times her pale thin hands were clasped, and once, when our pastor repeated in his own low, fervent tone—"Come unto me, all ye heavy-laden, and I will give you rest"—her lip quivered, and she looked quickly up, with

"A glance of hurried wildness, fraught
With some unfathomable thought."

My sympathies were all out-gushing for her, and when the full tones of the organ peeled forth their parting strain and we went forth from the sanctuary, my busy dreamings of the present and the past all were merged in one honest desire to know the poor girl's history. I learned it afterward from the lips of Aunt Nora Meriwether.

Dear Aunt Nora! If thou *wert* yclept "spinster," never did a heart more filled with good and pure and kindly impulses beat than thine!

Indeed, I have ever ascribed my deep reverence for the sisterhood in[138] general to my affectionate remembrances of this childhood's friend. The oracle of our village was Aunt Nora Meriwether—and how could "old maid" be a stigma upon her name, when it was by virtue of this very title that she was enabled to perform all those little kindly offices which her heart was ever prompting, and which made up the sum of her simple daily existence! It was said that Aunt Nora was "disappointed" in early life—but however this may have been, certain it was that the tales (and they *did* intimate—did the good people of our village—that if Aunt Nora had a weakness, it consisted in over-fondness for story-telling) she treasured longest, and oftenest repeated, were those in which the fair heroine was crossed in love.

Many a time have we, a group of gay and happy-hearted children, gathered round her feet, as she sat in the low doorway of her cottage-home, and listened with intense interest to a tale of her youthful days, gazing the while with eyes in which the bright drops of sympathy oft would glisten, upon the kind face bent upon our own in such loveful

earnestness. And we would hope, in child-like innocence of heart, that *we* might never "fall in love," but grow up and be "old maids," just like our own dear Aunt Nora! Whether we still continued to hope so, after we had grown in years and wisdom, it behoveth me not to say! I am quite sure you would rather listen to the tale now before thee, dear reader, from the good old lady's own lips—for it is but a simple sketch at best, and needeth the charm thrown around it by a heart which the frost of many winters had not sealed to the tenderest sympathies of our nature—and the low-toned voice, too, that often during her narrative would grow tremulous with the emotion it excited. But, alas! this may not be! that low voice is hushed—the little wicket-gate now closed—the path which led to her cottage-door untrodden now for many a day—and that kind and gentle heart is laid at rest beneath bright flowers, planted there by loving hands, in the humble church-yard. But this day is so lovely—is it not? With that soft and shadowy mist hanging like a gossamer veil over Nature's face, through which the glorious god of day looks with a quiet smile, as though he loved to dwell upon a scene so replete with

home-breathing beauty! And that smile! how lovingly it rests upon the lawn and the meadow and the brook! How it lingers upon the sweet flowerets which have not yet brushed the tears from their eyes, until those dewy tear-drops seem—as if touched by a fairy wand—to change to radiant gems! How it peeps into every nook and dell, until the silent places of the earth rejoice in the light of that glory-beaming smile! The busy hum of countless insects—the soft chime of the distant water-fall—the thrilling notes of the woodland choristers—the happy voice of the streamlet, which hurries on ever murmuring the same glad strain—the gentle zephyr, now whispering through the leafy trees with low, mysterious tone, and then stealing so gently, noiselessly through the shadowy grass, till each tiny blade quivers as if trembling to the touch of fairy feet. These are Nature's voices, and do they not seem on a day like this in the sweet summer-time to unite and swell forth in one full anthem of harmony and praise to the great Creator of all? And does it not seem, too, as we gaze (for thou art sitting now with me, art thou not, gentle reader? on the mossy bank beneath the noble elm which has for many

years stretched out its arms protectingly over mine own old homestead, while I recount to thee this simple tale of "long ago") upon the scene before us, so replete with quiet loveliness it is—that in every heart within the precincts of our smiling village there must be a chord attuned to echo back in voiceless melody the brightness and the beauty around? Yet oh! how many there may be, even here, whose sun of happiness hath set on earth forever! How many whose tear-dimmed glance can descry naught in the far future but a weary waste—whose life-springs all are dried—whose up-springing hopes all withered by the blighting touch of Sorrow!

Dost thou see that little cot nestled so closely beneath the hill-side? and covered with the woodland vine which hath enfolded its tendrils clingingly around it—peeping in and out at the deserted windows, or climbing at will over the latticed porch, or trailing on the ground and looking up forlornly, as though it wondered where were the careful hands which erst nourished it so tenderly. The place seems very

mournful—with the long grass growing rankly over the once carefully-kept pathway, and a few bright flowers, on either side, striving to uprear their beauteous heads above the tangled weeds which have well nigh supplanted them. Neglect—desolation is engraven on all around, and even the little wicket, as it swings slowly to and fro, seems to say, "All gone! go-ne!" The wind, how meaningly it steals through the deserted rooms, as though breathing a funereal dirge over the departed! How "eloquent of wo" is that sound! Now swelling forth, as it were, in wild and uncontrollable grief, and now sinking exhaustedly into a low and touching mournfulness which seems almost human! But to our tale.

One bright morning, now many years ago, a lady clothed in garb of mourning, accompanied by a little bright-eyed girl of perhaps some nine summers, and her old nurse, alighted at the village inn. Now this seemingly trivial circumstance was in reality quite an event in our quiet community, and considerably disturbed the good people thereof from the "even tenor of their way." Indeed, there were many more curious eyes bent upon the new-comers than they seemed to be at all

aware of, if one might judge from the cold and calm features of the lady, or the assiduous care which her companion was bestowing upon one particular bandbox, which the gruff driver of the stage-coach was, to be sure, handling rather irreverently, actually seeming to enjoy the ill-concealed anxiety of the poor old woman for the safety of her goods and chattels, while the child followed close beside her mamma, her sparkling eyes glancing hither and thither with that eager love of novelty so natural to the young. At length, however, the trunks, boxes, packages, &c., &c., all were duly deposited,[139] and duly inspected also, by the several pairs of eyes which were peering through the narrowest imaginable strips of glass at neighboring window-curtains or half-closed shutters. The driver once more mounted his box, cracked his whip, and the lumbering coach rattled rapidly away, while the travelers, obeyed the call of the smiling and curtseying landlady, and disappeared within the open door of the inn.

Oh, what whisperings and surmisings were afloat throughout our village during the succeeding week! "Who *can* this stranger-lady be? From whence has she come, and how long

intend remaining here?" seemed to be the all-important queries of the day; and so gravely were they discussed, each varying supposition advanced or withdrawn as best suited the charity or credulity of the respective interrogators, that one would certainly have thought them questions of vital importance to their own immediate interests. Strange to say, however, with all this unwonted zeal and perseverance, at the end of the nine days, (the legitimate time for wonderment,) all that the very wisest of the group of gossips could bring forward as the fruits of her patient and untiring investigation, was the simple fact that the lady's name was Layton—the nurse's Jeffries—and that the child, who soon became the pet of the whole household, was always addressed by the servants at the inn as "Miss Fanny," and, moreover, that Mrs. L. was certainly in mourning for her husband, as she had been seen one morning by the chambermaid weeping over the miniature of a "very fine-looking man, dressed in uniform," and had, in all probability, come to take up her residence in our quiet Aberdeen, as she had been heard inquiring about the small cottage beneath the hill, (the self-same, dear reader,

the neglect and desertion of which were but now lamented.)

Truth to tell, it *was* shrewdly surmised that the landlady at the "Golden Eagle" had gleaned more particular information than this, although whenever she was questioned concerning the matter, she did only reply by a very grave shake of the head, each vibration of which (particularly when accompanied by a pursing of the mouth, and a mysterious looking round) more and more convinced her simple-minded auditors (i.e. some of them, for it is not to be denied that there were a few incredulous ones who, either from former experiences, or natural sagacity, or some cause unknown, hesitated not to declare it to be their fixed and unalterable opinion that these seeming indications of superior knowledge on the part of good Mrs. Gordon, were but "a deceitful show," "for their '*delusion*' given,") that she, Mrs. G., had been entrusted either by Mistress Jeffries, the nurse, or perhaps by the lady herself, with a weighty and important secret, which it would be very dreadful, indeed, to disclose. And yet, when such a possibility was vaguely hinted to her, she did not, (as one would be disposed to do who was really

striving to deceive the eager questioners around her, by giving them an erroneous impression as to the amount of her knowledge on the subject,) seize the idea with avidity, and seem manifestly anxious to encourage such a supposition. On the contrary, it was evidently deeply distressing to her that any one should cherish such a thought for a moment; and she begged them so earnestly, almost with tears in her eyes, not to mention it again, and said so much about it, reverting to the theme invariably when the conversation chanced to turn upon some other topic, as though it quite weighed upon her mind, that at length her companions inwardly wondered what had given rise to the belief in their minds, and yet, as one old lady said, looking sagaciously over her spectacles, "that belief waxed stronger and stronger."

Time passed on—days merged themselves into weeks, and weeks to months, and the harmony and quietude of Aberdeen was fully restored. The "Widow Layton," (for thus, from that time, was she invariably styled,) after all due preliminaries, had taken quiet possession of the little vine-clad cot; and although she was not as "neighborly" as she might have been,

and never communicative as to her previous history, still might the feeling of pique with which they at first received such a rebuff to their curiosity, have been a very evanescent one in the minds of the villagers, had it not chanced that Aberdeen was blessed (?) with two prim sister-spinsters, (was it they or Aunt Nora, who formed the exception to the general rule? I leave it for thee, dear reader, to decide, since with that early-instilled reverence before mentioned, I cannot consider my humble opinion infallible,) whose hearts, according to their *own* impression on the subject, quite overflowed with charity and benevolence, which manifested itself in the somewhat singular method of making every one around them uncomfortable, and in the happy faculty which they possessed in an eminent degree, of imparting injurious doubts and covert insinuations as to the manners and habits of their neighbors, who else might have journeyed peacefully adown the vale of life in perfect good faith with all the world; moreover, they hated a mystery, did these two sister-spinsters, from their own innate frankness and openness of disposition, they said, and considered themselves so much in

duty bound to ferret out the solution of any thing which bore the semblance to an enigma, that they gave themselves no rest, poor, self-sacrificing creatures, until they had obtained their object. And well were they rewarded for this indefatigable zeal, for they had the satisfaction of knowing that they had found out more family secrets, destroyed more once-thought happy marriages, and embittered more hearts than any two persons in all the country round.

They lived in the heart of our village, (and never did that heart quicken with one pulsation of excitement or surprise, or joy or sorrow, but they were the first to search into the why and wherefore,) in a large two story house, isolated from the rest, which seemed to emulate its occupants in stiffness and rigidity, and whose glassy eyes looked out as coldly upon the beauteous face of nature, as they from their own stern "windows of the soul," upon the human face divine. There was no comfort, no[140] home-look about the place; even the flowers seemed not to grow by their own sweet will, but came up as they were bidden, tall and straight, and stiff. And the glorious rays of the sun glanced off from the dazzling

whiteness of the forbidding mansion, as though they had met with a sudden rebuff, and had failed to penetrate an atmosphere where every thing seemed to possess an antipathy to the bright and the joyous. It was strange to see what a chilliness pervaded the spot. The interior of the house (which I once saw when a child; and, oh! I never *can* forget the long, long-drawn sigh that escaped my lips as I once more found myself without the precincts of a place where my buoyant spirits seemed suddenly frozen beneath the glance of those two spinsters, where even the large, lean cat paced the floor with such a prim, stately step, now and then pausing to fix her cold, gray eyes upon my face, as though to question the cause of my intrusion, and also to intimate that she had no sort of sympathy with either my feelings, or those of children in general.) Every thing bore the same immovable look—the narrow, high-backed chairs seemed as if they had grown out of the floor, and were destined to remain as stationary as the oaks of the forest; the "primeval carpet," over which the Misses Nancy and Jerusha Simpkins walked as though mentally enumerating the lines that crossed each other in such exact

squares, never was littered by a single shred; and the high, old-fashioned clock still maintained its position in the corner from year to year, seeming to take a sort of malicious satisfaction in calmly ticking the hours away which bore the Misses Simpkins nearer and nearer to that *certain* age (which they, if truth must be told, were in nowise desirous to reach) when all further endeavors to conceal the foot-marks of stern old Father Time would be of no avail.

It was at the close of a chilly evening late in autumn—old Boreas was abroad, and had succeeded, it would seem, in working himself into an ungovernable fit of rage, for he went about screaming most boisterously, now hurrying the poor bewildered leaves along, maliciously causing them to perform very undignified antics for their *time of life*, while they, poor old withered things, thus suddenly torn from the protecting arms of their parental tree, flew by, like frightened children, vainly striving to gain some place of shelter. Alas! alas! no rest was there for them. What infinite delight their inveterate persecutor seemed to take in whirling them round and round, dodging about, and seeking them in the most

unheard-of places, where they lay panting from very fright and fatigue. And then off he would start again, shaking the window-sashes as he passed, with wild, though impatient fury, remorselessly tearing down the large gilt signs which had from time immemorial rejoiced in the respective and respectable names of several worthies of our village, and then speeding away to the homes of said worthies, to proclaim the audacious deed through the key-hole, in the most impudent and incomprehensible manner possible. It was on such an evening as this, a few months after the arrival of the Laytons at Aberdeen, that the Misses Simpkins sat in their cheerless back-room, hovering over a small fire, busily plying their noisy knitting-needles, and meantime indulging in their usual dish of scandal, which, however, it is but justice to say, was not quite so highly seasoned with the spice of envy and malice as was its wont. Whether it was that the memory of a bright and beaming little face that had intruded upon their solitude during the afternoon, had half succeeded in awakening the slumbering better nature which had slept so long, it was somewhat doubted if any effort could resuscitate it again; whether it was that

the lingering echo of a certain sweet, childish voice that had beguiled the weary hours of their dullness and monotony, and with its innocent prattle, had, in some degree, forced an opening through the firm frost-work which had been gradually gathering for years round their hearts, I cannot tell; but true it is that as the sister spinsters sat there, with the faint and feeble flame struggling up from the small fire, and the light from the one tall candle flickering and growing unsteady as it flashed upon the two thin, sharp faces close beside it, while the antique furniture looked more grotesque and grim than ever in the deep shadow, and the never-wearying clock still ticked calmly on, regardless alike of the contending elements without and the wordy warfare within; true it is that the conversation between the sisters was divested of one half its wonted acrimony.

"To be sure," said Miss Simpkins the younger, at length, after a pause, in which the half-awakened better nature seemed strongly disposed to resume its slumbers again, "little civility has the Widow Layton to expect from any body with her distant bows and uppish airs, when one ventures to express an interest

in her; and if I hadn't a very forgiving disposition, oh! Jerusha! Jerusha! I don't think I'd trouble myself to call upon her again. But I feel it to be my duty to advise her to put little Fanny to school, for she's a good child and winsome-like, and running at large so will just be the spoiling of her."

"Well, Jerusha," responded Miss Nancy, who had, perhaps, a little leaven more than her sister, of tartness in her disposition, and on whose face an habitual expression of acidity was rapidly increasing, "you know very well that the widow considers herself a little above every body else in Aberdeen, and you might as well talk to a stone wall as to her about sending the child to school. Why haven't I done my best at talking to her? Haven't I told her of Miss Birch's school, where the children don't so much as turn round without their teacher's leave, and where you might hear a pin drop at any time. Haven't I told her that she might easily save a good deal in the year, by renting one half of that snug little cottage—and what thanks did I get? A reply as haughty as if she were the greatest lady in the land, instead of being, as she is, a nameless, homeless stranger, who cannot be 'any better

than she should be,' or she would never make such a mighty mystery about her past life, that she 'trusted Miss Simpkins would allow her to be the best judge as to the[141] proper method of educating her child, and also as to the means of retrenching her own expenses if she found it needful.'"

Unkind, unjust, unfeeling Nancy Simpkins! and has not that settled, ever-present sorrow upon those pale features; have not those grief-traced lines around the compressed mouth, and across the once smooth and polished brow; has not the sad garb of the mourner, which speaks of the lone vigil, the weary watching, the hope deferred, or it may be the sudden stroke of the dread tyrant Death, no appeal to thy frozen sympathies? Canst thou suffer thy better nature to resume its deep and trance-like sleep again, and rob that poor widowed mother of her only hope on earth, that bright, glad creature, who carries sunshine to her otherwise desolate home, but to pinion her free and fetterless spirit beneath the iron rule and despotic sway of the village task-mistress?

We will leave the Misses Simpkins, and thou pleasest, reader mine, to the enjoyment of their

envy-tinctured converse, and turn the page of Mrs. Layton's life.

An only child of wealthy parents, petted, caressed and idolized, she had sprung into womanhood, with every wish anticipated, every desire gratified ere half expressed, if within the reach of human possibility, what wonder, then, that she grew wayward and willful, and at length rashly dashed the cup of happiness of which she had drank so freely in her sunny youth from her lip, by disobeying her too fond and doating parents, in committing her life's destiny to the keeping of one who they, with the anxious foresight of love, too well knew would not hold the precious trust as sacred. Brave and handsome and gifted he might be, but the seeds of selfishness had been too surely sown within his heart; and he had won the idol of a worshiping crowd, more, perchance, from a feeling of exultation and pride in being able to bear away the prize from so many eager aspirants, than any deep-rooted affection he felt for the fair object of his solicitude. The novelty and the charm soon wore away, and then his beautiful bride was neglected for his former dissolute associates. He afterward

entered the navy, and somewhat more than ten years after they were wedded, fell in a duel provoked by his own rash, temper. From the moment that Mrs. Layton recovered from the trance-like swoon which followed the first sight of her husband's bleeding corpse, she seemed utterly, entirely changed. She had truly loved him, he who lay before her now, a victim of his own rash and selfish folly, and with all a woman's earnest devotion would have followed him to the remotest extremes of earth; but her feelings had been too long trampled upon, her heart too bruised and crushed ever to be upraised again. She had leaned upon a broken reed, and had awakened to find herself widowed, broken-hearted. And she arose, that desolate and bereaved one, and folding her child closer to her breast, went forth into the cold world friendless—alone! Once would her grief have been loud and passionate and wild, but she had passed through a weary probation, and had learned "to suffer and be still." How, in that dark hour, did her lost mother's prayer-breathed words, her father's earnest entreaties come back to smite heavily upon her sorrow-stricken spirit—but remorse and repentance were now all too late.

And yet not too late, she murmured inly, for had she not a duty to perform toward the little being, her only, and, oh! how heaven-hallowed, tie to earth, consigned to her guardianship and care. Did she not firmly resolve never by ill-judged and injudicious fondness to mark out a pathway filled with thorns for her darling. It may be that that widowed mother erred even in excess of zeal, for she would resist the natural promptings of her heart, and check the gushing affection which welled from the deepest, purest fountain in the human heart, lest its expression might prove injurious to the loved one in after years. And thus there grew a restraint and a seeming coldness on the part of the mother, a constant craving for love, which was never satisfied, and a feeling of fear on the child's, which shut them out from that pure trust and confidence, which are such bright links in the chain that binds a mother to her child.

This, then, was the Widow Layton who with her little one and nurse had sought our village, immediately after the decease of her husband,

as a peaceful asylum from the noise and tumult of a world where, in happier days, she had played so conspicuous a part. It was not so much that she sedulously avoided all mention of her past history to the eager questioners around her, from a disinclination that it should be known, as that she little understood the character of the villagers themselves—ofttimes mistaking a really well-meant interest in her welfare for an idle and impertinent curiosity. Mrs. Layton had been highly born and nurtured, and there seemed to her delicate mind a something rude and unfeeling in the manner with which her too officious friends and neighbors would touch upon the sources of grief which were to her so sacred. And therefore, perhaps unwisely, she held herself aloof from them, replying to their different queries with that calm and easy dignity which effectually precluded all approach to familiarity, and engendered a dislike in the minds of those who were little accustomed to meet one who could not enter into all their feelings, plans and projects—which dislike was constantly kept alive and fostered by the united exertions of the two sister spinsters. Good Mrs. Jeffries, too, the fond old nurse

who had never left her beloved mistress through all her varying fortunes, was all too faithful and true to reveal aught that that kind mistress might wish untold; and thus it was that the curiosity of the good people of Aberdeen was kept continually in check, and about the unsuspecting inmates of Woodbine Cottage was thrown a mystery that was becoming constantly augmented by their incomprehensible silence on the subject.

Weeks—months—years sped swiftly away, and the widow, by her free and unostentatious charities and her angel-ministering to the poor, the afflicted and the bereaved, had almost eradicated the first unpleas[142]ing impression made upon the simple-hearted people of Aberdeen; so that, although the Misses Simpkins still held their nightly confabulations, they did not venture as at first, so openly to propagate their animadversions concerning the "mysterious stranger," but on the contrary, always made it a point to preface any sudden and amiable suggestion that presented itself to their minds with "not that I

would say any thing against her, but it does seem a little singular," &c. But of Miss Fanny—sweet, witching Fanny Layton! who had grown in beauty and grace day by day, not one word did they dare to speak in her dispraise! For was there one in all Aberdeen who would not have resented the slightest intimation of disrespect to our lily of the valley—whose joy-inspiring and sorrow-banishing presence was welcomed delightedly by young and old, both far and near? And oh! was there ever music like her sweet, ringing laugh, or melody like the low-toned voice which was always eloquent of joyousness. Whether she sat in the humble cottage, lending kind and ready assistance to the care-worn matron, by playfully imprisoning the little hands of the children within her own petite palms, while she recounted to them some wonderful tale, her brilliant fancy, meantime, never soaring above their childish comprehension, although she was regarded by her little auditors as nothing less than a bright fairy herself, who was thus familiar with all that witching tribe, and who could with her own magic wand thus open to them stores of such strange and delightful things as was never

before dreamed of in their youthful philosophy—while their patient, painstaking mother would now and then glance up from her never-ending task, with a smile of such beaming pleasure and gratitude as amply repaid the gentle being, who seemed in her loveful employ to be the presiding angel of that humble dwelling-place. Whether she would "happen-in" of a long, warm summer afternoon to take a cup of tea with a neighboring farmer's wife—an honor that never failed to throw that worthy woman into a perfect fever of anxiety and delight—who would proffer a thousand and one apologies for the deficiencies that only existed in her own perverse imagination, if, indeed, they existed even there, for her bright eyes were contradicting a pair of rosy lips all the while, as they glanced with a lurking—yet I am sure laudable—pride, from the "new chany sett" (which was wont on great occasions to be brought forward) to the rich treasures of her well-kept dairy, that her busy feet had been going pat-a-pat from cupboard to cellar, and cellar to cupboard, for a whole hour previous collecting, to place in all their tempting freshness before her beloved guest. Or whether

she came with her simple offering of fresh flowers—her word of sympathy and comfort—or some choice dainty, that seemed "*so* nice" to the sick and suffering, who had turned away with loathing from every thing before, but who could not fail to find *this* delicious, for was it not made and brought by the hands of dear Miss Fanny's self? Still did her presence seem to make sunlight wherever she went!

Fanny was a young lady now—although you would scarce believe it, for she was a very child at heart, with all a child's unworldliness, unsuspecting confidence, and winning innocence. And yet there was deep, deep down in that loveful, earnest heart, that Joy and all Joy's sister spirits seemed to have taken captive, a fount whose seal had never been found.

Oh, Fanny, dear, darling Fanny Layton! wo, wo for thee the day when first that hidden seal was broken! When Hope and Doubt and Fear by turns played sentinel to the hidden treasure, the door to which, when once flung back, never can be reclosed again! When joy and gladness but tarried a little while to dispute

their prior right to revel undisturbed in that buoyant heart of thine, and then went tearfully forth, leaving for aye a dreary void, and a deep, dark shadow, where all had been but brightness and beauty before! Oh, why must the night-time of sorrow come to thee, thou gentle and pure-hearted one? Thou for whom such fervent and fond prayers have ascended, as should, methinks, have warded off from, thee each poisoned shaft, and proved an amulet to guard thee from all life's ills! Thy sixteenth summer, was it not a very, very happy one to thee, sweet Fanny Layton? But happiness, alas! in this cold world of ours, is never an unfading flower; and although so coveted and so sought, still will droop in the eager hands which grasped it, and die while yet the longing eyes are watching its frail brightness with dim and shadowful foreboding!

