

## Choice Literature.

## A STORY AND A SEQUEL.

It was midsummer in a Virginian town. They were walking in an orchard behind her father's house. His black eyes glowed with passionate fire, for he loved her. His love was written on every feature of his handsome, intellectual countenance. She had a dainty, graceful figure, a perfect complexion, hazel eyes, light brown hair, and a merry, winsome face. She was eighteen, he twenty-seven.

"I could never have loved any one else, Ruth," he said, as he drew the low hanging boughs out of her path. "I have seen thousands of beautiful women in this country and in Europe; but until I came to this town a year ago and saw you I had never dreamed of loving any one."

"Well, I love you," she said, with almost childish simplicity; and her shy, upward glance verified her words.

They paused at an old peach tree which had been bent down in a storm. He aided her to spring upon its trunk, where she sat swinging her feet back and forth in girlish enjoyment, her hands lingering for a moment in his.

"Now let me go," she said, catching a bough and steadying herself. "Mamma might be at the back window upstairs. She would tease me to death." He had never seen her so animated, so bewitchingly lovely. The day was warm and cloudy, and she wore no hat; and her luxuriant hair lay in a beautiful mass about her neck.

"And yet we are not alike in a good many things," he said, thoughtfully.

"No, of course not. How could I be like you?" she asked, coquettishly. "Perhaps we should not have liked each other if we had not been different."

"You are right," he said, gravely. "And yet I am sometimes troubled about our differences in tastes—in some things."

She looked at him in surprise. "What do you mean, Arthur?"

For a moment he was silent: an embarrassed flush struggled into his face. "Why," he said, his embarrassment deepening, "some things I love next to you—things which fill me with an interest that is—beyond expression, do not touch you."

"Books!" and she laughed merrily. "I thought you were going to tell me something blood-curdling. Oh, I hate the sight of them. For your sake I tried to read the volume of Shakespeare you gave me—and because you sent it to me; but I could not. Then 'The Wandering Jew' and 'Les Misérables'—oh, they were simply horrid! I did like 'Ivanhoe,' though a little. I am really afraid I can never care for books not even for your sake. Indeed, I've tried."

"I don't care so much for that," he said, a tinge of reproach in his kindly tone; "but you never seem to realize how much I love them, and how necessary they are to me."

"No, I suppose not; but I am proud of you because you are so intellectual. The other day Mrs. Marsh called to see mamma. She has no idea you come to see me so often. I overheard her talking about the young men in town, and she said you had the face of a genius; that she had rather talk with you than any young man in D—, and that she always left you with new ideas."

"Pshaw!" he said, pulling a twig from the tree and biting it in slight confusion; "she is fond of books, and has often flattered me in a pleasant way. I simply love literature, poetry, music and art as others do, I suppose."

"Tell me how you love them," she said, her face growing slightly pensive. "I do wish I could be like you."

"I love them very much," he said. "I have often been afraid that it might keep me from making a success in the practice of law. Law books are so dry, the others are—fascinating. The other day Colonel Richardson gave me some important briefs to copy. I took them home to do, but got to writing a story that had come into my head, and was so much carried away with my own creation that I completely forgot my briefs. The Colonel was very angry, and said I would never make a lawyer, and that I was only throwing away my time."

Her face had grown very grave; there was a look of disappointment about her mouth. "I am very sorry," she said. "The last time I saw you you were so much encouraged. You ought never to have written the story."

"But you don't understand," he replied, anxiously. "The story I wrote was really very original. I never read anything like it. I have only written it well enough it may get into one of the great magazines, and then—"

"Well, what if it did," she interrupted. "Colonel Richardson would not like it, would he?"

His face clouded with keenest disappointment; he looked past her to a mountain whose rocky heights lay against the dun sky, and a blur came before him. "Can't you see," he said without looking at her—"can't you understand what joy that would give me? Why, Ruth, I would give my right arm. I would be willing to go through life in rags to be known to the lovers of literature over the world."

A blended expression of incredulity and amusement crossed her face. "You are joking, Arthur," she said; "why do you want to tease me this way?"

His face grew very grave and his voice was husky. "Sometimes I am afraid that you would be unhappy as my wife. I can't change my nature. Why, you have no idea how peculiar I am. I was the strangest child that was ever born in my native town. When I was only eight years of age I used to love to read stories better than to play with other children. I was fond of solitude, and used to spend hours alone on the hilltops dreaming of beautiful, impossible things. But when I left college my father persuaded me to study law, and I did so, and came here to get away from old associations, thinking I could apply myself more closely. I am trying to stick to my profession so that I may make you my wife. I could never live without you."

She got down from the trunk, her features struggling under the efforts to understand him.

"You said you would live in rags to be an author," she said, hesitatingly; "really I cannot understand it."

"To be a truly great writer, Ruth," he replied. "To know that within me lay the power to touch the hearts of the poor, the rich, the unhappy, the evil, the good, the world over, why, child, it would be better than to be an emperor."

