

TALES FROM SHAKSPEARE

An Introduction to the Study of the Master by Charles and Mary Lamb.

VI. Two Gentlemen of Verona.

There lived in the city of Verona two young gentlemen, whose names were Valentine and Proteus, between whom a firm and uninterrupted friendship had long subsisted. They pursued their studies together, and their hours of leisure were always passed in each other's company, except when Proteus visited a lady he was in love with; and these visits to his mistress, and this passion of Proteus for the fair Julia, were the only topics on which the two friends disagreed; for Valentine, not being himself a lover, was sometimes a little weary of hearing his friend for ever talking of his Julia, and then he would laugh at Proteus, and in pleasant terms ridicule the passion of love, and declare that no such idle fancies should ever enter his head, greatly preferring (as he said) the free and happy life he led, to the anxious hopes and fears of the lover. Proteus came to Proteus to tell him that he must for a time be separated, for that he was going to Milan. Proteus, unwilling to part with his friend, and unwilling to prevail upon Valentine not to leave him; but Valentine said, "Cease to persuade me, my loving friend; for I will not, like a sluggard, wear out my youth in idleness at home. Home-keeping youth have ever homely wits. If your affection were not chained to the sweet glances of your mistress, Julia, I would treat you to accompany me, to see the wonders of the world abroad; but since you are a lover, love on, till, and may your love be prosperous!"

They parted with mutual expressions of unalterable friendship. "Sweet Valentine," said Proteus, "think of me when you see some rare object worthy of notice in your travels, and wish me partaker of your happiness."

Valentine began his journey that same day toward Milan; and when his friend had left him, Proteus sat down to write a letter to Julia, which he gave to her maid Lucetta to deliver to her mistress.

Julia loved Proteus as well as he did her, but she was a lady of noble spirit, and she thought it did not become her maiden dignity too easily to be won; therefore she affected to be insensible of his passion, and gave him much uneasiness in the prosecution of his suit. And when Lucetta offered the letter to Julia she would not receive it, and bid her maid for taking letters from Proteus, and ordered her to leave the room. But she so much wished to see what was written in the letter, that she soon called in her maid again; and when Lucetta returned, she said, "What o'clock is it?" Lucetta, who knew her mistress more desired to see the letter than to know the time, said, "My lord, though I have been a truant of my time, yet hath my friend made use and fair advantage of his days, and is complete in person and in mind, in all good grace to grace a gentleman."

When Valentine then according to his wonted custom, came to visit to Silvia, and Valentine was entertaining Silvia with turning everything Thurio said in ridicule, when the duke himself entered the room, and told Valentine the welcome news of his friend Proteus' arrival. Valentine said, "If I had wished a thing, it would have been to have seen him here." And then he highly praised Proteus to the duke, saying, "My lord, though I have been a truant of my time, yet hath my friend made use and fair advantage of his days, and is complete in person and in mind, in all good grace to grace a gentleman."

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Proteus' father thought the advice of his friend to be good, and upon Proteus' telling him that Valentine "wished him with him, the partner of his fortune," he at once determined to send his son to Milan; and without giving Proteus any reason for this sudden resolution, it being the usual habit of this positive old gentleman to command his son not reason with him, he said, "My will is the same as Valentine's wish," and seeing his son look astonished, he added, "Look not amazed, that I so suddenly resolve you shall spend some time in the Duke of Milan's court, for what I will, and there is an end. Tomorrow be in readiness to go. Make no excuses; for I am peremptory."

Proteus knew it was of no use to make objection to his father, who never suffered his will to be disputed; and he blamed himself for telling his father an untruth about Julia's letter, which had brought upon him the sad necessity of obeying his father's will.

Now that Julia found she was going to lose Proteus for so long a time, she no longer pretended indifference; and she begged that she might be allowed to spend some time in the Duke of Milan's court, for what I will, and there is an end. Tomorrow be in readiness to go. Make no excuses; for I am peremptory."

