

THE SUNSET LAND.

In the land of the wonderful sun and weather,
With green under foot and with gold over head,
Where the sun takes flame, and you wonder whether
'Tis an isle of fire in his foamy bed;
Where the ends of the earth they are welding together
In a rough-hewn fashion, in a forge flame red.

In the land where the rabbits dance delicate measures,
At night by the moon in the sharp chapparal;
Where the squirrels build homes in the earth and hoard
treasures;
Where the wolves fight in armies, fight faithful and
well,
Fight almost like Christians; fight on and find pleasures
In strife, like man turning earth into hell;
Where the plants are as trees; where the trees are as
towers
That too, as it seems, with the stars at night,
Where the roses are forests; where the wildwood flowers
Are dense unto darkness; where, reaching for light,
They spill in your bosom their fragrance in showers
Like incense spilled down in some sacrament rite.

'Tis the new-finished world; how silent with wonder
Stand all things around you; the flowers are faint
And lean on your shoulder. You wander on under
The broad, gnarly boughs, so colossal and quaint,
You breathe the sweet balsam where boughs break asunder—
The world seems so new, as if smelling of paint.

JOAQUIN MILLER.

THE GOLD OF CHICKAREE.

BY

SUSAN and ANNA WARNER.

AUTHORS OF

"WIDE, WIDE WORLD," and "DOLLARS AND
CENTS," "WYCH HAZEL," etc.

CHAPTER XXIII.

FOR BETTER FOR WORSE.

The sun of that short Christmas day was already dipping behind the tall Chickaree woods, laying bars of light and threads of gold where once green leaves had been, when Dr. Maryland's little sleigh came jingling up the long hill road to the door of the house. There had been a heavy fall of snow two days before, and wanderings and rides—and everything but sleighing—had been effectually stopped. Only the doctor and his two daughters were in the sleigh; for Dr. Arthur was helping his friend in the Hollow, to appear with him by and by at dinner time. But this day Wych Hazel did not come running to meet them, as sometimes. The ladies were ushered and waited on by Phoebe in one of the state rooms; and Dr. Maryland was taken care of in another to match, so full of wax candles and firelight and cheval glasses, and whether it was himself or the attendant confronted him at every turn, the doctor could hardly tell. For though there was lingering sunlight still out of doors, shutters were closed and candles lighted all over the house, in every open room but Wych Hazel's own. In her special room of rooms and retreat of retreats upstairs, the afternoon sun came glinting in as long as it would, and for a successor had only the twilight. And there she knelt by the window, gazing out on the fired tree tops, and the gathering shades, till she heard the sleigh bells come. Yes, till she heard the steps go down the staircase, and the door of the great drawing-room open and close behind her guests. O if Mr. Falkirk were there! she thought. And then came Phoebe with a message, to know if Mrs. Boerssen might see her. Gyda was at once asked to come upstairs.

Hazel met her standing, in the middle of the room. It was in half gloom by this time; but only by the faint light Hazel could see the glitter of the embroidery on the Norwegian jacket. Gyda was in great state. The fair, mild, old face Hazel could not well see; the voice was its fit interpreter. Gyda came forward and kissed her hand.

"How is my dear lad's lady to-night?" The adjective did double duty; but the tone was unmistakably tender and anxious. Hazel had met her with both hands stretched out; now she drew her along gently to a chair.

"Sit down," she said. "I can spare a few minutes." But she herself stood still, keeping fast her hold. "I am glad you have come. Are you well?—after all that fatigue?"

"Doesn't my lady know, that there is no evil to them that trust in Him?"

"Yes."

"It is a glad day for me, my dear; but I know the heart of a young maiden, and that it's not altogether a glad day for you. Can my lad's old nurse be any use? He told me to see if I could; that's why I'm bold to ask."

Hazel passed her little fingers softly over Gyda's hand; she did not speak at once.

"Perhaps—after dinner. Will you sit here after dinner till I come? Now I must go."

Hazel put her visitor in Mrs. Bywank's charge, and, giving herself no time to think, ran down stairs.

The great drawing-room was all ablaze, with hickory sticks and wax candles, and the reflected sheen from old chairbacks, and brass andirons, and silver sconces. The turkey carpet on the floor alone absorbed and hid the light. Into this glow came Wych Hazel suddenly and softly. She was in one of her brilliant toilettes to-night; one that made Mrs. Coles open her eyes, and forget for a minute to open her mouth; and must have plunged Prim in a puzzle. One vivid spot on her cheek, and the silky hair in curls and waves and rings of its own making, and the brown eyes looking somewhere where you could not follow,—it was better than a pic-

ture to see her, it was almost like music to hear her tread.

