

A VISION OF SPRING IN WINTER.

O tender time that love thinks long to see.
Sweet foot of spring that with her footfall sows
Late snowlike flowery leavings of the snows.
Be not too long irresolute to be.
O mother-mother, where have they hidden thee?
Out of the pale time of the flowerless rose
I reach my heart out toward the springtime lands.
I stretch my spirit forth to the fair hours,
The purplest of the prime;
I lean my soul down over them, with hands
Made wide to take the ghostly growths of flowers:
I send my love back to the lovely time.

Where has the greenwood hid thy gracious head?
Veiled with what visions while the grey world grieves,
Or muffled with what shadows of green leaves,
What warm intangible green shadows spread
To sweeten the sweet twilight for thy bed?
What sleep enchants thee? what delight deceives?
Where the deep dreamlike dew before the dawn
Feels not the fingers of the sunlight yet
His silver web unweave.
Thy footless ghost on some unfooted lawn
Whose air the unrisen sunbeams fear to fret
Lives a ghost's life of daylong dawn and eve.

Sunrise it sees not, neither set of star,
Large nightfall, nor imperial plenitude,
Nor strong sweet shape of the full-breasted noon;
But where the silver-sandalled shadows are,
Too soft for arrows of the sun to mar,
Moves with the mild gait of an ungrown moon;
Hard overhead the half-lit crescent swims.
The tender-coloured night draws hardly breath.
The light is listening;
They watch the dawn of slender-shapen limbs.
Virginal, born again of doubtful death,
Chill foster-father of the weanling spring.

As sweet desire of day before the day,
As dreams of love before the true love born,
From the outer edge of winter overworn
The ghost arisen of May before the May
Takes through dim air her unawakened way.
The gracious ghost of morning risen ere morn.
With little unblown breasts and child-eyed looks
Following, the very maid, the girl-child spring,
Lifts windward her bright brows,
Dips her light feet in warm and moving brooks.
And kindles with her own mouth's colouring
The fearful frittings of the plumelike tongs.

I seek thee sleeping, and awhile I see,
Fair face that art not, how thy maiden breath
Shall put at last the deadly days to death
And fill the fields and fire the woods with thee
And seaward hollows where my feet would be
When heaven shall hear the word that April saith
To change the cold hear' of the weary time,
To stir and soften all the time to tears,
Tears joyfuller than mirth;
As even to May's clear height the young days climb
With feet not swifter than those fair first years
Whose flowers revive not with thy flowers on earth.

I would not bid thee, though I might give back
One good thing youth has given and borne away;
I crave not any comfort of the day
That is not, nor on time's retrodden track
Would turn to meet the white-robed hours or black
That long since left me on their mortal way;
Nor light nor love that has been, nor the breath
That comes with morning from the sun to be
And sets light hope on fire;
No fruit, no flower thought once too fair for death,
No flower nor hour once fallen from life's green tree,
No leaf once plucked or once-fulfilled desire.

The morning song beneath the stars that fled
With twilight through the moonless mountain air
While youth with burning lips and wreathless hair
Sang toward the sun that was to crown his head
Rising; the hopes that triumphed and fell dead,
The sweet swift eyes and songs of hours that were;
These may'st thou not give back forever; these,
As at the sea's heart all her wrecks lie waste,
Lie deeper than the sea;
But flowers thou may'st, and winds, and hours of ease,
And all its April to the world thou may'st
Give back, and half my April back to me.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

[For the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.]

MAY DAY

OR

A SKETCH FROM VILLAGE LIFE.

By Festina Lente, Author of "Patty's Story," &c.

(Concluded from our last.)

We lingered talking under the trees, until darkness came upon us. This happiness had come to me quite suddenly, and when the newness of it wore away as we talked together of our future, reality began to stare me in the face. I had forgotten my life's work at home, that if I married Joe, and left home, mother would be killed by overwork. I became very silent. Heard Joe talk of our cottage by the village Green, of how much money he could earn a week, of how we must try to save against a "rainy day," and not be ashamed to live in the quiet way we both liked best.

"Will you be content with these plans?" he asked. "I have thought them over and over, longing for the time when your father would give me leave to tell them to you."

We had come by this time to the brook; from its banks the space was cleared to where our cottage was built. Joe and I stood quietly on the porch and looked in at our cottage door. It stood open as usual, and as we came near we saw the large wood fire, and father and mother sitting, looking very lonely on each side of the settle. Joe and I stood quite still looking, and I took my arm away from Joe.

He looked down at me, and we searched each other's faces, and were satisfied.

"I will never ask you to leave your duty," said Joe, in his quiet trusty voice. "They could not spare you yet, I know."

