

THE FLIGHT OF THE SWALLOWS.

Swift swallows, stay, we cannot spare you yet—
No chilly breath has struck you with alarm;
Why should you fill our souls with vague regret

In these sweet days of golden rest and calm?
Let us a while travel and change forget.

Why should you roam? The gardens are aglow
With brighter color than they wore in June,
The tall white lilies make a queenly show,
The gadding vine with many a wild festoon
Still hides your nest; we cannot let you go.

Why should you leave us? Summers are so brief.

It seems but one bright week, or scarcely more,
Since every day showed some new tree in leaf.
Pleasant it was from window and from door
To hail, in your glad coming, Spring's relief—

To stand within the gateway of the year,
As at the entrance of an unknown wood,
Hearing the songs of unseen birds so near,
It seemed we might have caught them where they stood—
False cuckoo notes of joys that disappear!

Swallows, ye brought upon your glossy wings
A hundred visions from beyond the sea;
Though your last nest was mid the tombs of kings,
Our thatch from alien touch is not less free
Than those grand ruins round which silence clings.

Say, do ye fear ye may not see again
The large-browed Sphinx gazing with human eyes
Through countless centuries across the plain
Of arid sands, beneath the shadeless skies,
Where Carnac's sculptured glories yet remain?

Is there in Luxor, 'neath a lotus flower
Carved when the world was young, a hiding-place

Dear to you—never moistened by a shower
Since first a bold adventurer of your race
Chose it and made it your ancestral tower?

Now, if ye must go, quickly take farewell,
For many a dim eye that has watched you play

Shall fill with tears, taking your flight for knell
Of life and season, ebbing both away
In that long struggle words are weak to tell.

Bare are the happy fields; on every side
The plough already has its work begun;
Dart, swallows, fly in peace—sure is your guide
Cross seas—and seek the countries of the sun—
But come again to us, whate'er betide.

FOR ANOTHER.

Adeline Von R. was sentenced to seven days' imprisonment. I was notified to receive her in prison.

The lady did not interest me, because I was not personally acquainted with her. I was also ignorant as to the cause of this judgment, but still I could not place the order out of my sight without repeated persuasals, feeling a foreboding that something unusual and gloomy would surely transpire in connection with it.

There was really nothing remarkable about the seven days' imprisonment, and yet it might be that a longer sentence was obviated by the social position of the lady, had not the document ordered close confinement and no amelioration of the rules of the place for her.

But other business pressed, and one week and then another went by, and the circumstance had almost been forgotten when the last day of the third week again recalled it.

It was getting late; the prisoners had received their supper, and I had retired to my room to attend some writing that my duties during the day had left me little time for. I was so deeply absorbed that I did not hear the door open, and was consequently more than startled when I heard, not far from me, a trembling voice utter a soft "Good evening." Looking up, I saw an elegantly attired young girl, hesitating at a nearer approach, and seemingly waiting to be addressed.

I had time to make observations. Her style of dress first attracted my attention. It was not such as I had been accustomed to see around me on my visitors to this establishment. Her face was young, fresh, and round; the regularity of features alone caused an exclamation in favor of its beauty, the downcast eyes closed their mirror from view, but the whole expression of face and person indicated a sense of horror, shame, and fear.

Such conduct is rare in prison, yet the girl had evidently come to stay, judging by the bundle of wearing apparel she carried.

My sympathy was awakened, and, in a kinder tone than I should have used under ordinary circumstances for this ill-timed disturbance, I requested her to approach me.

She did not move; her head remained bowed, the eyes drooping.

"What is your name?"

I received no reply. The girl seemed to struggle for composure, her lips quivered, her mouth vainly trying to form words.

"But, dear child," I asked rather impatiently

after a pause, "you must tell me what you desire; why are you here?"

"I am here under arrest."

She said it almost whispering, the words scarcely passing her lips. I looked at her in astonishment.

"For how long?"

"Oh, God!" (Ach, Gott!)

Nothing but this escaped her mouth. She breathed heavily, her bosom palpitating with distressing rapidity. She tried to conquer herself, but the strength of her feelings seemed to master her endeavors.

