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Poetry.

THE EYE BEFORE A BRIDAL.

Another moon shall wane, mother,
And by the altar's side
One moment standing there mother,
And I shall be his bride.

His bride! A flush is on my cheek,
My heart is trembling wild;
I would my love were thine alone,
As when a little child.

Oh, mother I can't ever be,
Upon his brow so fair,
Will come so dark and sad a thing
As wild and weary care!

I would it never might be so,
And yet I know it may;
Sweet mother kneel beside me now,
And for my own love pray.

Oh, a girlish one was that maiden fair
As she knelt that night at her evening prayer;
And her voice was low as a wailing sigh,
As it rose for her love, that he might not die.

That his heart might ever be free from care,
Was the fondest wish of the maiden a prayer;
Then she sank to rest, and her heart was mild
As the holy love of a sinless child.

Oh, a sacred thing is a maiden's love,
And her trust is as pure as a snow white dove;
Ah, stern must he be, who would lily break
The heart that would peril its all for his sake!

Literature.

THE LOVERS' FIRST VISIT.

(Concluded from our last.)

Mr. Gourlay was out superintending the clearing of an old drain, and our travellers having rested a little, and refreshed themselves, went away in quest of him. It so happened that as they were coming forward one of the men threw up with his spade a small curved piece of metal, which Mr. Gourlay picked up and was examining when the two young gentlemen made their appearance. After a very warm greeting the little piece of metal was exhibited. Samuel looking at it with a mechanical eye, saw nothing in it out of the ordinary way, it was a bit of old metal—that was all. But our philosophic friend fired at the idea of an interesting relic of the olden time, being thus lightly treated. He rubbed it against a stone, and having judged from its appearance that it was silver, he at once decided that it must have belonged to one of the ancient inhabitants of the country. Its form indicated that it must have been the tricker guard of a crossbow, such as was used by the Scots and Picts, and might have been lost in some one of their excursions against their less warlike neighbours, the Dalreudini, whom they finally subdued. Its being silver, no doubt testified to the fact that it had belonged to some one of the chiefs:

This lucky incident gave David an ample opportunity to show the thoroughness of his acquaintance with the ancient history of his

own country—a study frequently too much neglected—and he ran on at a rapid pace from the time of Galgacus, who so valiantly withstood Agricola and his Roman legions, down through a long list of Scotch and Pictish and Dalreudic chieftains. He admitted that it was not so thoroughly proved that the ancient races were so much given to the use of the crossbow, as to the use of a light javelin, and a sword of prodigious length; but as to their ability to work in metals there could be no dispute, for Edwin, King of Northumberland, who, early in the seventh century extended his conquests through Scotland beyond the Frith of Forth, is said to have caused wells to be dug by the wayside, and chained brazen ladles to them, that the traveller might slake his thirst as he passed by. While engaged in this learned disquisition they had moved off from the field, and neared the house of the neighbouring farmer, Mr. Westfield of Harrowluck—a name given, by the way, in consequence of Mr. Westfield having at one time while harrowing, turned up a mole's skin, pretty firmly stuffed with gold coins, which ever after gave the name of Harrowluck to the farm. The two farmers having been on the most intimate terms, a call was made, and the young strangers were introduced, and as a necessary consequence, the subject on which they had been discoursing was renewed. Mr. Westfield listened for some time with a seeming complacency, but judge of the surprise of the antiquary, when the farmer drew down from the rafters an old "Horse pistol" and fitted on the rusted piece of metal on the shattered stock as its original tricker-guard. This wonderful circumstance needed an explanation which was speedily afforded. Some twenty years previous Mr. Westfield, then a young man, had been out recreating himself along with the farmer, who at that time occupied the farmstead of Windy Hill, and having taken aim at some partridges with his old horse pistol, which had descended as an heirloom in the family, the piece burst and shattered its stock, and threw off the tricker-guard, which no amount of search had been able to discover until that fortunate moment when it was thrown from the ditch, where it had probably lain all the intervening time. This was rather harrowing, but,

"The best-laid schemes,—
Gang all a-glee."

Dinner was awaiting the trio by the time they reached the homestead, and having partaken of the generous repast they wandered over the premises, and inspected the threshing machine, and the other works and implements connected with the farm. A shooting excursion was proposed. Two guns were brought down and dusted, and off they started, but in this the travellers showed little experience. Nothing particular occurred, with the exception that Samuel in his hurry to take aim at a hare which was started, omitted to withdraw the ramrod, which unfortunately struck a stone and was altogether splintered. Mr. Gourlay having brought down a pheasant, and a brace of wild pigeons they were compensated for their labour.

It would, however, be like tolling secrets out of the family to say here how they were entertained, having got the particulars of the affair from Anabella herself. Suffice it to say, the day passed on very pleasantly, and they were greatly delighted with their excursion. Night, however, drew on apace, and a thick mist from the hills, which preceded the setting of the sun gave indications, that a dark forenoon would ensue.

Unconscious of the sudden approach of night the youths manifested considerable uneasiness about their return, as being totally unacquainted with the road, they considered it next to impossible for them to find the way.

It was at once proposed that they should remain overnight, and start off early in the morning to be home in good time to allay the fears of their parents, and strongly though the young farmer urged this proposal they were determined to make trial of the road.

After some further consultation, the two travellers—each provided with a strong hazel cudgel, and one of them carrying a large three cornered, house lantern,—set out singing,—at least Anabella very archly said, they should have been singing

"I'm o'er young to marry yet."

Mr. Gourlay accompanied them about two miles and a half, and so far all was well; and having cautioned them against being afraid of anything by the way, he returned home cheerful and happy to his little homestead.

Our adventurers betrayed a more ungenial state of mind. They proceeded along slowly and in silence. Frequently when the light fell obliquely from the lantern upon the broom or the alder bushes by the road-side, were their cudgels raised to protect them from the imagined foe; and ever and anon the slight rustling of the withered leaves, or the trickling of the water from the field drains in the road-side ditch, was a source of great terror.

At length, however they came to a dark wood, which runs on each side of the road, to nearly a mile in extent, separated only from the pathway by a dry stone dyke, about two feet and a half high. The little dip into ancient lore which David had made was at this particular juncture fatal to his comfort; for tradition had said—and he believed it firmly—that many dark deeds had, in feudal times, been done in that same wood; and that while the tall pines remained to shade the highway, they were only as so many sad mementoes of the days of yore.

It so happened that one of the farm servants of Woodside—a farm that skirted the east side of the wood—had gone in the gloamin' to the smithy to get the coulter of his plough sharpened, and having, either by chance or arrangement, fallen in with Sarah Johnson, a neighbouring domestic, the time passed more swiftly than they imagined. To make up for lost time they took a short road through the wood, and had reached within about twenty yards of the dyke, when the two young gentlemen with the lanterns were in sight.

The novelty of seeing a large glass lantern in such a place made Mackay a little curious to know who was coming, and he laid hold of one of the branches of a tall spruce fir; but while swinging