

Poetry.

LIFT A LITTLE.

Lift a little! lift a little!
Neighbor, lend a helping hand,
To that heavy laden brother,
Who for weakness scarce can stand.
What to thee with thy strong muscle,
Seems a light and easy load,
Is to him a ponderous burden,
Cumbering his pilgrim road.

Lift a little! lift a little!
Effort gives one added strength;
That which staggers him when rising,
Thou canst hold at arm's full length.
Not his fault that he is feeble,
Not thy praise that thou art strong.
It is God makes lives to differ,
Some from wailing, some from song.

Lift a little! lift a little!
Many they who need thine aid;
Many lying on the roadside,
'Neath misfortune's dreary shade;
Pass not by like priest and Levite,
Heedless of thy fellow-man;
But, with heart and arms extended,
Be the good Samaritan.

THE WEAVER'S DREAM.

He sat all alone in his dark little room,
His fingers weary with work at the loom,
His eyes seeing not the fine threads, for the
tears,
As he carefully counted the months and the
years
He had been a poor weaver.

Not a traveller went on the dusty highway,
But he thought, "He has nothing to do but
be gay,"
No matter how burdened or bent he might be
The weaver believed him more happy than he,
And sighed at his weaving.

He saw not the roses so sweet and so red
That looked through his window; he thought
to be dead
And carried away from his dark little room,
Wrapt up in the linen he had in his loom,
Were better than weaving.

Just then a white angel came out of the skies,
And shut up his senses, and sealed up his eyes,
And bore him away from the work at his loom
In a vision, and left him alone by the tomb
Of his dear little daughter.

"My darling!" he cries, "what a blessing
was mine!
How I sinned, having you, against goodness
divine!
Awake! O my lost one, my sweet one, awake!
And I never, as long as I live, for your sake,
Will sigh at my weaving!"

The sunset was gilding his low little room,
When the weaver awoke from his dream at
the loom,
And close at his knee saw a dear little head
Alight with long curls—she was living, not
dead—
His pride and his treasure.

He winds the fine thread on his shuttle anew,
(At thought of his blessing 'twas easy to do),
And sings as he weaves, for the joy in his
breast,
Peace cometh of striving, and labor is rest—
Grown wise was the weaver.

S. S. L.

Tales and Sketches.

ONE WOMAN'S RESOLUTION.

BY MRS. DENISON.

"Until, driven by the neglect of society, and the avarice of the rich, she consents to a life of crime and humiliation."

"Is that the end?" asked Hannah, quietly, not looking up from the work she was busy upon.

"That is the end, and a very well written thing it is, too," observed placid Mrs. Martyn, folding up the paper.

"Well! I'll tell you what I think," said Hannah, in a suppressed voice, coming out of her dreamy languor, her cheeks crimsoning, her eyes flashing, "the author is simply an idiot—the driveller! Do you suppose any fate could lower me to such a depth as that?"

"You?" cried Mrs. Martyn, aghast.

"Me! Hannah Martyn, aunt. You glance around; yes, a spacious room like this, gloriously dowered with the fruits of genius—the home of Mark Martyn, one of the foremost merchants of his time, do not seem compatible with the idea of penury, of utter destitution. But it might come—this wretched time of loneliness and despair, even to Mark Martyn's daughter, and I be driven to the very streets without a shelter or a friend. But do you think," and her scissors snapped defiantly, "that I could for a moment forget my self-respect?"

"Of course you wouldn't," said Mrs. Martyn, her weak nerves a little startled; "oh, no, of course no, but then—you might starve."

"No, and I wouldn't starve," cried Hannah, another energetic snap giving force to her speech.

"What in mercy would you do? Not take your life, I hope?"

"That would be as weak and cowardly as

the other," replied Hannah. "Aunt, I haven't been tried yet—I trust in Heaven I never may be—but if I am, God give me grace to show to the world, as far as my example can reach, that women need not be driven by the neglect of society and the avarice of the rich, or for any other reason, to consent to a life of crime and humiliation."

"Haddy, you'd better get up that face when Fletcher comes. I'll be bound he never saw you when you were so near being a positive beauty as you are at this moment."

Hannah turned, laughing, as the pert little blonde came over to her lounge and threw herself down, shaking yellow ringlets, that the wind had disarranged, into their place.