But old admirers of Miss Kennedy knew well that a brilliant toilette did not bespeak the lady to be easy of access. So it was to-night; she was unapproachable. It was like looking at the fire through a glass screen. Yet she was very affectionate to Primrose, a little stately to Mrs. Coles; and gave Dr. Maryland's hand a grip of her small fingers which would have gone to his heart had he known what it meant.

"My dear!" said Mrs. Coles, "you look as if you expected a party. It isn't true? I thought we were asked to just a family gathering."

"I expect only the gentlemen from the Hollow," said Wych Hazel. "Prim, are you quite warm?"

"It makes me warm only to look at you," said Prim admiringly. "Oh, Hazel, you do know how to dress beautifully." Prim's eyes were wondering as well as admiring, and a trifle speculative also.

"It is of no use to dress for gentlemen, Miss Kennedy," said Prim's sister, shaking her head, the fair bandeaux of which were in excellent order. "They never know what we have on. It is mortifying—but it's a fact."

"Facts about oneself often are," said Hazel. "But fiction comes in to set things straight."

"I am thinking," said Mrs. Coles, in a half whisper and with a smile, "how Dane's principles will harmonize, by and by, with Hazel's practice. Will he hold himself responsible, Prim, do you suppose?—or will he console himself with the reflection that he cannot help it? Though if Dane Rollo does that, it will be the first time in his life. What are his notions about dress, now-a-days, Miss Kennedy? has he revealed them to you yet? I don't see any change in his own."

"I think I know more of my own notions," said the girl. "Dr. Maryland, you have taken the hardest chair in the room! This is the one you ought to have, by me."

"You have a pretty house, my dear," said the old doctor, as he obediently made the change. "I never saw it look prettier than it does to-night. A handsome old house! I hope Dane won't want to make any changes here. If he does, don't let him, my dear."

"He won't," said Prim. "What an idea, papa! Dane has some sense."

"When anybody gets in the spirit of change, though," said Prudentia—"you never know how far it will go. He may think one end of the house suitable for a hospital; or build an addition for a refuge."

"Prim, you do talk nonsense," said the sister. "Hazel wouldn't like that; and Dane wouldn't like what she wouldn't like."

"Wouldn't he?" Mrs. Coles responded, with a little, most disagreeable laugh.

"Hazel will be able to regulate all that," said Dr. Maryland. "I don't think Dane would do what she disapproved of. Ha, there they are!"

The jingle of the sleigh bells was heard passing the window; and for a minute all the party were silent. And the Christmas wind moaned in the chimney, as much as to say, "I have seen many a Christmas here; you are all new comers, compared to me." And Wych Hazel sat trying to manage herself, with her heart on the jump. She had been breathless and speechless during the late pleasant little discussion of her affairs, but now, for the moment even Mrs. Coles was forgotten. The next thing was a message from Mrs. Bywank; could Miss Wych step to the housekeeper's room for a moment? And in the housekeeper's room Hazel found only one person, and that one was not Mrs. Bywank.

He met her eagerly, and at the same time with the manner of reverential tenderness she was accustomed to have from him lately; as if he remembered how alone she was, and that he must be mother and lover and all in one. And she did her best to give him a smile; but he got it most in the low-toned intonation, after all, with which she answered his question, how she was?

"You did not get the Christmas gift I had intended for you," he went on; and if his eye had a sparkle of joy in it, his face and manner were as grave and quiet as consideration for her could have suggested. "I have been disappointed, much to my mortification. The carriage has not come. I had ordered a pony chaise to be here, which I thought you would like. The pony is in the stable."

She glanced up at him and down, with quick changes in her face, but somehow words would not come. His words touched too many things,—and things would not bear touching to-night. And she could not say a common "thank you"; she could not talk of the trouble he had taken; and pleasure was rather dull down at present, with some leagues of uncertain weather between. No use!

"How could you find time?" she said timidly. But again her voice supplemented the words; and Rollo probably did not feel himself unthanked, for he went on with no want of content in his voice.

"I have left all happy in the Hollow. Every house has a Christmas dinner; and your sugar-plums are making life sweet to the souls of young and old. Charteris men and all; every house has comfort in it to-night. I wish you could have seen a few of the faces that came to thank me. You know, I sent off the pampels to the several houses; so for a while I worked on free enough; but when the thing began to get wind, men, women and children came collecting about me, looking on with great eyes of wonder,

and some eyes of tears, and muttered words—I can tell you, I wished them all away!"