"I could not love you any better than I do now," she said,

her lips beginning to quiver. "If you feel that way perhaps you had better give me up. I would only be in the way. It might—"

A sob rose in her throat and stopped her utterance. He turned deathly pale. "Don't say that, Ruth, for God's sake; don't you see that I love you with all my soul? I could not care more for you if you were like I am. I love you for yourself, just as you are. When you sing for me I am moved as nothing else can move me. You seem to have a grand soul. I could never succeed in literature anyway. I will throw it aside and stick to my calling. It is the only way I can be worthy of you."

Her face brightened; and they both laughed like two merry children as they walked homeward.

"You are very good to me, and I love you with all my heart," she said, as she turned to leave him at the gate.

When he went to his room that night he saw the story he had told Ruth about lying on his table. He took it up and started to destroy it, when something in the first paragraph caught his attention. He sat down and began to read it, and in a moment his whole being was aglow with the delight of creative genius. He read it through. "It is far better than I thought," he said, enthusiastically; "perhaps I ought not to destroy it. I will send it to a magazine, just to see what the editor will say." Sealing himself he wrote a letter to the "Editor of *The Monthly*," and put it and his story in an envelope ready for mailing.

The next morning, as he went to his work, he dropped it in the postoffice.

"Let it go," he said, "I shall think no more about it, and stick to business and make myself worthy of Ruth."

One night, about ten days later, as he entered his room after having spent a delightful evening with Ruth, he saw a letter lying on his table. It was postmarked Boston, and bore in the corner of the envelope the printed words, "*The Monthly*." His heart beat in his mouth as he opened it.

"My dear sir," it ran, "I regard it as a piece of good fortune that you did not destroy the manuscript you sent me. I seldom read a contribution till it has received the approval of at least one or more of our readers; but your unconventional letter roused such an interest in you personally that I read your story at once. It is simply a remarkable work of genius. It is artistic, original and wonderfully strong, and full of charming vitality. We are delighted to retain it for publication, and herewith enclose our cheque in payment for it. I am much interested in your statement that you are just entering the practice of law and that your whole heart is not in it. I can readily understand this, for your whole heart is undoubtedly in such works as you have sent us. If you will allow me to advise you, I would urge you to apply all your time and thought to writing, for I am sure it is your proper field. There is no doubt that even the publication of this striking short story will bring you immediate recognition. We would be glad, if convenient, for you to come on to see us. Perhaps if you should wish it—we may be able to find an opening of some sort for you. At any rate, we want to have the opportunity to examine your future work."

"Sincerely yours, THE EDITOR"

Arthur sat staring at the pink cheque and the letter as if in a dream. He went cold and hot all over by turns. He read the letter and looked at the cheque twenty times before he realized fully what they meant. His heart and brain were throbbing with a joy he had never dreamed of before. He felt like shouting, like running to the rooms of the other inmates of the house and awaking them to tell them his good fortune. It was one o'clock, but he could not sleep. He put on his light overcoat and hat and went out on to the quiet street. Not a soul was stirring. A full moon was shining and a shimmering haze hung over the earth. He walked on and on till he had passed the town suburbs, and further till he reached the little river that flowed through the fields. Never was there a happier man. No newly-made king ever felt so elated as he. Every now and then he would take the letter and cheque from his pocket and read and re-read them to the moonlight. "Money," he cried exultantly—"money for the delight of writing a story which I would gladly have given even to one appreciative friend."

When he went back to his room the sky was tinged with grey, and the horizon was bordered with a fringe of pink and gold. He threw himself on his bed, tired out with his long walk, but he did not sleep. He lay there planning his future. He would tell no one of his success. They should find it out when *The Monthly* published his story. Then he thought of Ruth and his heart sank. He would confide in her, of course; she would never betray his secret, but she could not understand what it meant to him. When she learned that he had decided to give up his profession she might reproach him.

That morning he told Mr. Richardson that he had decided to give up trying to succeed at law; that he had an opportunity to get a situation in Boston, which he thought would be better suited to him.

Mr. Richardson was surprised, but admitted that he had never seen any law student so indifferent to his studies, and that it might be well for him to try something else. That evening Arthur went to see Ruth. She turned very pale when he told her that he had given up his profession and was going to Boston. She did not hear half the letter he read to her from the editor. Tears came into her eyes.

"So many people have predicted that you would not succeed in law that I was anxious to have you do it," she said, calmly. "I can't bear to have them say they were right. Besides, you are going away."

"I am unworthy of you, Ruth," he said, in great emotion. "I cannot earn my living nor take care of you as it is. In this new field I have only the assurance of one man as to my ultimate success, it is true, and yet I could not conquer my desire to take his advice and try."

"I would love you and be true to you if you had not a cent in the world," she said; and she fell sobbing into his arms.