"What system of philosophy have you discovered? Has she been fighting any of your pet theories, Mrs. Martyn? She always was a belligerent," rattled the pretty little lady.

"She came near choking a girl, once, for telling a falsehood about her; yes, she did, Mrs. Martyn; she got her fingers in, this way, and tightened her collar till the poor girl thought, I verily believe, that her hours were numbered. I shall never forget that time," continued Minnie Moore, laughing till she almost lost her breath, "nor how she turned on grim Miss Grim, the teacher, that was her name, though, and cried, with a stamp of the foot, 'This girl has lied about me, and if she is not punished—for the creature was a toady and a favorite—I shall make her so afraid of me that she won't dare to come to school.'"

"That was years and years ago," murmured Hannah, laughing at the recollection, "and I was a little child."

"Ah! but the child is mother of the woman, I presume I may say, changing the old saw a little, and I confess if I did do anything to deserve your wrath, I should look out for my throat. But do you know that Fletcher Chase is going to India?"

Hannah's face whitened a moment, even to the lips. Something was wanted that had fallen on the carpet, and she stooped needlessly long, to recover it; then her face was natural again. Meantime, Mrs. Martin the elder had made all the exclamations and enquiries needful.

"Yes, he has a splendid chance they say, to make his fortune—that is if he isn't wrecked on the way, or don't die of fever after he gets there. I'm so provoked at it; we shall all miss him terribly, for he was always on hand for us girls. There never was such a fellow for sport, and what shall we do these long winters, coming, I'm sure I don't know. Isn't he foolish, utterly silly? There's not the least need of it, not the least. His uncle is enormously rich, and he never needed to do anything."

"Pleasant to stand on the steps of the 'Continental,' I presume, and stare at the ladies," said Hannah, still pursuing her work.

"There! isn't that just like her? Almost a sneer, if not quite. I don't believe Fletcher Chase ever did stand on the 'Continental' steps for that particular purpose; he isn't that kind of a man. But, Hannah, I came to consult you about the Haggood's party. It's got up in such a sudden way, you know, because John is going off, I suppose. There's a foreign fever, one would imagine, and all our beaux are attacked with it. Well, you see I've worn my blue silk twice—though to be sure, once at a wedding—and mamma complains about getting another; besides, there isn't time, and—"

"Well," said Hannah, smiling, for the pretty blonde had talked herself out of breath again, "can't you change the trimming?"

"Yes, if I had anything decent, or a set of pearls, or—"

"Why, my dear, you shall have my pearls." Minnie Moore looked up quite glowing, her bright eyes dancing. "Oh! I wouldn't have dared to ask you, and I hardly dare to accept now, they are so beautiful and costly."

"You needn't mind at all," replied Hannah, quietly; "I don't care for the pearls myself. Come into my room, and see if there is anything else."

"You darling!" murmured the delighted girl, rising and following her into a richly furnished boudoir. Hannah looped aside the curtains so exquisitely frosted with the daintiest needle-work, and opened the drawer in which she kept her jewels, all the time moving, and looking, and talking, with a pre-occupied, absent manner, with just the thought of a smile flitting from eye to lip.

"Oh, what it is to be rich!" cried the little blonde, her face growing luminous, as if from the reflection of the many-colored, scintillant jewels lying in their dainty nests, and yet seeming the very incarnation of restlessness, as they trembled in flashes and sparkles with the least touch of the vibrant light; "why, how can you ever choose?"

"Because I know that garnet is becoming, and it is safe to wear diamonds; the rest I never use, except in defiance of my better judgment, because aunts get so set on it, as she says."

"But, dear me," cried Minnie, in an excess of self-love, "they would all become me."

"Yes," Hannah responded, smiling, "I have no doubt they would; because—the smile seemed further to say, your pretty face is so dependent upon glitter and color."

"And oh, what a lovely berth! Why, I never saw you wear it in my life."

"No, you never did; I don't like it, and aunt beguiled me into buying it. I never shall wear it. It's a pity it should lie there, getting yellow. If I thought a little lady of

my acquaintance would take it kindly—my giving her what I do not prize myself—I would make her a present of it."

The little blonde face looked up eagerly.