Just on the outskirts of our village there slept a silent, secluded little nook, which the thickly-growing trees quite enclosed, only permitting the bright sun to glance glimmeringly through their interwoven leaves and look upon the blue-eyed violets that held their mute confabulations—each and all perking up their

pretty heads to receive the diurnal kiss of their god-father Sol—in little lowly knots at their feet. Kind reader, I am sure I cannot make you know how very lovely it was, unless you yourself have peeped into this sheltered spot—seen the cool, dark shadows stretching across the velvet turf, and making the bright patches of sunlight look brighter still—have stood by the murmuring brook on which the sun-bright leaves overhead are mirrored tremulously, and upon whose brink there grows so many a lovely "denizen of the wild"—gazed admiringly upon the beautiful white rose Dame Nature hath set in the heart of this hidden sanctuary, as a seal of purity and innocence—and more than this, have turned from all these to watch the fairy form flitting from flower to flower, with so light a step that one might mistake it for some bright fay sent on a love-mission to this actual world of ours—if one did not know that this was Fanny Layton's dream-dell—that in this lovely spot she would spend hours during the long, warm summer days, poring over the pages of some favorite author, or twining the sweet wild flowers in fragrant wreaths to bedeck her invalid mother's room—or, perchance, staying

for awhile those busy fingers, to indulge in those dreamy, delicious reveries with which the scene and hour so harmonized.

One day—and that day was an era in poor Fanny's[143] life which was never afterward to be forgotten—our lovely heroine might have been seen tripping lightly over the smooth sward, the green trees rustling musically in the summer breeze, and Nature's myriad tones "concerting harmonies" on hill and dale. And one needed but to see the smiling lip, and those clear, laughter-loving eyes peeping from beneath just the richest and brightest golden curls in the world, to know what a joyous heart was beating to that fairy-light and bounding step. Wonder none could be, that many an eye brightened as she passed, and many a kindly wish—that was never the less trustful and sincere for that it was couched in homely phrase—sped her on her way. Dream-dell was reached at length—the flowering shrubs which formed the rural gate-way parted, and Fanny threw herself on the waving grass, with a careless grace which not all the fashionable female attitudinizers in the world could have imitated, so full of unstudied ease and naturalness it was—with her small

cottage bonnet thrown off that wealth of clustering curls which were lifted by the soft summer wind, and fell shadowingly over the brightest and most beaming little face upon which ever fond lover gazed admiringly—with eyes which seemed to have caught their deep and dewy blue from the violets she clasped in one small hand, and on which they were bent with a silent glance of admiration—for Fanny was a dear lover of wild-wood flowers, as who is not who bears a heart untouched by the sullying stains of earth? One tiny foot had escaped from the folds of her simple muslin dress, and lay half-buried in the green turf—a wee, wee foot it was, so small, indeed, that it seemed just the easiest thing possible to encase it within the lost slipper of Cinderella, if said slipper could but have been produced; at least so said a pair of eyes, as plainly as pair of eyes *could* say it, which peering from behind a leafy screen, were now upon it fixed in most eager intensity, and now wandered to the face of the fair owner thereof, who was still bent over the flowers in the small hand, as if seeking some hidden spell in their many-colored leaves.

That pair of eyes were the appurtenances belonging to a face that might have proved no uninteresting study to the physiognomist, albeit it would have puzzled one not a little, methinks, to have formed a satisfactory conclusion therefrom, so full of contradictions did it seem. A mass of waving hair fell around a brow high and well-developed, though somewhat darkly tinged by the warmth, mayhap, of a southern sun, and the eyes were large and lustrous, yet there was a something unfathomable in their depths, which made one doubt if they were truly the index of the soul, and might not be made to assume whatever expression the mind within willed. At present, however, they were filled only with deep admiration mingled with surprise, while around the mouth, which, in repose, wore a slightly scornful curve, there played a frank and winning smile, as, advancing with a quiet courtesy that at once bespoke him a man of the world, despite slouched hat and hunting-frock, the intruder upon our heroine's solitude exclaimed, with half-earnest, half-jesting gallantry, "Prithee, fair woodland nymph, suffer a lone knight, who has wandered to the confines of a Paradise unawares, to bow the

knee in thy service, and as atonement meet for venturing unbidden into thy hidden sanctum, to proffer thee the homage of his loyal heart!"

Fanny was but a simple country maiden, all unskilled in the light and graceful nothings which form the substance of worldly converse, and so the warm, rich crimson crept into her cheek,

"The color which his gaze had thrownUpon a cheek else pale and fair,As lilies in the summer air."

and the wee foot forthwith commenced beating a tatoo upon the heads of the unoffending flowers around, who breathed forth their perfumed sighs in mute reproachfulness; but she was still a woman, and so with all a woman's ready tact she replied, though with the flush deepening on her cheek, and a scarce-perceptible tremor in her voice,

"Indeed, sir stranger, since thou hast given me such unwonted power, I must first use my sceptre of command in banishing all intruders into my august presence, and invaders of this 'hidden sanctum,' which is held sacred to mine own idle feet alone!"

And there was a merry look of mischievous meaning stealing in and out of those bright eyes as they were for a moment uplifted to the face of the stranger, and then again were shadowed by the drooping lid. Whether it was that said "intruder" detected a something in the tone or the demure glance of the fair girl which contradicted the words she spoke, or whether that very glance transfixed him to the spot, history telleth not, but stay he did; and if his tarrying was very *heart*ily objected to by his companion, if the words which fell from his lip in utterance how musical, for the space of two fastly-fleeting hours, were not pleasing to the ear of the maiden, then, indeed, did that soft, bright glow which mantled her fair cheek, and the rosy lip, half-parted and eloquent of interest, sadly belie the beating heart within, as the twain walked lingeringly homeward, the dark shadows lengthening on the green grass, and the setting sun flinging a flood of golden-tinted light upon the myriad leaves which were trembling to the love-voice of the soft summer breeze.

Softly was the latch of the wicket lifted, and light was the maiden's step upon the stair, as she sought her own little chamber. Was she

gazing forth from the open window to admire the brilliancy of that gorgeous sunset? Was it to drink in the beauty and brightness of that sweet summer eve, or to feel the soft breeze freshly fanning her flushed cheek? Nay, none of these. See how earnestly her gaze is bent upon the retreating form of the stranger; and now that he is lost to view, behold her sitting with head resting on one little hand, quite lost in a reverie that is not like those of Dream-dell memory, for now there comes a tangible shape in place of those ideal ones, and the echo of a manly voice, breathing devotion and deference in every tone, still is lingering in her enchained ear. For the first time she forgets to carry her offering of fresh flowers to her mother's room. Ah! her busy fingers have been strewing[144] the bright leaves around unconsciously, and she blushingly gathers the few remaining ones, and, with a pang of self-reproach, hastens to her mother's side.

It is with a sigh of relief that Fanny beholds her invalid parent sleeping sweetly—a relief that was augmented by the question which burst suddenly upon her mind, "Can I tell her that I have had a stranger-companion in my wanderings?" Wonder not at the query, gentle

reader, for remember that the life of our sweet Fanny had not been blessed with that loving confidence which is the tenderest tie in the relation of mother and child. Her love was ever intermingled with too much fear and restraint from earliest youth, for that interchange of counsel and trust which might have been a sure safeguard against many of earth's ills. And it was perhaps that very yearning to fill the only void left in her happy heart which prompted her to give the helm of her barque of life, so soon and so confidingly into the hands of a stranger.

Day succeeded day, and still the lovers, for they were lovers now, were found at their sweet trysting spot, seeking every pretext for frequent meetings, as lovers will, until many were the heads in Aberdeen which were shaken in wise prognostication; and the Misses Simpkins, to their unspeakable relief, had found a new theme whereon to exercise their powers conversational, while the children of the village mourned the absence of their kind "Fairy," and wished with all their little hearts that Miss Fanny would send away that "naughty man" who kept her from their homes.

Poor Fanny! the hidden seal had been touched at length, and on the deep waters beneath was shining Love's own meteor-light—a light that was reflected on every thing around.

"It was as her heart's full happinessPoured
over *all* its own excess."

How swiftly the days flew by, "like winged birds, as lightly and as free." And, oh! how priceless, peerless was the gift she was yielding to the stranger in such child-like confidence and trust. There was so much up-looking in her love for him; it seemed so sweet to recognize the thoughts which had lain dormant in her own soul, for want of fitting expression, flowing from his lip clothed in such a beauty-breathing garmenture. And now Fanny Layton was a child no longer. She had crossed the threshold, and the "spirit of unrest" had descended upon her, albeit as yet she knew it not. Her heart seemed so full of sunshine, that when she ventured to peep into its depths, she was dazzled by that flood of radiance—and how could she descry the still shadow. Alas! that on this earth of ours with the sunlight ever comes the shadows, too, which was sleeping there, but to widen and

grow deeper and darker when love's waters should cease to gush and sparkle as at the first opening of that sweet fount.

But the day of parting came at length—how it had been dwelt upon with intermingling vows, promises, caresses on his part, with trust, and tenderness, and tears on hers! A sad, sad day it was for Fanny Layton, the first she had ever known that was ever heralded by sorrow's messenger. How she strove to dwell upon Edward Morton's words, "It will not be for long;" and banish from her heart those nameless, undefinable fears which *would* not away at her bidding. The sky looked no longer blue—the green earth no longer glad; and traces of tears, the bitterest she had ever shed, were on that poor girl's cheek, as she went forth to meet her beloved, for the last time.

It matters not to say how each familiar haunt was visited that day; how each love-hallowed spot bore witness to those low murmured words which are earth's dearest music; how time wore on, as time will, whether it bears on its resistless tide a freightage of joys or sorrows, pleasures, or pains, until at length the last word had been said, the last silent embrace

taken; and now poor Fanny Layton stood alone, gazing through blinding tears upon the solitary horseman who rode swiftly away, as if another glance at the fair creature who stood with straining gaze and pallid cheek and drooping form, would all unman him. Was it this, or was it that in that hour he felt his own unworthiness of the sacred trust reposed in him?

We will believe, dear reader, that whatever after influences may have exercised dominion over his heart; however he may have been swerved from his plighted faith by dreams of worldly ambition, or wealth, or power; however cold policy may have up-rooted all finer feeling from his soul, we will believe that no thoughts of treachery, no meditated falsehood mingled with that parting embrace and blessing; that although he had bowed at many a shrine before, and therefore could not feel all the depth and purity of the unworldly affection which he had won, still he did not, could not believe it possible that that priceless love would be bartered for pomp and station, he did mean, when he placed the white rose, plucked from the heart of Dream-dell, in the little trembling hand which rested on his

shoulder, and murmured "Fanny, darling, ere this bud hath scarce withered, I shall be with you again," that it should be even as he said. Alas! alas! for the frailty of human nature!

That night poor Fanny pressed the precious rose to her quivering lip, and sobbed herself, like a child, to sleep.

The next day wore away—the next—the next—still no tidings from the absent one; and he had promised to write as soon as he arrived "in town!" What could it mean?

Oh, that weary watching! The hours moved, oh, so leaden-paced and slow! Every day the poor girl waited for the coming of the post-man; and every day, with a pang at her heart, and tear-dimmed eyes, she saw him pass the door. "Edward has been detained; he will come yet, I'm sure," a fond inner voice whispered; "perhaps he has sent no letter, because he'll be here himself so soon!" Poor Fanny! another week, and still no letter, no tidings. "Oh! he must be ill!" she whispered, anxiously, but never thought him false. Oh, no! she was too single-hearted, too relying in her trust fora doubt so dreadful; but her step grew heavier day by day—her cheek

so[145] very, very pale, except at the post-man's hour, when it would burn with a feverish brightness, and then fade to its former pallid hue again; her sweet voice was heard no longer trilling forth those thrilling melodies which had gladdened the heart of young and old to hear. The visits to Dream-dell were less and less frequent, for now how each remembrance so fondly connected with that spot, came fraught with pain; the works of her favorite author's lay opened, but unread, upon her knee; and the fastly-falling tears half-blotted out the impassioned words she had once read with *him* with so happy a heart-thrill.

The widow saw with anxiety and alarm this sudden change; but she was an invalid—and the poor suffering one strove to hide her sickness of the heart, and mother though she was, Mrs. Layton discovered not the canker-worm which was nipping her bud of promise, but would whisper, "You confine yourself too much to my room, my child, and must go out into the bright sunshine, so that the smile may come back to your lip, the roses to your cheek."

One day, now three months after Edward Morton's departure, Miss Jerusha Simpkins was seen threading her way to Woodbine Cottage. She held a newspaper carefully folded in her hand, and on her pinched and withered face a mingled expression of caution and importance was struggling.

Lifting the latch of the embowered door, the spinster walked into the small parlor, where Fanny Layton was engaged in feeding her pet canaries; poor things! they were looking strangely at the wan face beside the cage, as if they wondered if it could be the same which used to come with wild warblings as sweet and untutored as their own. Fanny turned to welcome the intruder, but recognized Miss Simpkins with a half-drawn sigh, and a shrinking of the heart, for she was ever so minute in her inquiries for that "runaway Mr. Morton."

"A beautiful day, Miss Fanny," commenced the spinster, looking sharply around, (she always made a point of doing two things i.e. entering the houses of her neighbors without knocking, and then taking in at a glance not only every thing the room contained, but the

occupation, dress, &c. of the inmates for after comment,) and then throwing back her bonnet, and commencing to fan herself vigorously with the folded paper, "I thought I must run round to-day and see how your mother did, and bring her to-day's paper. I happened to be standing by the window when the penny-post came by, and Nancy says to me, 'Jerusha,' says she, 'do run to the door and get the Times—I haven't seen it for an age,' for we aint no great readers at our house; so I steps to the door and gets one from neighbor Wilkins—he is a very pleasant-spoken man, and often drops in of a morning to have a chat with me and Nancy. Well, what should I see the first thing (for I always turn to the marriages and deaths) but Mr. Edward Morton's marriage to the elegant and rich Miss—Miss—dear me! I've forgot the name now—do you see if you can make it out," handing her the paper; "but, bless me! what is the matter, Miss Fanny? I don't wonder you're surprised; Nancy and me was—for we did think at one time that he had an attachment to Aberdeen; but, la! one can't put any dependence on these wild-flys!"

The last part of the cruel sentence was wholly lost upon poor Fanny, who sat with fixed and

stony gaze upon the dreadful announcement, while it seemed as if her heart-strings were breaking one by one. In vain Miss Simpkins, thoroughly alarmed at length, strove to rouse her from this stupor of grief. In vain did her dear old nurse, who ran in affrighted at the loud ejaculations of the terrified but unfeeling creature who had dealt the blow, use every epithet of endearment, and strive to win one look from the poor sufferer, into whose inmost soul the iron had entered, upon whose heart a weight had fallen, that could never, never be uplifted again on earth. Every effort alike was useless; and for days she sat in one spot low murmuring a plaintive strain, rocking to and fro, with the white rose, *his* parting gift, tightly clasped in her pale fingers, or gazing fixedly and vacantly upon the birds who sang still, unconsciously above her head. After a time she became more docile, and would retire to rest at night, at the earnest entreaties of her poor old nurse—but reason's light, from that fearful moment, was darkened evermore. She would suffer herself to be led out into the open air, and soon grew fond again of being with her old playmates, the children; but her words were unintelligible now to them, and she

would often throw down the wreath she was twining, and starting up, would exclaim, in a tone that thrilled to one's very heart, "Oh, has he come? Are you sure he has not come yet—*my rose* is almost *withered*?"

Poor, poor Fanny Layton! She would go to church regularly—it was there, dear reader, that her faded face had brought to me such bewildered rememberings of the Fanny Layton of other years—and always dressed in the same mock-bridal attire. And there was not an eye in that village-church but glistened as it rested upon the poor, weary, stricken one, in her mournful spirit-darkness, and no lip but murmured brokenly, "Heaven bless her!"

This was the last drop in the cup of the bereaved desolate widow. She soon found that rest and peace "which the world cannot give or take away." She sleeps her last, long, dreamless sleep.

It was not long ere another mound was raised in the humble church-yard, on which was ever blooming the sweetest and freshest flowers of summer, watered by the tears of many who yet weep and lament the early perishing of that fairest flower of all. And a marble slab, on

which is simply graven a dove, with an arrow driven to its very heart, marks the last earthly resting-place of our Lily of the Valley.

THE SPANISH PRINCESS TO THE MOORISH KNIGHT.

[146]

BY GRACE GREENWOOD.

Thou darest not love me!—thou canst only seeThe great gulf set between us—had'st thou *love*'Twould bear thee o'er it on a wing of fire!Wilt put from thy faint lip the mantling cup,The draught thou'st prayed for with divinest thirst,For fear a poison in the chalice lurks?Wilt thou be barred from thy soul's heritage,The power, the rapture, and the crown

of life,By the poor guard of danger set about it?I tell thee that the richest flowers of heavenBloom on the brink of darkness. Thou hast markedHow sweetly o'er the beetling precipiceHangs the young June-rose with its crimson heart—And would'st not sooner peril life to winThat royal flower, that thou might'st proudly wearThe trophy on thy breast, than idly pluckA thousand meek-faced daisies by the way?How dost thou shudder at Love's gentle tones,As though a serpent's hiss were in thine ear.Albeit thy heart throbs echo to each word.Why wilt not rest, oh weary wanderer,Upon the couch of flowers Love spreads for thee,On banks of sunshine?—voices silver-tonedShall lull thy soul with strange, wild harmonies,Rock thee to sleep upon the waves of song.Hope shall watch o'er thee with her breath of dreams.Joy hover near, impatient for thy waking,Her quick wing glancing through the fragrant air.

Why dost thou pause hard by the rose-wreathed gate,Why turn thee from the paradise of youth,Where Love's immortal summer blooms and glows,And wrap thyself in coldness as a shroud?Perchance 'tis well

for *thee*—yet does the flameThat glows with heat intense and mounts toward heaven.As fitly emblem holiest purity,As the still snow-wreath on the mountain's brow.

Thou darest not say I love, and yet thou *lovest*,And think'st to crush the mighty yearning down,That in thy spirit shall upspring forever!Twinned with thy soul, it lived in thy first thoughts—It haunted with strange dreams thy boyish years,And colored with its deep, empurpled hue,The passionate aspirations of thy youth.Go, take from June her roses—from her streamsThe bubbling fountain-springs—from life, take *love*,Thou hast its all of sweetness, bloom and strength.

There is a grandeur in the soul that daresTo live out all the life God lit within;That battles with the passions hand to hand,And wears no mail, and hides behind no shield!That plucks its joy in the shadow of death's wing—That drains with one deep draught the wine of life,And that with fearless foot and heaven-turned eye,May stand upon a dizzy precipice,High o'er the abyss of ruin, and not *fall*!

THE LIGHT OF OUR HOME.

BY THOMAS BUCHANAN READ.

Oh, thou whose beauty on us beamsWith glimpses of celestial light;Thou halo of our waking dreams,And early star that crown'st our night—

Thy light is magic where it falls;To thee the deepest shadow yields;Thou bring'st unto these dreary hallsThe lustre of the summer-fields.

There is a freedom in thy looksTo make the prisoned heart rejoice;—In thy blue eyes I see the brooks,And hear their music in thy voice.

And every sweetest bird that singsHath poured a charm upon thy tongue;And where the bee enamored clings,There surely thou in love hast clung:—

For when I hear thy laughter free,And see thy morning-lighted hair,As in a dream, at once I seeFair upland scopes and valleys fair.

I see thy feet empearled with dews,The violet's and the lily's loss;And where the waving woodland woosThou lead'st me over beds of moss;—

And by the busy runnel's side,Whose waters, like a bird afraid,Dart from their fount, and, flashing, glideAthwart the sunshine and the shade.

Or larger streams our steps beguile;—We see the cascade, broad and fair,Dashed headlong down to foam, the whileIts iris-spirit leaps to air!

Alas! as by a loud alarm,The fancied turmoil of the fallsHath driven me back and broke the charmWhich led me from these alien walls:—

Yes, alien, dearest child, are theseClose city walls to thee and me:My homestead was embowered with trees,And such thy heritage should be:—

And shall be;—I will make for theeA home within my native valeWhere every brook and ancient treeShall whisper some ancestral tale.

Now once again I see thee stand,As down the future years I gaze,The fairest maiden of the land—The spirit of those sylvan ways.

And in thy looks again I traceThe light of her who gave thee birth;She who endowed thy form and faceWith glory which is not of Earth.

And as I gaze upon her now,My heart sends up a prayer for thee,That thou may'st wear upon thy browThe light which now she beams on me.

And thou wilt wear that love and lightFor thou'rt the bud to such a flower:—Oh fair the day, how blest and bright,Which finds thee in thy native bower!

AN INDIAN-SUMMER RAMBLE.

[147]

BY ALFRED B. STREET.

It was now the middle of October. White frosts had for some time been spreading their sheets of pearl over the gardens and fields, but the autumn rainbows in the forests were wanting. At last, however, the stern black frost came and wrought its customary magic. For about a week there was a gorgeous pageantry exhibited, "beautiful, exceedingly." But one morning I awoke, and found that the mist had made a common domain both of earth and sky. Every thing was merged into a gray dimness. I could just discern the tops of trees a few feet

off, and here and there a chimney. There was a small bit of fence visible, bordering "our lane," and I could with difficulty see a glimmering portion of the village street. Some gigantic cloud appeared to have run against something in the heavens and dropped down amongst us. There were various outlines a few rods off, belonging to objects we scarce knew what. Horses pushed out of the fog with the most sudden effect, followed by their wagons, and disappeared again in the opposite fleecy barrier; pedestrians were first seen like spectres, then their whole shapes were exhibited, and finally they melted slowly away again, whilst old Shadbolt's cow, grazing along the grassy margin of the street, loomed up through the vapor almost as large as an elephant.

About noon the scene became clearer, so that the outline of the village houses, and even the checkered splendors of the neighboring woods could be seen; so much of Nate's sign, "Hammond's sto—" became visible, and even Hamble's great red stage-coach was exhibited, thrusting its tongue out as if in scorn of the weather.

In the afternoon, however, the mist thickened again, and the whole village shrunk again within it, like a turtle within its shell. The next morning dawned without its misty mask, but with it rose a gusty wind that commenced howling like a famished wolf. Alas! for the glories of the woods! As the rude gusts rushed from the slaty clouds, the rich leaves came fluttering upon them, blotting the air and falling on the earth thick as snow-flakes. Now a maple-leaf, like a scalloped ruby, would fly whirling over and over; next a birch one would flash across the sight, as if a topaz had acquired wings; and then a shred of the oak's imperial mantle, flushed like a sardonyx, would cut a few convulsive capers in the air, like a clown in a circus, and dash itself headlong upon the earth. Altogether it was an exciting time, this fall of the leaf. Ah! a voice also was constantly whispering in my ear, "we all do fade as the leaf!"

I took a walk in the woods. What a commotion was there! The leaves were absolutely frantic. Now they would sweep up far into the air as if they never intended to descend again, and then taking curvatures, would skim away like birds; others would cluster together, and then roll

along like a great quivering billow; others again would circle around in eddies like whirlpools, soaring up now and then in the likeness of a water-spout, whilst frequently tall columns would march down the broad aisles of the forest in the most majestic manner, and finally fall to pieces in a violent spasm of whirling atoms. Even after the leaves had found their way to the earth they were by no means quiet. Some skipped uneasily over the surface; some stood on one leg, as it were, and pirouetted; some crept further and further under banks; some ran merry races over the mounds, and some danced up and down in the hollows. As for the trees themselves, they were cowering and shivering at a tremendous rate, apparently from want of the cloaks of which every blast was thus stripping them.

A day or two after came the veritable soft-looking, sweet-breathing Indian-Summer—"our thunder." No other clime has it. Autumn expires in a rain-storm of three months in Italy; and it is choked to death with a wet fog in England; but in this new world of ours, "our own green forest land," as Halleck beautifully says, it swoons away often in a delicious trance, during which the sky is filled with

sleep, and the earth hushes itself into the most peaceful and placid repose. There it lies basking away until with one growl old Winter springs upon Nature, locks her in icy fetters, and covers her bosom with a white mantle that generally stays there until Spring comes with her soft eye and blue-bird voice to make us all glad again.