Then we went indoors, and poor old father cried as he tried to say he would give me freely, for I had been a good daughter. And mother though she never had any time for rest herself—told Joe I should be ready just when he wanted me, but I saw her clench her worn fingers close together, and her eyes looked hopelessly on the children asleep in the corner of the room.

Then both of them spoke together and hoped we would be happy, and not find life so hard as it had been with them. Then father kissed mother, and held her thin face to the light, and told Joe how pretty she had been when he had married her, and mother said, though poor, she had been happy with father, loving him so well. Then they sat on one side of the settle, telling stories of that time so long ago, and Joe and I sat on the other; happy and full of trust in one another. Content to wait as long as my first duty lay at home.

I was busy the next morning, and I forgot it was May day. But Joe came and reminded me of it, and said that he had come to ask me to go to the village "merry making" with him. Mother's face looked very sorrowful. "You see, Joe," she said, "the girls dress up in their best and Nancy—"

"Nancy is my queen," he said laughing. "She and I understand all that."

Then mother came up stairs to help me dress, and comment on the happy time that I should have. She looked quite young as she talked of olden times, when she had gone to the Merry-making with father. She described the dresses she had worn, the dances she had danced, and at last paused, and I looked round to see tears in her eyes, as she suddenly remembered youth was gone, and that Merry-making time far away in the past.

"Mother, mother," called father, and "mother mother," echoed the children. We ran down to see what was the matter. There was father, with a broad smile on his face, and there were the children shouting with joy; for father had returned from work, on purpose to take them to the Merry-making. We took mother upstairs to dress before she had time to think, and father and I, with the assistance of Joe, combed and clipped the towzled heads of the boys, and found no difficulty in making the delighted children don their Sunday coats. Upstairs, mother quickly dressed herself, and baby, and the cottage was full of merry sounds, the laughing of the boys, the snip, snip of Joe's scissors, the feeble ha! ha! of my poor father, and mother's merry talk to baby.

At last all were ready, and we started. What a bright day it was. The forest trees were green, the hawthorn blossoms beginning to come out in white clusters. Underfoot were primroses and violets, and a carpet of moss and trailing ivy.

The children ran hither and thither amongst the flowers, father walked in front, carrying the baby, mother followed leading little Lusie. Joe and I walked behind. In time we left the forest path, and crossed the Park, and came into the quiet village street; farther up again there was the Village Green, where now all the folk were assembled.

The May pole was dressed with garlands of Spring flowers, and young girls were grouped round it, dressed in white and wearing wreaths of blossoms on their heads. The old folks were chatting under the trees. Just as we entered the Green, a cry arose, and young and old stood aside to see the procession pass.

It was the May Queen.
She was carried by the youths, in a chair. She was covered with Spring flowers, and looked bright and happy as sunshine itself. In front, and behind walked the village maidens dressed in white, each wearing wreaths of green and white. As they walked they sang:

Come, lasses and lads,
Get leave of your dads
And away to the Maypole hie' &c.

The procession passed and wound round the Green, passed again, the young men (who were dressed like Spring, in green), singing a song with a chorus for the maidens. Dear child, it was a pretty sight. They set the May Queen down by the pole; joined hands and danced round her, singing altogether, old country songs that everybody knew.

Then they acted a play, the May Queen spoke a good deal in it, and the acting was very pretty, but I think we were all a little glad when the sound of the fiddles came near. But the dancing was not to be yet. There were races, men running races tied up in sacks; there were splendid wrestling matches, and a greased pole to be climbed. After the games were over, the May Queen gave prizes.

I wish you had seen how father and mother liked it all. How they laughed at the racing in sacks, how father at length was inspired to try a race on level ground for a side of bacon. It was but a try, he was thin and feeble, (food had been scarce for us that winter), and the swift feet of the strong soon distanced him.

"It would have been nice," he said to mother in a regretful tone, as he came slowly back.

"Never mind, father," was her cheery answer, "twenty years ago, you could have beaten any of them."

When the races were over Joe took us to the fair, and treated us to gingerbread, cakes and ale. And he bought toys for the children and a nice fairing for mother, and for me—two china ornaments, (they stand there, child,) the Dame said, turning a look of pride upon the Shepherd and Shepherdess on the mantel shelf, to make our house look pretty.

The village folk came round us, glad to see father and mother again, and to chat of old times. The young people stared rudely at our old fashioned clothes, and sneered at Joe and me. I was sorry for Joe's sake my frock should look so threadbare, and I tried to tell him so. He looked at it then, as if he had never seen it before, and told me he never thought of what my dress was like if he could but see me. And as for

mother's, he told me, he loved every fold of her old gown, and was proud to be her son-in-law. We went back again to the Green, and the fiddlers began to play. It was an old country dance, hands across and back again, curtesy and turn your partner. Joe and I, father and mother the May Queen and the maidens all joined the dance. And as we danced, the sun shone on us, and a little gust of wind blew the Spring blossoms under our feet, and the music grew gayer, and our laughter more merry.