"Meaning me?"

"Meaning you."

Minnie shook her head. "I'm not a bit proud that way," she said, "and you know it, Hannah Martyn. But to take such a costly thing! Why?"

"Fifty dollars! That's a trifle, my dear."

"And it's just perfection," sighed Minnie. "It's what I've been sighing for, and longing for. It would match, oh, so splendidly! with the pearls. If mamma would only buy it now!"

"Mamma could not buy it for any money," said Hannah, smiling again, to see of what value such trifles (to her) seemed in the sight of the widow Moore's pretty daughter. "I would take it as a favor if you accept it," she said, folding it; "for it is sheer shame to keep it lying there so utterly useless. You are welcome entirely, and heartily welcome."

"I know I am, you darling. Oh, how kind you are to me! If I ever do get a rich husband—and of course I shall—but then I couldn't give you anything you haven't got."

Hannah made some merry reply, and a few moments after was alone with her jewels. Alone, to think—to triumph, that any little seed she dropped might bear fruit—and such fruit! She moved about the room restlessly, touching this and that in an uncertain, smiling way, murmuring, with a fond intonation in her rich voice, "Then he is going; can it be he heeded what I said?"

Her cheek flushed brightly; her lips parted tenderly, giving her again that almost beautiful look; she glanced straight before her into the great oval mirror, and yet seemed not to see the rich crimson of lip and cheek, for she stood again in that curtained recess—heard the trembling, throbbing sighs of the Strauss waltz—looking along the far vista of splendid coloring and graceful motion—watched the appearing and disappearing of happy, beautiful, youthful faces, the light seeming to revolve about them in shining circles, and yet, withal, heard but one voice, saw but one face—for Fletcher Chase stood beside her.

A combination of indolence and strength, from whom one, well skilled in physiognomy, might look for great faults or great virtues; a handsome man, the slow movements of whose eyes, and the little conventional drawl of speech which never seemed to quicken into enthusiasm, proclaimed a thorough mastery over himself, as far as any exhibition of feeling ever went.

Strange that to such a man as this Hannah Martyn should bow down. But she loved him; she never disguised the fact to herself, she could not. With her intense hatred of deception it was difficult to conceal it from stranger eyes, perhaps from his.

And he liked her, because she was so different from other women; because she was never afraid of him, never petted his self-love, which threatened to be inordinate. Although in her heart, as I have said, she bowed down to him, in her outward correspondence she made him bow down to anything but himself.

"And so you don't wonder that I am enchanted?" he was saying, as she looked far off at the throng.

"Not at all. What have you to keep you from stagnation? One unvaried round of ease and pleasure, none of the excitements that stir the mind healthily. I'd run off. I know I should be tempted to change conditions with some hard-working man, and earn one right down fatigue—some good, hearty shoulder-ache, if it was only for a day, only to feel some sympathy with these nameless men who are of more use to the world than—she stopped short—blushes always became her.

"I am. Go on," he said, bringing his eyes slowly to bear on her face.

"Well, Fletcher Chase, you know in your soul what I have said is true: that idleness is vice and slow self-murder. Don't you now, honestly?"

"This dance with me," he said, coolly, as if completely ignoring her question, as he led her out.

She was trembling, she hardly knew why, almost cheerfully, half angry with herself, and distressed at his *nou-chalance*—but before the dance was through her mind recovered its usual tone. Since then she had heard nothing of Fletcher Chase, till Minnie Moore told her that he was going to India to make his fortune.

That same night she learned it from his own lips; learned that she need no longer smother her love; learned that among all the attractions he had seen at home and abroad, her almost beautiful face had been the brightest.

Fletcher had been gone a month when aunt Martyn died. Then Mark, the tall, hale old merchant, her father, after a few months of mourning, hurried her off to Washington. A feverish season of excitement, in which Hannah's heart was not, and then Mark said that business called him to Buffalo, to which city he took his daughter, seeming for the first time in his life to feel pleasure in her society, even preferred staying along with her to going down into the brilliant parlors of the great hotel.

All this time Hannah had noticed that there was something amiss with her father. His actions and speech were abrupt, at times almost incoherent. She watched him anxiously, saw that his letters caused him great suffering—and, alas! one fatal day, news was brought to her, while she waited for him to

come down to breakfast, that her father was dead! It was hard that all had to be bruted about so publicly, very hard.

