

"LEAD, KINDLY LIGHT."

Duc, alma Lux, circumstat umbra mundi,
Duc, alma Lux;
Est atra nox, mei jam vagabundi
Sis ergo dux:
Serva pedes,—non cupio longinqua
Videre; satis semita propinqua.

Non semper eram, ut nunc, doctus precari
Ductorem te,—
Magis me exploratorem gloriarī:
Duc tamen me.
Proclara amabam, neque expers timorum
Regebam me: sis immemor actorum.

Tam diu præsens adfuit vocanti
Divina vox.
Sic erit vel per ima dubitanti
Dum fugit nox,
Et manē lucent nitide figure,
Notæ per annos, paululum obscuræ.

Translated at sea, December, 1877.

C. S. O.

* This bold attempt to render Dr. Newman's hymn in rhymed Latin stanzas, of the same number and the same number of lines as in the English original, was sent home to the translator's friends as the recreation of nights at sea by an English scholar on his way to the antipodes. Any old Oxford friend who may recognize the initials will feel the point and pathos added by the fact that news of the unlooked-for loss of a truly "nitida figura nota per annos," which has darkened his home since he left it, is following him round the world.—J. O.

FASHION AND FANCY.

"Frightful! When could it have been in fashion?"

Hearing these words, in a moment I became aware of what our military correspondents term "the situation." It was certainly an awkward one. I had slipped open the drawing-room door after breakfast, thinking that in that sunny and luxurious abode, usually deserted during morning hours, a quiet corner for me and my newspaper would not be amiss—and here I was, or was about to be, launched on that most boundless of oceans, a feminine discourse upon dress! For the above remark was uttered in a soft treble pipe, and at least half-a-dozen other pipes equally soft, responded.

Being a man, and not a youth, my first impulse was to beat an instantaneous retreat, closing the half-opened door before it had attracted observation; but the trampling of rough-booted feet, the odour of fuses, and the unmistakable bass notes wanting to the treble variations within, proclaimed that I was taken in the rear. The sportsmen, the mighty men of valour, and the beardless boys who hung upon their moustachied lips, inhaling wisdom as they puffed tobacco, were drifting through the hall, apparently without any settled destination.

I knew their ways; I had been in the house with them for three days at least, and had learnt to long as ardently as the most fervid lover of the sport, for the blissful "Twelfth" that was to dawn on the morrow. I need hardly say, after this, that we were in Scotland, and that the month was August. This year was a good while ago.

Still the "Twelfth" then, was as the "Twelfth" now, the day of days, and for it I, in common with all, panted. Then we should be rid of as idle, useless, and good-natured a set of incubi as ever existed. Then we should have an end to that seemingly eternal kennel talk, and be able to stroll once more round the terrace without passing a yawning figure extended on every bench. There remained but a single day, and the joyous emancipation for all would take place; but, meantime, I had to beware of chance meetings, for even a stupid like myself might be a peg for some to hang their idle talk upon.

A plague upon them! What was to become of me? Here was I, an elderly man, who had a right to peace and quiet, a right to be left alone, to say nothing of a right to exemption from rheumatism in a dry and warm summer month,—here I was, I say, kept standing in a draught—all the drawing-room windows were open, as was the hall door—whilst I vacillated betwixt a choice of evils.

How long would these ruffians hang on in the hall? How many were collected at the door, and how soon would the rest follow? It was little use attempting to guess; they were all over the place, and without any apparent intentions of "moving on." One took up a matchlock, another exhibited feats with a cane, and two more began a languid game of billiards.

I chose the ladies and fashion, and boldly entered the drawing-room. The door was sunk in a wall many feet thick, so that all the time I had been standing in the entry, I had been invisible to both forces within and without.

No sooner was I fairly committed to the venture than I found, as many another desperate man has done before me, a way of safety open as by magic. It had escaped my memory that over this doorway—a side one—hung a voluminous embroidered curtain, behind which a newcomer was screened from observation until he had drawn it on one side. It did not hang close to the door; the door could be shut ere the curtain was raised. By these means a tiny recess was formed, so that although the girls were clearly within a few feet of it, and their chatter was as audible as though the curtain were not there, my presence remained a secret.

They had not heard any of my manoeuvres, being engrossed with the subject in hand; and it was plain that if I chose, I might ere long slip out, as I had slipped in, unobserved.