Well, this beautiful season arrived as aforesaid, and a day "turned up" that seemed to be extracted from the very core of the season's sweetness. The landscape was plunged into a thick mist at sunrise, but that gradually dwindled away until naught remained but a delicate dreamy film of tremulous purple, that seemed every instant as if it would melt from the near prospect. Further off, however, the film deepened into rich smoke, and at the base of the horizon it was decided mist, bearing a tinge, however, borrowed from the wood-violet. The mountains could be discerned, and that was all, and they only by reason of a faint jagged line struggling through the veil proclaiming their summits. The dome above was a tender mixture of blue and silver; and as for the sunshine, it was tempered and shaded down

into a tint like the blush in the tinted hollow of the sea-shell.

It was the very day for a ramble in the woods; so Benning, Watson, and I, called at the dwelling of three[148] charming sisters, to ask their mamma's consent (and their own) to accompany us. These three Graces all differed from each other in their styles of beauty. The eyes of one were of sparkling ebony, those of the other looked as if the "summer heaven's delicious blue" had stained them, whilst the third's seemed as though they had caught their hue from the glittering gray that is sometimes seen just above the gold of a cloudless sunset.

We turned down the green lane that led from the village street, and were soon in the forests. The half-muffled sunlight stole down sweetly and tenderly through the chaos of naked branches overhead; and there was a light crisp, crackling sound running through the dry fallen leaves, as though they had become tired of their position, and were striving to turn over. So quiet was the air that even this faint sound was distinctly audible. Hark! whang! whang! there rings the woodman's axe—crack! crash! b-o-o-m!—Hurrah! what thunder that little

keen instrument has waked up there, and what power it has! Say, ye wild, deep forests, that have shrunk into rocky ravines, and retreated to steep mountains, what caused ye to flee away from the valleys and uplands of your dominion? Answer, fierce eagle! what drove thee from thy pine of centuries to the desolate and wind-swept peak, where alone thou couldst rear thy brood in safety? Tell, thou savage panther, what made the daylight flash into thy den so suddenly, that thou didst think thy eye-balls were extinguished?

And thou, too, busy city, that dost point up thy spires where two score years ago the forest stood a frown upon the face of Nature—what mowed the way for thee? And, lastly, thou radiant grain-field, what prepared the room for thy bright and golden presence? Whew! if that isn't a tremendous flight, I don't know what is! But the axe, as Uncle Jack Lummis says of his brown mare, is "a tarnal great critter, any how!"

How Settler Jake's cabin will gleam those approaching winter nights from the "sticks" that axe of his will give him out of the tree he has just prostrated. It is really pleasant to think

of it. There will be the great fire-place, with a huge block for a back-log; then a pile will be built against it large enough for a bonfire—and then such a crackling and streaming! why the dark night just around there will be all in a blush with it. And the little window will glow like a red star to the people of the village; and then within, there will be the immense antlers over the door, belonging to a moose Jake shot the first year he came into the country, all tremulous with the light, and the long rifle thrust through it will glitter quick and keen; and the scraped powder-horn hung by it will be transparent in redness; even the row of bullets on the rude shelf near the window will give a dull gleam, whilst our old acquaintance, the axe, will wink as if a dozen eyes were strewn along its sharp, bright edge. And then the brown and tortoise-shell cat belonging to the "old woman" will partake of the lustre; and the old woman herself—a little, active, bustling body, will be seated in one corner of the fire-place, after having swept clean the hearth; and "Sport" will have coiled his long body on a bear-skin near her. Lastly, the settler himself will be sitting upon a stool opposite "Betsey," with his elbows on his knees,

smoking a pipe as black as his face at the "spring logging." But stop—where was I? Oh, in the woods!"

"Look! look!" cries Susan, the owner of the gray orbs, with an accent of delight, "see that beautiful black squirrel eating!"

We all looked, and sure enough, there is the little object in a nook of warm bronze light, with his paws to his whiskered face, cracking nuts, one after another, as fast as possible. But he stops, with his paws still uplifted, looks askance for a moment, and away he shoots then through the "brush-fence" at our side like a dart.

We soon find the tree whence he gathered his fruit. It is a noble hickory, with here and there a brown leaf clinging to its boughs. A stone or two brings the globes that hold the nuts to the earth. They have commenced cracking, and with a little exertion we uncover the snow-white balls. We are now all determined to rob the tree. It has no business to be displaying its round wealth so temptingly. And, beside, it will, if let alone, most probably entice boys from the little black school-house out yonder to "play truant." So it is unanimously voted

that Benning, who is light and active, should climb the tree. Up he goes, like one of those little striped woodpeckers that are so often seen in the woods tapping up the trees, and immediately his hands and feet make the branches dance, whilst the green globes drop like great hail-stones on the earth. We then commence stripping the nuts from their covers, and soon the base of the tree is covered with them. We then stow the ivories away in our bags, and start for new havoc.

We come now to the brush-fence. It is a perfect *chevau-de-frize*. It looks at us with a sort of defying, bristling air, as if it said as Wilson, the horse-jockey, says when some one endeavors to hoodwink him in a bargain, "You can't come it!"

We wont try here, but a little lower down there is a gap made by John Huff's cow, that uses her horns so adroitly in the attack of a fence, no matter how difficult, that I verily believe she could pick a lock. We pass through the kindly breach and skirt the fence for some little distance to regain the path. The fence on this side is densely plumed with blackberry vines. What a revel I held there two months

ago. The fruit hung around in rich masses of ebony, each little atom composing the cone having a glittering spot upon it like a tiny eye. How the black beauties melted on my tongue in their dead-ripe richness. One bush in particular was heavy with the clusters. After despoiling the edges I opened the heart, and there, hidden snugly away, as if for the wood-fairies, were quantities of the sable clusters, larger and more splendid than any I had seen. I immediately made my way into the defences of that fortress. There was a merciless sacking there, reader, allow me to[149] tell you. But that is neither "here nor there" on the present occasion.

How beautifully the soft, tender dark light slumbers on objects where the great roof of the forest will allow it. There is an edge of deep golden lace gleaming upon that mound of moss, and here, the light, breaking through the overhanging beech, has so mottled the tawny surface of the leaves beneath as to make it appear as if a leopard-skin had been dropped there.

B-o-o-m, b-o-o-m, boom-boom—whi-r-r-r-r-r—there sounds the drum of the partridge.

We'll rouse his speckled lordship probably below, causing him to give his low, quick thunder-clap so as to send the heart on a leaping visit to the throat.

We now descend the ridge upon which we have been for some time, to a glade at the foot. The sweet haze belonging to the season is shimmering over it. It is a broad space surrounded on all sides by the forest. The first settler in this part of the country had "located" himself here, and this was his little clearing. His hut stood on an eminence in one corner. He lived there a number of years. He was a reserved, unsocial man, making the forest his only haunt, and his rifle his only companion. He was at last found dead in his cabin. Alone and unattended he had died, keeping to the last aloof from human society. The hut was next occupied by a singular couple—an old man and his idiot son. The father was of a fierce, savage temper, but seemed very fond, although capriciously so, of his child. Sometimes he would treat him with the greatest tenderness, then again, at some wayward action of the idiot, he would burst upon him with an awful explosion of passion. The old man had evidently been a reckless

desperado in other days, and many in the village suspected strongly that he had once been a pirate. He was addicted to drinking, and now and then, when bitten by the adder, would talk strangely. He would commence narrating some wonderful hurricane he had experienced on the Spanish Main, and would launch out upon the number of times he had headed boarding parties, and once, in a state of great intoxication at the village tavern, he rambled off into a story about his having made an old man walk the plank. He would, however, check himself on all these occasions before he went far. He became involved in a fight one time with a great lounging fellow about the village, whose propensity to bully was the only salient point in his character. They clinched—the old man was thrown, and the bystanders had just time to pull the bully away, to prevent a long keen knife in the grasp of Murdock (for such was the old man's name) from being plunged into his side.

Suddenly the idiot-boy disappeared. The passers-by had frequently seen him (for he was an industrious lad) working in the little patch belonging to the cabin, but from a certain time he was seen no more, and the old man lived

alone in his cabin. A change, too, gradually grew over him. He became silent and deeply melancholy, and his countenance settled into an expression of stern, rigid sorrow. His eye was awful. Wild and red, it seemed as if you could look through it into a brain on fire.

At last he commenced rubbing his right hand with his left. There he would fasten his gaze, and chafe with the most determined energy. He would frequently stop and hold the hand to his eye for a moment, and then recommence his strange work. To the inquiries of the village people concerning his son, he would give no answer. He would roll upon the inquirer for an instant his fierce, mad eye, and then prosecute his mysterious chafing more rigorously than ever.

Things continued so for about a fortnight after the disappearance of the idiot, when one dark night the village was alarmed by the appearance of flames from the clearing. Hurrying to the spot, they were just in time to see the blazing roof of the hut fall in. The next morning disclosed, amidst the smouldering ashes, a few charred bones. Murdock was not again seen or heard of from that night.

The glade is now quiet and lonely as if human passions had never been unloosed there in the terrific crime of parricide—the consequent remorse merging into madness, and a fiery retributory death. Upon the grassy mound, which the frost has not yet blighted, a beautiful white rabbit has just glided. The lovely creature darts onward, then crouches—now lays his long ears flat upon his shoulders, and now points them forward in the most knowing and cunning manner. He plays there in his white, pure beauty, as if in purposed contrast to the blood-stained and guilty wretch who expired on the same spot in his flaming torture. But the little shape now points his long, rose-tinted ears in our direction, and then he does not disappear as much as melt from our sight like the vanishing of breath from polished steel. We then enter fully into the glade. One of the trees at the border is a magnificent chestnut. I remember it in June, with its rich green leaves hung over with short, braided cords of pale gold. These braided blossoms have yielded fruit most plenteously. How thickly the chestnuts, with their autumn-colored coats and gray caps, are scattered around the tree, whilst the large yellow burrs

on the branches, gaping wide open, are displaying their soft velvet inner lining in which the embedded nuts have ripened, and which in their maturity they have deserted.

After changing the position of the little glossy things from the earth to our satchels, we cross the glade, and strike a narrow road that enters the forests in that direction. We pass along, our feet sinking deep in the dead leaves, until we come to an opening where a bridge spans a stream. It is a slight, rude structure, such as the emigrating settler would (and probably did) make in a brief hour to facilitate his passage across. Let us sketch the picture to our imagination for a moment. We will suppose it about an hour to sunset of a summer's day. There is a soft richness amidst the western trees, and the little grassy opening here is dappled with light and shade. The emigrant's wagon is standing near the brink, with its curved canvas top, white as silver, in a slanting beam, and the broad tires of its huge[150] wheels stained green with the wood-plants and vines they have crushed in their passage during the day. The patient oxen, which have drawn the wagon so far, are chewing their cud, with their honest

countenances fixed straight forward. Around the wagon is hung a multitude of household articles—pans, pails, kettles, brooms, and what not; and on a heap of beds, bedding, quilts, striped blankets, &c., is the old woman, the daughter, about eighteen, and a perfect swarm of white-headed little ones. The father, and his two stalwort sons, are busy in the forest close at hand. How merrily the echoes ring out at each blow of their axes, and how the earth groans with the shock of the falling trees. The two largest of the woodland giants are cut into logs—the others are also divided into the proper lengths. The logs are placed athwart the stream several feet distant from each other—the rest are laid in close rows athwart, and lo! the bridge. Over the whole scene the warm glow of the setting sun is spread, and a black bear, some little distance in the forest, is thrusting his great flat head out of a hollow tree, overseeing the proceedings with the air of a connoisseur.

The bridge is now old and black, and has decayed and been broken into quite a picturesque object. One of the platform pieces has been fractured in the middle, and the two ends slant upwards, as if to take observations

of the sky; and there is a great hole in the very centre of the bridge. Add to this the moss, which has crept over the whole structure, making what remains of the platform a perfect cushion, and hanging in long flakes of emerald, which fairly dip in the water, and the whole object is before you. The stream has a slow, still motion, with eddies, here coiling up into wrinkles like an old man's face, and there dimpling around some stone like the smiling cheek of a young maiden, but in no case suffering its demureness to break into a broad laugh of ripples. In one spot tall bullrushes show their slender shapes and brown wigs; in another there is a collection of waterflags; in another there are tresses of long grass streaming in the light flow of the current, whilst in a nook, formed by the roots of an immense elm on one side, and a projection of the bank on the other, is a thick coat of stagnant green—a perfect meadow for the frogs to hold their mass meetings in, differing from ours, however, from the fact of theirs being composed of all talkers and no listeners.

Let us look at the stream a little, which has here expanded into a broad surface, and view its "goings on." There is a water-spider taking

most alarming leaps, as if afraid of wetting his feet; a dragon-fly is darting hither and yon, his long, slender body flashing with green, golden and purple hues; a large dace has just apparently flattened his nose against the dark glass inward, dotting a great and increasing period outward. A bright birch-leaf, "the last of its clan," has just fallen down, and been snapped at most probably by a little spooney of a trout, thinking it a yellow butterfly; and on the bottom, which, directly under our eyes is shallow, are several water-insects crawling along like locomotive spots of shadow and reflected through the tremulous medium into distorted shapes. However, we have lingered here long enough—let us onward.

What on earth is that uproar which is now striking our ear. Such hoarse notes, such rapid flutterings, whizzings, deep rumbling sounds, and such a rustle of dead leaves surely betoken something. We turn an elbow of the road, and a flashing of blue wings, and darting of blue shapes in the air, now circling round, now shooting up, and now down, with a large beech tree for the centre, meet our eyes. The tumult is explained. A colony of wild pigeons is busy amongst the beech-nuts, which the

frost has showered upon the earth. The ground for some distance around the tree is perfectly blue with the birds picking, and fighting, and scrambling. It is ludicrous to see them. Here a score or two are busy eating, looking like a collection of big-paunched, blue-coated aldermen at a city feast; there, all are hurrying and jostling, and tumbling over one another like the passengers of a steamboat when the bell rings for dinner. By the side of yonder bush there is a perfect duel transpiring between two pugnacious pigeons dashing out their wings fiercely at each other with angry tones, their beautiful purple necks all swollen, and their red eyes casting devouring looks, whilst two others are very quietly, yet swiftly, as if making the most of their time, causing all the nuts in sight, and which probably induced the quarrel, disappear down their own throats. See! here is a pigeon who has over-estimated his capacity of swallowing, or has encountered a larger nut than usual, for he is exhibiting the most alarming symptoms of choking. He stretches his neck and opens his bill like a cock in the act of crowing, at the same time dancing up and down on his pink legs as if his toes had caught fire. However, he has

mastered the nut at last with a vigorous shake of his neck, and bobs industriously again at his feast.

Determining to have some of the brown luscious mast, we make a foray amongst the gorging host, and succeeded in causing a cloud of them to take wing, and in securing a quantity of the spoil.

We then start again on our way, but do not advance far before—b-r-r-r-r-r-h—off bursts a partridge, and shoots down the vista of the road, with the dark sunshine glancing from his mottled back. If little "Spitfire" was here, how he would yelp and dance, and dart backward and forward, and shake his tail, so as to render it doubtful whether it wouldn't fly off in a tangent.

Rattat, tattat, tat—tat—t-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r—there is the great red-headed woodpecker, or woodcock, as he is called by the country people, looking like a miniature man with a crimson turban and sable spear, attacking the bark of yon old oak. He is making a sounding-board of the seamed mail of the venerable monarch, to detect by the startled writhing within the grub snugly ensconced, as it thinks,

there, in order to transfix it with his sharp tongue through the hole made by his bill. He ceases his work though as we approach—and now he flies away.

A mile farther, we come to the strawberry-field[151] belonging to Deacon Gravespeech, the outlines of whose dark, low farm-house are etched on the mist which is again slowly spreading over the landscape, for it is now near sunset. Having left the forest, we see the mild red orb, like an immense ruby, just in the act of sinking in the bank of pale blue which now thickens the Western horizon. But what have we here? A splendid butternut tree, with quantities of the oval fruit scattered about amidst the brown leaves, in their coats of golden green. What a rich lustre is upon them, made brighter by the varnish, and how delightful their pungent perfume. Let us crack a few of the strong, deeply-fluted shells. In their tawny nooks nestle the dark, golden-veined meats, which with the most delicious sweetness crumble in the mouth.

Of all the fruits of the Northern forests give me the butternut; and, speaking of fruits puts me in mind of the strawberry field. I was here

with a small party one day last June. The field was then scattered thickly over with the bright crimson spotting fruit, and the fingers of all of us were soon dyed deeply with the sweet blood. There is great skill in picking strawberries, let me tell you, reader, although it is a trifle. Go to work systematically, and don't get excited. Gather all as you go, indiscriminately. Don't turn to the right for two splendid berries, and leave the one in front, for it is just as likely, before you gather the two, a cluster, with five ripe tempting fellows, will cause you to forget the others, and in whirling yourself around, and stretching over to seize the latest prize, your feet and limbs not only destroy the first and second, but a whole collection of the blushing beauties hid away in a little hollow of buttercups and dandelions.

Well, "as I was saying," I was here with a small party, and had fine sport picking, but the next day a precept, at the suit of Peter Gravespeech, was served upon Hull and myself, (the two gentlemen of the party,) issued from "Pettifogger's Delight," as the office of Squire Tappit, the justice, was called throughout the village: action, trespass. "For the fun of the thing" we stood trial. The day

came, and all the vagabonds of the village,—those whose continual cry is that they "can never get any thing to do," and therefore drive a brisk business at doing nothing,—were in attendance. The justice was a hot-tempered old fellow, somewhat deaf, and,—if his nose was any evidence,—fond of the brandy bottle.

The witness of the trespass, who was a "hired hand" of Deacon Gravespeech, was present, and after the cause had been called in due order, was summoned by the deacon (who appeared in proper person) to the stand. He was generally very irascible, a good deal of a bully, rather stupid, and, on the present occasion, particularly drunk.

"Now, Mr. Hicks," said the deacon, respectfully, (knowing his man,) after he had 'kissed the book,' "now, Mr. Hicks (his name was Joe Hicks, but universally called 'Saucy Joe,') please tell the justice what you know of this transaction."

"Well, squire, I seed 'em!" replied Joe, to this appeal, facing the justice.

"Who?" ejaculated the justice, quickly.

"Who!" answered Joe, "why, who do you spose, but that'ere sour-faced feller, (pointing at Hull,) what looks like a cow swelled on clover, and that 'ere little nimshi, who isn't bigger than my Poll's knitten needle. They was with four female critters."

"Well, what were they about?" asked the deacon.

"What was they about!" (a little angrily,) "you know as well as I do, deacon, for I telled ye all about it at the time."

"Yes, but you must tell the justice."

"Answer, witness!" exclaimed the justice, somewhat sternly.

"Oh! you needn't be flusterfied, Squire Tappit; I knowed ye long afore ye was squire, and drinked with ye, too. For that matter, I stood treat last!"

"That's of no consequence now, Mr. Hicks," interposed the deacon, throwing at the same time a deprecatory glance at the old justice, whose nose was growing redder, and whose eye began to twinkle in incipient wrath.

"Let the gentleman proceed with his interesting developments," said Hull, rising

with the most ludicrous gravity, and waving his hand in a solemn and dignified manner.

"Well," said Joe, a little mollified at the word 'gentleman,' "ef I must tell it agin, I must, that's all. They was a picken strawberries like Old Sanko."

"How long do you think they were there, trampling down the grass?" asked the deacon.

"Why, I spose from the time I seed 'em"—here he stopped abruptly, glanced out of the window toward the tavern, spit thirstily, and then looked at the deacon.

"Let the gentleman proceed," again cried Hull, half rising, in mock respect.

"*Pro*ceed!" said the justice, angrily.

"Well, as I was a sayen, from the time I seed 'em—— But I say, deacon, I'm monstrous dry. You're temp'rance I know; but sposen as how you treat me and old Squire Tappit there to some red eye. He won't refuse, no how you can fix it, and as for me, I am so dry I really can't talk."

"Go on with your story, you scoundrel!" shouted the justice, exasperated beyond all bounds, "or I'll commit you to prison."

"Commit me to prison, you old brandy-jug!" yelled Joe, swinging off his ragged coat at a jerk, and throwing it on the floor, "commit *me*, you mahogany-nosed old sarpent!" advancing close to the justice, with both of his great fists ready.

"Let the gentleman proceed," here broke in Hull again, in an agony of laughter.

And, sure enough, the "gentleman" did proceed. Launching out his right fist in the most approved fashion at the nose of the justice, Joe was in an instant the center of a perfect Pandemonium. The constable rushed in to protect the justice, who was shouting continually, "I command the peace;" the bystanders, ready for a fight at any time, followed his example, and, for a few minutes, there was a perfect[152] chaos of arms, legs, and heads, sticking out in every direction.

The first thing Hull and I saw were the heels of the justice flourishing in the air, and the last was Joe going off to jail in the grasp of the constable one way, and the deacon sneaking off another. We never heard afterward of the suit, but "Let the gentleman proceed," was for

a long time a by-word amongst us in the village.

After crossing the strawberry field we came to a "cross-road" leading to the turnpike. In a few minutes we arrived at "Cold Spring," where a little streak of water ran through a hollowed log, green with moss, from the fountain a short distance in the forest, and fell into a pebbly basin at the road-side. We here refreshed ourselves with repeated draughts of the sweet, limpid element, and then, resuming our walk, soon found ourselves upon the broad, gray turnpike, with the village upon the summit of the hill, about half a mile in front.

The sun had long since plunged into the slate-colored haze of the West; the thickening landscape looked dull and faded; the mist was glimmering before the darkened forests; the cows were wending homeward, lowing; the woodsmen passed us with axes on their shoulders; and, mounting the hill, we saw here and there, a light sparkling in the village, following the example of the scattered stars that were timidly glancing from the dome of the purpled heavens.

THE LOST PET

BY MRS. LYDIA H. SIGOURNEY.

[SEE ENGRAVING.]

When Mary's brother went to sea,He lingered near the door,Beside the old, familiar tree,He ne'er had left before,

And though gay boyhood loves to seekNew regions where to tread,A pearl-drop glittered on his cheekAs tenderly he said—

"The gentle dove I reared with care,Sister, I leave to thee,And let it thy protection shareWhen I am far at sea."

Whene'er for Willy's loss she grieved,His darling she caressed,That from her hand its food received,Or nestled in her breast;

And sometimes, at the twilight dim,When blossoms bow to sleep,She thought it murmuring asked for himWhose home was on the deep.

And if her mother's smile of joyWas lost in anxious thought,As memories of her sailor-boySome gathering tempest wrought,

She showed his pet, the cooing dove,Perched on her sheltering arm,And felt how innocence and loveCan rising wo disarm.

When summer decked the leafy bowers,And pranked the russet plain,She bore his cage where breathing flowersInspired a tuneful strain;

And now and then, through open door,Indulged a wish to roam,Though soon, the brief excursion o'er,The wanderer sought its home.

She laughed to see it brush the dewFrom bough and budding spray.And deemed its snow-white plumage grewMore beauteous, day by day.

The rose of June was in its flush,And 'neath the fragrant shadeOf her own fullest, fairest bushThe favorite's house was staid,

While roving, bird-like, here and there,Amid her flow'rets dear,She culled a nosegay, rich and rare,A mother's heart to cheer.

A shriek! A flutter! Swift as thoughtHer startled footstep flew,But full of horror was the sightThat met her eager view—

Her treasure in a murderer's jaws!One of that feline raceWhose wily looks and velvet pawsConceal their purpose base.

And scarce the victim's gushing breastHeaved with one feeble breath,Though raised to hers, its glance exprestAffection even in death.

Oh, stricken child! though future yearsMay frown with heavier shade,When woman's lot of love and tearsIs on thy spirit laid—

Yet never can a wilder cryThy heart-wrung anguish proveThan when before thy swimming eyeExpired that wounded dove.

THE LOST PET

Engraved Expressly for Graham's Magazine

Figure from I. M. Wright. Drawn with original scenery & engraved by Ellis.

FIEL A LA MUERTE, OR TRUE LOVE'S DEVOTION.

[153]

A TALE OF THE TIMES OF LOUIS QUINZE.

BY HENRY WILLIAM HERBERT, AUTHOR OF "THE ROMAN TRAITOR," "MARMADUKE WYVIL," "CROMWELL," ETC.

(*Concluded from page* 91.)

PART III.