Outside the circle of the dancers, the children played at hunt the slipper, and kiss in the ring. And the old folk laughed at their merry pranks, and sometimes were persuaded to join for a minute or two in the games. And those too old to play, told stories of May-day of long ago, when they had been children playing on the Green. They said the days were warmer then, and shivered as they spoke, and wondered that so bright a sun should give so little heat.

Ah! me child! Was it seventy years ago? Can that have passed so long a time, which seems but yesterday; when my eyes see poor father turning mother in the dance; and mother, with shining eyes, and worn face brightened, and her heavy bonnet fallen back from her head. Outside the dancers I see the baby, with his sober eyes seeing all, and his mouth distended by the tin trumpet he was chewing. And the children rolling over on the grass, or running races under the trees.

The dance was over, father and mother said it was time to take the children home; but I might stay a little longer with Joe to take care of me. Then we called the children together, and Joe filled their hands with "fairings," and they went home with delighted hearts. Joe and I stood watching them as they walked away, and we heard poor father's laugh as they turned the corner of the Green. And then we strolled round the Green and saw the fair, and farther on came to a group of Gipsies that wanted to tell our fortunes; but Joe said ours were told, and we had only to go straight on and do what was the best we knew how to do. Then the dancing began again, and we were content this time to stand by and watch. Then two girls sang a song—a dialogue it was and very pretty too. Then the village girls went behind the trees and sang together, and I never heard anything sound so well.

We danced again after that, and it was sundown and Joe said quite time for us to go. I felt a little glad, for many of the folk were getting rough and rude, and the men were drinking too much cider. We went away then just when the sun had set and left the Green in shadows, and we saw the river in the distance, and the hills beyond. Then we came to the forest, and as we walked into the gloom of the trees, talked of the home that we would have in years to come. Talked of my own poor home, and of how long I must still work there, and of the wrong it would be if we considered only our own happiness in the matter.

"And were you married?" I cried, "Did you wait?" For the Dame had paused, forgetful of her hearer, and I had borne a silence of at least a minute.

"Yes, we were married," she replied, "We waited quite five years, and then my father did a service for the Lord of the Manor, and so had his wages raised. Then Joe and I were married. Yes, dear, and on a winter's morning, when the hoar frost lay on the grass blades, and the forest trees were bare. Five years of happy waiting, of trust in one another, and determination to do right. We did our duty by our parents as well as we knew how."

"And you were repaid," I cried, with my childish brain full of fairy rewards to the dutiful. "You lived happy ever after."

The placid face I gazed at grew strangely troubled as I spoke, and the withered hands restlessly played with the knitting needles. I was frightened and ran home to relate all to my mother.

"Ah!" said my mother, sorrowfully, "you touched upon a sore place. Only a few years after they were married Joe lost his life, at a sudden rising of the Severn, upon the lowlands. And the son, her only child, grew up wild, ran away to sea, and has never been heard of since."

My mother was busy; but I ran away to the fields, muttering to myself, "He will come back, of course he will, and be very rich, and will be happy after all."

A child's faith looks into the future, and sees a fairy world. The reward for good must come in time.

THE END.

THE CINCINNATI FESTIVAL.

A correspondent of the Philadelphia Press writes of the coming Cincinnati musical festival: The programme was selected by a committee of gentlemen of rare musical tastes, and arranged by Thomas himself. Such a grand series of concerts as these has never been witnessed anywhere in the world. I cannot give you all, but here are a few of the brightest gems: "At the first concert will be given a 'Triumph' by Johannes Brahms, who was a protégé of Schumann's. The hymn contains a baritone solo, supported by an eight-part full chorus, organ, and orchestra. The hymn has been performed several times in Germany, but never before in this country, and never any where on so grand a scale as is contemplated at Cincinnati. The first concert will also have Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, and three Vorspiel scenes from Wagner's 'Lohengrin,' the latter with the leading soloists and the full chorus. The second night will be given up to