"Tell me, child, how long must you remain here?"

"Seven days."

This expression seemed to bring unutterable relief. The trembling limbs became quiet, respiration regular, only the eyes remained downcast still.

"And your name?"

"I am called Adeline von R."

"Ah!"

The exclamation escaped me before I was aware of it. The girl was startled, and directly raised her head and gazed me full in the face, with an unspoken inquiry. I saw two eyes, large and wondrously beautiful, an irresistible power of fascination within their depths speaking of childlike innocence, fearful sorrow and fright, yet expressive of resignation; they were humid with suppressed tears that told of the will to be strong and endure.

What should I do with Adeline von R.; how should I treat her? Her station in life demanded a proper respect. I did not want her to see that I felt this to be so, and yet I did not wish to repulse her. I was yet undecided how to act when she said:

"Mr. Inspector, you know now why I am here; I cannot ask you to set aside your duty in my behalf; but oh, I beg you will not make my position harder to bear than is called for. May I be alone, left to myself?"

"If you desire it."

"And no one will see me?"

"None but the prisoners employed on the premises."

"That is good; I would like to hide myself from all humanity, and from the dear God too. Under arrest! Oh, the disgrace. It will cling to me forever. Oh! it is horrible, and to bear it through life—terrible!"

In her excitement Adeline von R. struck her hands together, alternately covering her face with them, as if to shut out a picture conjured by the imagination of a fearful future.

"You go too far," said I, trying to comfort her; "the disgrace does not consist in the arrest, but in the causes, the deed that requires such a penance."

"True, that is true. But do all people think thus? How often does it occur that they care to know if the punishment is just, if one is really guilty? But who can alter such things? Can those do it who suffer innocently? Can they make war with the majority, swim against the tide and be lost in the stream? All that is left them is endurance and oblivion to hide where none know from whence you came or where you go."

"I think," I interrupted her, "that the judgment of the people is less to be feared than the reproaches of one's conscience."

"Oh, hush! hush! sir. Do you believe that I underrate this inner judgment? I struggled long before I became reconciled to come here. I was even induced—not to. Oh, God! I dare not think of it; and you do not know—you cannot understand. But I did not wish it otherwise. I must not frighten myself with reproaches. Others will do that."

As she said this her whole manner changed; she seemed to cast aside all fear; her head was proudly erected; her eyes brightened with a determination that changed the child to an earnest woman. She picked up the bundle that had fallen from her arm during her siege for composure, and, coming close to me she said:

"Mr. Inspector, I am to remain here seven days. I was told you had received the order for my reception. Here is the document that holds me prisoner—is this sufficient? If not, please please tell me what else is required of me?"

Her manner had acquired such a quiet dignity that my intercourse could not go beyond business questions; although my interest and curiosity would like to have known more about her family and self, and particularly the crime that brought her under my supervision.

She still retained her calmness when locked in her cell. Without exhibiting any particular emotion she entered the little, dark room. I directed her to the bed, gave her a few particulars in regard to the rules of the place and left her alone. This was the beginning of a distressing drama.

The following morning I went to the examining bureau to find particulars in regard to Adeline von R., but could discover little. The case had been heard at some place quite distant, where the prisoner was formerly resident, and in the requisition it was particularly remarked that she desired to "serve her term" under me, but the act that called for seven days' imprisonment was not stated; whether by design or mistake we were to be left in ignorance, I could not say.

There is nothing more passing than time. Adeline von R. had done penance six days. Only I had seen her during this time; even the director, being indisposed, had not made his customary revision. I did what was in my power to make her punishment light, and she showed her appreciation by giving me no cause to complain.

I was no wiser in regard to her circumstances. Every attempt to question her was delicately turned, and I was given to understand that my right did not extend into her private affairs.

The morning of the seventh day she greeted me with a hearty cheerfulness, telling me how she would count the hours, and I discovered that some one was looking for her release as anxiously as she herself desired it, but I could not tell was it father, mother, brother, or sister, or friend. Another time and place enlightened me.

