

THE HERALD OF SUMMER.

I hear a gush of melody, I see a flush of green, So I know the Summer's coming with the glory of a queen.

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IN AFTER-YEARS; OR, FROM DEATH TO LIFE.

BY MRS. ALEXANDER ROSS.

CHAPTER X. (continued.)

Adam's reasons for taking Mr. Cox's apartments for a week were twofold, first he had to find out Lady Hamilton's residence;

The request was made and complied with, Mrs. Cox going with the two girls, on the day of their arrival to a neighbouring millinery establishment;

"Oh George, is that you? It's six o'clock is it, that's what was hurrying me. Young ladies, this is my Son Mr. George Cox, I was telling you about him, and George this is the Misses Cunninghames, the new lodgers, friends of Miss Stichen from Scotland.

During the introduction, Mr. George had placed himself in front of his mother, and the young ladies, his hand just touching the brim of his hat;

After tea he had a long conversation with Adam, and discovered that the objects of his love were twins; that they were the descendants of nobles; a fact the old man did not fail to impress on all and sundry;

In dreams I see their pale brown hair, In dreams I see their white robes flowing, The tallest with her Queen like hair, Her radiant smiles on all bestowing, I see the Castle by the sea.

there is such a difficulty in composing real good poetry about a rumbling old mass of stones like a Castle; and then the sea, scarcely anything will rhyme to sea, but be, and short 'trasy' words like that.

He looked up at a square foot of looking glass, which hung on the wall above the table at which he wrote, the contemplation of the handsome face reflected there with its slightly hooked nose (which he called Roman) the large good humoured mouth, and collar laid back from the fat neck (a la Byron) had often helped him in similar immiserations;

"Yes, I have it; the poets licence, I shall make it a cottage and a lake, instead of a Castle and a sea much more romantic, and beautiful; here goes.

I see the cottage by the lake O'er which the forest boughs are swaying, The moonbeams too, how soft they be, Alas! the waveless waters weeping.

depth, and full enough for half a dozen modern caps.

"Mother," said the poet, shaking Mrs. Cox with poetical licence as he spoke.

"What is it, what's the matter, Susan is the house on fire?" exclaimed the poor woman, all in one breath, as still half asleep, she sat bolt upright in bed.

"No, no," said Mr. George in a low tone, as with the candle, which he had suggested the idea of fire to the half aroused sleeper, in his hand, he bent over the bed, "It's only my, don't speak so loud, you'll wake the lodgers."

"It's you, George? you've gone to bed with cold feet, and you've got the stomach ache, Oh George, George, you're no more to be trusted than when you was ten years old, but it's my own fault, I should have tried if your feet were cold before I sent you to bed.

"I haven't cold feet, and I haven't any stomach ache, and I haven't been in bed yet, I have been busy in my lonely room, with only the moon for a companion, while the lodgers and yourself slept soundly below while I

Through long lone listless hours apart, Stood listening to my wildly beating heart.

poet sought his attic, and his tired although delighted listener resigned herself once more to sleep.

Next morning, Mrs. Cox entrusted Susan with the secret of the great event which had taken place, saying: "If the poem takes with the public we are all to live out of town and keep a one horse shay, a cow, fowls and other country things, and we'll have to have a man to take care of all that and do the work, and perhaps that's your seven years' change."

"Perhaps," replied the wondering and pleased maid of all work.

"Heigh ho!" rejoined the little wizened tired out mistress; "it would be a nice change for us all."

During the time the twins were shopping under the auspices of Mrs. Cox, Adam was doing his best to find the address of Lady Hamilton, although in rather a singular way.



HE PROCEEDED AT ONCE TO WRITE A POEM.

No sooner had he written the word weeping than he exclaimed—

"Beautiful! beautiful! Byron never wrote anything more 'sweetly beautiful,' as mother says, than that. It was just the thing, changing the sea into a lake, the Castle into a cottage; but what a time it does take to compose poetry. I do declare if that is not the dead hour of midnight, sounding ting ting on our little cracked clock, well, late as it is, I must go and read it to mother, there is no chance of getting her to listen to me in the morning or at meal times, she is so busy with them plagued lodgers; well there will be an end to all that, when I publish my long poem; but before I take it down stairs to her, I must read it over again, to see that there is not the shadow of a mistake, after all there is no one like woman, dear woman, if you want to hear the truth about what you compose; I never in all my life read a verse of my own composition to a dunderhead of a man, that he was not mad with jealousy, and tried to laugh me out of the talent given me at my birth."

