

Italians would call a "sympathetic" voice; and, though evidently more or less untrained, its natural melody and sweetness were singularly touching. The singer possessed also the somewhat rare merit of a very distinct utterance, and Hugh could hear every word of the wild mournful ballad she was linking to a plaintive harmony that suited well the theme. It was the lament of an Australian exile, who, leaving his native land for ever, passes, in the vessel that is bearing him away, close to the shore on which stands the dwelling of one he has loved too well. He sees the lighted windows, behind which her shadow moves, as he is being driven by the stormy blast far away in the darkness, to meet the raging billows and the dangers of the deep; and, as the foam-capped waves rise up between him and the light which is the symbol of her beloved presence, he sends back to her, upon the wailing wind, a last farewell, with all the passion of despair. It may be that the weird sadness of this song gained an additional touch of pathos from the fact that she who sang it was feeling in her secret heart all the while how like to her own destiny was the doom that had fallen upon the lonely exile, for she too, amid the storms and gloom of life's tempestuous sea, would have to look from afar upon the light of love's fair sunshine, brightening all the happy home of him from whose heart she was exiled evermore; but certain it is, that Hugh Carlton was moved by Estelle's sweet mournful tones as he never had been moved in all his life before.

It is a matter of experience—common, we believe, to all—that there are affinities as well as antipathies between human beings, which make themselves felt on the very first occasion of their meeting, in a manner as sudden as it is unmistakable. Such feelings neither admit of explanation nor resistance; they are the infallible guides to the nature of the influence which the persons concerned are to exercise over each other's destiny; and even if apparently altered or modified by subsequent intercourse, they will be found to have given a true indication of that which the future will surely bring to fruition for good or for evil.

The peculiar charm which the voice of Estelle Lingard had for Hugh Carlton was emphatically a case in point. As soon as the cessation of the music broke the spell under which he listened to her, he was seized with a vehement desire to know who the singer was, for he was certain at least that the voice was one he had never heard before. He could not enter the drawing-room in his fishing-costume, so he went close to the window, hoping to catch a glimpse of the stranger, but he saw only Kathleen, who was standing near him, with a look of delighted admiration on her pretty face. He called to her in an eager whisper, "Kathie, Kathie, come here!"

She turned, and, seeing him, came out instantly on the terrace to join him.

"Whose voice is that?" he exclaimed, catching her by the arm; "who is it that has been singing?"

"It is Estelle Lingard; is not her voice exquisite? I wish you had heard all she has sung to-night."

"I must hear her again, and see her too, that is very certain. I suppose there is time to change my dress and come into the drawing-room before she goes?"

"I am afraid not. She has to go home early, on account of her invalid uncle, and she said just now that she could not delay long enough to give us another song."

"Kathleen, I must see her!" said Hugh, imperiously. "I must see her to-night, and you will have to manage it as best you can."

Kathleen never dreamt of disputing his will. "I dare say I can persuade her to come out here," she said; and going back into the drawing-room, through the open window, she took Estelle by the hand, as she stood talking to Raymond, and drew her gently towards the terrace.

"Come with me for a moment, dear Estelle," she said, "I want to introduce my cousin to you, and he is too roughly clad to venture in here."

She came out at once, as Kathleen asked her; and Hugh, still standing on the terrace, suddenly saw within a few paces of him, a slender, white-robed figure. He bent his

head in acknowledgement of the introduction which his cousin effected between them, before he saw her face, and then, after a few words of courtesy had been spoken by both, he drew a step nearer, and looked at her. She had turned by this time to admire the dream-like beauty of the scene around her, and stood with her fair face uplifted to the purple sky, and her large dark eyes shining like lamps as the moonbeams streamed down upon them, and filled them with a heavenly light. Her appearance at that moment became stamped as an indelible picture on Hugh's mind, and never in after years was it effaced, through all the vicissitudes of his life, till, in the last hour of conscious memory, it remained the one vivid image which passed before his dying eyes, when earth was fading from them.

Little did Estelle dream of the effect she was producing; in perfect simplicity she was gazing with delight on the splendour of the moonlit heavens, and scarce had given a thought to the young man by her side.

"Oh, what a divine night!" she said at last; it reminds me of the evening hours in Australia, which we always spent out of doors when the heat of the day was over. It does seem such a pity to lose the enjoyment of this soft air and lovely night. Kathleen, would it be quite contrary to English proprieties that I should walk home this evening instead of going in the carriage?"

"No, not at all, if some one went with you; you could not go alone. Why should we not all go?" she added, gleefully. "It would be charming; I should so enjoy it! Raymond, you will go with us, will you not?" she continued, turning round, with the perfect certainty that she would find him close to her side, as in fact he was.