For there were seen in that dark wall,Two niches, narrow, dark and tall.Who enters by such grisly door,Shall ne'er, I ween, find exit more.—WALTER SCOTT.

It would be wonderful, were it not of daily occurrence, and to be observed by all who give attention to the characteristics of the human mind, how quickly confidence, even when shaken to its very foundations, and almost obliterated, springs up again, and recovers all its strength in the bosoms of the young of either sex.

Let but a few more years pass over the heart, and when once broken, if it be only by a slight suspicion, or a half unreal cause, it will scarce revive again in a life-time; nor then, unless proofs the strongest and most unquestionable can be adduced to overpower the doubts which have well-nigh annihilated it.

In early youth, however, before long contact with the world has blunted the susceptibilities, and hardened the sympathies of the soul, before the constant experience of the treachery, the coldness, the ingratitude of men has given birth to universal doubt and general

distrust, the shadow vanishes as soon as the cloud which cast it is withdrawn, and the sufferer again believes, alas! too often, only to be again deceived.

Thus it was with St. Renan, who a few minutes before had given up even the last hope, who had ceased, as he thought, to believe even in the possibility of faith or honor among men, of constancy, or purity, or truth in women, no sooner saw his Melanie, whom he knew to be the wife of another, solitary and in tears, no sooner felt her inanimate form reclining on his bosom, than he was prepared to believe any thing, rather than believe her false.

Indeed, her consternation at his appearance, her evident dismay, not unnatural in an age wherein skepticism and infidelity were marvelously mingled with credulity and superstition, her clear conviction that it was not himself in mortal blood and being, did go far to establish the fact, that she had been deceived either casually or—which was far more probable—by foul artifice, into the belief that her beloved and plighted husband was no longer with the living.

The very exclamation which she uttered last, ere she sunk senseless into his arms, uttered, as she imagined, in the presence of the immortal spirit of the injured dead, "I am true, Raoul—true to the last, my beloved!" rang in his ears with a power and a meaning which convinced him of her veracity.

"She could not lie!" he muttered to himself, "in the presence of the living dead! God be praised! she is true, and we shall yet be happy!"

How beautiful she looked, as she lay there, unconscious and insensible even of her own existence. If time and maturity had improved Raoul's person, and added the strength and majesty of manhood to the grace and pliability of youth, infinitely more had it bestowed on the beauty of his betrothed. He had left her a beautiful girl just blooming out of girlhood, he found her a mature, full-blown woman, with all the flush and flower of complete feminine perfection, before one charm has become too luxuriant, or one drop of the youthful dew exhaled from the new expanded blossom.

She had shot up, indeed, to a height above the ordinary stature of women—straight, erect,

and graceful as a young poplar, slender, yet full withal, exquisitely and voluptuously rounded, and with every sinuous line and swelling curve of her soft form full of the poetry and beauty both of repose and motion.

Her complexion was pale as alabaster; even her cheeks, except when some sudden tide of passion, or some strong emotion sent the impetuous blood coursing thither more wildly than its wont, were colorless, but there was nothing sallow or sickly, nothing of that which is ordinarily understood by the word pallid, in their clear, warm, transparent purity; nothing, in a word, of that lividness which the French, with more accuracy than we, distinguish from the healthful paleness which is so beautiful in southern women.

Her hair, profuse almost to redundance, was perfectly black, but of that warm and lustrous blackness which is probably the hue expressed by the ancient Greeks by the term hyacinthine, and which in certain lights has a purplish metallic gloss playing over it, like the varying reflections on the back of the raven. Her strongly defined, and nearly straight eyebrows, were dark as night, as were the long, silky

lashes which were displayed in clear relief against the fair, smooth cheek, as the lids lay closed languidly over the bright blue eyes.

It was a minute or two before Melanie moved or gave any symptoms of recovering from her fainting fit, and during those minutes the lips of Raoul had been pressed so often and so warmly to those of the fair insensible, that had any spark of perception remained to her, the fond and lingering pressure could[154] not have failed to call the "purple light of love," to her ingenuous face.

At length a long, slow shiver ran through the form of the senseless girl, and thrilled, like the touch of the electric wire, every nerve in St. Renan's body.

Then the soft rosy lips were unclosed, and forth rushed the ambrosial breath in a long, gentle sigh, and the beautiful bust heaved and undulated, like the bosom of the calm sea, when the first breathings of the coming storm steal over it, and wake, as if by sympathy, its deep pulsations.

He clasped her closer to his heart, half fearful that when life and perfect consciousness should be restored to that exquisite frame, it

would start from his embrace, if not in anger or alarm, at least as if from a forbidden and illicit pleasure.

Gradually a faint rosy hue, slight as the earliest blushes of the morning sky, crept over her white cheeks, and deepened into a rich passionate flush; and at the same moment the azure-tinctured lids were unclosed slowly, and the large, radiant, bright-blue eyes beamed up into his own, half languid still, but gleaming through their dewy languor, with an expression which he must have been, indeed, blind to mistake for aught but the strongest of unchanged, unchangeable affection.

It was evident that she knew him now; that the momentary terror, arising rather, perhaps, from fear than from superstition, which had converted the young ardent soldier into a visitant from beyond those gloomy portals through which no visitant returns, had passed from her mind, and that she had already recognized, although she spoke not, her living lover.

And though she recognized him, she sought not to withdraw herself from the enclosure of his sheltering arms, but lay there on his

bosom, with her head reclined on his shoulder, and her eyes drinking long draughts of love from his fascinated gaze, as if she were his own, and that her appropriate place of refuge and protection.

"Oh! Raoul," she exclaimed, at length, in a low, soft whisper, "is it, indeed, you—you, whom I have so long wept as dead—you, whom I was even now weeping as one lost to me forever, when you are thus restored to me!"

"It is I, Melanie," he answered mournfully, "it is I, alive, and in health; but better far had I been in truth dead, as they have told you, rather than thus a survivor of all happiness, of all hopes; spared only from the grave to know *you* false, and myself forgotten."

"Oh, no, Raoul, not false!" she cried wildly, as she started from his arms, "oh, not forgotten! think you," she added, blushing crimson, "that had I loved any but you, that had I not loved you with my whole heart and being, I had lain thus on your bosom, thus endured your caresses? Oh, no, no, never false! nor for one moment forgotten?"

"But what avails it, if you do love no other—what profits it, if you do love me? Are you

not—are you not, false girl,—alas! that these lips should speak it,—the wife of another—the promised mistress of the king?"

"I—I—Raoul!" she exclaimed, with such a blending of wonder and loathing in her face, such an expression of indignation on her tongue, that her lover perceived at once, that, whatever might be the infamy of her father, of her husband, of this climax of falsehood and self-degradation, she, at least, was guiltless.

"The mistress of the king! what king? what mean you? are you distraught?"

"Ha! you are ignorant, you are innocent of that, then. You are not yet indoctrinated into the noble uses for which your honorable lord intends you. It is the town's talk, Melanie. How is it you, whom it most concerns, alone have not heard it?"

"Raoul," she said, earnestly, imploringly, "I know not if there be any meaning in your words, except to punish me, to torture me, for what you deem my faithlessness, but if there be, I implore you, I conjure you, by your father's noble name; by your mother's honor, show me the worst; but listen to me first, for

by the God that made us both, and now hears my words, I am not faithless."

"Not faithless? Are you not the wife of another?"

"No!" she replied enthusiastically. "I am not. For I am yours, and while you live I cannot wed another. Whom God hath joined man cannot put asunder."

"I fear me that plea will avail us little," Raoul answered. "But say on, dearest Melanie, and believe that there is nothing you can ask which I will not give you gladly—even if it were my own life-blood. Say on, so shall we best arrive at the truth of this intricate and black affair."

"Mark me, then, Raoul, for every word I shall speak is as true as the sun in heaven. It is near two years now since we heard that you had fallen in battle, and that your body had been carried off by the barbarians. Long! long I hoped and prayed, but prayers and hopes were alike in vain. I wrote to you often, as I promised, but no line from you has reached me, since the day when you sailed for India, and that made me fear that the dread news was true. But at the last, to make assurance doubly sure, all my own letters were returned to me

six months since, with their seals unbroken, and an endorsement from the authorities in India that the person addressed was not to be found. Then hope itself was over; and my father, who never from the first had doubted that you were no more—"

"Out on him! out on him! the heartless villain!" the young man interrupted her indignantly. "He knows, as well as I myself, that I am living; although it is no fault of his or his coadjutors that I am so. He knows not as yet, however, that I am *here*; but he shall know it ere long to his cost, my Melanie."

"At least," she answered in a faltering voice, "at least he *swore* to me that you were dead; and never having ceased to persecute me, since the day that fatal tidings reached, to become the wife of La Rochederrien, now Marquis de Ploermel, he now became doubly urgent—"[155]

"And you, Melanie! you yielded! I had thought you would have died sooner."

"I had no choice but to yield, Raoul. Or at least but the choice of that old man's hand, or an eternal dungeon. The *lettres de cachet* were signed, and you dead, and on the conditions I

extorted from the marquis, I became in name, Raoul, only in name, by all my hopes of Heaven! the wife of the man whom you pronounce, wherefore, I cannot dream, the basest of mankind. Now tell me."

"And did it never strike you as being wonderful and most unnatural that this Ploermel, who is neither absolutely a dotard nor an old woman, should accept your hand upon this condition?"

"I was too happy to succeed in extorting it to think much of that," she answered.

"*Extorted!*" replied Raoul bitterly, "And how, I pray you, is this condition which you extorted ratified or made valid?"

"It is signed by himself, and witnessed by my own father, that, being I regard myself the wife of the dead, he shall ask no more of familiarity from me than if I were the bride of heaven!"

"The double villains!"

"But wherefore villains, Raoul?" exclaimed Melanie.

"I tell you, girl, it is a compact—a base, hellish compact—with the foul despot, the disgrace of

kings, the opprobrium of France, who sits upon the throne, dishonoring it daily! A compact such as yet was never entered into by a father and a husband, even of the lowest of mankind! A compact to deliver you a spotless virgin-victim to the vile-hearted and luxurious tyrant. Curses! a thousand curses on his soul! and on my own soul! who have fought and bled for him, and all to meet with this, as my reward of service!"

"Great God! can these things be," she exclaimed, almost fainting with horror and disgust. "Can these things indeed be? But speak, Raoul, speak; how can you know all this?"

"I tell you, Melanie, it is the talk, the very daily, hourly gossip of the streets, the alleys, nay, even the very kennels of Paris. Every one knows it—every one believes it, from the monarch in the Louvre to the lowest butcher of the Faubourg St. Antoine!

"And they believe it—of me, of *me*, they believe this infamy!"

"With this addition, if any addition were needed, that you are not a deceived victim, but a willing and proud participator in the shame."

"I will—that is—" she corrected herself, speaking very rapidly and energetically—"I *would* die sooner. But there is no need now to die. You have come back to me, and all will yet go well with us!"

"It never can go well with us again," St. Renan answered gloomily. "The king never yields his purpose, he is as tenacious in his hold as reckless in his promptitude to seize. And they are paid beforehand."

"Paid!" exclaimed the girl, shuddering at the word. "What atrocity! How paid?"

"How, think you, did your good father earn his title and the rich governorship of Morlaix? What great deeds were rewarded to La Rochederrien by his marquisate, and this captaincy of mousquetaires. You know not yet, young lady, what virtue there is nowadays in being the accommodating father, or the convenient husband of a beauty!"

"You speak harshly, St. Renan, and bitterly."

"And if I do, have I not cause enough for bitterness and harshness?" he replied almost angrily.

"Not against me, Raoul."

"I am not bitter against you, Melanie. And yet—and yet—"

"And yet *what*, Raoul?"

"And yet had you resisted three days longer, we might have been saved—you might have been mine—"

"I am yours, Raoul de St. Renan. Yours, ever and forever! No one's but only yours."

"You speak but madness—your vow—the sacrament!"

"To the winds with my vow—to the abyss with the fraudful sacrament!" she cried, almost fiercely. By sin it was obtained and sanctioned—in sin let it perish. I say—I swear, Raoul, if you will take me, I am yours."

"Mine? Mine?" cried the young man, half bewildered. "How mine, and when?"

"Thus," she replied, casting herself upon his breast, and winding her arms around his neck, and kissing his lips passionately and often. "Thus, Raoul, thus, and now!"

He returned her embrace fondly once, but the next instant he removed her almost forcibly from his breast, and held her at arm's length.

"No, no!" he exclaimed, "not thus, not thus! If at all, honestly, openly, holily, in the face of day! May my soul perish, ere cause come through me why you should ever blush to show your front aloft among the purest and the proudest. No, no, not thus, my own Melanie!"

The girl burst into a paroxysm of tears and sobbing, through which she hardly could contrive to make her interrupted and faultering words audible.

"If not now," she said at length, "it will never be. For, hear me, Raoul, and pity me, to-morrow they are about to drag me to Paris."

The lover mused for several moments very deeply, and then replied, "Listen to me, Melanie. If you are in earnest, if you are true, and can be firm, there may yet be happiness in store for us, and that very shortly."

"Do you doubt me, Raoul?"

"I do not doubt you, Melanie. But ever as in my own wildest rapture, even to gain my own extremest bliss, I would not do aught that could possibly cast one shadow on your pure renown, so, mark me, would I not take you to my heart were there one spot, though it were

but as a speck in the all-glorious sun, upon the brightness of your purity."

"I believe you, Raoul. I feel, I know that my honor, that my purity is all in all to you.

"I would die a thousand deaths," he made answer, "ere even a false report should fall on it, to mar its[156] virgin whiteness. Marvel not then that I ask as much of you."

"Ask anything, St. Renan. It *is* granted."

"In France we can hope for nothing. But there are other lands than France. We must fly; and thanks to these documents which you have wrung from them, and the proofs which I can easily obtain, this cursed marriage can be set aside, and then, in honor and in truth you can be mine, mine own Melanie."

"God grant it so, Raoul."

"It shall be so, beloved. Be you but firm, and it may be done right speedily. I will sell the estates of St. Renan—by a good chance, supposing me dead, the Lord of Yrvilliac was in treaty for it with my uncle. That can be arranged forthwith. Conduct yourself according to your wont, cool and as distant as may be with this villain of Ploermel; avoid

above all things to let your father see that you are buoyed by any hope, or moved by any passion. Treat the king with deliberate scorn, if he approach you over boldly. Beware how you eat or drink in his company, for he is capable of all things, even of drugging you into insensibility, and here," he added, taking a small poniard, of exquisite workmanship, with a gold hilt and scabbard, from his girdle, and giving it to her, "wear *this* at all times, and if he dare attempt violence, were he thrice a king, *use it*!"

"I will—I will—trust me, Raoul! I *will* use it, and that to his sorrow! My heart is strong, and my hand brave *now*—now that I know you to be living. Now that I have hope to nerve me, I will fear nothing, but dare all things."

"Do so, do so, my beloved, and you shall have no cause to fear, for I will be ever near you. I will tarry here but one day; and ere you reach Paris, I will be there, be certain. Within ten days, I doubt not I can convert my acres into gold, and ship that gold across the narrow straits; and that done, the speed of horses, and a swift sailing ship will soon have us safe in England; and if that land be not so fair, or so

dear as our own France, at least there are no tyrants there, like this Louis; and there are laws, they say, which guard the meanest man as safely and as surely as the proudest noble."

"A happy land, Raoul. I would that we were there even now."

"We will be there ere long, fear nothing. But tell me, whom have you near your person on whom we may rely. There must be some one through whom we may communicate in Paris. It may be that I shall require to see you."

"Oh! you remember Rose, Raoul—little Rose Faverney, who has lived with me ever since she was a child—a pretty little black-eyed damsel."

"Surely I do remember her. Is she with you yet? That will do admirably, then, if she be faithful, as I think she is; and unless I forget, what will serve us better yet, she loves my page Jules de Marliena. He has not forgotten her, I promise you."

"Ah! Jules—we grow selfish, I believe, as we grow old, Raoul. I have not thought to ask after one of your people. So Jules remembers little Rose, and loves her yet; that will, indeed,

secure her, even had she been doubtful, which she is not. She is as true as steel—truer, I fear, than even I; for she reproached me bitterly four evenings since, and swore she would be buried alive, much more willingly imprisoned, than be married to the Marquis de Ploermel, though she was only plighted to the Vicomte Raoul's page! Oh! we may trust in her with all certainty."

"Send her, then, on the very same night that you reach Paris, so soon as it is dark, to my uncle's house in the Place de St. Louis. I think she knows it, and let her ask—not for me—but for Jules. Ere then I will know something definite of our future; and fear nothing, love, all shall go well with us. Love such as ours, with faith, and right, and honesty and honor to support it, cannot fail to win, blow what wind may. And now, sweet Melanie, the night is wearing onward, and I fear that they may miss you. Kiss me, then, once more, sweet girl, and farewell."

"Not for the last, Raoul," she cried, with a gay smile, casting herself once again into her lover's arms, and meeting his lips with a long, rapturous kiss.

"Not by a thousand, and a thousand! But now, angel, farewell for a little space. I hate to bid you leave me, but I dare not ask you to stay; even now I tremble lest you should be missed and they should send to seek you. For were they but to suspect that I am here and have seen you, it would, at the best, double all our difficulties. Fare you well, sweetest Melanie."

"Fare you well," she replied; "fare you well, my own best beloved Raoul," and she put up the glittering dagger, as she spoke, into the bosom of her dress; but as she did so, she paused and said, "I wish *this* had not been your first gift to me, Raoul, for they say that such gifts are fatal, to love at least, if not to life."

"Fear not! fear not!" answered the young man, laughing gayly, "our love is immortal. It may defy the best steel blade that was ever forged on Milan stithy to cut it asunder. Fare you—but, hush! who comes here; it is too late, yet fly—fly, Melanie!"

But she did not fly, for as he spoke, a tall, gayly dressed cavalier burst through the coppice on the side next the château d'Argenson, exclaiming, "So, my fair

cousin!—this is your faith to my good brother of Ploermel is it?"

But, before he spoke, she had whispered to Raoul, "It is the Chevalier de Pontrein, de Ploermel's half brother. Alas! all is lost."

"Not so! not so!" answered her lover, also in a whisper, "leave him to me, I will detain him. Fly, by the upper pathway and through the orchard to the château, and remember—you have not seen this dog. So much deceit is pardonable. Fly, I say, Melanie. Look not behind for your life, whatever you may hear, nor tarry. All rests now on your steadiness and courage."

"Then all is safe," she answered firmly and aloud, and without casting a glance toward the cavalier, who was now within ten paces of her side, or taking the smallest notice of his words, she kissed her hand[157] to St. Renan, and bounded up the steep path, in the opposite direction, with so fleet a step as soon carried her beyond the sound of all that followed, though that was neither silent nor of small interest.

"Do you not hear me, madam. By Heaven! but you carry it off easily!" cried the young

cavalier, setting off at speed, as if to follow her. "But you must run swifter than a roe if you look to 'scape me;" and with the words, he attempted to rush past Raoul, of whom he affected, although he knew him well, to take no notice.

But in that intent he was quickly frustrated, for the young count grasped him by the collar as he endeavored to pass, with a grasp of iron, and said to him in an ironical tone of excessive courtesy,

"Sweet sir, I fear you have forgotten me, that you should give me the go-by thus, when it is so long a time since we have met, and we such dear friends, too,"

But the young man was in earnest, and very angry, and struggled to release himself from St. Renan's grasp, until, having no strong reasons for forbearance, but many for the reverse, Raoul, too, lost his temper.

"By heaven!" he exclaimed, "I believe that you do *not* know me, or you would not dare to suppose that I would suffer you to follow a lady who seeks not your presence or society."

"Let me go, St. Renan!" returned the other fiercely, laying his hand on his dagger's hilt. "Let me go, villain, or you shall rue it!"

"Villain!" Raoul repeated, calmly, "villain! It is so you call me, hey?" and he did instantly release him, drawing his sword as he did so. "Draw, De Pontrien—that word has cost you your life!"

"Yes, villain!" repeated the other, "villain to you teeth! But you lie! it is your life that is forfeit—forfeit to my brother's honor!"

"Ha! ha!" laughed Raoul, savagely. "Ha-ha-ha-ha! your brother's honor! who the devil ever heard before of a pandar's honor—even if he were Sir Pandarus to a king? Sa! sa!—have at you!"

Their blades crossed instantly, and they fought fiercely, and with something like equality for some ten minutes. The Chevalier de Pontrien was far more than an ordinary swordsman, and he was in earnest, not angry, but savage and determined, and full of bitter hatred, and a fixed resolution to punish the familiarity of Raoul with his brother's wife. But that was a thing easier proposed than executed; for St. Renan, who had left France as a boy already a

perfect master of fence, had learned the practice of the blade against the swordsmen of the East, the finest swordsmen of the world, and had added to skill, science and experience, the iron nerves, the deep breath, and the unwearied strength of a veteran.

If he fought slowly, it was that he fought carefully—that he meant the first wound to be the last. He was resolved that De Pontrien never should return home again to divulge what he had seen, and he had the coolness, the skill, and the power to carry out his resolution.

At the end of ten minutes he attacked. Six times within as many seconds he might have inflicted a severe, perhaps a deadly wound on his antagonist; and he, too, perceived it, but it would not have been surely mortal.

"Come, come!" cried De Pontrien, at last, growing impatient and angry at the idea of being played with. "Come, sir, you are my master, it seems. Make an end of this."

"Do not be in a hurry," replied St. Renan, with a deadly smile, "it will come soon enough. There! will that suit you?"

And with the word he made a treble feint and lounged home. So true was the thrust that the point pierced the very cavity of his heart. So strongly was it sent home that the hilt smote heavily on his breast-bone. He did not speak or groan, but drew one short, broken sigh, and fell dead on the instant.

"The fool!" muttered St. Renan. "Wherefore did he meddle where he had no business? But what the devil shall I do with him? He must not be found, or all will out—and that were ruin."

As he spoke, a distant clap of thunder was heard to the eastward, and a few heavy drops of rain began to fall, while a heavy mass of black thunder-clouds began to rise rapidly against the wind.

"There will be a fierce storm in ten minutes, which will soon wash out all this evidence," he said, looking down at the trampled and blood-stained greensward. "One hour hence, and there will not be a sign of this, if I can but dispose of him. Ha!" he added, as a quick thought struck him, "The Devil's Drinking-Cup! Enough! it is done!"

Within a minute's space he had swathed the corpse tightly in the cloak, which had fallen from the wretched man's shoulders as the fray began, bound it about the waist by the scarf, to which he attached firmly an immense block of stone, which lay at the brink of the fearful well, which was now—for the tide was up—brimful of white boiling surf, and holding his breath atween resolution and abhorrence, hurled it into the abyss.

It sunk instantly, so well was the stone secured to it; and the fate of the Chevalier de Pontrien never was suspected, for that fatal pool never gave up its dead, nor will until the judgment-day.

Meantime the flood-gates of heaven were opened, and a mimic torrent, rushing down the dark glen, soon obliterated every trace of that stern, short affray.

Calmly Raoul strode homeward, and untouched by any conscience, for those were hard and ruthless times, and he had undergone so much wrong at the hands of his victim's nearest relatives, and dearest friends, that it was no great marvel if his blood were heated, and his heart pitiless.

"I will have masses said for his soul in Paris," he muttered to himself; and therewith, thinking that he had more than discharged all a Christian's duty, he dismissed all further thoughts of the matter, and actually hummed a gay opera tune as he strode homeward through the pelting storm, thinking how soon he should be blessed by the possession of his own Melanie.[158]

No observation was made on his absence, either by the steward or any of the servants, on his return, though he was well-nigh drenched with rain, for they remembered his old half-boyish, half-romantic habits, and it seemed natural to them that on his first return, after so many years of wandering, to scenes endeared to him by innumerable fond recollections, he should wander forth alone to muse with his own soul in secret.

There was great joy, however, in the hearts of the old servitors and tenants in consequence of his return, and on the following morning, and still on the third day, that feeling of joy and security continued to increase, for it soon got abroad that the young lord's grief and gloominess of mood was wearing hourly

away, and that his lip, and his whole countenance were often lighted up with an expression which showed, as they fondly augured, that days and years of happiness were yet in store for him.

It was not long before the tidings reached him that the house of D'Argenson was in great distress concerning the sudden and unaccountable disappearance of the Chevalier de Pontrien, who had walked out, it was said, on the preceding afternoon, promising to be back at supper-time, and who had not been heard of since.