Some hours later I received an order for the appearance of A. von R. before the examining judge. The person that brought it hinted at something peculiar in regard to the prisoner, as the judge and the city officials with him were enjoying some joke in connection with her arrest.

I did not send her the order, but went myself, to acquaint her that she must again appear before the court. Joyfully she met me. "Oh, Mr. Inspector," she cried, "only six hours and a half, and then I shall be free. I can again inhale the air of freedom. Sweet thought! Freedom! how shall I love thee now; but what is it, you look so stern, so dark, as if—"

"You are to appear before the judge; follow me."

"He wishes to speak to me? My God! I do not know this man; what can he want of me?"

"I cannot inform you; he will no doubt enlighten you. Hasten, they are waiting."

"One moment, I will be ready."

She appeared innocent, certainly she was astonished, but more impatient than frightened. But her lovely eyes no longer laughed; she searched for something, and they espied a cloth hanging on the back of a chair. With a charming movement she threw it over her head and placed herself at my side.

"Mr. Inspector, my toilet is finished. The judge has probably some news to communicate, for, of course, I can abide here no longer."

She again laughed in childish glee. All the way her spirits were joyous, she was unconscious of wrong, and, I hoped, free from future punishment. With the judge were other officials belonging to the city and a stranger unknown to me, a large, stout man, evidently a detective in civilian's dress. Feeling that he would figure in what followed I particularly noticed him.

As we entered I noticed him cast a quick, sharp glance at my prisoner, and his features relaxed into a meaning smile. I read in it that my prisoner was a guilty person and he a detective. At the time that did not annoy me as much as the man's smile. How could he laugh? The profession is not a trifling one. To hunt up guilty parties requires a character that is conscious of the duties it undertakes, and to characterize with a frivolous carelessness seemed out of place then. The mind must have a body without a heart in it, and be entirely without feeling.

"Well?" asked the judge.

"It is as I said," replied the man.

"Mr. Inspector," said the judge, turning to me, "you gave notice that Adeline von R. was under arrest with you seven days."

"Yes."

"It is false."

"Judge! Sir!"

"I repeat, it is false! Are you personally acquainted with Adeline von R.?"

"No!"

"This person has lied to you. She has assumed a name she has no right to. What is your name?" he asked the prisoner.

I had quite overlooked her since we entered the room. Now I turned towards her; she was standing near the door, pale as death, trembling, dumb, as if she had not heard the judge.

He stepped towards her, "I asked you to give your name, will you answer?" he questioned in a loud and angry voice.

The prisoner seemed frightened, so that her limbs refused to bear her, and had I not quickly grasped her, she would have fallen to the floor. I placed a chair for her and remained standing at her side. Spite of all our endeavors we could not get the girl to speak. She sat silent and utterly speechless, gazing on the floor; but as the judge in conversation with others declared, "This person remains a prisoner! She cannot go free!" she sprang from the chair ere the last word was uttered, let her eyes rove from one to another until they rested on him, and looking him firmly in the eyes, she said:

"I have suffered my seven days' imprisonment; to-night at half-past seven it is at an end. You dare not detain me longer. You have not the right."

"That is not for you to decide."

"But think, sir, I am not guilty of anything; not only I, but two others will be so miserable if you do not let me go."

The poor child was the picture of suffering and fright.

"Now," said the judge mildly, "answer me. Are you the Adeline von R. that was condemned by a military court at B.?"

"No, I am not the condemned. But what of that?" she asked.

"Much, very much. You are guilty of an act punishable by ten years' imprisonment and a fine of one hundred to ten thousand dollars, and until final judgment is passed in the matter you may return to close confinement."

"Oh, God? my god!" she cried wildly. "I do not understand what you say. I did not wish to do harm."

"That cannot avail you, even should your intention have been of the best. You cheated the

court out of a righteous judgment by conniving at the escape of the real criminal."

"No, no, I did not think of such a thing. I only desired to save another from utter destruction. Oh, believe me, the gentle, lovely girl would have become insane. I am stronger than she. Never would you have brought her alive to this place, and if so only her corpse would you have had to bring out."

