

The World Grows Lonely.

BY BESSIE BLAND.
The world grows lonely, year by year,
Though new friends come, the old depart.

Young Mr. Bretherton.

BY ANNA T. SADDLER.
(From the Ave Maria.)

VI.—THE MANAGER OF THE MILL.

"Mother Moulton, I will give you a conundrum. What is the difference between a mill-slapper and the tongue of a woman?"

"With that he arose and left the room, giving his housekeeper no time for a rejoinder. He heard her spiteful laugh, however, as he strode along to the mill, which was in the same hollow as the house and but a few yards distant.

And yet this materialist who had eliminated from his own nature and from his surroundings all that was spiritual and ideal, would fain have united himself with a girl young, beautiful, and richly endowed with the intellectual and moral gifts which he despised.

The manager hoped, notwithstanding the incogruity of their natures, that Miss Tabitha's niece would look favorably upon his suit.

An Ancient Foe

To health and happiness is Scrofula—as ugly as ever since time immemorial. It causes blemishes in the neck, disfigures the skin, inflames the mucous membrane, wastes the muscles, weakens the bones, reduces the power of resistance to disease and the capacity for recovery, and develops into consumption.

Hood's Sarsaparilla

will rid you of it, radically and permanently, as it has rid thousands.

manner as should best display her beauty and her accomplishments. As for Leonora, she had heard the mill bell ring out at regular intervals since her childhood, and had listened to weird tales of Eben Knox and his ungodly housekeeper without even for an instant imagining that she had had any connection with the matter or had been the inspiring cause of the manager's phenomenal parsimony.

VII.—MISS TABITHA IS SHOCKED.

Next morning Miss Tabitha made a careful toilet, having arranged to accompany her niece upon a shopping excursion. She was ready first, and stood in the porch, drawing on her Lisle-thread gloves with careful precision.

"Good mornin' to you, Miss Brown!"

"Good morning, Mr. Craft!"

"I see the bus comin' to your door yesterday evening," Jesse Craft went on, with cheerful friendliness.

"Yes, it came," Miss Tabitha replied, smoothing the tumb of her glove.

"Brought your niece home again to you. When I seen the young man helpin' her out of the bus, says I to myself, 'Jesse Craft, the young girl next door has gone and got married unbeknownst to her aunt.'"

"You are altogether mistaken!" Miss Tabitha cried hastily, disconcerting the work upon her glove, and opening her parasol with a snap as if it were a weapon of aggression.

"So I calculated, by usin' my ears for a spell," Jesse replied. "I caught on, as the sayin' is. The young man was a lord spoonin' round, I take it, after your niece—seein' to the luggage and all that. I know the game. Yes, ma'am; and Jesse Craft, old hulk as you see me now, has had a hand in it, too. Well, as I was sayin', Miss Brown, he was castin' sheep's eyes at the girl, and he was powerful scared of you. He seems to be a good feller, though I don't hold much to lords and such like. Let them stay in their own country and in the balls of Parliament, where they belong. Then the other young man, he chips in; he's kinder cute, 'o ye see, bein' the son of a bright man like the Governor, and—"

Jesse might have gone on indefinitely, undisturbed by the glare in Miss Tabitha's eye by which she sought to transfix him, had not Leonora appeared and forestalled a diversion.

"Good mornin' Miss!" cried Jesse. "There you be, fresh as a poppy—a real bloomin' rose. Jesse Craft knows one when he sees it, battered old hulk though he be! I was just talkin' to your aunt about your

beans, Miss Tabitha don't." (And the profane wretch gave a wink at Leonora, while he pursued the current of conversation.) "I guess she's forgotten what they're like, Miss Tabitha has. But anyway, as I was sayin', that English Johnny you've got hold of seems to be a good sort of chap, though he wears a suit of clothes that I don't specially admire. As for the Governor's son, he's the kind of feller that suits me."

Here Leonora broke into one of her ringing, unrestrained laughs, the humor of the situation appealed to her so forcibly, and she whistled to Miss Tabitha:

"O aunt, the awful majesty of your look and the awful unconsciousness of the said Jesse Craft!"

"You've got a real good laugh, siah as I like to hear," went on the neighbor. "But I was referin' to young Mr. Bretherton. I heard him tellin' your aunt how you and he scrapper over a sunflower, and how he gave you the seeds to make up peace. I just sat and laughed to myself on my doorstep. He's real entertainin', he is."

Ever so faint a tinge of color came into Leonora's face as she listened. That picture, which it appeared Jim Bretherton had been conjuring up, was present to her mind distinctly. She could recall the fragrance of the flowers growing around the two children upon the far-off day, and she before her the brown and yellow disk in the boy's hand; and the gap in the careful row of sunflowers, which had ever since remained, and through which the talkative neighbor was just then thrusting his head.

"But," said Jesse Craft, taking his clay pipe from his mouth and warning it toward the girl, in warning, don't you be settin' your heart on any of them 'big bugs.' When you think of marryin'—and you've got time enough to consider—just come to Jesse Craft and he'll point out the sort of young feller that will make you happy. 'Tain't any use, my dear, lookin' up too high. A violon can't live the life of a hollyhock. Lowly it was born and lowly it flourisheth."

Now, this concluding oration of the philosopher filled Miss Tabitha with greater indignation than anything that had come before, because it voiced her own misgivings. Moreover, it had the effect of momentarily banishing the smile from Leonora's fair face and leaving a hint of sadness there instead. The girl held up her head very high, however, and spoke in that voice of hers, so silvery sweet that it might have been learned from a bird in the treetops.