"Well," continued he, "the time is getting later and later and I have not read over my poem yet, here goes."

He read the eight lines twice over, each time becoming more and more enamoured with his long poem;

"Two verses," said he, "it is not so bad, two verses in one night, and that the beginning, the most difficult part in the whole poem; as the copy in small hand used to say at school, 'a thing well begun is half ended.' I know very well that's not true about my poem, but if I write two as good verses as that, every night, I'll be very contented, I'll be done in time, and when it is published, I'll cause a sensation in the literary world, I wonder what the Standard and Athenaeum will say to it?"

He smiled, a calm smile of triumph, as in imagination his eye glanced over a long laudatory article in each paper, on "the new poem of George Cox, Esquire, 'Thaives Inn, Holborn.' I wonder who I'll give it to, not Smith and Elder, that's certain, they refused my 'Literary Gems of Poetical Thought' and they shan't get the chance of ever seeing it before publication." "The twin sisters of the Lake washed mountains," yes that's what it must be now, sea washed is stronger, but I must sacrifice that, Lake washed is the true way to put it; but as Miss Louisa Hopkins beautifully observed about my poetry, it is one mass of beautiful truths, strung on a string like pearls and rubies; what a girl that is! such discrimination, but what will she say to my falling in love with the twins?"

The mere contemplation of such a thing made the poet start up, and with such eyes, and hands bent in the form of a claw raised to the level, and within half a foot of his head, he performed on two square of the bare flooring of the garret, a dance of admiration and laughter, prompted by his success in poetry, and love.

His dance over he took his candle, and armed with his new poem, proceeded to his mother's room; he found the good lady huddled up in sheets, and blankets, fast asleep, her face and head almost buried in a cotton night cap, the frills of which were at least two inches in

"You recollect that beautiful little poem, mother, I wrote on myself in the unpublished volume of 'Literary Gems of Poetical Thought.'"

"Good gracious," said the distressed looking woman, pressing one hand on the top of her head, which ached partly with the fatigue she had undergone, previous to going to bed, and partly with being so suddenly aroused from a sound sleep. "I do believe you've been and sat up half the night writing poetry again; you'll kill yourself that's sure enough; didn't Mr. Cateham tell you that studying the law, was as much one head could do at a time."

"You're a clever woman, mother, you've just guessed it, hit the nail on the right head; as to old Cateham he would be precious glad to write poetry himself if he could; what do you say to that?" as he spoke he flattered a sheet of foolscap, on which the two verses of the new poem were written and rewritten, with their various corrections and reiterations, this in Mr. George's large dashing hand, occupying the whole four pages of the sheet; "the beginning of a new poem of more than a hundred lines."

"Lad a mercy, George Cox, you'll put me into my cold grave, with your sittings up o' nights, and your wearing of yourself to a whipping post. I wish to goodness you had been as stupid as other people, and that you yourself telling me only yesterday that that other poetry man, Lord Byron, died before he was thirty years old, and quarrelled with his mother, and ran off to the Greece or some other place, and died a stranger in a strange land. No wonder the poor woman quarrelled with him, if he was avenging himself to a thread paper, sitting up o' nights as you're doing, but you needn't run off to the Greece or the fat ether. I'll take my affidavit on it, you'll die before you're twenty if you don't call a halt."

"For any sake, mother, stop. It's awful late, and I must read my poem to you before I go to bed. Look, eight verses."

"Eight verses!" repeated the horrified woman, expecting to see her son and heir dived down from sheer exhaustion at her feet.

"Eight verses, no, of course not, two verses, I meant to say eight lines."

"And quite enough, in all conscience, written in the dead of night, when you should have been in your comfortable warm bed. Say away, I'm hearing."

He put the candlestick into his mother's hand as she sat up in the bed, and striking a position, he held the sheet of paper in his left hand almost at arm's length, while with the forefinger and thumb meeting, the other fingers slightly curved and distended, he moved the right arm in gentle small waves and circles, keeping time to the rhyme of his poetry.