There was a suspicious sympathetic softness in Rollo's own eyes, which complemented his words.

Then Charteris men at last set up petitioning. "Wouldn't I have mercy on them?"—And Dane broke off short, and turned to the table where lay a jewel case.

"Here is a sugarplum for you, Hazel," he said presently, with his voice clear again. "You do not want sugarplums—but I want you to have this—"

What he took out was an old-fashioned, rather massive gold chatelaine; heavy and rich and quaint, with various trinkets fastened and hanging to it.

"This makes you my castle-keeper," said Dane, proceeding to attach it properly to Wych Hazel's belt. "My mother used to wear it. This,—taking up a little gold key,—"you will observe, is the key of your money-box. These seals you will study at your leisure. Here is a wee gold compass, Hazel; this is symbolical. It means, 'Know where you are, and take care which way you go.' Your vinaigrette you will never get again. I shall have to find you another."

The jewel hung richly at Wych Hazel's side, giving a curious touch of stateliness to the little lady. Indeed little she was not, in matter of stature; it was the extreme daintiness of every detail that gave occasion to the epithet. Dane's eyes took the effect. Hazel stood looking down, possibly taking the effect too. Then she turned short about.

"I have nothing to give you," she said,— "except—You will think all my gifts are in one line."

She was gone out of the room in a moment, but in another moment or two was back again, and holding in her hand a little gold locket. "I found it one day among the old things, and I thought, perhaps, you might like—"

She touched the spring and laid the open locket in his hand. It was an exquisite miniature of herself as a child; the Wych Hazel of six years old, in a white frock. A few hurried words finished the sentence.—"Might like to see what they gave you, so long ago."

In all true manliness there is a large element of tenderness; and something stirred the tenderness in this man more than he cared to shew. Wych Hazel's mood needed no exciting. He was very still for a few minutes, looking at the locket, with eyelids dropped too low for her to see his eyes; then he turned to kiss her.

"I do not take this from your hand, Hazel, but from your mother's. You cannot give me anything to-day but the original. I know she will know how I hold both."

It was time to rejoin the people in the drawing-room, but it suited Hazel to let Dane go in by himself and to follow afterwards alone. She did not escape Mrs. Coles.

"I thought," remarked that lady with a significant smile, "that your housekeeper was too skilled in her business to need consultation with anybody."

"Prudentia," said Dane, "you are not looking well."

"That is very impolite—from a gentleman to a lady."

"Not from a brother to a sister, though."

A flush rose into Mrs. Coles' cheeks, which were pale enough, and a strange confusion of expression for a moment reigned there. She was plainly surprised, evidently gratified, as evidently very much puzzled. Withal, so much moved, from whatever cause, that her features were not quite under command and her answer was scarce intelligible.

"She's been a little weakish, or so," said her father. "She doesn't complain much."

"What's good for you?" said Dane.

"It is good for her to be out," said Prim.

"But you know we can't much in this weather. Arthur drives her out sometimes; but Prue don't like his driving so fast. Do all doctors drive fast? Why can't they go like other people?"

"Policy. If we drove slowly, people would say we had small practice."

Dr. Arthur found it unusually hard to get his hands warm to-night, and still stood up by the fire taking notice. Among other things—there was not a flower in all the rooms. Nor a wreath, nor anything that looked like decoration. The doctor's quick eyes went from the unadorned rooms to Wych Hazel's dress, and her face, and Dane's face. After which, Dr. Arthur professed himself comfortable, and sat down. But a little silence had fallen upon the people; and the wind moaned in the chimney again.

"It is a sweet time, this Christmas time," said Primrose. "I always enjoy it. It feels like Christmas, somehow, here to-night. Listen to that wind. I dare say it is going to snow again. But it sounds like Christmas."

"Why?" said Dane.

"I can't tell the why of things," said Primrose. "I suppose I have been thinking of your doings in the Hollow, Duke. Wasn't it good?"

"It was very good, Prim. It is good now to think of. Yes, it does feel like Christmas, as you say. All Mill Hollow is happy to-night. No! I'm too hasty. The Charteris men cannot be happy; for they don't know what is to become of them when their Christmas beef is gone!"

"What will become of them, Dane?" said Primrose, looking very anxious.

"There is no hope for them, except in the mills going on with work."

"And is there any hope of that?" said Mrs. Coles.

"Not unless somebody buys them off Charteris's hands."

"Perhaps you'll do that."

"I should hardly think that would be prudent," said Dr. Maryland. "Dane's responsibilities are large as it is."

"Miss Kennedy, perhaps?" suggested Mrs. Coles. "Hasn't Dane touched your heart for the mill people, Miss Kennedy?"