"Thank you ever so much for your warning!" she said. "It will probably be long before I think of marryin'; but when that time comes I will do very well to take your advice. You are as wise, I am sure, as those old oak trees in which the wind is murmuring. Only I shall do, after all, precisely what I am destined to do."

This speech, spoken so softly and prettily, very much gratified the old man, though it puzzled him, too. He withdrew from the gap in the sunflowers, and watched the aunt and niece go down the little path and out at the gate. Having scratched his head in a doubting way he bobbed back to his doorstep.

Scarcely had Miss Tabitha got clear of the gate when she began:

"Intolerable old vulgarian! It is dreadful to have him so near us."

"Poor Jesse Craft!" said Leonora Chandler, with a sigh. "He only puts into words what the trees and the grasses and the birds—the unspoken wisdom of Nature—is teaching us, and we don't get angry with them."

Miss Tabitha, who did not always understand her niece, and thought her facetious at times, answered with someasperity:

"I don't see how you keep your patience with such a creature. He's always intruding; he admits himself, that he listens to what goes on in our premises. To think of his intolerable presumption in venturing to address you as he did, merely because young Mr. Bretherton pays us an afternoon visit, and a gentleman happens to escort you upon a railway journey!" Miss Tabitha, pausing an instant to get her breath, resumed with increased asperity:

"Have you got enough money, aunt?" asked the niece, opening her pocket-book. "You know I am quite wealthy now."

"I have all I want for the moment," responded Miss Tabitha. "Thank you very much, my dear!"

They arrived, just then, at the door of the shop, and perceived young Mr. Bretherton swinging upon a high office stool and talking animatedly to half a dozen rustic youths. Prominent among them were Reuben Jackson and Tommy Briggs, the latter having been sent thither on an errand from Stubbs & Co., and lingering, nothing loath, after his errand had been accomplished. Smith Jackson himself leaned over the counter, his rubicund face aglow with interest.

Miss Tabitha, recognizing the young friend whose exclusive acquaintance she had for a time enjoyed, was conscious of a shock at seeing his father's son and his uncle's nephew and his grandmother's grandson thus on familiar terms with what she indignantly designated the riffraff of the town. Times, indeed, had changed, and manners, with them. In Miss Tabitha's opinion, there was not a Bretherton among them who would not have arisen from the grave, were such resurrection possible, to protest against the indignity. It would have appalled Madam Bretherton of aristocratic memory, and have convinced her that some such catastrophe as the French Revolution was imminent in Millbrook.

The question under discussion was one of sport, and, as such, altogether unobjectionable to the mistress of Rose Cottage, who could make nothing of pitchers and catches, clean balls and home runs, hits and throws, balks and wild pitches, even when this strange jargon was uttered in the clear-cut, gentlemanly tones of young Mr. Bretherton himself. For a baseball match was approaching, in which the Governor's son declared his willingness to take part; admitting, however, his greater proficiency in football or cricket. For the two latter games he also professed the services of a friend of his who was in town just then.

Miss Tabitha's horror reached a climax at the idea of Lord Aylward engaging in a contest with Tommy Briggs. The good lady could bear no more, and advanced majestically into the store, trailing her silken petticoats with an air.

Leonora preferred to wait outside. She walked up and down in familiar conversation with the Jackson's dog a brown and white spaniel. He wagged his tail at her, and raised his ears, and fixed his eyes upon her face, in evident appreciation of her desire to communicate with him, and a corresponding anxiety on his part to reciprocate.

Young Mr. Bretherton promptly jumped down from the stool and took off his hat to Miss Tabitha, greeting her with cordiality and offering her his place at the counter. The eager sportsman of a moment before, most of whom were known to the eldest lady, gave various sheepish marks of recognition, and retiring to the back of the store, continued their conversation in a subdued tone.

Reuben Jackson and Tommy Briggs, having discovered the presence of Miss Chandler without, communicated the facts to each other by inarticulate signs, watching discreetly from the window.

Young Mr. Bretherton, having become cognizant of the same fact through the same medium, the shop window, left Miss Tabitha absorbed in her grocery list—which Smith Jackson, with cheerful alacrity, noted down in his order book,—and sauntered forth to the sidewalk. There he found Leonora still engaged with her shaggy, fourfooted acquaintance.

"Good-morning, Miss Chandler!" the young man said, pleasantly.

"Good morning, Mr. Bretherton!" responded the girl, giving him a single glance of greeting and again directing her attention to the spaniel, who was playing with the tassel of her parasol.

"Have you settled all about your baseball match?"

"Oh, no! It will take half a dozen meetings for that. I want to get up a football team as well. Aylward plays a splendid game. He's a capital sport."



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"Are they, indeed?" she exclaimed. "I didn't know that you manufactured garments."

"No more we don't, lady."

"Then why do you say 'They are cut by us, young man?'"

The look of bewilderment that overcame the face of that young man was most pathetic. Fortunately the joke didn't get through his skull. It would have had a lonely time of it there.—Transcript.

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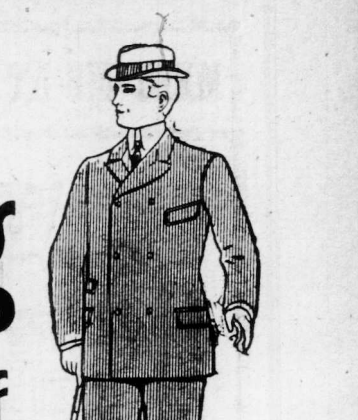
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