"Undoubtedly I will if you go," he answered smiling; "and I think the walk would be very delightful this fine night."

So Estelle went back into the drawing-room to take leave of her hosts, and then they all started together. Raymond, Kathleen, Hugh, and herself, while Tracy Harcourt watched them from the terrace with a somewhat discontented expression, but made no effort to join them.

Hugh Carlton kept close by Estelle's side, as they walked along the woodland way towards High Rock House; but during the first few minutes she was very silent, for her companions had taken advantage of the narrowness of the path to drop behind, and she heard as she passed on under the shadows of the branching trees, the happy murmurs of their voices, so eloquent of mutual love and full contentment, that her heart ached as she felt this was but the prelude to the long harmony of their blissful union, which she would have to hear forever sounding through the dreary silence of her own life-long desolation. She roused herself with some difficulty from her abstraction, when Hugh spoke at last.

"Miss Lingard," he said, "You have given me to-night the greatest pleasure it is possible for me to know, for music is one of the chief enjoyments of my life, and I never heard any voice which moved me so much as yours has done, or any song as that which you sang while I stood outside the window."

"I do not wonder you liked the ballad I was singing then," said Estelle; "it is a favourite with every one; it was really, as it implies, composed by an Australian exile. He had great genius, but he never seemed to have understood the true mission of a poet, and he died without accomplishing it in any sense."

"Do you consider that poets have any special mission?" asked Hugh.

"Undoubtedly," she replied. "Every one who has the power of impressing their fellow-creatures by the fascination of their genius, is bound to consider themselves entrusted with a sacred mission, just as much as any preacher of righteousness who ever was ordained to fight the battle of good against evil."

"Do you mean that they are to uphold the cause of Christianity? But persons must be essentially religious to perform such a work, and a poet, too often, has the gift of genius without the power of faith."

"True; but the cause of Christianity is that of right over wrong; and if a man has the heaven-sent gift of poetic talent at all, it is well-nigh

certain that he will love that which is noble and good, and hate all that is unholy and mean. A poet—even if, to his own great loss, he is not a religious man—may at least cry out against tyranny and opposition, against worldliness and falsehood, and, above all, against the martyrdom of the helpless that ceases not night or day. You may be very certain, Mr. Carlton, that the poet in our day has a grand mission, for he has assuredly a ray of the divine light within his soul, even if its full-orbed glory has not risen upon him in the highest faith."

"Such a view of the gift of genius never entered into my mind before," said Hugh, slowly. "It is like a revelation to me. Tell me more in detail, Miss Lingard, how you would have the poet accomplish his mission."

And she did as he had asked her. With all the fervour and eloquence of her enthusiastic nature, she spoke to him of the noble uses which genius in any shape might be made to serve in a world that was darkened by cruelty and suffering; and when, at the door of Highrock House, he was compelled at last to leave her, he said, as he took her hand, "Miss Lingard, I have known you but one hour, yet already have you opened out to me a whole new world of thought, for which I shall be grateful to you all my life."

(To be continued.)

THOUGHTS IN A CITY CHURCHYARD.

Quiet graves in city churchyards,
Mid the rush of hurrying feet,
Silent forms beneath their surface,
Hearts that long have ceased to beat.

Little reck the life around them,
Surging past the grassy mound,
Few who enter in to wander
Through the consecrated grounds,

Few, who for the souls departed,
Breathe a prayer, or meditate
On the narrow wall dividing
Life and death—earth's two-fold state.

Yet, amid the careless passers,
Some worn spirit here and there,
Bowed, perhaps, with mortal weakness,
Bearing marks of toil and care,

Steps within the sacred precincts,
Reads, engraved on tombstones old,
Words of faith and hope undying,
Love that never can grow cold.

Words that speak of resurrection
Of the Lord who died to save,
And the heavenly joy and brightness—
Of the life beyond the grave.

So he gathers solemn lessons,
Walks he forth with firmer tread,
Feels more kindly to the living
From his commune with the dead.

Not alone in shady churchyards
Stand the gravestones of the dead,
Living hearts bear "In memoriam,"
Hearts that loved and lost and bled.

Forth from memory's haunted chambers,
Voices hushed for many a year,
Teach us by their woeful silence
Patiently life's ills to bear.

Rest and peace—dear words of promise—
Rest and peace—the worn heart's balm—
These we seek mid earth's vain tempests,
Looking unto heavenly calm.

—At Christ Church, Ningpo, on Trinity Sunday, three native clergymen, who have been in deacon's orders for more than a year, were admitted to the order of priesthood by Bishop Russell. The sermon was preached by the Rev. F. F. Gough, the senior missionary. Two or three of the ordained are for the city of Ningpo, and one is to take charge of the church at Zkyi, to the building fund of which Shanghai residents have contributed.