

Poetry.

(Written for the Ontario Workman.)
DEAD, BUT AT REST.

Rest here a little while, but not forever!
Thou sleepest, and we lay thee gently down;
But thou art still our darling—still our own—
Thee from our love, time nor death can sever.

Only a little while—while thou art sleeping;
Thou art not left, our darling, not alone;
But as a precious seed that we have sown,
Still thou art loved, and still in constant keeping.

Why is thy mouth so mute—thy hand so still?
Why to our anxious voice comes no reply?
Why is no meaning in thy half-closed eye?
Alas! oh, God, teach us to love Thy will!

We shall not hear her in the early morning—
We shall not see her with the rest at play—
We shall not watch her growing day by day,
Fresh grace each year her gentle ways adorning.

Alas! no more her silvery voice will ring
About the dwelling like a song of mirth;
We shall not see her by the Christmas
hearth,

Nor garlanded with flowers in the spring.

Oh, never more the tender arms shall twine
Around me, bending me to thy caress;
Never the pleadings of thy meek distress
Sue to my heart and match my tears with thine.

But, my own darling, thou art not forsaken—
Thou art but resting here a little while;
We shall yet hear thy voice and see thy smile

In the bright morning, when thou shalt awaken.

Sleep, then, a little while, and take thy rest!
No cruel pain shall flush thy tender brow—
No sweeping tempest shall disturb thee now;
Sleep gracefully, as on thy mother's breast!

Sleep through the night, till morning comes
again!

Angels are watching with me round thy bed.
Sleep, tender flower—rest thy weary head,
Until the sunshine shall glance across the plain.

Yes, we shall hear thy voice and see thy smile,
And clasp thee in a long, long, sweet embrace,
And gaze upon the radiance of thy face—
Oh, then, rest here in peace a little while!

R. H. F.

Toronto, May, 1873.

Tales and Sketches.

ONE WOMAN'S RESOLUTION.

BY MRS. DENISON.

[CONTINUED.]

But it was not for her to sit and sorrow long, or hopelessly. Something must be done, and so she set out to find ways and means of helping herself. Some letters of condolence reached her. She was advised to come back to Philadelphia, but that she would not think of for a moment. To struggle bravely she felt that she must be among strangers. So she sat down to sum up her resources.

She did not play, therefore she could not teach music—that gentle resort of indigence; she knew how to sew well, but owing to a lameness of the side, from which she had always suffered, she could use her needle but a few hours at a time. She shrank from the public exposure of the shop, although, as a last resort, she was willing to occupy that position. She found at first some light work—zephyr-knitting—which answered well while her money held out; but she had chosen a good boarding-house, and the little sum soon dwindled away under the demands of her landlady. Then she sought a cheaper house, and went up with her trunk a story higher, into a room graced with a carpet a yard square, and a narrow hard bed. Here she worked diligently at what she could get to do, but the small needs of life—that look so insignificant to those whom wealth has dowered, drained her little purse weekly. The shoes, though they had worn almost like fairy gifts, at last began to give way, and her landlady looked at her with suspicion if she fell behind-hand only a few shillings. The time came when her miserable little candle-flame flickered till long after midnight, as she sewed, and the rude scrawls upon her whitewashed wall, done in red and black, leered at her with painfully disturbed, grotesque faces, and seemed with every flicker of the weak flame to be dancing towards her, receding only as she looked up with bloodshot, weary eyes.

Unfortunately her landlady was a coarse, ignorant woman, and could not appreciate her fine courtesy, and strict politeness. After the manner of such creatures, she speculated largely upon her lodger, giving as her opinion various uncharitable surmises as to what her former life had been.

"She's some fine lady, left—that's my mind about it," she would say, with sundry winks and shrugs. "P'raps she's trying to do better, for it's true as gospel, I believe she varies her meals only with crackers and water—and she's gittin' that thin, that I'm 'feared I shall have her sick on my hands yet."

There was likelihood of that, one night, when Hannah came home after the third day, unsuccessful in her search for work—and stumbled blindly up the stairs. Terrible, spli-

ting pains in her head, giddiness, a parched tongue, burning hands, and heavy eyes, all announced the presence of the dread phantom we call fever. He pressed his flaming hands to her forehead—he grinned horribly in her face, and his eyes like glints of lightning seemed to leer at her here and there from the disfigured wall. How she had walked that day! Lured here by a sign, and there by a placard, she would enter shop after shop, only to be disappointed.