On his way home that night he made up his mind that it would be better for him and Ruth to separate. She could never sympathize with his highest and noblest aims, and she would never encourage him to better efforts as a wife ought. Early the next morning he packed his trunks, and sent them to the station. He was hardly his true self when he wrote to Ruth:—

"When you get this, dear little girl, I shall be on my way to Boston. I have thought it all over calmly, and have concluded that we must part. I love the work I am going into with all the heart that is not left with you; but our tastes are too contrary for our happiness,

and I cannot ask you to share the hardships I shall have to endure in my new calling. Good-bye. I would have come over to tell you good-bye, but knew I could never stick to my resolution if I saw you. Forgive me if you can. ARTHUR.

A month later the literary world had discovered a new idol in Arthur Manly Denton. *The Monthly* had announced a new novel to come upon the heels of the short story which had attracted such unprecedented attention, and the famous author was already engaged upon it. Two months later, when the first chapters of the novel appeared, the doors of cultured Boston opened even wider to the young genius. He became a social as well as a literary lion. One night a great dinner was given in his honour by a leader of society. Some of the greatest men and the most beautiful women of New England were present. Speeches were made in his praise; wine was drunk to his health and continued success.

"I don't think I ever saw a sadder face," said Mrs. M—, a popular poetess, to a noted novelist, as she looked across the table at Arthur. "I wonder what has happened to him to make him so. It looks as if all this adulation would turn so young a head as his; but he takes it all as a matter of course."

"Must have been in love," smiled the novelist.

"Perhaps," said the lady. "I would like to know. Every body has prophesied that he will marry Miss Worthington, the heiress; she absolutely worships him. His study never lacks fresh flowers from her conservatory; but he is not in love with her, that is plain."

The next morning in his mail Arthur found a little package addressed to him in Ruth's handwriting. His heart almost stopped beating as he opened it. They were his letters to her. On a small slip he read:—

I have just discovered your address, otherwise I would have sent them earlier. RUTH ANDERSON.

He stepped up to the grate and threw them into the flames, then he went to his desk and took up his pen, but he was pale, and his hand trembled violently, and he could not get his thoughts on his work. He could think of nothing but Ruth. He must forget her. Now that he had seen what would be expected of an author's wife by the set he moved in, he saw more plainly than ever that Ruth, dear as she was to him, could not be happy with him, and he would be mortified by her continually. No, he must drive her from his mind. He took her photograph from a shelf and added it to the flames made by his letters. He determined that he would never allow himself to think of her again, and yet at that moment he felt as if his soul were dying within him.

Years went by. Arthur was more famous than ever. He had become the editor of *The Monthly*, and held the highest literary position of any one of his age in America. It was still whispered that he and Miss Worthington would be married. He had himself begun to think of it. He had persuaded himself that his feeling for Ruth had been only a youthful fancy; but he looked for the little weekly published in D—, with more interest than the most important paper that came to his desk. He read every issue carefully, always looking for her name and yet believing that he no longer cared for her. Now and then he would see her mentioned as being at some social gathering, and it gave him a strange pleasure to picture her among the others, ever with a sad expression on her face, but the same beautiful creature that she used to be in the days when he was really happy, before position and fame had weighed him down. At such moments he was fond of imagining that he was an attorney in that delightful little town with her for his wife. But he considered these thoughts only pleasing fancies like those he loved to put in his books, and really believed that if he should marry the charming and intellectual Miss Worthington that he would learn to love her with all his heart.

One day he saw in a society paper that his friend Miss Sanborn had returned from a visit to Virginia, and he went that evening to call on her, hoping to hear news of his native State. As he sat in the drawing-room waiting for her to come down stairs, he was astounded to see a photograph of Ruth on a little easel on a table near him. He trembled so that he could hardly lift it from its place. How could it have come there? How pretty she was! She was more beautiful than ever. Where could there be a more perfect face? It was even classical. Could Miss Sanborn have met her? Had she been to D—?

(To be continued.)

## THE MISSIONARY WORLD.

## THE CRITICS OF MISSIONS.

Dr. Munger thus disposes of those critics who declare that Christian missions are making no progress: "The most persistent critics are the tourists and the statisticians. The former make the journey of the world, and, finding in every port a handful of missionaries, and behind them the great, black mass of untouched heathenism, not unnaturally infer that this speck of whiteness can never overcome this mass of blackness. What reason has the tourist for believing that a thing which is so near nothing can bring to naught a thing so vast and real as Asiatic Buddhism? He forgets that one rope-girded priest converted England, another Germany, another Ireland. He finds that the missionary is a common and uninteresting man, that often his converts are chiefly retainers, that relapses are frequent, and that his methods have apparently little relation to the ends most to be desired. And so he eats the missionary's bread as a god from Olympus might sup with mortals, accepts his suggestions as to routes, and fills his note-book with borrowed information which appears in his printed pages as original observation, and goes away damning the cause with faint praise of the worthy man's zeal. It would be interesting to compare the opinion of book-making tourists with those of the British Governors of India, the Ministers to Turkey, and the admirals of Pacific squadrons; that is, the opinions of casual observers with those of men who thoroughly understand the subject. But the most confident critic of missions is the sta-