She turned for a better look into Hazel's face; but Rollo interferred again.

"You forget she is under guardians, Prudentia. What would Mr. Falkirk say?"

"How comes it Mr. Falkirk is not here?—to-night of all nights!" said Dr. Arthur suddenly. He was sitting by Wych Hazel, and she answered pretty steadily, though certain intuitions were waking up concerning his face.

"Mr. Falkirk wrote that he could not come back for Christmas,—nor perhaps until spring."

"He does not take the same pleasure in it that Prim does," Rollo remarked.

The dinner bugle, and the opened door, cut short all further comment upon Mr. Falkirk. Wych Hazel went in upon Dr. Maryland's arm, with a strange feeling of its being the last time,—the last of her entertainments, which had been so pretty and so popular. So she felt when in her place at the head of the table, with Dr. Maryland on her right and Dr. Arthur on her left. There were flowers enough here, the table was in a glow. Not stiff baskets and made-up bouquets, but cut flowers in every sort of dish and arrangement for which there was room; from the low narrow border of violets and rosebuds which fenced off the plates, to parian shells and fairy glasses and a bewildering pyramid in the centre. The very candlesticks were wreathed. No gardener's work; those who had seen such before knew the touch of Wych Hazel's own fingers. She hardly knew it herself; and eyes that watched her might catch now and then a dreamy look at the flowers,—wondering if she had arranged them!—if she should ever arrange any more.

Besides this the table was bountiful of course with the old Chickaree silver and china and glass; and by each plate on the rich damask, lay a separate, individual knot of flowers, with a scroll around it, naming the guest. These were culled flowers; but Dr. Arthur took notice that Wych Hazel did not even handle her own, but left it where it lay.

(To be continued.)

PERSONAL.

CHIEF JUSTICE DRAPER is dying.

HON. MR. CAUCHON has been appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba.

It is announced that Sir John Rose, formerly Finance Minister of Canada, has retired from the banking firm of Morton, Rose & Co., London, England.

MAYOR WALLER, of Ottawa, has accepted the Registrarship of the County of Carleton. Senator Skedd's name is mentioned in connection with the Mayoralty.

REV. GEORGE M. GRANT, of Halifax, has been appointed Principal of Queen's University, Kingston, in the room of Principal Snodgrass, who has resigned.

REV. J. McCANN, of Oshawa, has been appointed to the Chancellorship of the Archdiocese of Toronto. He will be succeeded at Oshawa by Rev. Father McIntee, of Uxbridge.

HUMOROUS.

"You are as pretty as a picture" is no longer the correct compliment to pay a lady. Simply say, "You put me in mind of a chromo."

WHAT the milkman said when he found a fish in the lactical fluid, "Good heavens! the brindle cow has been in swimming again."

"WHAT will become of the last man?" says a scientific exchange. Manufacturing shoes by machinery is, we believe, knocking him out of his business.

AN American listened to an Englishman's description of a London fog, the other day, and then coolly enquired if the fog was so dense that they had to run snow-plows on the railroads to clear the tracks.

THE man who has heretofore collided with a plate of soft butter when feeling around the cupboard in search of something to eat after dark, now experiences a relief from the monotony by sticking his fingers in pumpkin pie.

THE Philadelphia *Chronicle* yells out in agony: "What is going to become of the last man? We don't care what becomes of the last man, or the first one, either. It is what is to become of the intermediate fellow that interests us."

AN agricultural correspondent writes to correct what he thought to be an erroneous statement that recently appeared in a certain paper relative to cows giving buttermilk. We adhere to our original statement. We never saw a cow give any thing but her milk.

A CAMBRIDGE, Mass., man, waiting in line for his turn to buy some lecture tickets, got hungry and gave a boy a quarter to hold his place while he went to lunch. The boy, with true Yankee thrift, immediately sold out the position to another for two dollars, and left.

AN exchange says: It makes one sad, when treading up the costly carpeted aisles of an up-town church to think how many church members belong there who have not good clothes enough to attend the preaching of God's word. We are spared all this and feeling by attending where there are no costly carpets, and where a man coming in late drowns the organ with the music in his sole.

A GREAT pianist says: "If I stop practice for one day I notice it in my playing; if I stop two days my friends notice it; if I stop three days the public notice it." It is different with the young man who practices down the street. If he stops for one day the whole neighborhood notices it, and feel like paying him \$50 never to begin again. If he doesn't stop for two days, the neighbours ask the police to notice it as a nuisance; and if he doesn't stop for three days, they get down their shot guns and go gunning for him.