"We want experienced hands, ma'am," was the invariable answer.

"But I could soon learn if they would take me," said Hannah, dimly thinking that she could live on faith till then. "Why can't I get a situation in a store like this?"

"Bless you, that is hardest of all," said the saleswoman. "I waited three months for this place. You see the girls get their friends in, or the salesmen do, and a stranger hasn't no chance at all."

"Oh, if I could only die!" was the next thought, as, with a bursting heart, she turned away. "Oh, Fletcher, they will not let me live even by the sweat of my brow!"

Not long after her return her landlady was summoned.

"I'm afraid I'm going to be ill," said Hannah, in a weak voice.

"And I hope not ma'am," retorted the landlady, savagely, as if she had been struck. "I can't be having you sick here."

"I was going to say that I have friends in Philadelphia, who—"

"Well, then, you better go to 'em," said the woman, coarsely; "either them or the hospital. I can't have you here."

Hannah gave a faint cry at the word hospital. Then she lifted herself, eyes and cheeks blazing, took one step towards the creature in her old, imperious way, the woman shrinking in terror.

"I say you shall not—you dare not send me to the hospital," she cried, half delirious at the thought. "Do you know who I am? Why, woman, I could have bought you and sold you a thousand times, three months ago."

"Yes, no doubt—that's what I've been thinking. A pretty character to let into my house; that's just where the land lays. He's gone off and left ye. Well, you might as well be gone, it always turns out so. What do such men care, when?"

Hannah had been standing there with eyeballs nearly bursting, so fierce was the pain, not comprehending till the last few words were spoken. Then she sprang towards her again, with outstretched hand, the fever throbbing in every vein.

"Woman, fend! How dare you talk to a fatherless, friendless girl, in that way! How dare you insult her, and lower yourself by such suspicions? See"—and she fumbled over her little workbox, trembling from head to foot, ghastly white one moment, crimson the next, and brought out a newspaper.

"Read that!" she cried, pointing to a paragraph, and then sank down, vainly striving to press the pain back with both hands held closely against her throbbing temples.

"Oh, so you was his 'daughter'?" said the landlady, laying down the paper. "Well, you needn't take on so about it. I'm poor, and it's natural for poor folks to be suspicious, I suppose. It's no use trying to take care of you, if you are going to be sick, any way; and the—what I said is good enough for anybody."

At that moment came a lean child into the room—a child all eyes and feet, who had such a worn, hungry look, that Hannah, in the midst of her agony, had thought to pity her.

"A letter, Miss," she said, "and a package, Miss; they said it was for you, down stairs."

Hannah's trembling fingers held and unrecorded the little box, or whatever it was, tore open the letter, and tears, that eased her tortured brain, fell on the childish words within.

"DEAR DARLING HADDY: I've been trying so long to find you. You know I never returned your pearl necklace, so here it is; I'm so thankful I had it! and I was so foolish as to sell you—no—I mean my lace bertha—and I got twenty-five dollars for it; please don't refuse it. I hope you are not poor; but if you want it ever so little, please do accept it as readily as I accepted your gift. Oh, it was such a shame that everything went! I cried like a baby when I heard of it; all your splendid jewels, your elegant piano! I can't bear to think of it, and I never, never go by your house; I'd walk a mile round first. I trust these may reach you; I am almost sure they will, by the way I send it. Oh, Haddy, can't you come to Philadelphia? You shall be welcome to us. Our little home is just as pleasant as ever, and we should be so proud to have you."

With such tender entreaty the long letter abounded. Hannah put it aside, the tears still streaming.

"There! see for yourself—pearls! and mine! Costly enough, too, to keep me from the hospital, I think, for one while."

The woman said nothing, but stared enviously at the beautiful things; while Hannah threw on her bonnet and shawl, and hurried out.

It was not difficult to convert the ornaments into money, though she received far less than their value.

"A few dollars left," she murmured, as six weeks afterward she moved feebly about her room; "enough to keep me till I get up my strength, and then—and then!"