The little bottle of prussic acid held tightly in the cold hand, the strange fits of depression, the haunting dread in his eyes, all were accounted for when news came that Mark Martyn was utterly bankrupt—that besides the few dollars in the pocket-book he carried with him, amounting to all but little over a hundred, not a cent was left for the petted daughter of luxury.

The time of her trial had come. Some mercantile friends, mostly creditors, came on to Buffalo, nobly offering assistance, but in the first days of her anguish, Hannah refused to be comforted, and sat alone and tearless in the little room of the plain home she had chosen after the funeral was over.

(To be continued.)

A HURRIED COURTSHIP.

I was a young man possessed of sufficient means to enable me to live at my ease, and refrain from labor of any kind, when suddenly there came a blow that scattered my prosperity to the winds, and forced me to employ my labor and wits in the general struggle of gaining a living. The blow came in the shape of the failure of a large firm in which my capital was invested.

After securing a clerkship in the house of a creditor of our late firm, my first care was to look up a less expensive boarding house than the fashionable one in which I was living. I inserted an advertisement in several widely circulated city papers, asking for reasonable board in a strictly private family, and of course received a multitude of answers by the next post. Out of the motley installment of epistles there was but one which pleased me, and that one I decided to answer immediately.

Grace Kingsley was the name of the favored landlady writing to me, and the letter stated that her house was entirely private, having no boarders whatever. I was much pleased with the fair, delicate handwriting, and an idea took possession of me that Grace was a young and fascinating widow. I was not disappointed when I reached the house, and my ringing at the door-bell was answered by the lady herself. She invited me into the parlor in a manner so courteous, and yet so modest, that I had fallen desperately in love with her before I could cross the threshold.

I enjoyed a very pleasant chat with Mrs. Kingsley. During the conversation she informed me that her late husband had been in a fair way of business, and at his death, a year previous, had left her in pretty comfortable circumstances. They had but one child; and this item of mortality I was most graciously permitted to look upon, as it lay peacefully slumbering in its cradle. I also learned that the lady was living in the house quite alone, and desired a male boarder more as a means of protection than as a source of revenue. In conclusion, the landlady looked so pretty (she was quite young, not more than two or three and twenty), and the board so moderate, her companionship so inviting, and she seemed to trust in me and look upon me so favorably, that I would have been a heathen, dead to all charms and inducements of the sex, if I had not engaged board on the spot.

The next day I had my trunk removed to my new boarding place, and permanently established myself there. Before leaving my boarding house, a letter was handed me by the postman, but I did not find time to examine it until I was comfortably ensconced in the parlor of Mrs. Kingsley's cozy house.

Opening the letter, I discovered it to be from a wealthy uncle of mine, residing in Vermont, who regularly sent me a letter once a year; but whom I had never seen. His epistles were always short and to the point, generally consisting of an account of the weather in his locality, and good advice to me to take care of my money, as I might be burdened with some of it before I was much older. I was always very glad to get this advice from him, as I regarded it as an intimation that I was to inherit his wealth on his decease.

One day, however, about a year previous, I received a letter from him which contained another topic besides those I have mentioned. My uncle made some pressing inquiries respecting my matrimonial prospects, and stated that if I was not already married, I should at once enter into the wedded state, and let him know of it, or he would nevermore be an uncle of mine.

Now, as my uncle lived in Vermont, and I in Philadelphia, and I never anticipated that he would pay me a visit and discover the falsehood, I wrote and informed him that I was not only married, but the father of a bouncing baby. This intelligence so pleased my uncle that he sent a gold goblet and silver pap-spoon to be presented to my child. I at first sat down and wrote a very romantic letter to my uncle, thanking him for the presents, and then visited the nearest jewelry store and turned both the goblet and spoon into cash, which I pocketed.

I had received no further letters from my uncle until the one which I read in Mrs. Kingsley's parlor. The postscript to this not only astonished, but absolutely frightened me. It read as follows:

P. S.—I have never visited Philadelphia, so

I have decided to do so at once, and get a look at you and your wife and child. You may expect me about the 10th of the month.