His mother was delighted, as he knew she would be. She saw before her in the person of her own son one who, if he could only be persuaded to sleep instead of write during the night, would, she felt certain, in after years reach at least one of the pinnacles of human greatness.

Hamilton was, and as to the whereabouts of Inchdrewer.

Adam gave him all the information he himself was in possession of, which certainly did not amount to much that would enable him to find Lady Hamilton in London. However, it enabled his listener to comprehend that a West End directory was the most likely means by which the old man's end would be attained; and writing the name and address on a slip of paper, together with the number of the booksellers shop, he explained to Adam how he was to proceed on the following morning.

Next day Adam again went forth on the same errand, but pursuing the same course pointed out to him the evening before. His success was no better than at first. Several directories were produced for his inspection; the owners of the books looked for the name themselves, but none such was to be found.

The girls proposed that they, accompanied by Adam, should go down to the wharf, where the ship they came in still lay, and consult the captain of the "Skeely Skipper;" it was very probable he could give them some information that might make finding their friend a very simple process.

To the wharf, therefore, they set off, Adam as before, riding with the cabin man on the dicky. As they approached the wharf, the cab in which they were seated got into a line of others, and finding that it was likely to continue so for some time they left it and pursued their way on foot.

CHAPTER XI.

IN PURSUIT OF THE FUGITIVES.

When Sir Richard Cunningham reached his home with the doctor, they found the child stretched on the lap of its weeping mother apparently stiffening fast in death; he was put into a warm bath with the usual success in such cases but the danger was still so imminent, that Sir Richard prevailed on the doctor to make the Castle his headquarters for that day and the following night.

On the second day the doctor declared his patient out of danger, and it was not until then that Sir Richard had time to think of the girls whom he fancied were lying dead in the north tower.

Sir Richard himself drove the doctor home, and on his return he was put into unusual good humour by finding his son and heir progressing rapidly towards convalescence.

Tired as he was with watching his sick boy it was a trouble he cared not for that of having the dead bodies, he expected it was now high time to see to, removed to a decent chamber, and the signs which would lead men to guess at the manner of their death obliterated, all of which must be done with his own hand, ere he could send for Lady Hamilton to show her the revenge he had taken; but he knew it must be done at once, the bodies would soon become offensive, perhaps they were so now; he started as the thought occurred that his own life might be endangered thereby.

The afternoon was waning as he betook himself to the door of the chamber where he had so carefully excluded the life giving air

on his last visit, he now proceeded to undo his former work, carefully putting the wadding he had stuffed the crevices with, into his pocket that it might be burned, and so thus far all record of the deed perished.

This part of his work was accomplished, but he still left the door locked that the foul air might escape by the balcony. He now entered the corridor, and stared with horrified eyes as he beheld the iron shutters wide open, and the plaster lying in lumps under the window, he saw that his secret was abroad; he must have been watched, no person on earth could have opened the shutters from the inside, he advanced to the window—the girls were gone—he was overwhelmed with amazement and rage.

"They must be got back at any sacrifice, but how? that was a question he could not answer, neither had he any clue by which to discover the one who aided them in their flight, his thoughts wandered to Arthur Lindsay,—yes, it must be he.

The evil spirit who had given him counsel and help for forty years stood by, peering into the eyes and heart of the bewildered man; closer to body and soul than mortal touch could reach, and he laughed with hellish triumph, and shook his chosen folk with headish amusement as he sprung over the balustrade of the tower.

Sir Richard ordered his carriage and in hot haste drove to the Haddon Arms, and entering for the first time since he had been asked in the far off broad and cheerless, and lighted with the twinkling of his match on to his, and grey beard, he dashed his feet to show him to a room where he could talk to him alone, then he proceeded to interrogate the man as to his knowledge of the fugitives.

"You have seen my grand nephew, the young ladies who live at the castle?"

"Yes Sir."

"Have they been here within the last two days?"

"No Sir."

"Now Maclure listen to me, these young ladies are next to my son, heirs of Haddon Castle, and they have run away during the last two days, not alone, that they could not do, but probably in company with some young fellow, who will marry one of them in hope to secure the wealth of both; I have good reason to suppose that a son of General Lindsay's is the man, and that the girls are now in Inchdrewer Castle; you are a sharp fellow, go on some errand which you can easily invent to Inchdrewer, and find out if they are there, and what stories they have told to insure themselves a welcome, if by your means I recover these girls you shall have a twenty years lease of your place for your work."