The weeks sped on; she was well enough to resume life's duties, but—what duties?

Should she begin anew the wearisome hunt after sewing, and stores; and spend weeks to learn the initiatory process by which she was to become an expert? That would not do. But her inexorable needs stared her in the face. Her dress was shabby; her home, poor as it was, to be paid for. The doctor had said she must have substantial food. She needed rich and strengthening juices; she had been accustomed all her life to the finest of the wheat.

Had she begun now to regret the luxuries, the splendors that once had almost wearied her! Did visions of spacious rooms, and costly pictures, and shining silver, and trooping friends, ever ready to welcome with outstretched arms, haunt her now? Oh, but she was weary sometimes; very weary with the struggle of thought—very sad with the prospect before her. For a home—just a home—however rugged and bare of comforts, what would she not have given. The hard, cold winter was upon her. Fuel must be bought, the thin cloak was insufficient to protect her from the blast and frosts; but how to get a thicker? She had one promise of a situation, but she might be obliged to wait for it weeks, perhaps months. The landlady was kinder—had even gone the length of fitting up a little stove for the few fogots she could buy in bundles. And, during the period of her convalescence, she had tortured herself with doubts and fears. Mr. Martyn had never been a very affectionate father, but Hannah had loved him doubly, since her mother died, having no one else upon whom she could bestow her affection. Now, looking back upon his terrible death, she thought over all that miserable time, and wondered if, by any act of hers, she might have averted it. It seemed to grow more and more fraught with horror as the time passed on—and what had she to do but to nurse her morbid fancies? Oh, for work! work! that almost divine healer of human sorrows—that beautiful handmaiden sent from the skies, to make the burden of cross and care lighter by more than half.

The sweet little thoughtfulness of Minnie Moore had touched her, and deepened the love she had always felt for the timid, childish creature. As soon after her illness as she was able to handle a pen, she had written to her pretty friend, thanking her for the gifts which she did not excuse herself for retaining, and for the offer of a home, which she would not accept.

Then came dreary thought again. What should she do? She might make caps, and by laborious stitching earn perhaps twenty-five or thirty cents a day. She might make shirts for men, fifteen, and twenty cents apiece. She had tried to obtain a situation as a sewing-machine operator, that being the least painful way in which she could use a needle, but there was a surplus of hands at that time; perhaps—if she "would call again;" and she grew tired of calling. As for teaching, that was out of the question after one application for examination. She faltered over the simplest questions; not that she did not know—but her knowledge of a rudimentary kind, in books, had a trick of deserting her at the needed moment. In fine, it seemed as if all ways were closed, all employments shut up to her, and though she was still knitting, the remuneration scarce sufficed her for her fire-wood and scanty, unhealthy food. When she went out, with sometimes a newspaper only, between her dress and her thin shawl, the cold, to which he had always been susceptible, pierced her through and through, till it seemed as if the tears it forced out froze upon her lashes.

One night her little bundle of wood had not lasted till the sun went down. Hannah was cold, roused, bitter. "I will not live thus!" she cried, with the determined old stamp; "my health is going, my energies rusting, my very heart is numb," and then rang out the old cry, "What shall I do? Oh, my God, what shall I do? She had asked of the right source, though not yet with the right intent.

The wind whistled through the crazy casements as Hannah began a quick and half angry walk. She felt tempted to arraign Providence, that seemed to be bearing down upon her so cruelly. She looked about her with the most intense disgust—at the bare floor, the discolored wall, the guttering candle, the dull black stove yawning with cracks, the rusted pipe on which poverty seemed written in scraggy red letters of German text. She scrutinized her own worn fingers, thin and roughened with the reefs of the needle, for she had alternated her knitting with sewing. She thought of her past, when a word brought the most tempting viands—and oh, she was so hungry! so hungry for one good, comfortable meal, every pore in her body cried out for food and warmth. And again she cried with passionate determination, "I will not live thus; I will not! I will not!"

But what to do? Fletcher would not come back for two years. His letters were to be forwarded, if any came, by little Minnie; but none might come. And if they did, she should only write once, telling him all; there would be no need of any more, she thought—and still the old cry overbore all this: "I will not live thus!"