"Even that will not clear you from this deception or free you from punishment."

"What shall I say to soften your hard hearts?"

"Ask that person," she said, pointing to the detective. "He will tell you I have only spoken the truth about my friend; he knew her. Do you think it was an easy matter to place myself here? Did I not suffer indescribably? My strength failed me even at the prison-gate; but I thought of my friend, of her kiss, as at parting she wept and moaned in her anguish, and I became strong again, and when my spirits failed me during this time that picture gave me courage."

"Well, well, tell your future judges this, as you have told us. I have nothing to do with it. Perhaps they will, in consideration of this, give you only two years and \$100 fine."

"I will do everything you tell me, sir; but you will let me go now, will you not? I may return home this evening?" she pleaded.

"No!" he replied shortly.

"Must I repeat it, sir? I shall go mad. I must be home to-night; my friend awaits me; she numbers the moments until I see her again; she will die in her sorrow and fear!"

"Your friend receives with you the same punishment!"

"What say you?" she screamed; "you tell me she will suffer also? Why, she does not even know that I am here; she believes that I have gone to some one in a distant place to intercede for her."

"Examination may prove the truth of this assertion."

"My examination!" the girl repeated. "Oh, I feel so strange; all is void in my heart, and yet it seems as if it would break from the fullness of its misery. I comprehend, and still cannot realize. It cannot be. Oh, Mr. Inspector, you will let me go home this evening?"

"I dare not," I answered, as firm as I could.

"Not?"

That word enclosed my soul in so small a space I cannot understand it. The heart-rending cry she uttered will never be forgotten. All were silent; only the quick breathing of the prisoner could be heard. The judge thought she had become satisfied; further words were useless, and by a motion he bade me take her away.

I led her out by the hand; she uttered not one word; arriving at the prison she entered her cell in the same silence; her eyes were hard and dry; she did not appear to see me, but sat with folded hands gazing into vacancy.

The pressure of her troubles was too much for the spirit of the girl; six days had she waited for the moment when she could face her beloved friend and say, "You are free!"

She had constantly kept before her mind the sorrowing picture of their parting, and then fancied the happiness her sacrifice would bring. Such vicissitudes had kept her courageous and cheerful; now with one fearful blow they were destroyed, and only the prospect of a life covered with disgrace left her.

I appealed to the judge in her behalf, and explained my fears in regard to the girl's reason, but one can become hardened through familiarity to suffering in every shape. He anticipated nothing serious in consequence.

But her situation did not alter; she observed neither my coming nor going. I tried to draw her interest from her own thoughts, without success. She neither ate or drank. Occasionally her eyes would be raised from the floor to fix on one object to another, as if in search of something that could not be found. It was the restless wandering of a suffering soul—the language of a broken spirit. She had exhibited the courage of a man; she had offered more than life in the act of entering the prison; that she could not realize the unhappy result did not detract one iota from the nobleness of the intention. She was not aware that she was committing something forbidden; she only believed that self-sacrifice would bring peace to her family and happiness to her friend.

My heart bled for her, and after eight days the physician in charge pronounced her incurable. He could not help her condition, and two years later the sufferer died in an insane asylum.

I after a time discovered that the crime for which Adeline von R. was sentenced was nothing more than an unintentional injury done this detective that also discovered the fraud. It seems A. von R. repeated a bit of information at a social entertainment that she had received from her seamstress, and it was thus spread until it reached the ears of his superiors. It was of such a nature that he appeared in a comfortable character, and when called upon for her authority she could give none but the needful woman; but as she was the original cause of his disgrace he soon found a healing remedy by hunting her down to punishment and causing her such harm as he knew would bring the ignominy home to her and her position. Thus for a careless repetition of a piece of frivolity she was sentenced to the disgrace of arrest and a prison cell. The discovery happened unfortunately through one of the officers under him, who had seen Adeline von R., while he supposed her to be in close confinement, and shortly after the lady herself appeared before him to