The man stood as if he had much to tell and yet could not get made himself that the various incidents running in his mind and stirring his memory almost to confusion, were in any way connected with the flight of Sir Richard's grandchildren, or would help himself to the consummation so devoutly to be wished of a twenty years free lease of his lordship.

He would take time to arrange his thoughts, perhaps it was the young ladies he saw in the post cart, if so his fortune was made.

"Captain Lindsay is not at Inchdrewer, the family are all in London these three months back, but on Wednesday night, or rather Thursday morning I went up to Brown's the crofters, to get him to lend me his post cart" (the truth is Maclure had gone to Brown's to bring home a barrel of stungled whiskey made by Brown from an illicit still in his barn) "and I was just in time to see your old servant Adam drive off with the Shetland pony and the post cart; Brown told me Adam paid him five shillings for the use of the pony and post cart, only three ten o'clock, and Longman the Stratford carrier was to send it back again."

"I had to go home without doing my errand, and I went through the firewood; just as I was nearly at Dan's road on the uplands, I saw the post cart come down the main road from Kettle's farm, and take up two women that was sitting on a hillcock below the trees, a stone's cast from the road."

"Once the women was in the cart, Adam drove as fast as the pony's feet could peck, down the road that turns to Longman's the carrier's; may be it was them, and that they're there yet."

(To be continued.)

THE TOWER OF GAIN.—By dint of sheer struggling with hand and foot, we reached the summit of Mount Salabagh, near Damascus, at ten, and set down to "look about us." Right up the very bases of the mountains, on either side, extends a perfect sea of vegetation, through the dark glossy crown of which, like silver threads, wind the clear streams of the Abana; and here and there along the clustering bushes rise shining cupolas and tall white towers, while in the center of all lies the imperial city, her low massive walls and tapering minarets showing dazingly white in the glorious sunshine, and the mighty dome of the Great Mosque crowning the whole.

In the transparent atmosphere of that wonderful sky, every thing is brought near to our eyes as if by magic; the hills which rise at the base of the tower weary hour as it appears to lie under our very feet, while the swarthy Arabs, who are crawling like black ants along the broad white road, seem as distinct as if they were in the next yard off. In all my travels, I have seen nothing so complete with that view, except perhaps the panorama of Moscow from the Sparrow Hills; and if the City of the Caesars has the advantage in barrenness and color, Damascus certainly stands alone in beauty of site and splendid luxuriance of vegetation.

From this glorious panorama we turn away reluctantly, to gaze at the little square tower of stone at the base of the mountain, marked by tradition as the grave of the first murderer. Childish and impossible as the legend is, it here assumes an air of solemn reality. Where that miserable life drew to a close, none but God can say; but in all the earth it could have found no fitter spot for its ending. To us, at least, there is a weird grandeur in the thought of the lonely homestead looking down forever from this bleak mountain top, here and desolate as his own limited existence, upon the earthly paradise which he might not enter; and watching through the countless ages, the red current which he had let loose gradually overspreading the wide earth.

Could his fierce spirit be pleased by deeds of blood, few spots on the earth's surface have witnessed more of such than this quiet, beautiful valley, from the base where Hazael stole an illicit to spread a thick cloth, dipped in water, over his master's face, to that fatal night, eleven years ago, when ten thousand armed murderers came howling round the Christian quarter of Damascus. And now, over the graves of the countless slain, the grass grows fresh and green, and the grasshoppers sport in the sunshine, and the waters ripple in the shadow of waving trees, as if there was nothing in the world but the work of God; above, all is silence, and desolation; a fit spot whereon to realize the grim belief of the heathen, that the souls of the wicked are led to the summit of a rocky ridge, whence they behold the good far below them, dwelling in shining tents, and chasing shadowy herds of buffaloes over the fertile prairies of the spirit land; while they, after one last despairing look at the joys which they can never share, are driven back to wander forever among the barren mountains, tortured by the eternal agony of thirst and hunger.—Chambers' Journal.