What to do? As if the tempter stood before her bodily, came the vision of a beautiful room—a placid, honored old lady—a young girl knitting—a well-written article by some one who treated of the wrongs of women, and this sentence, which she seemed to hear shudderingly: "Until, driven by the neglect of so-

ciety, and the avarice of the rich, she consents to a life of crime and humiliation."

Her cheek burned with a hotter than fever flush as she remembered all this. Involuntarily the hand clenched and her feet set with that same resentful feeling. She had said then that she would not starve nor die; but oh, how little had she imagined all the perils attending actual cold, and hunger, and helplessness! Poor auntie! if she could see her, how her tender, timid heart must ache!

Again the casement rattled, and a bit of paper at her feet rustled and fluttered towards her. "Poor thing! even you feel the cold, I believe," she said, almost caringly, as she took it up—a torn and mutilated advertisement. The light of the almost spent candle fell full upon it; she clutched it eagerly with both hands, as her eye caught the broken words and joined them here and there.

"Enough! Thank God! No woman need consent to a life of crime and humiliation, while the world stands, and there are homes in plenty provided for them by the Great Father." Her face was transfigured now; she had taken a resolve, in which there was no humiliation, the faint shadow of which had always been present with her—yes, her face looked not almost beautiful, but more than beautiful. There was struggle no longer, no longer passion and defiance in the way she said, again and again, "I will not live thus!"

"You have noticed it then, John, dear?"

"Well, I don't know that I did before you called it before me so forcibly. I have reason to remember that, for it was in the midst of the toughest Greek sentence I ever yet applied myself to master."

"I think you were a little angry then, John," and a mellow laugh, clear and ringing, though low, showed how small an estimate she put upon John's anger.

The room was large, comfortably furnished, well warmed, and books peeped out everywhere, from brackets, shelves, corners, tables, boxes, and closets. John was a bookworm, who made more than a comfortable living by his pen. Annita was a little, cheerful, merry busybody—a check upon her husband when he threatened to entomb himself alive, his helper if he was overtaken, his good angel always. The aroma of comfort filled every nook. The gas was shaded by a beautiful device that mellowed the light without destroying its splendor.

Across the hall the door opened into a roomy, old-fashioned kitchen. The gas was bright there also, bringing into fine relief, against the rather dark paper of the wall, a fair woman, neatly dressed, who seemed superintending the studies of an overgrown boy. Slates and pencils, pens and papers, and school books were scattered over the table.

"There, Joe, you'll soon be a good writer," said the woman, smiling. "You improve so fast."

"And I hope I may never forget to pay you back for your goodness some day."

"Very well, Joe, I can wait," says the sweet voice. And she turns away, seeing that there are tears in the eyes of the boy who came there uncouth, ignorant, and obstinate.

Return we to the cosy sitting-room.

"I am so thankful she ever came," resumed Annita. "For two years she has been friend, counsellor, and, I will not say servant, though she does insist upon the word, all in one. Under her reign the kitchen is more like a parlor; and the meals—I declare she cooks poetry into them. Strange that she will be so reserved on the subject of her past life. She is a lady, though she tries so hard to be ungrammatical at times, and in a sense common-place. I'm glad she has no company, for I'm selfish enough to want her all to myself."

"Strange she is so exclusive in her notions," put in John.

"Yes, that's the word," clapped Annita, laughing; "she won't condescend to be one of us, not even to eat or sit with us, though I've almost begged it. What good luck it was, John, that we got her; and if over my brother should give us a slice of his fortune, she should leave that place and be our house-keeper. Wouldn't that be splendid! Oh, I keep forgetting you are writing an article. Read it when you're through."

"By the way, Annita, I met Warren to-day, and he says Fletcher Chase is home."

"Why, bless me, you don't say!" cried the little woman, breathlessly. "My best nephew! for I do love him best, if you did think him the most worldly fellow living. I always said there was the true stuff in him, and I'll warrant you he's come home a man."

At this moment appeared the overgrown boy.

"Why, Joe, did anybody ring?"

"Yes'm," and Joe disappeared, but soon entered, again, followed by a bearded man, bronzed, and the handsomer for his travels. There were great cries of joy, kisses, and handshaking—a ring for refreshments, which the fair-looking woman brought in herself. She had unbound her hair previously, but had just tucked it back, here and there a stray curl falling.