Raoul smiled grimly at the intimation, but said nothing, and the narrator judging that St. Renan was not likely to take offence at the imputations against the family of Ploermel, proceeded to inform him, that in the opinion of the neighborhood there was nothing very mysterious, after all, in the disappearance of the chevalier, since he was known to be very heavily in debt, and was threatened with deadly feud by the old Sieur de Plouzurde, whose fair daughter he had deceived to her undoing. Robinet, the smuggler's boat, had been seen off the Penmarcks when the moon

was setting, and no one doubted that the gay gallant was by this time off the coast of Spain.

To all this, though he affected to pay little heed to it, Raoul inclined an eager and attentive ear, and as a reward for his patient listening, was soon informed, furthermore, that the bridegroom marquis and the beautiful bride, being satisfied, it was supposed, of the chevalier's safety, had departed for Paris, their journey having been postponed only in consequence of the research for the missing gentleman, from the morning when it should have taken place, to the afternoon of the same day.

For two days longer did Raoul tarry at St. Renan, apparently as free from concern or care about the fair Melanie de Ploermel, as if he had never heard her name. And on this point alone, for all men knew that he once loved her, did his conduct excite any observation, or call forth comment. His silence, however, and external nonchalance were attributed at all hands to a proper sense of pride and self-respect; and as the territorial vassals of those days held themselves in some degree ennobled or disgraced by the high bearing or recreancy

of their lords, it was very soon determined by the men of St. Renan that it would have been very disgraceful and humiliating had their lord, the Lord of Douarnez and St. Renan, condescended to trouble his head about the little demoiselle d'Argenson.

Meanwhile our lover, whose head was in truth occupied about no other thing than that very same little demoiselle, for whom he was believed to feel a contempt so supreme, had thoroughly investigated all his affairs, thereby acquiring from his old steward the character of an admirable man of business, had made himself perfectly master of the real value of his estates, droits, dues and all connected with the same, and had packed up all his papers, and such of his valuables as were movable, so as to be transported easily by means of pack-horses.

This done, leaving orders for a retinue of some twenty of his best and most trusty servants to follow him as soon as the train and relays of horses could be prepared, he set off with two followers only to return, riding post, as he had come, from Paris.

He was three days behind the lady of his love at starting; but the journey from the western extremity of Bretagne to the metropolis is at all times a long and tedious undertaking; and as the roads and means of conveyance were in those days, he found it no difficult task to catch up with the carriages of the marquis, and to pass them on the road long enough before they reached Paris.

Indeed, though he had set out three days behind them, he succeeded in anticipating their arrival by as many, and had succeeded in transacting more than half the business on which his heart was bent, before he received the promised visit from the pretty Rose Faverney, who, prompted by her desire to renew her intimacy with the handsome page, came punctual to her appointment. He had not, of course, admitted the good old churchman, his uncle, into all his secrets; he had not even told him that he had seen the lady, much less what were his hopes and views concerning her.

But he did tell him that he was so deeply mortified and wounded by her desertion, that he had determined to sell his estates, to leave

France forever, and to betake himself to the new American colonies on the St. Lawrence.

There was not in the state of France in those days much to admire, or much to induce wise men to exert their influence over the young and noble, to induce them to linger in the neighborhood of a court which was in itself a very sink of corruption. It was with no great difficulty, therefore, that Raoul obtained the concurrence of his uncle, who was naturally a friend to gallant and adventurous daring. The estates of St. Renan, the old castle and the home park, with a few hundred acres in its immediate vicinity only excepted, were converted into gold with almost unexampled rapidity.

A part of the gold was in its turn converted into a gallant brigantine of some two hundred tons, which was despatched at once along the coast of Douarnez bay, there to take in a crew of the hardy fishermen and smugglers of that stormy shore, all men well-known to Raoul de St. Renan, and well content to[159] follow their young lord to the world's end, should such be his will.

Here, indeed, I have anticipated something the progress of events, for hurry it as much as he could in those days, St. Renan could not, of course, work miracles; and though the brigantine was purchased, where she lay ready to sail, at Calais, the instant the sale of St. Renan was determined, without awaiting the completion of the transfer, or the payment of the purchase-money, many days had elapsed before the news could be sent from the capital to the coast, and the vessel despatched to Britanny.

Every thing was, however, determined; nay, every thing was in process of accomplishment before the arrival of the fair lady and her nominal husband, so that at his first interview with Rose, Raoul was enabled to lay all his plans before her, and to promise that within a month at the furthest, every thing would be ready for their certain and safe evasion.

He did not fail, however, on that account to impress upon the pretty maiden, who, as Jules was to accompany his lord, though not a hint of whither had been breathed to any one, was doubly devoted to the success of the scheme, that a method must be arranged by which he

could have daily interviews with the lovely Melanie; and this she promised that she would use all her powers to induce her mistress to permit, saying, with a gay laugh, that her permission gained, all the rest was easy.

The next day, the better to avoid suspicion, Raoul was presented to the king, in full court, by his uncle, on the double event of his return from India, and of his approaching departure for the colony of Acadie, for which it was his present purpose to sue for his majesty's consent and approbation.

The king was in great good humor, and nothing could have been more flattering or more gracious than Raoul de St. Renan's reception. Louis had heard that very morning of the fair Melanie's arrival in the city, and nothing could have fallen out more *apropos* than the intention of her quondam lover to depart at this very juncture, and that, too, for an indefinite period from the land of his birth.

Rejoicing inwardly at his good fortune, and of course, ascribing the conduct of the young man to pique and disappointment, the king, while he loaded him with honors and

attentions, did not neglect to encourage him in his intention of departing on a very early day, and even offered to facilitate his departure by making some remissions in his behalf from the strict regulations of the Douane.

All this was perfectly comprehensible to Raoul; but he was far too wise to suffer any one, even his uncle, to perceive that he understood it; and while he profited to the utmost by the readiness which he found in high places to smooth away all the difficulties from his path, he laughed in his sleeve as he thought what would be the fury of the licentious and despotic sovereign when he should discover that the very steps which he had taken to remove a dangerous rival, had actually cast the lady into that rival's arms.

Nor had this measure of Raoul's been less effectual in sparing Melanie much grief and vexation, than it had proved in facilitating his own schemes of escape; for on that very day, within an hour after his reception of St. Renan, the king caused information to be conveyed to the Marquis de Ploermel that the presentation of Madame should be deferred until such time as the Vicomte de St. Renan should have set

sail for Acadie, which it was expected would take place within a month at the furthest.

That evening, when Rose Faverney was admitted to the young lord's presence, through the agency of the enamored Jules, she brought him permission to visit her lady at midnight in her own chamber; and she brought with her a plan, sketched by Melanie's own hand, of the garden, through which, by the aid of a master-key and a rope-ladder, he was to gain access to her presence.

"My lady says, Monsieur Raoul," added the merry girl, with a light laugh, "that she admits you only on the faith that you will keep the word which you plighted to her, when last you met, and on the condition that I shall be present at all your interviews with her."

"Her honor were safe in my hands," replied the young man, "without that precaution. But I appreciate the motive, and accept the condition."

"You will remember, then, my lord—at midnight. There will be one light burning in the window, when that is extinguished, all will be safe, and you may enter fearless. Will you remember?"

"Nothing but death shall prevent me. Nor that, if the spirits of the dead may visit what they love best on earth. So tell her, Rose. Farewell!"

Four hours afterward St. Renan stood in the shadow of a dense trellice in the garden, watching the moment when that love-beacon should expire. The clock of St. Germain l'Auxerre struck twelve, and at the instant all was darkness. Another minute and the lofty wall was scaled, and Melanie was in the arms of Raoul.

It was a strange, grim, gloomy gothic chamber, full of strange niches and recesses of old stone-work. The walls were hung with gilded tapestries of Spanish leather, but were interrupted in many places by the antique stone groinings of alcoves and cup-boards, one of which, close beside the mantlepiece, was closed by a curiously carved door of heavy oak-work, itself sunk above a foot within the embrasure of the wall.

Lighted as it was only by the flickering of the wood-fire on the hearth, for the thickness of the walls, and the damp of the old vaulted room rendered a fire acceptable even at

midsummer, that antique chamber appeared doubly grim and ghostly; but little cared the young lovers for its dismal seeming; and if they noticed it at all, it was but to jest at the contrast of its appearance with the happy hours which they passed within it.

Happy, indeed, they were—almost too happy—though as pure and guiltless as if they had been hours spent within a nunnery of the strictest rule, and in the presence of a sainted abbess.[160]

Happy, indeed, they were; and although brief, oft repeated. For, thenceforth, not a night passed but Raoul visited his Melanie, and tarried there enjoying her sweet converse, and bearing to her every day glad tidings of the process of his schemes, and of the certainty of their escape, until the approach of morning warned him to make good his retreat ere envious eyes should be abroad to make espials.

And ever the page, Jules, kept watch at the ladder-foot in the garden; and the true maiden, Rose, who ever sate within the chamber with the lovers during their stolen interviews,

guarded the door, with ears as keen as those of Cerberus.

A month had passed, and the last night had come, and all was successful—all was ready. The brigantine lay manned and armed, and at all points prepared for her brief voyage at an instant's notice at Calais. Relays of horses were at each post on the road. Raoul had taken formal leave of the delighted monarch. His passport was signed—his treasures were on board his good ship—his pistols were loaded—his horses were harnessed for the journey.

For the last time he scaled the ladder—for the last time he stood within the chamber.

Too happy! ay, they were too happy on that night, for all was done, all was won; and nothing but the last step remained, and that step so easy. The next morning Melanie was to go forth, as if to early mass, with Rose and a single valet. The valet was to be mastered and overthrown as if in a street broil, the lady, with her damsel, was to step into a light caleshe, which should await her, with her lover mounted at its side, and high for Calais—

England—without the risk—the possibility of failure.

That night he would not tarry. He told his happy tidings, clasped her to his heart, bid her farewell till to-morrow, and in another moment would have been safe—a step sounded close to the door. Rose sprang to her feet, with her finger to her lip, pointing with her left hand to the deep cupboard-door.

She was right—there was not time to reach the window—at the same instant, as Melanie relighted the lamp, not to be taken in mysterious and suspicious darkness, the one door closed upon the lover just as the other opened to the husband.

But rapid and light as were the motions of Raoul, the treacherous door by which he had passed into his concealment, trembled still as Ploermel entered. And Rose's quick eye saw that he marked it.

But if he saw it, he gave no token, made no allusion to the least doubt or suspicion; on the contrary, he spoke more gayly and kindly than his wont. He apologized for his untimely intrusion, saying that her father had come suddenly to speak with them, concerning her

presentation at court, which the king had appointed for the next day, and wished, late as it was, to see her in the saloon below.

Nothing doubting the truth of his statement, which Raoul's intended departure rendered probable, Melanie started from her chair, and telling Rose to wait, for she would back in an instant, hurried out of the room, and took her way toward the great staircase.

The marquis ordered Rose to light her mistress, for the corridor was dark; and as the girl went out to do so, a suppressed shriek, and the faint sounds of a momentary scuffle followed, and then all was still.

A hideous smile flitted across the face of de Ploermel, as he cast himself heavily into an arm-chair, opposite to the door of the cupboard in which St. Renan was concealed, and taking up a silver bell which stood on the table, rung it repeatedly and loudly for a servant.

"Bring wine," he said, as the man entered. "And, hark you, the masons are at work in the great hall, and have left their tools and materials for building. Let half a dozen of the grooms come up hither, and bring with them

brick and mortar. I hate the sight of that cupboard, and before I sleep this night, it shall be built up solid with a good wall of mason-work; and so here's a health to the rats within it, and a long life to them!" and he quaffed off the wine in fiendish triumph.

He spoke so loud, and that intentionally, that Raoul heard every word that he uttered.

But if he hoped thereby to terrify the lover into discovering himself, and so convicting his fair and innocent wife, the villain was deceived. Raoul heard every word—knew his fate—knew that one word, one motion would have saved him; but that one word, one motion would have destroyed the fair fame of his Melanie.

The memory of the death of that unhappy Lord of Kerguelen came palpably upon his mind in that dread moment, and the comments of his dead father.

"I, at least," he muttered, between his hard set teeth, "I at least, will not be evidence against her. I will die silent—*fiel a la muerte*!"

And when the brick and mortar were piled by the hands of the unconscious grooms, and

when the fatal trowels clanged and jarred around him, he spake not—stirred not—gave no sign.

Even the savage wretch, de Ploermel, unable to believe in the existence of such chivalry, such honor, half doubted if he were not deceived, and the cupboard were not untenanted by the true victim.

Higher and higher rose the wall before the oaken door; and by the exclusion of the light of the many torches by which the men were working, the victim must have marked, inch by inch, the progress of his living immersement. The page, Jules, had climbed in silence to the window's ledge, and was looking in, an unseen spectator, for he had heard all that passed from without, and suspected his lord's presence in the fatal precinct.

But as he saw the wall rise higher—higher—as he saw the last brick fastened in its place solid, immovable from within, and that without strife or opposition, he doubted not but that there was some concealed exit by which St. Renan had escaped, and he descended hastily and hurried homeward.

Now came the lady's trial—the trial that shall prove to de Ploermel whether his vengeance was complete. She was led in with Rose, a prisoner. *Lettres de cachet* had been obtained, when the treason of some wretched subordinate had revealed the secret of her intended flight with Raoul; and the[161] officers had seized the wife by the connivance of the shameless husband.

"See!" he said, as she entered, "see, the fool suffered himself to be walled up there in silence. There let him die in agony. You, madam, may live as long as you please in the Bastille, *au secret*."

She saw that all was lost—her lover's sacrifice was made—she could not save him! Should she, by a weak divulging of the truth, render his grand devotion fruitless? Never!

Her pale cheek did not turn one shade the paler, but her keen eye flashed living fire, and her beautiful lip writhed with loathing and scorn irrepressible.

"It is thou who art the fool!" she said, "who hast made all this coil, to wall up a poor cat in a cupboard, as it is thou who art the base knave and shameless pandar, who hast

attempted to do murther, and all to sell thine own wife to a corrupt and loathsome tyrant!"

All stood aghast at her fierce words, uttered with all the eloquence and vehemence of real passion, but none so much as Rose, who had never beheld her other than the gentlest of the gentle. Now she wore the expression, and spoke with the tone of a young Pythoness, full of the fury of the god.

She sprung forward as she uttered the last words, extricating herself from the slight hold of the astonished officers, and rushed toward her cowed and craven husband.

"But in all things, mean wretch," she continued, in tones of fiery scorn, "in all things thou art frustrate—thy vengeance is naught, thy vile ambition naught, thyself and thy king, fools, knaves, and frustrate equally. And now," she added, snatching the dagger which Raoul had given her from the scabbard, "now die, infamous, accursed pandar!" and with the word she buried the keen weapon at one quick and steady stroke to the very hilt in his base and brutal heart.

Then, ere the corpse had fallen to the earth, or one hand of all those that were stretched out to

seize her had touched her person, she smote herself mortally with the same reeking weapon, and only crying out in a clear, high voice, "Bear witness, Rose, bear witness to my honor! Bear witness all that I die spotless!" fell down beside the body of her husband, and expired without a struggle or a groan.

Awfully was she tried, and awfully she died. Rest to her soul if it be possible.

The caitiff Marquis de Ploermel perished, as she had said, in all things frustrated; for though his vengeance was in very deed complete, he believed that it had failed, and in his very agony that failure was his latest and his worst regret.

On the morrow, when St. Renan returned not to his home, the page gave the alarm, and the fatal wall was torn down, but too late.

The gallant victim of love's honor was no more. Doomed to a lingering death he had died speedily, though by no act of his own. A blood-vessel had burst within, through the violence of his own emotions. Ignorant of the fate of his sweet Melanie, he had died, as he had lived, the very soul of honor; and when they buried him, in the old chapel of his

Breton castle, beside his famous ancestors, none nobler lay around him; and the brief epitaph they carved upon his stone was true, at least, if it were short and simple, for it ran only thus—

THE POET'S HEART.—TO MISS O. B.

BY CHARLES E. TRAIL.

Like rays of light, divinely bright,Thy sunny smiles o'er all disperse;And let the music of thy voice,More softly flow than Lesbian verse.By all the witchery of love,By every

fascinating art—The worldly spirit strive to move,But spare, O spare, the Poet's heart!

Within its pure recesses, deep,A fount of tender feeling lies;Whose crystal waters, while they sleep,Reflect the light of starry skies.Thy voice might prophet-like uncloseIts bonds, and bid those waters start,But why disturb their sweet repose?Spare, lady, spare the Poet's heart!

It cannot be that one so fair,The idol of the courtly throng—Would condescend his lot to share,And bless the lowly child of song,Would realize the soul-wrought dreams,That of his being form a part,And mingle with his sweetest themes;Then spare, O spare, the poet's heart!

The poet's heart! ye know it not,Its hopes, its sympathies, its fears;The joys that glad its humble lot;The griefs that melt it into tears.'Tis like some flower, that from the groundScarce dares to lift its petals up,Though honeyed sweets are ever foundIndwelling in its golden cup.

Love comes to him in sweeter guise,Than he appears to other men—Heav'n-born, descended from the skies,And longing to return again.But bid him not with me abide,If he can no relief impart;Ah, hide those smiles, those glances hide,And spare, O spare, the Poet's heart!

THE RETURN TO SCENES OF CHILDHOOD.

[162]

BY GRETTA.

"You have come again," said the dark old trees,As I entered my childhood's home."You

have come again," said the whispering breeze,"And wherefore have you come?

"When last I played round your youthful browIts morning's light was there,But you bring back a shadow upon it now,And a saddened look of care.

"Have you come, have you left earth's noisy strife,To seek your favorite flowers?They are gone, like the hopes which lit your life,Like your childhood's sunny hours.

"Have you come to seek for your shady dell,For that spot in the moonlit grove,Where first you were bound by the magic spell,And thrilled to the voice of love?

"Has your heart been true to that early vow,And pure as that trickling tear?Does that voice of music charm you nowAs once it charmed you here?

"Years have been short, and few, since lastAs a child you roamed the glen;But what have you learned since hence you passed,What have you lost since then?

"You have brought back a woman's ruddier cheek,A woman's fuller form,But where is the look so timid and meek,The blush so quick and warm?

"Have you come to seek for the smiles of yore,For your brief life's faded light?Do you hope to hear in these shades once moreThe blessing and 'good-night?'

"Do you come again for the kisses sweet,Do you look as you onward passFor the mingled prints of the tiny feetIn the fresh and springing grass?

"Have you come to sit on a parent's kneeAnd gaze on his reverend brow?Or to nestle in love and childish gleeOn her bosom, that's pulseless now?

"Why come you back? We can give you naught,No more the past is ours,Thine early scenes with their blessings fraught,Thy childhood's golden hours."

I have come, I have come, oh haunts of youth,With a worn and weary heart;I have

come to recall the love and truthOf my young life's guileless part.

I have come to bend o'er the holy spotWhere I prayed by a father's knee—Oh I am changed—but I ne'er forgotHis look, his smile for me.

I have not been true to my heart's first loveHere pledged 'neath the moonlit heaven,But I come to kneel in the lonely groveAnd ask to be forgiven.

I have not brought back the hopes of youth,Or the gentle look so meek,I mourn o'er my perished faith and truthAnd the quick blush of my cheek.

But, oh ye scenes, that have once beguiled,In the peaceful days of yore.I would come again like a little childWith the trust I knew before.

I would call back every hope and fear,The heart throbs full and high,The prattling child that rambled here,And ask if it were *I*?

And I would recall the murmured prayer,And the dark eyes look of love,While unseen

angels hovered thereFrom the starry worlds above.

And I've come to seek one flower here,Just one, in its fading bloom,Though it must be culled with a gushing tearFrom a parent's grassy tomb.

And I'll bear it away on my lonely breast,As a charm 'mid earth's stormy strife,An amulet, worn to give me rest,On the billowy waves of life.

I wait not now by the dancing rillFor the steps of my playmates fair—They are gone—but yon heaven is o'er me still,And I'll seek to meet them there.

Parents, and friends, and hopes are gone,And these memories only given,But they shall be links, while the heart is lone,In the "chain" that reaches heaven.

SUNSHINE AND RAIN.

BY GEORGE S. BURLEIGH.

O Blessed sunshine, and thrice-blessed rain,How ye do warm and melt the rugged soil,—Which else were barren, nathless all my toilAnd summon Beauty from her grave again,To breathe live odors o'er my scant domain:How softly from their parting buds uncoilThe furléd sweets, no more a shriveled spoilTo the loud storm, or canker's silent bane;Were it all sun, the heat would shrink them up;Were it all shower, then piteous blight were sure;Now hangs the dew in every nodding cup,Shooting new glories from its orblets pure.Sunshine and shower, I shrink from your extremes,But with delight behold your blended gleams.

THE CHRISTMAS GARLAND.

[163]

BY MISS EMMA WOOD.

CHAPTER I.

THE BOARDING-SCHOOL.

Christmas is coming! The glad sound awakes a thrill of joy in many a heart. The children clap their tiny hands and laugh aloud in the exuberance of their mirth as bright visions of varied toys and rich confectionary flit before their minds. The sound of merry sports—the gathering of the social band—the banquet—all are scenes of joy. Shout on bright children, for your innocent mirth will rise as incense to Him who was even as one of you. The Son of God once reposed his head upon a mortal breast

and wept the tears of infancy. Now risen to His throne of glory, his smile is still upon you, bright Blossoms of Blessedness.

Christmas is coming! is the cry of the young and gay, and with light hearts they prepare for the approaching festival. The holyday robes are chosen, and the presents selected which shall bring joy to so many hearts. The lover studies to determine what gift will be acceptable to his mistress, and the maiden dreams of love-tokens and honeyed words. Nor is the church forgotten amid the gathering of holyday array, for that, too, must be robed in beauty. The young claim its adornment as their appropriate sphere, and rich garlands of evergreen, mingled with scarlet berries, are twined around its pillars, or festooned along its walls. Swiftly speeds their welcome task, and a calm delight fills their hearts, as they remember Him who assumed mortality, and passed the ordeal of earthly life, that he might be, in all things, like unto mankind. Blessed be this thought, ye joyous ones, and if after-years shall bring sorrow or bitterness, ye may remember that the Holiest has trod that path before, and that deeper sorrow than mortality can suffer, once rested upon his guiltless head.

Christmas is coming! is the thought of the aged, and memory goes back to the joys of other years, when the pulses of life beat full and free, and their keen sensibilities were awake to the perception of the beautiful. Now the dim eye can no longer enjoy the full realization of beauty, and the ear is deaf to the melodies of Nature, but they can drink from the fountain of memory, and while looking upon the mirth of the youthful, recollect that once they, too, were light-hearted and joyous. Blessed to them is the approaching festival, and as they celebrate the birth of the Redeemer, they may remember that He bore the trials of life without a murmur, and laid down in the lone grave, to ensure the resurrection of the believer, while faith points to the hour when they shall inherit the glory prepared for them by His mission of suffering.