Perhaps you cannot understand the exquisite relief of that discovery? I daresay not. You have never walked three streets round to avoid

shaking hands with a friend? I have. I cannot tell you why, for I don't know myself, but it is no less true. The sight of my friends, especially my women friends, when I am not in the vein for it, is far more disagreeable to me than that of my enemies. To them I need not pull off my glove, and be hearty, and rack my brains to remember whom I ought to ask after. They come stolidly up, and as stolidly go by, and there is an end of the matter. I meet Bristle, who sneered at my paper on the Code of Health and Longevity, constantly, and don't mind it at all; but when it comes to beginning your smile twenty yards off, and having to stop it suddenly with the recollection that it is a mistake, it should have been a sympathetic look, and the halt upon the pavement, and the getting under way again with the inevitable tendency to laugh at nothing, it is really a nuisance. I don't above half like meeting a man whom I see daily, though we only know each other by sight; but when he is one whom I am on excellent terms with, it is of course far worse.

Telling this is merely in explanation of what may otherwise appear to be the unreasonable satisfaction which caused me to rub my hands in secret glee at having found so snug a retreat.

Although myself unseen, however, it by no means followed that others were unseen by me. On the contrary, through a chink in the curtain, not above half an inch wide, I had an excellent view of the whole party, who were now with much animation, bustle, and laughter, in the full tide of the discussion.

What it was about I did not care to inquire minutely, even of my own ears, my eyes being on duty, and understanding what they were about tolerably correctly too.

A very pretty picture it was. Youth and beauty was the order of the day in the old Scotch countryhouse. And a charming group of fair faces and graceful forms bent and swayed around a huge mirror, which, Parisian fashion, came close down to the ground, and lost itself in a bank of rich and varied summer flowers. Taller than all the rest, by half a head, was our lovely young hostess, Carry Brand.

I am as old as Carry's father, and she has been my great pet and favourite for three-and-twenty years, being the term of her short life; so I may be pardoned if, in these pages, I seem, to indifferent ears, to speak of her too impartially.

She is a beauty, none can deny that. A beauty with long blue-black hair, blooming carmine cheeks, and grey eyes.

She is not clever. She is good, kind and gentle—must I confess it? too gentle, if such a thing can be. Perhaps (although I would rather not have allowed it), perhaps the world ought to have been pliable. She must agree with the last speaker,—she neither can nor will decide for herself.

Well, what is the use of being vexed? Those beautiful eyes, that flash and glitter like stars, although they do soften and shine at times sweetly enough, will never have the living soul in them that I have seen in some eyes—eyes which strike a wild chord of remembrance through even this foolish old heart. Those softly folding lips will never utter beyond the pleasantness, the commonplaces of life. So be it. I am resigned: I take my dear girl as she is, and love her dearly.

It occurred to me in a sort of misty way that there was something peculiar about Carry upon this particular morning; yet I might have remained in my corner from Whitsuntide till Martinmas without discovering what that something was, had not my senses been provoked to the discovery by all the tongues of the fair bevy clamouring at once to an older lady, who just then entered by the other door—

"Oh, Maria, do come and look at Carry's gown!"

Gown? Well, of course I looked at the gown too. But, although I looked, expect not, dear reader, that it will be within my powers to describe. No, that I cannot do. I will but hint at what I saw, and you, with your ardent imagination and receptive mind, may fill up, in any way you please for me, the deficiencies of which I am but too well aware.

This, then, I believe I saw. A curious massive, shining, stately robe, in colour white, but gently fading into yellow. Silk or satin? you will say. It might have been one of these, but to my thinking it was something richer and finer than either. Somehow, looking upon it gave me a strange sensation. I rubbed my eyes, looked again, and felt a-sleeping.

In front of an antique mirror, on the walls of an old, dark, oak-panelled chamber, there stood a tall and graceful dame, gorgeously arrayed, from the snowy plume which diamonds clasped, to the silver-clocked stocking and high-heeled slipper; and by her side was a little awe-struck boy, who, as he gazed with upturned face upon all that sparkle and splendour, wondered in his secret heart if there was anybody so beautiful as his mother. Those flowers upon her ample skirt, how often with admiring finger he was wont to trace their outline, to pick at the hard berries, and stroke the silky leaves! The rose was there in every stage of its fragrant existence—the tight firmly-closed bud, the puffy bursting bud, the wrinkled three-quarters-grown bud, the full-blown rose in its glory; then the rose in decay, drooping and withering, yet beautiful still. Geraniums, too, clustered round the borders of the robe, as well as hanging fuchsia-bells, dahlias, and carnations. All were friends of his, known and beloved.