"Good gracious! My uncle is coming to visit me," I exclaimed, "and it's past the 10th of the month, now! I don't know at what moment he may pop in. What am I to do for a wife and child?"

At that moment there came a terrible pull at the door bell, as if the man who owned it imagined that he owned the house and could make as much noise as he pleased. A sickening sensation took possession of me, for I had a misgiving that it was my uncle. Now, as good fortune would have it, Mrs. Kingsley had gone out to a neighboring store for a few moments, and had requested me to have an eye on her child while she was gone, so that it wouldn't fall out of the cradle, and thought of my uncle at the door, a bright idea entered my mind. I determined, in case the visitor was my uncle, to claim the youthful occupant as my own.

The visitor proved to be my uncle. I knew him by the pictures of him I had seen, and he likewise knew me by my photograph. After a mutual recognition and hand-shaking, I ushered my honored relative into the parlor and introduced him to my newly-claimed offspring.

"There uncle," said I, "is the first pledge of our married life. I assure you I take pleasure in presenting to you my child."

"It is a fat little youngster," said my uncle, gazing at it admiringly. "By the way, what is it, boy or girl?"

That was a knotty question for me to answer, for he was just as much acquainted with its gender as I was. But it would not do to show ignorance on the subject, so I answered at hap-hazard that it was a boy.

"I am sorry it is a boy," said my uncle; "there are too many boys in the family. Now if you had only produced a little blue-eyed girl, it would have been more sensible."

I assured him I was sorry the gender did not suit, but hoped in the future his wishes would be gratified.

So far I had succeeded in deceiving my uncle, but the worst I feared was that, when Mrs. Kingsley returned, she might object to my claiming ownership in her child. Besides, to carry out the deception, I must find a wife as well as infant, and Mrs. Kingsley was the only one I could conveniently claim. The only difficulty was to get her consent to the deception, and this might be done if I could only secure a private conversation with her before I introduced her to my uncle, then it would be all right.

I watched my opportunity, and gained an interview with her before she entered the room. I told her, in a few brief and hurried words, the extent of my difficulty, and how I had taken the liberty of acting as papa for her little one. I then told her I must find a wife somewhere, and begged her to allow me to introduce her in that capacity. She laughed very heartily at my suggestion, said she could comprehend my difficulty, and consented to the proposal, and very roguishly warned me not to presume upon the occurrence.

We then entered the parlor, and I introduced her as my better half. My uncle was very much pleased with her, and complimented me upon my good choice in the selection of a wife. Mrs. Kingsley, of course, colored most charmingly at this compliment, and I could scarcely refrain from laughing.

"You have a fine boy here," said my uncle to Mrs. Kingsley, pointing to the cradle.

"Excuse me, sir," said she, coloring up again, "it is a girl."

I was dumbfounded. I was exposed in my iniquity. Would my uncle believe me after this? He looked from me to my pretty landlady, with a puzzled countenance.

"Your husband told me it was a boy," he said, and rather suspiciously too, I thought.

"Well, I always took it for a boy," was my reply, putting on a bold face, "but I suppose my wife knows best."

Here Mrs. Kingsley fairly screamed with laughter, and my uncle's stern face assumed an ironical smile.

"You are a nice father, ain't you?" he said, touching me with the point of his umbrella, "not to know the sex of your own child. Why, I knew it was a girl the moment I looked at it."

"But, Charley," he said, again addressing me, "what did you do with the goblet and pap-spoon I sent to the little one?"

"Oh, they are perfectly safe, I assure you," I replied; "I have taken good care of them."

"Yes, but where the deuce are they. I would like very much to take another look at them."

"Well, I have deposited them in a bank for safe keeping, but I can readily produce them—that is—in the course of a week's time."

He told me to do so, as he wanted to see them, and then I got out of the room, for fear that he might ask me some more perplexing questions.

A short time afterward, Mr. Kingsley came to me, when I was alone, in an adjoining room, and I saw immediately that something very humorous must have happened, for the corners of her lips were breaking into smiles.

"Do you know, sir, into what an awkward predicament you have got me?" she inquired, as she took a seat on the lounge by my side.

"Explain yourself," I said.

"Why, your uncle came to me a short time ago, and asked to see my marriage certificate, and he said he had some money to settle upon