Christmas is coming! shouted we, the school-girls of Monteparaiso Seminary, as we rushed from the school-room, in glad anticipation, of the holydays. How gladly we laid down the books over which we had been poring, vainly endeavoring to fix our minds upon their pages, and gathered in various groups to plan amusements for the coming festival. One week

only, and the day would come, the pleasures of which we had been anticipating for months. Our stockings must be hung up on Christmas Eve, though the pleasure was sadly marred because each of us must, in our turn, represent the good Santa-Claus, and contribute to the stockings of our schoolmates, instead of going quietly to bed, and finding them filled on Christmas morning by the good saint, or some of his representatives. How eagerly we watched the Hudson each morning, to see if its waves remained unfettered by ice, not only because the daily arrival of the steamboat from New York was an era in our un-eventful lives, but there were many of our number whose parents or friends resided in the city, from whom they expected visits or presents. We were like a prisoned sisterhood, yet we did not pine in our solitude, for there were always wild, mirth-loving spirits in our midst, so full of fun and frolic that the exuberance of their spirits was continually breaking out, much to the discomfort of tutors and governesses. When the holydays were approaching, and the strict discipline usually maintained among the pupils was somewhat relaxed, these outbreaks became more numerous, insomuch that lessons

were carelessly omitted, or left unlearned. When study hours were over misrule was triumphant. Lizzie Lincoln could not find a seat at the table where some of the older girls were manufacturing fancy articles for Christmas presents, and avenged herself by pinning together the dresses of the girls who were seated around the table, and afterward fastening each dress to the carpet. Fan Selby saw the manœuvre, and ran to her room, where she equipped herself in a frightful looking mask, which she had manufactured of brown paper, painted in horrid devices. Arrayed in this mask, and a long white wrapper, she came stalking in at the door of the sitting-room. In their fright the girls screamed and tried to rush from the table, when a scene of confusion ensued which beggars description. The noise reached the ears of the teachers, who came from different parts of the house to the scene of the riot, but ere they reached it, Fan had deposited the mask out of sight in her own room, and was again in her place, looking as innocent as if nothing had happened. She even aided the teachers in their search for the missing "fright." When this fruitless search was ended, and a monitress placed in the

sit[164]ting-room to prevent further riots, a new alarm was raised. Mary Lee blackened her face with burnt cork, and entered the kitchen by the outside door, begging for cold victuals, much to the terror of the raw Hibernians who were very quietly sitting before the fire, and telling tales of the Emerald Isle, for they feared a negro as they would some wild beast. They ran up stairs to give the alarm, but when they returned the bird had flown, and while a fruitless search was instituted throughout the basement, Mary was in her own room, hastily removing the ebon tinge from her face. Such were a few among the many wild pranks of the mischief spirits, invented to while away the time. Quite different from this was the employment of the "sisterhood." A number of the older pupils of the school had seated themselves night after night around the table which stood in the centre of the sitting-room, in nearly the same places, with their needle-work, until it was finally suggested, that, after the manner of the older people, we should form a regularly organized society. Each member should every night take her accustomed place, and one should read while the others were busy with

their needle-work. To add a tinge of romance to the whole, we gave to each of our members the name of some flower as a soubriquet by which we might be known, and Lizzie Lincoln (our secretary) kept a humorous diary of the "Sayings and Doings of Flora's Sisterhood." Anna Lincoln was the presidentess of our society, and we gave her the name of Rose, because the queen of flowers seemed a fitting type of her majestic beauty. But the favorite of all was Clara Adams, to whom the name of Violet seemed equally appropriate. Her modesty, gentleness, and affectionate disposition had won the love of all, from Annie Lincoln, the oldest pupil, down to little Ella Selby, who lisped her praises of dear Clara Adams, and seemed to love her far better than she did her own mad-cap sister.

When we celebrated May-day Clara was chosen queen of May, though Lizzie Lincoln was more beautiful, and Anna seemed more queenly. It was the instinctive homage that young hearts will pay to goodness and purity, which made us feel as if she deserved the brightest crown we could bestow. If one of us were ill, Clara could arrange the pillows or bathe the throbbing temples more tenderly

than any other, and bitter medicines seemed less disgusting when administered by her. Was there a hard lesson to learn, a difficult problem to solve, a rebellious drawing that would take any form or shadowing but the right one, Clara was the kind assistant, and either task seemed equally easy to her. While we sat around the table that evening, little Ella Selby was leaning on the back of Clara's chair, and telling, in her own childish way, of the manifold perfections of one Philip Sidney, a classmate of her brother in college, who had spent a vacation with him at her home. Ella was quite sure that no other gentleman was half so handsome, so good, or kind as Mr. Sidney, and she added,

"I know he loves Clara, for I have told him a great deal about her, and he says that he does."

The girls all laughed at her simple earnestness, and bright blushes rose in Clara's face. Many prophecies for the future were based on this slight foundation, and Clara was raised to the rank of a heroine. It needs but slight fuel to feed the flame of romance in a school-girl's breast, and these dreamings might long have been indulged but for an interruption. A servant came, bringing a basket, with a note

from the ladies engaged in decorating the church, requesting the young ladies of the school to prepare the letters for a motto on the walls of the church. The letters were cut from pasteboard, to be covered with small sprigs of box. Pleased with the novelty of our task we were soon busily engaged, under the direction of Clara and Anna Lincoln. Even the "mischief spirits" ceased their revels to watch our progress. Thus passed that evening, and as the next day was Saturday, and of course a holyday, we completed our work. The garlands were not to be hung in the church until the Wednesday following, as Friday was Christmas day. We employed ourselves after study hours the intervening days in finishing the presents we had commenced for each other. On Wednesday morning Lucy Gray, one of our day-scholars, brought a note from her mother, requesting that she might be excused from her afternoon lessons, and inviting the teachers and young ladies of the school to join them in dressing the church. Here was a prospect for us of some rare enjoyment; and how we plead for permission, and promised diligence and good behaviour for the future, those who remember their own school-days

can easily imagine. At length permission was granted that Anna and Lizzie Lincoln, Fan Selby, Clara Adams, and I, accompanied by one of the teachers, might assist them for an hour or two in the afternoon. Never did hours seem longer to us than those that passed after the permission was given till we were on our way. The village was about half a mile from our seminary, but the walk was a very pleasant one, and when we reached the church our faces glowed with exercise in the keen December air. We found a very agreeable company assembled there, laughing and chatting gayly as they bound the branches of evergreen together in rich wreaths. Our letters were fastened to the walls, forming a beautiful inscription, and little remained to be done, save arranging the garlands. Clara and Fan Selby finished the wreaths for the altar, and were fastening them in their places, when a new arrival caused Fan to drop her wreath, and hasten toward the new-comers, exclaiming,

"Brother Charles, I am so glad to see you!"

Then, after cordially greeting his companion, she asked eagerly of her brother,

"Have you come to take us home?"

"No, mad-cap," was the laughing reply, "we are but too glad to be free for one Christmas from your wild pranks. Sidney is spending the Christmas holydays with me, and as the day was fine we thought we would visit you. When we reached the village we learned that several of the young ladies of the school were at the church, and called, thinking that you might be of the number."[165]

Turning to Sidney, Fan said, playfully,

"Follow me, and I will introduce you to Ella's favorite, Clara Adams."

Before Clara had time to recover from her confusion caused by their entrance Fan had led Philip Sidney to her, and introduced him as the friend of whom little Ella had told her so much. The eloquent blushes in Clara's face revealed in part the dreams that had been excited in her breast, while Philip, with self-possessed gallantry, begged leave to assist her in her task, and uttered some commonplace expressions, till Clara was sufficiently composed to take her part in conversation. The teacher who accompanied us, alarmed at his attention, placed herself near them, but his manner was so respectful that she could find

no excuse to interrupt their conversation. Philip Sidney was eminently handsome, and as his dark eye rested admiringly upon her, who will wonder that Clara became more than usually animated! nor is it strange that the low, musical tones of his voice, breathing thoughts of poetry with the earnestness of love, should awaken a new train of thought in the simple school-girl. She answered in few words, but the drooping of her fringed lids and the bright color in her cheek replied more eloquently than words. The moments flew swiftly, the garlands were placed, and the teacher who had watched them with an anxious eye, announced that it was time to return to the seminary. Philip knew too well the strictness of boarding-school rules to hope for a longer interview, yet even for the sake of looking longer on her graceful figure, and perchance stealing another glance from her bright eyes, he insisted upon seeing little Ella. Charles Selby objected, as it was growing late, and he had an engagement for the evening in the city. Reluctantly Philip bade Clara farewell, and from the door of the church watched her receding figure until she disappeared around the turn of the road. From that moment Clara

was invested by her schoolmates with all the dignity of a heroine of romance, and half the giddy girls in school teazed her mercilessly, and then laid their heads upon their pillows only to dream of lovers.

Christmas eve came. The elder ladies of the school accompanied our Principal to the church to listen to the services of the evening. We were scarcely seated when we perceived nearly opposite to us, that same Philip Sidney, who was the hero of our romance. Poor Clara! I sat by her side, and fancied I could hear the throbbing of her heart as those dark, expressive eyes were fixed again on hers, speaking the language of admiration too plainly to be mistaken. Then as the services proceeded, his countenance wore a shadow of deeper thought, and his eyes were fixed upon the speaker. Thus he remained in earnest attention till the services closed. When we left the church, a smile, and bow of recognition passed between him and Clara, but no word was spoken. Our sports that evening had no power to move her to mirth, but she remained silent and abstracted. The next Saturday Mrs. Selby came to see her daughter, and soon after her arrival, Fan laid a small package on the

table mysteriously, saying to Clara, "You must answer it immediately," and left the room. Clara broke the seal, and as she removed the envelope, a ring, containing a small diamond, beautifully set, fell to the floor. I picked it up, and looking on the inside, saw the name of Philip Sidney. As soon as she had read the note, she gave it to me, and placed the ring upon her finger. Then severing a small branch from a myrtle plant, which we kept in our room as a relic of home, she placed it, with a sprig of box, in an envelope, and, after directing it to Philip Sidney, gave it to Fan, who enclosed it in a letter to her brother. The note which Clara gave me was as follows:

"Forgive my presumption, dear Clara, in addressing you, so lately a stranger. Think not that I am an idle flatterer, when I say that your beauty and worth have awakened a deep love for you in my heart, and this love must be my excuse. I would have sought another interview with you, but I know the rules of your school would have forbid, and the only alternative remaining is to make this avowal, or be forgotten by you. I do not ask you now to promise to be mine, or even to love me, till I have proved myself worthy of your affection.

My past life has been one of thoughtlessness and inaction, but it shall be my endeavor in future to atone for those misspent years. Your image will ever be with me as a bright spirit from whose presence I cannot flee, and whisper hope when my energies would fail. I only ask your remembrance till I am worthy to claim your love. If you do not see me or hear from me at the end of five years, you may believe that I have failed to secure the desired position in the world, or am no longer living. Will you grant me this favor—to wear the ring enclosed, and sometimes think of me? If so, send me some token by Mrs. S., to tell me that I may hope."

The evergreens, with their language of love and constancy were the token, and the ring sparkled upon Clara's finger, so that I knew well that Philip Sidney would not soon be forgotten.

CHAPTER II.

A GLANCE AT HOME.

The little village of Willowdale is situated in one of those romantic dells which are found

here and there among the hills of Massachusetts. A small stream, tributary to the Connecticut, flows through the village, so small that it is barely sufficient to furnish the necessary mill-seats for the accommodation of a community of farmers, but affording no encouragement to manufacturers. It is to this reason, perhaps, that we may attribute the fact that a place, which was amongst the earliest settlements of Massachusetts, should remain to this day so thinly inhabited. The rage for manufactures, so prevalent in New England, has led speculators to place factories on every stream of sufficient power to keep them in operation, and a spirit of enterprise and locomotion has caused railroads to pass through sections of the country hitherto unfrequented by others than tillers[166] of the soil. Cities have sprung up where before were only small villages, and brisk little villages are found, where a few years ago were only solitary farm-houses. But in spite of all such changes, Willowdale has escaped the ravages of these merciless innovators. The glassy river still glides on in its natural bed, and even the willows on its banks, from which the village takes its name, are suffered to stand, unscathed

by the woodman's axe. The "iron horse" has never disturbed the inhabitants by his shrill voice, and the rattling of cars has not broken upon the stillness of a summer-day. The village is not on the direct route from any of the principal cities to others, consequently the inhabitants suffer little apprehension of having their fine farms cut up by rail-road tracks. The village consists of one principal street, with houses built on both sides, at sufficient distances from the street and each other, to admit of those neat yards, with shade-trees, flowers, and white fences, which are the pride of New England, and scattered among the surrounding fields are tasteful farm-houses.

There are two houses of worship in the place: the Episcopal church, which was erected by the first settlers, before the revolution; and the Congregationalist house, more recently built. There is but little trade carried on in the place, and one store is sufficient to supply the wants of the inhabitants. The Episcopal church stands on a slight eminence, at a little distance from the main street of the village, and a lane extending beyond it leads to the parsonage. A little farther down this lane is my father's house, and nearly opposite the house of

Deacon Lee, the home of Clara Adams. Clara was left an orphan at an early age. Her father was the son of an early friend of the old rector. The latter, having no children, adopted Henry Adams, and educated him as his own son, in the hope of preparing him for the ministry, but with that perversity so common in human nature, the youth determined to become an artist. The rector, not wishing to force him unwillingly into the sacred office, consented that he should pursue his favorite art. He placed him under the tuition of one of the first painters in a neighboring city, hoping that his natural genius, aided by his ambition, might enable him to excel. Henry Adams followed his new pursuit with all the ardor of an impetuous nature, till the bright eyes of Clara Lee won his heart, and his thoughts were directed in a new channel, until he had persuaded her to share his lot. It proved, indeed, a darkened lot to the young bride. Her husband was a reckless, unsatisfied being, and though he ever loved her with all the affection of which such natures are capable, the warm expressions of his love, varied by fits of peevishness and ill-humor, were so unlike the calm, unchanging devotedness of her nature

that she felt a bitter disappointment. Soon after the birth of their daughter his health failed, and he repaired to Italy for the benefit of a more genial climate, and in the hope of perfecting himself in his art. He lived but a few months after his arrival there, and the sad intelligence came like a death-blow to his bereaved wife. She lingered a year at the parsonage, a saddened mourner, and then her wearied spirit found its rest. The old rector would gladly have nurtured the little orphan as his own child, but he could not resist the entreaties of Deacon Lee, her mother's brother, and reluctantly consented to have her removed to his house. Yet much of her time was spent at the parsonage, and growing up as it were in an atmosphere of love, it is not strange that gentleness was the ruling trait of her character. Deacon Lee was one of that much-scandalized class, the Congregationalist deacons of New England, who have so often been described with a pen dipped in gall, if we may judge from the bitterness of the sketches. Scribblers delight in portraying them as rum-selling hypocrites, sly topers, lovers of gain, and fomenters of dissension, and so far has this been carried, that no tale of Yankee cunning or

petty fraud is complete unless the hero is a deacon. It is true there are far too many such instances in real life, where eminence in the church is their only high standing, and the name of religion is but a cloak for selfish vices, but it is equally true that among this class of men are the good, the true, and kind, of the earth, whose lives are ruled by the same pure principles which they profess. Such was Deacon Lee, and it were well if there were more like him, to remove the stain which others of an opposite character have brought upon the office. He was one of those whom sorrow purifies, and had bowed in humble resignation to heavy afflictions. Of a large family only one son had lived to attain the years of manhood. The mother of Clara had been very dear to him, and he felt that her orphan child would supply, in a measure, the place of his own lost ones. His wife was his opposite, and theirs was one of those unaccountable unions where there is apparently no bond of sympathy. Stern and exact in the performance of every duty, she wished to enforce the same rigid observance upon others. The loss of her children had roused in her a zeal for religion, which, in one

of a warmer temperament, would have been fanaticism. While her husband was a worshiper from a love of God and his holy laws, she was prompted by fears of the wrath to come. He bowed in thankfulness, even while he wept their loss, to the Power that had borne his little ones to a brighter world, while her life gained new austerity from the thought that they had been taken from her as a judgment on her worldliness and idolatry. She loved to dwell upon the sufferings of the Pilgrim Fathers of New England, and emulate their rigid lives, forgetting that it was the dark persecution of the times in which they lived that left this impress upon their characters. Her husband loved to commend the good deeds of their neighbors, while she was equally fond of censuring transgressors. Perhaps the result of their efforts was better than it would have been had both possessed the disposition of either one of them. Her firmness and energy atoned for the negligence resulting from his easy temper, and his sunny smile and kind words softened the asperity with which she would have ruled her household. Their son was engaged in mercantile business in a neigh[167]boring city, and their home would

have been desolate but for the presence of little Clara. She was the sunshine of the old man's heart, and he forgot toil and weariness when he sat down by his own fireside, with the merry prattler upon his knee, and her little arms were twined about his neck. She was the image of his lost sister, and it seemed to him but a little while since her mother had sat thus upon his knee, and lavished her caresses upon him. In spite of the predictions of the worthy dame that she would be spoiled, he indulged her every wish, checking only the inclination to do wrong. Nor was the good lady herself without affection for the little orphan, but she wished to engraft a portion of her own sternness into her nature, and in her horror of prelacy she did not like to have such a connecting link between her family and that of the rector. She had never loved Clara's father, yet she could not find it in her heart to be unkind to the little orphan, so she contented herself with laying his faults and follies at the door of the church to which he belonged. Clara had been my playfellow from infancy, and at the village school we had pursued our studies together. When my parents decided to place me at a boarding-school on the banks of the

Hudson, I plead earnestly with the deacon that Clara might go with me. Her aunt objected strenuously to her acquiring the superficial accomplishments of the world, but the old man for once in his life was firm, and declared that Clara should have as good an education as any one in the vicinity. Accordingly we were placed at Monteparaiso Seminary, where was laid the scene of the last chapter.

CHAPTER III.

THE RETURN HOME.

Our school-days passed, as school-days ever will, sometimes happily, and again lingering as if they would never be gone. Clara was still the same sweet, simple-minded innocent girl, but her mirth was subdued by thoughtfulness, though the calm tranquillity of her life was unruffled by the new feeling that had found a place in her heart. She pursued her studies with constant assiduity, and at the close of our third year at school, was the first scholar in the institution. She was advanced beyond others of her age when she entered, and had improved every opportunity to the best of her abilities

after becoming a member of the school. Three years was the period assigned for our school-days, and we were to return to Willowdale at the close of that time. Though we loved our schoolmates dearly, we were happy to think of meeting once more with the friends from whom we had so long been separated. Anna Lincoln had left the year before, and Lizzie had taken her place as Presidentess of "the Sisterhood." Fan Selby had left off her wild pranks and become quite sedate. Mary Lee was less boisterous in her mirth than formerly, and the younger members of the school seemed ready to take the places of those who were about to leave. It was sad for us when we bade farewell to the companions of years, though we were pleased with the thought of seeing more of the world than a school-girl's life would allow. I will not attempt to describe our joy when we were once more at our homes, nor the warm reception of those around our own firesides. Never was there a happier man than old Deacon Lee, as he led Clara to the window, that he might better see the rich bloom on her cheek, and the light of her eye. "Thank God!" was his fervent ejaculation, "that you have come to us in

health. I was afraid that so much poring over books would make you look pale and delicate, as your poor mother did before she died. How much you are like what she was at your age." Then with a feeling of childish delight he opened the door of their rustic parlor, and showed her a small collection of new books, a present from the rector, and a neat piano, which he had purchased himself in Boston to surprise her on her return.

"You are still the same dear, kind uncle," said Clara, as she run her fingers over the keys, and found its tone excellent; "you are always thinking of something to make me happy. How shall I ever repay your kindness?"

"By enjoying it," was his reply. "The old man has a right to indulge his darling, and nothing else in this world can make him so happy as to see your rosy cheeks and bright eyes, and hear your merry voice; but let us hear you sing and play."

Tears of delight glistened in the old man's eyes as she warbled several simple airs to a graceful accompaniment. Mrs. Lee sighed deeply, and would have given them a long lecture upon the vanities and frivolities of the world, had not

Clara changed the strain, and sung some of her favorite hymns.

"Are you not tired?" asked her uncle, with his usual considerate kindness. "Come, let us go to the garden, and see the dahlias I planted, because I knew the other flowers would be killed by the frost before you came home."

"With pleasure," answered Clara; "but first let me sing a song that I have learned on purpose to please you."

Then she sung the beautiful words, "He doeth all things well." The old man's eyes beamed with a holy light as he listened to the exquisite music which expressed the sentiments that had pervaded his life. As she rose from the piano, he laid his hands upon her head caressingly, saying, "Blessed be His name, who guards my treasures in Heaven, and has still left me this rich possession on earth." The old lady, melted by the sight of his emotion, and the sentiment expressed, clasped her to her heart, and called her her own dear child.

Months glided on with swift wings, and even Mrs. Lee was forced to give up her arguments against a fashionable education. She had predicted that Clara would be a fine lady, and

feel above performing the common duties of life; but every morning with the early dawn she shared the tasks of her aunt, and seemed as much at home in the dairy or kitchen as when seated at her piano. Her step was as light and graceful while tripping over the fields as it had been in the dance, and her fingers as skillful in making[168] her own and her aunt's dresses, as they had been at her embroidery. The good dame had learned to love the piano, and more than once admitted that she would feel quite lonely without it. So she was fain to retreat from her position, by saying that her old opinions held good as general rules, though Clara was an exception, for no one else was ever like her. At length her old feelings revived when a young farmer in the neighborhood aspired to the hand of Clara, and was kindly, though firmly, refused. She was sure that it came of pride, and that the novels she had read had filled her head with ideas of high life. But her good uncle came to the rescue, and declared that her inclinations should not be crossed, and he had no wish that she should marry till she could be happier with another than she was with them. Clara longed to tell him of her acquaintance with Philip

Sidney, but she feared it would make him anxious, and resolved to say nothing till time had proved the truth of her lover. From this time forth the subject of her marriage was not mentioned, and Clara was left free to pursue her own inclinations. Her presence was a continual source of happiness to her uncle, and her life flowed on like a gentle stream, diffusing blessings on all around her, while a sense of happiness conferred threw a lustre around every hour.

CHAPTER IV.

CONCLUSION.

Five years had passed since the commencement of our tale, and Clara and I still remained at our homes in Willowdale. Life had passed gently with us, and the friendship formed in our school-days remained unbroken. It was sweet to recall those days; and we passed many a pleasant hour in the renewal of old memories. Clara had heard nothing from Philip Sidney, save once, about a year before, when a letter from Fan Selby informed her that he had called on them. He

had inquired very particularly after Clara, and said that he intended to visit Willowdale the following year, but where the intervening time was to be passed she did not know. It seemed very strange to me that Clara should not doubt his truth from his long silence, but her faith remained unshaken.

It was the day before Christmas, and the young people of Willowdale were assembled to finish the decorations of the church. The garlands were hung in deep festoons along the walls, and twined around the pillars. The pulpit and altar were adorned with wreaths tastefully woven of branches of box mingled with the dark-green leaves and scarlet berries of the holly, the latter gathered from trees which the old rector had planted in his youth, and carefully preserved for this purpose. On the walls over the entrance was the inscription, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace and good-will to men," in letters covered with box, after the model of those we had seen in our school-days. We surveyed our work with pleasure, mingled with anxiety to discover any improvement that might be made, for we knew that a stranger was that night to address us. The growing infirmities of the old rector had

for a long time rendered the duties of a pastor very fatiguing to him, and he had announced to us the Sabbath before, that a young relative who had lately taken orders, would be with him on Christmas Eve, and assist him until his health should be improved. The news was unwelcome to the older members of the congregation, who had been so long accustomed to hear instruction from their aged pastor that the thought of seeing another stand in his place was fraught with pain to them. He had been truly their friend, sharing their joys and sorrows—and their hearts were linked to him as childrens' to a parent. At the baptismal font, the marriage altar, and the last sad rites of the departed, he had presided, and it seemed as if the voice of a stranger must strike harshly upon their ears. But to the young there was pleasure in the thought of change; and though they dearly loved the old man, the charm of novelty was thrown around their dreams of his successor. No one knew his name, though rumor whispered that he had just returned from England, where he had spent the last year. No wonder, then, that we looked with critic eyes upon our work, eager to know how it must appear to one who had traveled abroad,

and lingered among the rich cathedrals of our fatherland. Clara alone seemed indifferent, and was often rallied on her want of interest in the young stranger, I alone read her secret, as she glanced at the gem which sparkled upon her finger, for I knew that her thoughts were with the past—and Philip Sidney.