He was such an odd boy, she said, that if he

liked to be there, he might; he did no one any harm, but she could not understand such a taste. However, it kept him quiet, and as long as he meddled with nothing he was welcome to come. So he came; and so, seated on a low stool by her side, the old man saw him now.

When the vision faded, or how long it lasted, cannot here be told. I awoke, it was gone, and I was still in the recess, an involuntary, but—I blush to record it—a by no means unwilling spy. I could not help it, I was fascinated, rooted to the spot.

The voices of the chattering group were loud as ever; indeed I was conscious that, although no sense had been conveyed to my absent understanding, they had literally never ceased for a moment.

Laughing and prating, they were still collected round their leader, who was herself the merriest of the party.

"Don't I look as if I had stepped out of the ark?" said she.

"My dear Carry, no. You would positively have been thought antiquated, even then! You are, you must be, antediluvian."

"Oh yes, antediluvian!" cried a chorus. Then one began, "Did you ever see such a Gothic sleeve?"

"Gothic! Bessie! You ignorant thing! Why, we had just pronounced the whole to be antediluvian."

"Never mind," retorted Bessie—a good girl, who gives herself no airs, and never sets up for being infallible—"antediluvian or not, neither you nor I ever saw such a sleeve in our lives."

"Well, yes, it is hideous," allowed the other.

(Hideous! Some one behind the curtain started.)

"Oh, frightful! Oh, shocking! Oh dear me, yes!" echoed one voice after the other. "It really is hideous," all agreed.

"Surely, my dear, your good grandmother must have been studying economy; 'tis not two inches wide," exclaimed one.

"This was not among my grandmother's things," replied Carry. "It belonged to Mr. Oldham's mother. He gave it me."

(Yes. By this time he knew that. He had recognized, understood it all, some minutes before.)

"It was thought very grand in its day," continued Mrs. Brand, apologetically.

"No doubt, dear. And the good man thinks it so to this day, I'll wager a pair of gloves. What could have put it into his dear old bald pate to make it over to you?"

(Bald pate, indeed! Not as bald by half as your father's, Miss Bessie. Impertinent minx! Not another word do I write in your favour, you may wager your pair of gloves upon that, madam.)

"I don't know why he gave it to me," said Carry; "but I am sure he meant it in kindness." (Bless her dear heart!) "I daresay he thought I might wear it, even you know," she continued. "What should he care about fashions? I really did put it on the first day after he had presented it, and perhaps—perhaps I was a bit naughty in saying how much I admired it, meaning only the material, you understand," anxiously; "but I always feel as if I had been punished enough, for I am sure it lies on my conscience how I have never made the slightest use of it, and never shall."

"Wicked creature! But what made you bring it out to-day?"

"Why, poor grandmamma's wardrobe that was left to me, only arrived a few days ago; and so, when I was arranging it, I remembered Mrs. Oldham's gown. Something in the curious old scent about the things brought it to my recollection, and I mean to lay it by with the others."

"You got the whole wardrobe? What was there in it? Laces? Furs? Anything worth having?"

"Lace? yes, there was a good deal of lace, but all of one kind. She seems to have had a mania for that old Venetian point. For my part, I don't admire it. The furs were spoilt, except one sable boa, which I mean to have made into a muff. Some of the things I sent off to Madame R., to see if anything could be done to them; and now the question is, when shall I see them again? Not till she has copied every single thing worth copying, you may be sure."

"Was there nothing wearable? No dresses?"

"Not one. Nothing to compare with this in splendour, and yet you see what a guy it is! They are something the same in shape, but not made of half such rich material. It is really a pity that this is so far gone, that one can do nothing with it, is it not?"

"Far gone? My dear Car, I don't believe it has been worn half-a-dozen times; and that is nothing, no wear at all, for a gown of this kind. Quite different from our flimsy things," said the elderly Maria, who had been examining it narrowly, and now stood with a piece between her fingers.

"I did not mean far gone in the way of being worn out," replied Carry. "I mean too entirely out of date; too far back in the dark ages of fashion, to be capable of any transformation. Before you go, Maria, I must show you the others. You are a *sarant* in matters of this kind and can deliver a lecture on all the different trimmings. By the way," continued the lively prattler, "what a pity it is that my worthy grandsire had not taken the precaution of laying in camphor some of his velvet suits and ruffles! What charades we might have had! With Chauncy Thorne for manager, too!"

"The ruffles would have been valuable; old point," said Maria.