Another scene—the woman turned deadly white. Annita sprang up and recovered the tray. Fletcher Chase had nearly leaped the table, and now held the half-fainting woman in his arms.

"Hannah, darling! did you dream how I was searching for you? Hannah, my darling! my blessed darling!"

"Why, I never," gasped Mrs. John, "knew that you two were acquainted. And did you know he was my nephew?"

"I did not know it," said Hannah. "But Fletcher, you—you do not know?"

"Don't put me away, my darling. I do know—know that you are the noblest woman that ever crossed my path. Aunt Annita, this dear woman is my betrothed wife, and you see before you the happiest man in all this beautiful city."

Have I put it plain enough—for this is not all a fancy sketch—have I put it plain enough that you, earnest, pure, high-minded women, need not toil in cold attics, need not wear out precious eyesight, and more precious heart and brain, toiling on in unrequited labor! No, woman need not be driven to crime, while there are thousands of happy homes in our land that would gladly welcome to their hearthstones those who are thrown upon the cold charities of the world, if they will only accept them, and feel that in the humblest labor there is no humiliation, no degradation in the smallest office done for Christ's sake.

HUNTED DOWN;

OR, THE

STORY OF AN INSURANCE BROKER.

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

Most of us see some romances in life. In my capacity as Chief Manager of a Life Assurance Office, I think I have within the last thirty years seen more romances than the generality of men; however unpromising the opportunity may, at first sight, seem.

As I have retired, and live at my ease, I possess the means that I used to want, of considering what I have seen, at leisure. My experiences have a more remarkable aspect, so reviewed, than they had when in progress. I have come home from the Play now, and can recal the scenes of the Drama upon which the curtain has fallen, free from the glare, bewilderment, and bustle of the Theatre.

Let me recal one of these Romances of the real world.

There is nothing truer than physiognomy, taken in connection with manner. The art of reading that book of which *Eternal Wisdom* obliges every human creature to present his or her own page with the individual character written on it, is a difficult one, perhaps, and is little studied. It may require some natural aptitude, and it must require (for everything does) some patience and some pains. That these are not usually given to it—that numbers of people accept a few stock commonplace expressions of the face as the whole list of characteristics, and neither seek nor know the refinements that are truest—that you, for instance, give a great deal of time and attention to the reading of music, Greek, Latin, French, Italian, Hebrew if you please, and do not qualify yourself to read the face of the master or mistress looking over your shoulder teaching it to you—I assume to be five hundred times more probable than improbable. Perhaps, a little self-sufficiency may be at the bottom of this: facial expression requires no study from you, you think; it comes by nature to know enough about it, and you are not to be taken in.

I confess, for my part, that I have been taken in, over and over and over again. I have been taken in by acquaintances, and I have been taken in (of course) by friends; far oftener by friends than by any other class of persons. How came I to be so deceived? Had I quite mis-read their faces?

No. Believe me, my first impression of those people, founded on face and manner alone, was invariably true. My mistake was, in suffering them to come nearer to me and explain themselves away.

CHAPTER II.

The partition that separated my own office from our general outer office in the city, was of thick plate-glass. I could see through it what passed in the outer office, without hearing a word. I had it put up in place of a wall that had been there for years—ever since the house was built. It was no matter whether I did or did not make the change, in order that I might derive my first impression of strangers who came to us on business, from their faces alone, without being influenced by anything they said. Enough to mention that I turned a Life Assurance Office is at all times exposed to be practiced upon by the most crafty and cruel to the human race.

It was through my glass partition that I first saw the gentleman whose story I am going to tell.

He had come in, without my observing it, and had put his hat and umbrella on the broad counter, and was bending over it to take some papers from one of the clerks. He was about forty or so, dark, exceedingly well dressed in black—being in mourning—and the hand he extended with a polite air, had a particularly well fitting, black kid glove upon it. His hair, which was elaborately brushed and oiled, was parted straight up the middle; and he presented this parting to the clerk, exactly (to my thinking) as if he had said in so many words: "You must take me, if you please, my friend, just as I show myself. Come straight up here, follow the gravel path, keep off the grass, I allow no trespassing."

I conceived a very great aversion to that man, the moment I thus saw him.