Christmas Eve arrived, as bright and beautiful as the winter nights of the North. A light snow covered the ground, and the Frost King had encrusted it with thousands of glittering diamonds. The broad expanse of the valley was radiant in the moonbeams, and the branches of the willows were glittering with frosty gems. The church was brilliantly lighted, and the blaze from its long windows left a bright reflection upon the pure surface of the snow. The merry ringing of sleigh-bells were heard in every direction, and numerous sleighs deposited their fair burden at the door. There was a general gathering of the young people from ours and the neighboring villages, to witness the services of the evening, and brighter eyes than a city assembly could boast, flashed in the lamp-light. The garlands were more beautiful in this subdued light than they had been in the glare of day, and their richness

was like a magic spell of beauty to enthrall the senses of the beholder. Clara and I were seated in one of the pews directly in front of the altar, occasionally looking back to see the new arrivals, and return the greetings of friends from other villages. Suddenly the organ swelled in a rich peal of music, and the old pastor entered, followed by the youthful stranger. There was no time to scrutinize the features of the latter ere he knelt and concealed his face, yet there was something in the jetty curls that rested upon his snowy surplice, as his head laid within his folded hands that looked familiar, and Clara involuntarily grasped my hand. As he arose and opened the prayer-book to turn to the[169] services of the evening, he took a momentary survey of the congregation. That glance was enough to tell us that the stranger was Philip Sidney. As his eye met Clara's, a crimson flush spread over his pale face, his dark eye glowed, and his hand trembled slightly as he turned over the leaves. It was but a moment ere he was calm and self-possessed again, and when he commenced reading the services his voice was clear and rich. The deepest silence pervaded the assembly, save

when the responses rose from every part of the house. Then the organ peals, and the sweet voices of the choir joined in the anthems, and again all was still. The charm of eloquence is universally acknowledged, and the statesman, the warrior, and votary of science have all wielded it as a weapon of might, but we can never feel its irresistible power so fully as when listening to its richness from the pulpit. The perfect wisdom of holy writ, the majesty of thought, and purity of sentiment it inspires, will elevate the mind of the hearer above surrounding objects, and when to this power is added beauty of language and a musical voice, the spell is deeper. Such was the charm that held all in silent attention while Philip Sidney spoke. The scene was one which would tend to fix the mind on the event it was designed to commemorate, and the sweet music of his words might remind one of the angel's song proclaiming "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace and good-will to men." Richer seemed its melody, and more beautiful his language, as he dwelt upon the love and mercy of the Redeemer's mission, and the hope of everlasting life it brought to the perishing. He led them back to the hour when moral

darkness enshrouded the world, and mankind were doomed to perish under the frown of an offended God. There was but one ray to cheer the gloom, the prophetic promise of the Messiah who should come to redeem the world. To this they looked, and vainly dreamed that he should appear in regal splendor, to gather his followers and form a temporal kingdom. Far from this, the angel's song was breathed to simple shepherds, and the star in the East pointed out a stable as the lowly birth-place of the Son of God. He came, not to rule in splendor in the palaces of kings, but to bring the gospel of peace to the lowliest habitations, and fix his throne in the hearts of the meek and humble-minded. He claimed no tribute of this world's wealth as an offering, but the love and obedience of those whom he came to save. Earnestly the speaker besought his hearers to yield to their Saviour the adoration which was his due, and requite His all-excelling love with the purest and deepest affections of their hearts. Every eye was fixed upon the speaker, every ear intently listened to catch his words, and tears suffused the eyes so lately beaming with gayety. At the close of his eloquent appeal, there were few in that

congregation unmoved. The closing prayers were read, the benediction pronounced, and the audience gradually left the house. Clara and I were the last to leave our seats, and as we followed the crowd that had gathered in the aisles before us she did not speak, but the hand that rested in mine trembled like a frightened bird. Suddenly a voice behind us whispered the name of Clara. She turned and met the gaze of Philip Sidney. The trusting faith of years had its reward, and those so long severed met again. Not wishing to intrude upon the joy of that moment, I left them, and followed on with the old rector. We walked on in the little foot-path that led to our homes; and while Clara's hand rested upon his arm, the young clergyman told the tale of his life since their parting.

"But how did it come," asked Clara, "that you chose the sacred profession of the ministry?"

"I cannot fully trace the source of the emotions that led me to become a worshiper at the throne of the Holiest, unless it is true that the love of the pure and good of earth is the first pluming of the soul's pinions for heaven. I went to church that Christmas eve, urged only

by the wish to look upon your face once more, yet, when there, the words of the speaker won my attention. I had listened to others equally eloquent many times before; but that night my heart seemed more susceptible to religious impressions. I felt a deep sense of the folly and ingratitude of my past life, and firmly resolved for the future to live more worthily of the immortal treasure that was committed to my charge. Prayerfully and earnestly I studied the Word of Life, and resolved to devote myself to the ministry. I wrote to my worthy relative, the rector of Willowdale, for his advice, and found, to my great joy, that he was your devoted friend. He condemned my rashness in the avowal I had made to you, and insisted that there should be no communication between us until I had finished my studies. I consented, on condition that he should write frequently and inform me of your welfare. One year ago I had completed my studies, and would have hastended to you, but my stern Mentor insisted that I should travel abroad, as he said, to give me a better knowledge of human nature, and test the truth of my early affection. I have passed the ordeal, and now, after an absence of

five years, returned to you unchanged in heart."

The rest of the conversation was lost to me, as I reached my home; but that it was satisfactory to those engaged in it I know from the fact, that the next day I had the pleasure of congratulating Clara upon her engagement, with the full consent of her relatives. The remainder of the tale is quickly told. The old rector resigned his pastoral charge to Philip Sidney, with the full approbation of his parishioners; and it was arranged that the old rector and his wife should remain at the parsonage with the young clergyman and his bride. Deacon Lee became warmly attached to Philip, and felt a father's interest in the happiness of Clara, though he sometimes chid her playfully for keeping their early acquaintance a secret from him. As for Mrs. Lee, she was so proud of the honor of being aunt to a minister, that she almost forgot her dislike to prelacy. It is true she was once heard to say to one of her gossiping acquaintances, that she would have been better pleased if Clara had married a good Congregationalist minister, even if he had not preached quite so flowery sermons as Philip Sidney.[170]

One bright day in the month of May following was their wedding-day. The bride looked beautiful in her pure white dress of muslin, with a wreath of May-blossoms in her hair. Blessings were invoked on the youthful pair by all, both high and low, and sincere good wishes expressed for their future happiness. Here I will leave them, with the wish that the affection of early years may remain through life undimmed, and that the Christmas Garland, so linked with the history of their loves, may be their emblem.

HEADS OF THE POETS.

BY W. GILMORE SIMMS.

I.—CHAUCER.

——Chaucer's healthy Muse,Did wisely one sweet instrument to choose—The native reed; which, tutored with rare skill,Brought other Muses [1] down to aid its trill!A cheerful song that sometimes quaintly maskedThe fancy, as the affections sweetly tasked;And won from England's proud and *foreign* [2] court,For native England's *tongue*, a sweet report—And sympathy—till in due time it grewA permanent voice that proved itself the true,And rescued the brave language of the land,From that [3] which helped to strength the invader's hand.Thus, with great patriot service, making clearThe way to other virtues quite as dearIn English liberty—which could grow alone,When English speech grew pleasant to be known;To spell the ears of princes, and to makeThe peasant worthy for his poet's sake.

II.—SHAKSPEARE.

——'T were hard to say,Upon what instrument did Shakspeare play—Still harder what he did not! He had allThe orchestra at service, and could callTo use, still other implements, unknown,Or only valued in his hands

alone!The Lyre, whose burning inspiration cameStill darting upward, sudden as the flame;The murmuring wind-harp, whose melodious sighsSeem still from hopefullest heart of love to rise,And gladden even while grieving; the wild strainThat night-winds wake from reeds that breathe in pain,Though breathing still in music; and that voice,Which most he did affect—whose happy choiceMade sweet flute-accents for humanityOut of that living heart which cannot die,The Catholic, born of love, that still controlsWhile man is man, the tide in human souls.

III.—THE SAME.

——His universal songWho sung by Avon, and with purpose strongCompelled a voice from native oracles,That still survive their altars by their spells—Guarding with might each avenue to fame,Where, trophied over all, glows Shakspeare's name!The mighty master-hand in his we trace,If erring often, never commonplace;Forever frank and cheerful, even when woCommands the tear to speak, the sigh to flow;Sweet without weakness, without storming, strong,Jest not o'erstrained, nor

argument too long;Still true to reason, though intent on sport,His wit ne'er drives his wisdom out of court;A brooklet now, a noble stream anon,Careering in the meadows and the sun;A mighty ocean next, deep, far and wide,Earth, life and Heaven, all imaged in its tide!Oh! when the master bends him to his art,How the mind follows, how vibrates the heart;The mighty grief o'ercomes us as we hear,And the soul hurries, hungering, to the ear;The willing nature, yielding as he sings,Unfolds her secret and bestows her wings,Glad of that best interpreter, whose skillBrings hosts to worship at her sacred hill!

IV.—SPENSER.

It was for Spenser, by his quaint deviceTo spiritualize the passionate, and subdueThe wild, coarse temper of the British Muse,By meet diversion from the absolute:To lift the fancy, and, where still the songProclaimed a wild humanity, to swaySoothingly soft, and by fantastic wilesPersuade the passions to a milder clime!His was the song of chivalry, and wroughtFor like results upon society;Artful in high degree, with plan obscure,That mystified

to lure, and, by its spells,Making the heart forgetful of itselfTo follow out and trace its labyrinths,In that forgetfulness made visible!Such were the uses of his Muse; to sayHow proper and how exquisite his lay,How quaintly rich his masking—with what artHe fashioned fairy realms and paints their queen,How purely—with how delicate a skill—It needs not, since his song is with us still!

V.—MILTON.

The master of a single instrument,But that the Cathedral Organ; Milton singsWith drooping spheres about him, and his eyeFixed steadily upward, through its mortal cloud,Seeing the glories of Eternity!The sense of the invisible and trueStill present to his soul, and in his song;The consciousness of duration through all time,Of work in each condition, and of hopesIneffable, that well sustain through life,Encouraging through danger and in death,Cheering, as with a promise rich in wings!A godlike voice that, through cathedral towersStill rolls, prolonged in echoes, whose deep tonesSeem born of thunder, that subdued

to musicSoothe when they startle most! A Prophet Bard,With utt'rance equal to his mission of power,And harmonies that, not unworthy heaven,Might well lift earth to equal worthiness.

VI.—BURNS AND SCOTT.

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——Not forgotten or denied,Scott's trumpet-lay, and Burns's violin-song;The one a call to arms, of action fond;The other, still discoursing to the heart—The lowly human heart—of loves and joys—Such as beseem the cotter's calm fireside—Cheerful and buoyant still amid a sadness—Such sadness as still couples love with care!

VII.—BYRON.

——For Byron's home and fame,It needed manhood only! Had he knownHow sorrow should be borne, nor sunk in shame,For that his destiny decreed to moan—His Muse had been triumphant over TimeAs still she is o'er Passion; still sublime—Having subdued her

soul's infirmityTo aliment; and, with herself o'ercome,O'ercome the barriers of Eternity,And lived through all the ages, with a swayComplete, and unembarrassed by the doomThat makes of Nature's porcelain, common clay!

VIII.-A GROUP.

Shelly and Wordsworth,—Tennyson, Barrett, Horne and Browning;—Baily and Taylor;—Campbell and Moore.

——As one who had been brought,By Fairy hands, and as a changeling leftIn human cradle, the sad substituteFor a more smiling infant—Shelly singsVague minstrelsies that speak a foreign birth,Among erratic tribes; yet not in vainHis moral, and the fancies in his flightNot without profit for another race!He left his spirit with his voice—a voiceSolely spiritual, which will long sufficeTo wing the otherwise earthy of the time,And, with the subtler leaven of the soul,Inform the impetuous passions!With him cameAntagonist, yet still with sympathy,Wordsworth, the Bard of the

contemplative,A voice of purest thought in sweetest music!—These, in themselves unlike, together linked,Appear in unison in after days,Making progressive still, the mental births,That pass successively through rings of time,Each to a several conquest; most unlikeThat of its sire, yet borrowing of its strength,Where needful, and endowing it with new,To meet the new necessity which stillHaunts the free progress of each conquering race.—Thus, Tennyson and Barrett, Browning, Horne,Blend their opposing faculties, and speakFor that fresh nature, which in daily thingsBeholds the immortal, and from common formsExtorts the Eternal still! So Baily singsIn Festus; so, upon a humbler rank,Testing the worth of social policies,As working through a single human will,The Muse of Taylor argues—Artevelde,Being the man who marks a popular growth,And notes the transit of a thought through time,Growing as still it speeds.....

ExquisiteThe ballads of Campbell, and the lays of Moore,Appealing to our tastes, our gentler moods,The play of the affections, or the thoughtsThat come with national pride; and as we pauseIn our own march, delight the

sentiment!But nothing they make for progress. They perfectThe language, and diversify its powers—Please and beguile, and, for the forms of art,Prove what they are, and may be. But they liftNone of our standards; help us not in growth;Compel no prosecution of our search,And leave us, where they found us—with the time!

HOPE ON—HOPE EVER.

BY H. CURTISS HINE, U. S. N.

Poor stricken one! whose toil can gain,And barely gain, the coarsest fare,From bitter thoughts and words refrain;Yield not to dark despair!The blackest night that e'er was bornWas followed by a radiant morn;Heed not

the world's unfeeling scorn,Nor think life's brittle thread to sever;Hope on—hope ever!

Hope, though your sun is hid in gloom,And o'er your care-worn, wrinkled brow,Grief spreads his shadow—'tis the doomThat falls on many now.Grim Poverty, with icy hand,May bind to earth with ruthless bandBright gifted ones throughout the land;But struggle still that band to sever—Hope on—hope ever!

Sit not and pine that FORTUNE ledAnother on to grasp her wreath;The same blue sky is o'er thy head,The same green earth beneath,The same bright angel-eyes look down,Each night upon the humblest clown,That sees the king with jeweled crown;Of these, stern fate can rob thee never—Hope on—hope ever!

What though the proud should pass thee by,And curl their haughty lips with scorn;Like thee, they soon must droop and die,For all of woman born,Are journeying to a shadowy land,Where each devoid of pride must stand,By hovering wings of angels'

fanned;There sorrow can assail thee never—Hope on—hope ever!

Then plod along with tearless eye,Poor son of toil! and ne'er repine,The road through barren wastes may lie,And thorns, as oft hath mine;But there was ONE who came to earth,Star-heralded at hour of birth,Humble, obscure, unknown his worth,Whose path was thornier far. Weep never!Hope on—hope ever!

MEXICAN JEALOUSY.

[172]

A SKETCH OF THE LATE CAMPAIGN.

BY ECOTIER.

On the 15th of September, two days after the storming of Chapultepec, a small party of soldiers, in dark uniforms, were seen to issue from the great gate of that castle, and, winding down the Calzada, turn towards the City of Mexico. This occurred at 10 o'clock in the morning. The day was very hot, and the sun, glancing vertically upon the flinty rocks that paved the causeway, rendered the heat more oppressive.

At the foot of the hill the party halted, taking advantage of the shade of a huge cypress tree, to set down a litera, which four men carried upon their shoulders. This they deposited under one of the arches of the aqueduct in order the better to protect its occupant from the hot rays of the sun.

The occupant of the litera was a wounded man, and the pale and bloodless cheek, and fevered eye showed that his wound was not a slight one. There was nothing around to denote his rank, but the camp cloak, of dark blue, and the crimson sash, which lay upon the litera, showed that the wounded man was an officer. The sash had evidently been saturated with blood, which was now dried upon it, leaving

parts of it shriveled like, and of a darker shade of crimson. It had staunched the life-blood of its wearer upon the 13th. The soldiers stood around the litter, their bronzed faces turned upon its occupant, apparently attentive to his requests. There was something in the gentle care with which these rude men seemed to wait upon the young officer, that bespoke the existence of a stronger feeling than mere humanity. There was that admiration which the brave soldiers feel for him who has led them in the field of battle, *at their head*. That small group were among the first who braved the frowning muzzles of the cannon upon the parapets of Chapultepec. The wounded officer had led them to those parapets.

The scene around exhibited the usual indications of a recent field of battle. There were batteries near, with dismounted cannon, broken carriages, fragments of shells, dead horses, whose riders lay by them, dead too, and still unburied. Parties were strolling about, busied with this sad duty, but heaps of mangled carcases still lay above ground, exhibiting the swollen limbs and distorted features of decomposition. The atmosphere was heavy with the disagreeable odor, and the

wounded man, turning upon his pillow, gently commanded the escort to proceed. Four stout soldiers again took up the litera, and the party moved slowly along the aqueduct, toward the Garita Belen. The little escort halted at intervals for rest and to change bearers. The fine trees that line the great aqueduct on the Tacubaya road, though much torn and mangled by the cannonade of the 13th, afforded a fine shelter from the hot sun-beams. In two hours after leaving Chapultepec, the escort entered the Garita Belen, passed up the Paseo Nuevo, and halted in front of the Alameda.

Any one who has visited the City of Mexico will recollect, that opposite the Alameda, on its southern front, is a row of fine houses, which continue on to the Calle San Francisco, and thence to the Great Plaza, forming the Calles Correo, Plateros, &c. These streets are inhabited principally by foreigners, particularly that of Plateros, which is filled with Frenchmen. To prevent their houses from being entered by the American soldiery upon the 14th, the windows were filled with national flags, indicating to what nation the respective owners of the houses belonged.

There were Belgians, French, English, Prussians, Spanish, Danes, and Austrians—in fact, every kind of flag. Mexican flags alone were not to be seen. Where these should have been, at times, the white flag—the banner of peace—hung through the iron railings, or from the balcony. In front of a house that bore this simple ensign, the escort, with the litera, had accidentally stopped.

The eye of the wounded officer rested mechanically upon the little flag over his head, when his attention was arrested by noticing that this consisted of a small, white lace handkerchief, handsomely embroidered upon the corners, and evidently such as belonged to some fair being. Though suffering from the agony of his wound, there was something so attractive in this discovery, that the eyes of the invalid were immediately turned upon the window, or rather grating, from which the flag was suspended, and his countenance changed at once, from the listless apathy of pain to an expression of eager interest. A young girl was in the window, leaning her forehead against the *reja*, or grating, and looking down with more of painful interest than curiosity upon the pale face beneath her. It was the window of

the *entresol*, slightly raised above the street, and the young girl herself was evidently of that class known to the aristocracy of Mexico as the "leperos." She was tastefully dressed, however, in the picturesque costume of her class and country, and her beautiful black hair, her dark Indian eye, the half olive, half carmine tinge upon her soft cheek, formed a countenance at once strange, and strikingly beautiful. Her neck, bosom, and shoulders, seen over the window-stone, were of that form which strikes you as possessing more of the oval than the rotund, in short the model of the perfect woman.

On seeing the gaze of the wounded man so intently fixed upon her, the young girl blushed, and drew back. The officer felt disappointed and sorry, as[173] one feels when the light, or a beautiful object is suddenly removed from his sight; still, however, keeping his eyes intently fixed upon the window, as though unable to unrivet his gaze. This continued for some moments, when a beautiful arm was plunged through the iron grating, holding in the most delicate little fingers a glass of piñal.

A soldier stepped up, and taking the proffered glass, held it to the lips of the wounded officer, who gladly drank of the cool and refreshing beverage, without being able to thank the fair donor, who had withdrawn her hand at parting with the glass. The glass was held up to the window, but the hand that clutched it was coarse and large, and evidently that of a man. A muttered curse, too, in the Spanish language, was heard to proceed from within. This was heard but indistinctly. The invalid gazed at the window for some minutes, expecting the return of the beautiful apparition, then as if he had given up all hope, he called out a "gracias-adios!" and ordered the escort to move on. The soldiers, once more shouldering the litera, passed up the Calle Correo, and entered the Hotel Compagnon, in the street of Espiritu Santo.

For two months the invalid was confined to his chamber, but often, during that time, both waking and dreaming, the face of the beautiful Mexican girl would flit across his fevered fancy. At the end of this time his surgeon gave him permission to ride out in an easy carriage. He was driven to the Alameda, where he ordered the carriage to halt under the shade of

its beautiful trees, and directly in front of the spot where he had rested on entering the city. He recognized the little window. The white flag was not now there, and he could see nothing of the inmates. He remained a considerable time seated in the carriage, gazing upon the house, but no face appeared at the cold iron grating, no smile to cheer his vigil. Tired and disappointed, he ordered his carriage to be driven back to the hotel.

Next day he repeated the manœuvre, and the next, and the next, with a like success. Probably he had not chosen the proper time of day. It was certainly not the hour when the lovely faces of the Mexican women appear in their balconies. This reflection induced him to change the hour, and, upon the day following, he ordered his carriage in the evening. Just before twilight, it drew up as usual under the tall trees of the Alameda. Imagine the delight of the young officer, at seeing the face of the beautiful Mexican through the gratings of the *reja*.

The stir made by the stopping of the carriage had attracted her. The uniform of its inmate was the next object of her attention, but when

her eyes fell upon the face of the wearer, a strange expression came over her countenance, as if she were struggling with some indistinct recollections, and all at once that beautiful countenance was suffused with a smile of joy. She had recognized the officer. The latter, who had been an anxious observer of every change of expression, smiled in return, and bowed an acknowledgment, then turning to his servant, who was a Mexican, he told him, in Spanish, to approach the window, and offer his thanks to the young lady for her act of kindness upon the 15th of September.

The servant delivered the message, and shortly afterward the carriage drove off. For several evenings the same carriage might be seen standing under the trees of the Alameda. An interesting acquaintance had been established between the young officer and the Mexican girl. About a week afterward, and the carriage appeared no more. The invalid had been restored to perfect strength.

December came, and upon the 15th of this month, about half an hour before twilight, an American officer, wrapped in a light Mexican cloak, passed down the Calle San Francisco,

and crossed into the Alameda. Here he stopped, leaning against a tree, as though observing the various groups of citizens, who passed in their picturesque dresses. His eye, however, was occasionally turned upon the houses upon the opposite side of the street, and with a glance of stealthy, but eager inquiry. At length the well-known form of the beautiful "lepera" appeared at the window, who, holding up her hand, adroitly signaled the officer with her taper, fan-like fingers. The signal was answered. She had scarcely withdrawn her hand inside the reja when a dark, scowling face made its appearance at her side, her hand was rudely seized, and with a scream she disappeared. The young officer fancied he saw the bright gleaming of a stiletto within the gloomy grating.

He rushed across the street, and in a moment stood beneath the window. Grasping the strong iron bars, he lifted himself up so as to command a view of the inside, which was now in perfect silence. His horror may be imagined when, on looking into the room, he saw the young girl stretched upon the floor, and, to all appearances, dead. A stream of blood was running from beneath her clothes, and her

dress was stained with blood over the waist and bosom. With frantic energy the young man clung to the bars, and endeavored to wrench them apart. It was to no purpose, and letting go his hold, he dropped into the street. The large gate of the house was open. Into this he rushed, and reached the *patio* just in time to catch a glimpse of a figure escaping along the azotea. He rushed up the steep stone stairway, and grasping the parapet, raised himself on the roof. The fugitive had run along a series of platforms of different heights, composed by the azoteas of houses, and had reached a low roof, from which he was about to leap into an adjoining street, where he would, in all probability, have made good his escape. He stood upon the edge of the parapet, calculating his leap, which was still a fearful plunge. It was not left to his choice whether to take or refuse it. A pistol flashed behind him, and almost simultaneously with the report he fell forward upon his head, and lay upon the pavement below, a bruised and bleeding corpse. His pursuer approached the parapet, and looked over into the street, as if to assure himself that his aim had been true, then turned with a fearful foreboding, and retraced his way

over the azoteas. His fears, alas! were but too just. She was dead.

TO GUADALUPE.

[174]

BY MAYNE REID.

Adieu! oh, in the heart's recess how wildly
Echo those painful accents of despair—
And spite our promise given to bear it mildly;
We little knew how hard it was to bear
A destiny so dark: how hard to sever
Hearts linked as ours, hands joined as now I grasp thee
In trembling touch: oh! e'er we part forever,
Once more unto my heart love's victim let me clasp thee!

It is my love's last echo—lone and lonelyMy heart goes forth to seek another shrine,Where it may worship pronely, deeming onlySuch images as thee to be divine—It is the echo of the last link breaking,For still that link held out while lingering near thee—A secret joy although with heart-strings achingTo breathe the air you breathed—to see, to hear thee.

And this link now must break—our paths obliquingMay never meet again—oh! say not never—For while thus speaking, still my soul is seekingSome hope our parting may not be forever—And like the drowning straggler on the billow,Or he that eager watches for the day,With throbbing brain upon a sleepless pillow—'Tis catching at the faintest feeblest ray.

Now faint and fainter growing, from thee going,Seems every hope more vague and undefined—Oh! as the fiend might suffer when bestowingA last look on the heaven he left behind:Or as earth's first-born children when they partedSlowly, despairingly, from Eden's bowers,Looked back with many a

sigh—though broken-hearted,Less hopeless was their future still than ours.