"Yes, but where are they? There is nothing whatever but female attire, and that principally consists of useless dresses."

"Useless dresses! I had once heard Car say that this poor Maria was dependent, and one whom it was difficult to help. Why then did she not observe that wistful glance? Why not let the dresses be no longer 'useless'?"

"Oh, indeed!" was all she said, and there was a great show of indifference. "Are they all the same?"

"All? yes. But you shall see."

(Perhaps then she had noticed the look. I had hope for Maria.)

"You shall have a regular turn-out," continued Car (my hopes were now a certainty), "and you will give me the benefit of your experience. This, however, is really untranslatable."

"Oh dear, yes! I should faint with horror if you were to appear in it!" cried an affected creature, with a lisp. "I really should. I can't stand anything *outré*—it makes me quite ill."

"You need not be afraid, Selina. I will spare your feelings, for I tell you frankly that nothing should ever tempt me to be made into a fright. I am far too vain." (She is not vain, and she knows she is not,—from behind the curtain.)

"Of course," continued the young lady, seriously, "I should not have ventured downstairs had I not known we had the house to ourselves. What would the men have said to such an apparition? I had a narrow escape too, for they did not go out so soon as usual."

"There is always the recess," observed one.

(The chink in the curtain was hastily closed.)

"Of course; but I had passed that door," replied the fair one; "and, you know, I did want to hear what you thought."

(The curtain slipped apart again.)

"Besides, I fancied, it would amuse you," concluded Mrs. Brand, growing aggrieved.

"So it does—so it does. A perfect comedy." She was assured of this on all sides.

"Such a waist!" cried one. "Where could the dear old lady's waist have been?"

"Such a neck! A yard below the throat!"

"Such a petticoat! A mile above the ground!"

"Do look here! Look at this tucker! All the pattern of the stuff woven in. That part is really *rather* pretty, though so odd."

Every one seized a piece of the tucker.

"Carry, I think it's beautiful," said a small voice, in accents that had not been heard before; and little Nelly Bertram, who had been altogether swamped in hoops and flounces hitherto, was now visible sitting on a stool among the geraniums, with her hands folded in her lap. "I saw one like it in London last week," continued the child; "and I think it was in the British Museum. It was in *some* museum, I know. Why don't you send this gown to the British Museum too?"

"Oh! what a good idea of Nelly's!" cried one. "Send it, by all means, Car. Say you found it wrapped round a Pharaoh, and in high preservation. A few bones inserted down the sleeve would make the illusion complete."

"Tom would do that for you," suggested Bessie, who had a roguish brother. I say, Carry, do let Tom see it, and see you in it. You might—just for once."

"Nonsense," said Carry, shortly.

"Oh, do. Tom admires you vastly, as you very well know, and he will take your picture in it, if you will sit to him. I wish you would—it would be quite a curiosity."

"No doubt of that!"

Others, however, took up the cry, and she was unmercifully urged. She grew peevish, she certainly would do nothing of the kind; but if any one of the others was ambitious of sitting for her portrait in the antiquated robe, she should be made heartily welcome to it, for the occasion.

Then began the excuses.

"It would be different for me, with my fair hair; but you dark people can wear anything you please," alleged a pretty little milk-and-water blonde done up in pale blue.

"And I don't affect white, either," said another, of a sallow complexion.

"I'm too tall for any thing *outré*," said Bessie. "That is to say," seeing her mistake, for Mrs. Brand overtopped her by an inch and more, "considering that I have no special good looks to fall back upon."

"It is a world too wide for me," thought a sylph, who was strapped in until her figure resembled an hour-glass.

"Take my advice, Car, and make it over to your maid," suggested the affected Selina, who had before promised to faint, and now meant to be thought exceedingly fine.

"Indeed I shall do no such thing," retorted Carry, for once roused by so base a proposal. "It is a very great deal too good for her. If it is old-fashioned, it is a splendid brocade, and I wonder what Mr. Oldham would say if he knew I had given away his mother's gown to a servant."

(Ay! What would Mr. Oldham have said? His eyes had opened at the suggestion.)

"Well then, dear, I'll tell you what to do," nodded the hour-glass, seriously. "Make an ottoman of it. Whenever we have any work or material that we are puzzled what to do with, I devise an ottoman. They always look well, you know, and fill up a room. Beside, people like to sit on ottomans; every shy person pokes about in search of a humble inoffensive seat, and he is sure to seize upon an ottoman, if he pos-