Mendelssohn's oratorio of 'Elijah,' in which Mr. Whitney will take the part of the Prophet. It is noted as an interesting circumstance that many of the musicians in the Cincinnati orchestra played in Birmingham in 1846 under the leadership of Mendelssohn, when the oratorio was first produced. The third night will bring out Bach's 'Magnificat in D,' which will then be given for the first time in America, and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, with the full vocal parts, including the final chorus of Schiller's ode, 'Hymn to Joy.' The 'Magnificat' is one of the best types of Bach's method, in which the religious and lyric are wonderfully intertwined. It contains two soprano arias, one for tenor, one for bass, and one for contralto, a duet for alto and tenor, a trio for two sopranos and alto, and several choruses. On the fourth and last night will be produced Schubert's 'Symphony in C,' two scenes from Wagner's 'Walkure,' and one of Liszt's symphonic poems, with his cantata of Herder's 'Prometheus.' The Wagner and Liszt selections of this concert will be among the most novel and brilliant effects of the festival. The maineers are given over to lighter music of a standard character, vocal and orchestral. At one of them the children of the Cincinnati public schools will sing in chorus. Those who are interested in the great festival may like to know where these concerts, which will attract audiences numbered by tens of thousands, are held. The Cincinnatians have no facilities in this respect that other cities could not have at trifling cost. The building used on this occasion is a temporary frame erected for the use of one of the German saengerfestes some years ago. It was preserved for the use of the annual Industrial Exposition held there, and is now the centre of a cluster of buildings used for that purpose. It is a plain board structure, without architectural pretensions or ornamentation of any kind. The only good thing about it is its acoustic properties, which are admirable, and its size, which is immense—the seating capacity being about ten thousand.

SCIENTIFIC.

In an article on the vegetation of the Arctic regions, *Nature* calls attention to the fact that although there is what botanists call an Antarctic flora, not a single flowering plant has been found within the Antarctic circle.

THE characteristic fragrance of the Australian blue gum tree, to which its sanitary influence is partly attributed, has been found preserved in the fossil leaves of several species of Eucalyptus lately discovered in the gold region of the colony of Victoria.

IN 1822, a geology of England and Wales was published containing some account of all the British fossils then known, numbering seven hundred and fifty-two species. As evidence of the progress which palaeontology has made since that date, Professor Prestwich, of Oxford, states that the geologist is now acquainted with thirteen thousand two hundred and seventy-six species of fossils found in Great Britain.

THE eminent geologist, Sir Charles Lyell, has made provision in his will for the foundation of a Lyell Medal of geology, for the promotion of research in that science. An award in money is to go with the medal, and ten thousand dollars are bequeathed to the Geological Society of London to enable it to carry out the project. The will especially provides that the medal may be bestowed upon women as well as men, and without regard to nationality.

THE burning of the ship *Cospatrick* has given rise to several novel projects for extinguishing fire on shipboard, among which we notice the suggestion of a French writer that brimstone be placed in the hold, where he thinks the sulphurous acid would put out any fire. The application of steam from the boiler, by means of pipes leading into the hold and other parts of the vessel, seems, however, to be the simplest means for the extinction of fire, so far at least as steamships are concerned. The process of combustion would cease with the expulsion of the air by the steam.

AN examination of the statistics of mortality, with reference to the time of day when the greatest and least number of deaths occur, has recently been made by Dr. Lawson. He finds, says *The Engineer*, that deaths from chronic diseases are most numerous between the hours of eight and ten in the morning, and fewest between those hours in the evening. In acute disease, death occurs most frequently early in the morning, when the daily extreme of bodily depression is reached, or in the afternoon, when such disease attains its daily maximum of intensity.

ARTISTIC.

A PAINTING of the "Madona and Infant Jesus," by Albert Dürer, has been discovered in the Castle of Glucksburg.

A HANDSOME Edinburgh edition of Edgar A. Poe's works recently issued, was printed from type set up by two young women who learned the trade after the recent strike of the Edinburgh printers.

THE plaster model of the statue of Senator Sumner, which is to be placed upon the monument in the Boston City Hall, has arrived from Rome, but has been so badly broken in the passage, owing to careless packing that it is doubtful if it can be put together for the bronze cast.

IT is announced that the committee appointed to decide upon the true character of the statue of St. John the Baptist, recently brought to light in the Roscelmini-Gualandi, palace at Pisa, have given it as their decided opinion, that it is a genuine work of Michael Angelo.

A STATUE of great value for the history of French Art, and which hitherto had lain unnoticed in the cellar of a chateau near Orleans, will shortly be placed in the Louvre Gallery. It represents a Virgin Mary with the Infant Jesus, and is supposed to be the work of the sculptor Justus of Tours.

THE jury of the approaching exhibition at the Palace of Industry in Paris have passed 2,300 works of arts, paintings, sculpture, engravings, drawings, &c., to which number must be added about 2,000 others exempt from the preliminary examination. The total of 4,300 exceeds that of any recent year.

MR. JOHN RUSKIN has just published in England the first part of "Mornings in Florence; being studies of Christian Art for English Travellers," on Santa Croce; and the first part of "Proserpina; Studies of Wayside Flowers, while the air was yet pure among the Alps, and in the Scotland and England which my father knew."