If we have loved—if in our hearts too blindlyWe have enthroned that element divine—In this, at least, hath fate dealt with us kindly;Our mutual images have found a shrine—An altar for our mutual sacrifice:And spite this destiny that bids us sever,Within our hearts that fire never dies—In mine, at least, 'twill burn and worship on forever.

Thee not upbraiding—thou has not deceived me—For from the first I knew *thy compromise*—No, Guadalupe—this hath never grieved me—I won thy love—so spoke thy lips and eyes:—The consolation of this proud possessingShould almost change my sorrow into bliss:I have thy heart—enough for me of blessing—Another may take all since I am lord of this.

Why we have torn our hearts and hands asunder—Why we have given o'er those sweet caresses—The world without will coldly guess and wonder—Let them guess on, what care we for their guesses!The secret shall be ours, as

ours the pain—A secret still unheeding friendship's pleading:What though th' unfeeling world suspect a stain,But little fears the world a heart with anguish bleeding.

'Tis better we should never meet again—Our love's renewing were but thy undoing:When I am gone, time will subdue thy pain,And thou wilt yield thee to another's wooing—For me, I go to seek a name in story—To find a future brighter than the past—Yet 'midst my highest, wildest dreams of glory,Sweet thoughts of thee will mingle to the last.

And though this widowed heart may love another—For living without love, it soon would die—There will be moments when it cannot smotherThy sweet remembrance with a passing sigh.Amidst the ashes of its dying embersFor thee there will be found one deathless thought;Yes, dearest lady! while this heart remembers,Believe me, thou shall never be forgot.

Once more farewell! Oh it is hard to yield thee,To lose for life, forever, thing so fair!How bright a destiny it were to shield

thee—Yet since I am denied the husband's care,This grief within my breast here do I smother—Forego *thy* painful sacrifice to prove,That I have been, what never can another,The hero of thy heart, my own sweet victim love.

THE FADED ROSE.

BY G. G. FOSTER.

Torn from its stem to bloom awhileUpon thy breast, the dazzling flowerImbibed new radiance from thy smile—But, ah! it faded in an hour.So thou, from peaceful home betrayed,In beaming beauty floated by;But ere

thy summer had decayed,We saw thee languish, faint and die.

*Extempore. On a Broken Harp-string.*Too rude the touch—the broken cordNo more may utter music-word,Yet lives each tone within the air,Its trembling sighs awakened there.So in my heart the song I sung,When thou in rapture o'er me hung,Still lives—yet thine is not the spellTo lure the music from its shell.

THE CHILD'S APPEAL.

[175]

AN INCIDENT OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

BY MRS. MARY G. HORSFORD.

Day dawned above a city's mart,But not 'mid peace and prayer;The shouts of frenzied multitudesWere on the thrilling air.

A guiltless man to death was led,Through crowded streets and wide,And a fairy child, with waving curls,Was clinging to his side.

The father's brow with pride was calm,But trusting and serene,The child's was like the Holy One'sIn Raphael's paintings seen.

She shrank not from the heartless throng,Nor from the scaffold high;But now and then with beaming smileAddressed her parent's eye.

Athwart the golden flood of mornWas poised the wing of Death,As 'neath the fearful guillotineThe doomed one drew his breath.

Then all of fiercest agonyThe human heart can bearWas suffered in the brief caress,The wild, half-uttered prayer.

But she, the child, beseechinglyUpraised her eyes of blue,And whispered, while her cheek grew pale,"I am to go with you?"

The murmur of impatient fiendsRung in her infant ear,And purpose strong woke in her heart,And spoke in accent clear;

"They tore my mother from our sideIn the dark prison's cell,Her eyes were filled with tears—she hadNo time to say farewell.

"And you were all that loved me then,But you are pale with care,And every night a silver threadHas mingled with your hair.

"My mother used to tell me ofA better land afar,I've seen it through the prison barsWhere burns the evening star.

"Oh! let us find a new home there,I will be brave and true,You cannot leave me here alone,Oh! let me die with you."

The gentle tones were drowned by shrillAnd long protracted cries;The father on his darling gazed,The child looked on the skies.

Anon, far up the cloudless blue,Unseen by mortal eye,God's angels with two spirits passedTo purer realms on high.

The one was touched with earthly huesAnd dim with earthly care,The other, as a lily's cupUnutterably fair.

THE OLD FARM-HOUSE.

BY MARY L. LAWSON.

I love these gray and moss-grown walls,This ivied porch, and trelliced vine,The lattice with its narrow pane,A relic of the olden time;The willow with its waving leaves,Through which the low winds murmuring glide,The gurgling

ripple of the streamThat whispers softly at its side.

The spring-house in its shady nook,Like lady's bower shadowed o'er—With clustering trees—and creeping plantsThat cling around the rustic door,The rough hewn steps that lend their aidTo reach the shady cool recess,Where humble duty spreads a sceneThat hourly comfort learns to bless.

Upland the meadows lie around,Fair smiling in the suns last beam;Beneath yon solitary treeThe lazy cattle idly dream;Afar the reaper's stroke descends,While faintly on the listening earThe teamster's careless whistle floats,Or distant song or call I hear.

And leaning on a broken stile,With woods behind and fields before,I watch the bee who homeward wendsWith laden wing—his labors o'er;The happy birds are warbling round,Or nestle in the rustling trees—'Mid which the blue sky glimmers down,When parted by the passing breeze.

And slowly winding up the roadThe wane has reached the old barn-floor,Where plenty's hand has firmly heapedThe golden grain in richest store.This 'mid the dream-land of my thoughtsWith smiling lip I own is real,Yet fancy's fairest visions blendWith all I see, and all I feel.

Then tell me not of worldly prideAnd wild ambition's hopes of fame,Or brilliant halls of wealth and pride,Where genius sighs to win a name;Give *me* this farm-house quaint and old,These fields of grain, the birds and flowers,With calm contentment, peace and health,And memories of my earlier hours.

"'TIS HOME WHERE THE HEART IS."

[176]

***WORDS BY MISS L. M. BROWN*.**

MUSIC COMPOSED BY KARL W. PETERSILIE,

Professor of Music at the Edgeworth Seminary, N. C.

Presented by George Willig, No. 171 Chesnut Street, Philad'a. [Copyright secured.]

SECOND VERSE.

I've courted the breath of a balm southern clime,Where sweetest of flow'rs, soft tendrils entwine;Have listed the song bird's notes borne on the air,That wakens and wafts the rich odors elsewhere;As tones on the ear so the dream of the past,Softly plays round the heart-green isle of the waste;Yes! 'twas all a life-dream, and still 'tis not gone,Oh, 'tis home where the heart is, where the heart is 'tis home.

THIRD VERSE.

I've cross'd the blue sea, I've sought out a homeIn the land of the free, freedom beckon'd me come;And friends of the stranger have sooth'd the sad heart,With kindness and sympathy, sweet balm for the smart;The light of the soul, doth play round it still,Like the perfume the urn, in which roses distil;Thoughts of affection forbid me to roam,Oh, 'tis home where the heart is, where the heart is 'tis home.

REVIEW OF NEW BOOKS.

[178]

Hawkstone: A Tale of and for England in 184-. New York: Standford & Swords. 2 vols. 12mo.

We were attracted to this novel by seeing the words "fifth edition" on its title page. After reading it, it is easy to account for its popularity. It is at once a most exciting romance and a defence of an unpopular religious body. The author (said to be Professor Sewall,) belongs to the Oxford School of Episcopalians, or to adopt his own view of the matter, to the one Catholic church. The object of the novel is to present the ideas of Church and State held by that class of religionists who are vulgarly called Puseyites. This is done partly in the representation of character and narration of incident, which constitute the romance of the book, and partly by long theological conversations which occur between a few of the characters. The interest of the work never flags, and it is among the few religious novels which are not positive bores to all classes of readers. In respect to its theology, it gives the most distinct view of the doctrines of the High Church party of Oxford

which we have seen. The author is as decisive and bitter in his condemnation of Romanism as of dissent. He considers that the peculiar doctrines and claims which distinguish the Roman Catholic church from the Church of England are *novelties*, unknown to the true church of the apostles and the fathers. He has no mercy for the Romanists, and but little for the young men of his own school who favor the Papacy. Those who are accustomed to associate Puseyism with a set of sentimentalists, who mourn the Reformation, wish for the return of the good old times of the feudal ages, and give Rome their hearts and Canterbury only their pockets, will find that such doctrines and practices find no favor in the present volumes. The greatest rascal in the novel is a piece of incarnate malignity named Pearce—a Jesuit, whom the author represents as carrying out the principles of Romanism to their logical results in practice.

But if the reader will find his common notions of Puseyism revolutionized by the present novel, he will be a little startled at its real doctrines and intentions. The author has the most supreme and avowed contempt for liberal ideas in Church and State; and for every good-

natured axiom about toleration and representative government he spurns from his path as a novelty and paradox. There is nothing dominant in England which he does not oppose. The Whig party he deems the avowed enemies of loyalty, order and religion. The Conservatives, with Sir Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington at their head, he conceives destitute of principle, and the destroyers of the British empire. There is not a concession made to liberal ideas within the present century which he does not think wicked and foolish. The manufacturing system and free trade, indeed the whole doctrines of the political economists in the lump, he looks upon alternately with horror and disdain. He seems to consider the State and Church as an organized body for the education of the people, whose duty is obedience, arid who have no right to think for themselves in religion or politics, for they would be pretty sure to think wrong. All benevolent societies, in which persons of different religious views combine for a common object, he considers as productive of evil, and as an assumption of powers rightly belonging to the church. Indeed, in his system, it is wrong for any

popular association to presume to meddle with ignorance and crime, unless they do it under the sanction and control of the church. He considers it the duty of a church minister to excommunicate every man in his parish who is *guilty* of schism—that is, who has the wickedness to be a papist or dissenter. But it is useless to proceed in the enumeration of our author's dogmatisms. If the reader desires to know them, let him conceive the exact opposite of every liberal principle in politics, political economy and theology, which at present obtains in the world, and he will have the system of "Hawkstone."

A good deal of the zest of the novel comes from the throng of paradoxes in which the author wantons. He has a complete system of thought to kill out all the mind of the English people, and render them the mere slaves of a hierarchy, and all for the most benevolent of purposes. In his theory he overlooks the peculiar constitution and character of the English people, and also all the monstrous abuses to which his system would inevitably lead, in his desire to see a practical establishment of the most obnoxious and high-toned claims of his church. He is evidently

half way between an idealist and a sentimentalist, with hardly an atom of practical sagacity or knowledge of affairs. The cool dogmatism with which he condemns the great statesmen of his country, is particularly offensive as coming from a man utterly ignorant of the difficulties which a statesman has to encounter. It is curious also to see how extremes meet; this theory of absoluteism "fraternizes" with that of socialism. A person reading, in the second volume, the account of Villiers' dealings with his tenantry, and his new regulations regarding manufactures, would almost think that Louis Blanc had graduated at Oxford, and left out in his French schemes the agency of the church, from a regard to the prejudices of his countrymen.

With all its peculiarities and heresies, however, the novel will well reward the attention of readers of all classes. It is exceedingly well written, and contains many scenes of uncommon power, pathos and beauty. With these advantages it may also claim the honor of being the most inimitable specimen of theological impudence and pretension which the present age has witnessed.

The Planetary and Stellar Worlds: A Popular Exposition of the Great Discoveries and Theories of Modern Astronomy. In a Series of Ten Lectures. By O. M. Mitchell, A. M. New York: Baker & Scribner. 1 vol. 12mo.

Mr. Mitchell is not only an accomplished astronomer, in every respect qualified to be the interpreter of the mysteries of his science to the popular mind, but, if we may judge from the style of his book, is a fine, frank, warm-hearted, enthusiastic man. On every page he gives evidence of really loving his pursuit. By a certain sensitiveness of imagination, and quickness of sensibility, every thing he contemplates becomes alive in his mind, and an object in which he takes a personal interest. This gives wonderful distinctness to his exposition of natural laws, and his delineation of the characters and pursuits of men of science. His Copernicus, Kepler, Gallileo and Newton are not dry enumerations of qualities, but vivid portraits of persons. He seems in close intellectual fellowship with them as individuals, and converses of them in the style of a friend, whose accurate knowledge is

equalled by his intense affection. So it is with his detail of the discovery of[179] a new law, or fact in science. His mind "lives along the line" of observation and reasoning which ended in its detection, and he reproduces the hopes, fears, doubts, and high enthusiasm of every person connected with the discovery. His delineation of Kepler is especially genial and striking. By following this method he infuses his own enthusiasm into the reader, bears him willingly along through the most abstruse processes of science, and at the end leaves him without fatigue, and ready for a new start.

In the treatment of scientific discoveries, by minds like Mr. Mitchell's, we ever notice an unconscious personification of Nature, as a cunning holder of secrets which only the master-mind can wrest from her after a patient siege. The style of our author glows in the recital of the exploits of his band of astronomers, as that of a Frenchman does in the narration of Napoleon's campaigns. This is the great charm of his book, and will make it extensively popular, for by it he can attract any reader capable of being interested in a tale of personal adventure, ending in a great

achievement. We can hardly bring to mind a popular lecturer or writer on science, who has this power to the extent which Mr. Mitchell possesses it. He himself has it by virtue of the mingled simplicity and intensity of his nature.

One of the most striking lectures in Mr. Mitchell's volume is that on the discoveries of the primitive ages, in which he represents the processes of the primitive observer, with his unarmed eye, in unfolding some of the laws of the heavens; and he indicates with great beauty what would be his point of departure, and what would be the limit of his discoveries. This lecture is a fine prose poem. There is a passage in the introductory lecture which grandly represents the continual watch which man keeps on the heavens, and the slow, silent and sure acquisitions of new truths, from age to age. "The sentinel on the watchtower is relieved from duty, but another takes his place, and the vigil is unbroken. No—the astronomer never dies. He commences his investigations on the hill-tops of Eden—he studies the stars through the long centuries of antedeluvian life. The deluge sweeps from the earth its inhabitants, their cities and their mountains—but when the storm is hushed, and the heavens

shine forth in beauty, from the summit of Mount Arrarat the astronomer resumes his endless vigils. In Babylon he keeps his watch, and among the Egyptian priests he inspires a thirst for the sacred mysteries of the stars. The plains of Shinar—the temples of India—the pyramids of Egypt, are equally his watching places. When science fled to Greece, his home was in the schools of her philosophers: and when darkness covered the earth for a thousand years, he pursues his never-ending task from amidst the burning deserts of Arabia. When science dawned on Europe, the astronomer was there—toiling with Copernicus—watching with Tycho—suffering with Gallileo—triumphing with Kepler."

We trust that this volume will have an extensive circulation. It will not only convey a great deal of knowledge to the general reader, but will also inspire a love for the science of which it treats.

Harold, the last of the Saxon Kings. By Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, Bart. New York: Harper & Brothers.

This is Bulwer's most successful attempt at writing an historical novel, but with all its merits, it is still rather an attempt than a performance. Considered as a history of the Norman invasion, it contains many more facts than can be found in Thierry, at least in that portion of his work devoted to Harold and William. Bulwer seems to have obtained his knowledge at the original sources, and the novel is certainly creditable to his scholarship. But he has not managed his materials in an imaginative way, and fact and fiction are tied rather than fused together. The consequence is that the work is not homogeneous. At times it appears like history, but after the mind of the reader has settled down to a historical mood, the impression is broken by a violent intrusion of fable, or an introduction of modern sentiment and thought. It has therefore neither the interest of Thierry's exquisite narrative of the same events, nor the interest which might have been derived from a complete amalgamation of the materials into a consistent work of imagination. Considered also as a reproduction of ancient men and manners it is strikingly defective. With many fine strokes of the pencil, where the author

confines himself to the literal fact, his portraits, as a whole, are overcharged with *Bulwerism*. His imagination is not a mirror. It can reflect nothing without vitiating it. He does not possess the power of passing a character through his mind and preserving its individuality. It goes in as Harold, or Duke William, or Lafranc, but it comes out as Sir E. Bulwer Lytton, Bart.

The novel contains much of that seductive sentiment, half romantic, half misanthropic, which is the characteristic of Bulwer's works, and it is expressed with his usual beauty and brilliancy of style. Here and there we perceive allusions to his own domestic affairs, which none but Lady Bulwer can fully appreciate. Every reader of the novel must be struck with its attempt at the moral tone. Edith, the heroine, is the bride of Harold's soul, and Platonism appears in all its splendor of self-denial and noble sentiments in a Saxon thane and his maiden. History pronounces this lady to be his mistress, and it certainly is a great stretch of the reader's charity to be compelled to view her in the capacity of saint. Not only, however, in the loves of Harold and Edith, but all over the novel, there is a constant intrusion

of ethical reflections, which will doubtless much edify all young ladies of a tender age. These would be well enough if they appeared to have any base in solid moral principle, but they are somewhat offensive as the mere sentimentality of conscience and religion, introduced for the purposes of fine writing. Suspicion, also, always attaches to the morality which exhibits itself on rhetorical stilts, and the refinement which is always proclaiming itself refined. Since the time of Joseph Surface there has been a great decline in the market price of noble sentiments.

The History of England, from the Invasion of Julius Cæsar to the Reign of Victoria. By Mrs. Markham. A New Edition. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1 vol. 12mo.

This is a new and revised edition of a work which has long been used in the education of boys and girls. Its information is, of course, milk for babes. We think that books of this class should be prepared by persons very different from Mrs. Markham. She, good lady, was the wife of an English clergyman by the name of Penrose, and she wrote English

history as such a person might be supposed to write it. With every intention to be honest, her book has many facts and opinions which boys and girls will have to take more time to unlearn than they spent in learning, unless they intend to be children their whole lives.

There is, however, a story in the volume regarding the Duke of Marlborough, which we think few of our readers have seen. The duke's command of his temper was almost miraculous. Once, at a council of war, Prince Eugene advised that an attack on the enemy should be made the next day. As his advice was plainly judicious, he was much exasperated at the refusal of the duke's consent, and immediately called him a coward and challenged him.[180] Marlborough cooly declined the challenge, and the enraged prince left the council. Early the following morning he was awoke by the duke, who desired him instantly to rise, as he was preparing to make the attack, and added, "I could not tell you of my determination last night, because there was a person present who I knew was in the enemy's interest, and would betray us. I have no doubt we shall conquer, and when the battle is over I will be ready to accept your

challenge." The prince, seeing the superior sagacity of Marlborough, and ashamed of his own intemperance, overwhelmed the duke with apologies, and the friendship of the two generals was more strongly cemented than ever. The anecdote is of doubtful origin, but it is an admirable illustration both of the character of Marlborough and Eugene.

Letters from Italy: and The Alps and the Rhine. By J. T. Headley. New and Revised Edition. New York: Baker & Scribner. 1 vol. 12mo.

We believe that these were Mr. Headley's first productions, and were originally published in Wiley & Putnam's Library. The present edition has a preface, devoted to the consideration of the new aspect Italy has assumed since the book was written, and a very judicious flagellation is given to that arch traitor and renegade, Charles Albert, King of Sardinia, whom events have transformed from a trickster and tyrant into a patriot leader. We agree with Mr. Headley in thinking that the Italians are more likely to be endangered than

benefitted by his position at the head of their armies.

"The Alps and the Rhine" is, in our opinion, Mr. Headley's most agreeable work. The descriptions of scenery are singularly vivid and distinct, and are given in a style of much energy and richness. The chapters on Suwarrow's Passage of the Glarus, Macdonald's Pass of the Splugen, and the Battle of Waterloo, are admirably done. That on Macdonald is especially interesting. Those who doubt Mr. Headley's talents will please read this short extract: "The ominous sound grew louder every moment, and suddenly the fierce Alpine blast swept in a cloud of snow over the mountain, and howled like an unchained demon, through the gorge below. In an instant all was blindness and confusion and uncertainty. The very heavens were blotted out, and the frightened column stood and listened to the raving tempest that made the pine trees above it sway and groan, as if lifted from their rock-rooted places. But suddenly a still more alarming sound was heard—'An avalanche! an avalanche!' shrieked the guides, and the next moment *an awful white form came leaping down the mountain*, and striking

the column that was struggling along the path, passed strait through it into the gulf below, carrying thirty dragoons and their horses with it in its wild plunge."

Principles of Zoology. Touching the Structure, Development, Distribution and Natural Arrangement of the Races of Animals, Living and Extinct. Part I. Comparative Physiology. By Louis Agassiz and Augustus A. Gould Boston: Gould, Kendall & Lincoln. 1 vol. 12mo.

The name of Professor Agassiz, the greatest of living naturalists, on the title page of this volume, is of itself a guarantee of its excellence. The work is intended for schools and colleges, and is admirably fitted for its purpose, but its value is not confined to the young. The general reader, who desires exact and reliable knowledge of the subject, and at the same time is unable to obtain the larger works of Professor Agassiz, will find in this little volume an invaluable companion. It has all the necessary plates and illustrations to enable the reader fully to comprehend its matter. The diagram of the crust of the earth,

as related to zoology, is a most ingenious contrivance to present, at one view, the distribution of the principal types of animals, and the order of their successive appearance in the layers of the earth's crust. The publishers have issued the work in a style of great neatness and elegance.

The Writings of Cassius Marcellus Clay, including Speeches and Addresses. Edited with a Preface and Memoir by Horace Greely, New York: Harper & Brothers.

This is a large and beautiful octavo, and is embellished with an admirable likeness of Mr. Clay. The people of this country are so well acquainted with the peculiarities of Cassius M. Clay's manner, that we will not pause to characterize it; and his views upon public subjects are so partisan that we leave their discussion to the politicians of the country. The eminent abilities of Mr. Greely are displayed in the execution of the duties of editor; and the memoir which introduces the work does full justice to the subject.

The Odd Fellows' Amulet, or the Principles of Odd Fellowship Defined; the Objections to the Order Answered, and its Advantages Maintained. By Rev. D. W. Bristol. Auburn: Derby, Miller & Co.

This is a beautiful little volume, admirably illustrated. It is well written; will be read with interest by the general reader, and should be in the possession of every member of the great and beneficent order which it advocates and vindicates.

The Baronet's Daughters, and Harry Monk.

Mrs. Grey, who is recognized as one of the most accomplished female novelists of the present day, has recently given to the public another interesting volume, bearing the above title. There are two stories, both of which are marked by the ability which characterizes the whole of Mrs. Grey's works, and are well calculated to make a sultry afternoon pass agreeably away. The American publisher is Mr. T. B. Peterson, who furnishes a neat and uniform edition of Mrs. Grey's novels.

TO OUR READERS.

The Proprietors of "Graham's Magazine," desirous of maintaining for it the high reputation it has secured in the estimation of the people of the United States, are determined to spare no pains to increase its value, and make it universally regarded as the best literary publication in the country. To this end they have placed in the hands of several of our best engravers a series of plates, which will be truly remarkable for their superiority in design and execution. As usual, the pens of the best American writers will be employed in giving grace and excellence to its pages, and in addition to articles which have been secured from new contributors of acknowledged ability, they have the pleasure of announcing that an engagement has been effected with J. BAYARD TAYLOR, Esq., whose writings are so extensively known and admired, by which his valuable assistance will be secured in the editorial department of this Magazine exclusively. This arrangement will, we are

assured, be hailed with pleasure by the host of friends which the Magazine possesses throughout the Union, as an earnest that no efforts will be omitted to show the sense the proprietors entertain of past favors, by rendering their work still more attractive and deserving of patronage for the future.

FOOTNOTES:

[1]The Italian.

[2]Norman.

[3]The French.

Transcriber's Note:

Certain irregularities in spelling and grammar have been left as in the original. Small errors in punctuation have been corrected without comment.

1. page 122—added apostrophe to word 'wont' in phrase '..he wont be my hero...'

2. page 123—corrected typo 'will' to 'well' in phrase 'They are all very will for rich people.'

3. page 125—corrected error in text 'almost wondering at first what Angile meant.' to 'almost wondering at first what Augusta meant.'

4. page 130—corrected typo 'spedily' to 'speedily' in phrase '...fit a mast to it, which was spedily done.'

5. page 143—corrected typo 'brightnesss' to 'brightness' in phrase '...the beauty and brightnesss of that sweet...'

6. page 153—corrected typo 'stong' to 'strong' in phrase '...or some stong emotion...'