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saying, "Whither away so fast, Valentine?"—"May it please your grace," said Valentine, "there is a messenger that stays to bear my letters to my friends, and I am going to deliver them." Now this falsehood of Valentine's had no better success in the event than the untruth Proteus told his father.

"Be they of much import?" said the duke.

"No more, my lord," said Valentine, "than to tell my father I am well and happy at your grace's house, and to say that I am going to Milan."—"No matter," said the duke, "stay with me a while. I wish your counsel about some affairs that concern me nearly." The duke then told Valentine a curious story, as a prelude to draw his secret from him, saying that Valentine knew he wished to match his daughter with Thurio, but that she was stubborn and disobedient to his commands, "neither regarding," said he, "that she is my child, nor fearing me as if I were her father. And I may say to thee, my son, she has drawn my love from her, and had thought my age should have been cherished by her child-like duty. I now am resolved to take a wife, and turn out to whosoever will take her in. Let her beauty be her wedding dowry, for me and my possessions she esteems not."

Valentine, wondering where all this would end, made answer, "And what would your grace have me to do in all this?"

"Why," said the duke, "the lady I would wish to marry is nice and coy, and does not much esteem my aged eloquence. Besides, the fashion of courtship is much changed, since I was young; now I would have thee to be my tutor to instruct me how I am to woo."

Valentine gave him a general idea of the modes of courtship then practiced by young men, when they wished to win a fair lady's love, such as presents, frequent visits, and the like.

The duke replied to this, that the lady did refuse a proposal which he kept by her father, that no man might have access to her by day.

"Why then," said Valentine, "you must visit her by night."

"But at night," said the artful duke, who was now coming to the drift of his discourse, "her doors are fast locked."

Valentine then unfortunately proposed that the duke should get into the lady's chamber at night by means of a ladder of ropes, saying he would provide him one fitting for that purpose; and in conclusion advised him to conceal this ladder of ropes under such a cloak as that which he now wore.

"Lend me your cloak," said the duke, who had feigned this long story on purpose to have a pretense to get off the cloak; so upon saying these words, he caught hold of Valentine's cloak, and throwing it back, he discovered not only the ladder of ropes, but also a letter of Silvia's, which he instantly opened and read; and this letter contained a full account of their intended elopement. The duke, after upbraiding Valentine for his ingratitude in thus returning the favor he had shown him, by endeavoring to steal away his daughter, banished him from the court, and city of Milan for ever; and Valentine was forced to depart that night, without even seeing Silvia.

While Proteus at Milan was thus in banishment, Silvia at Verona was regretting the absence of Proteus; and her regard for him at last so far overcame her sense of propriety, that she resolved to leave Verona, and follow her lover at Milan; and to secure herself from danger on the road, she dressed her maid Lucetta and herself in men's clothes, and they set out on their journey, and Proteus, who had just returned after Valentine was banished from that city through the treachery of Proteus.

Julia entered Milan about noon, and she took up her abode at an inn; and her thoughts being all on her dear Proteus, she entered into conversation with the innkeeper, or host, as he was called, thinking by that means to learn some news of Proteus.

The host was greatly pleased that this handsome young gentleman (as he took her to be), who from his appearance he concluded to be a nobleman, spoke so familiarly to him; and being a good-natured man, he was sorry to see him look so melancholy; and to amuse his young guest, he offered to take him to hear some fine music, with which, he said, a gentleman that evening was going to serenade his mistress.

The reason Julia looked so very melancholy was, that she did not well know what Proteus would think of the imprudent step she had taken; for she knew he had loved her with the same maiden pride and dignity of character, and she feared she should lower herself in his esteem; and this it was that made her appear so sad and thoughtful.

She gladly accepted the offer of the host to go with him, and hear the music; for she secretly hoped she might meet Proteus by the way.

But when she came to the palace, whither the host conducted her, a very different effect was produced to what the kind host intended; for there, to her husband's sorrow, she beheld her lover, the innocent Proteus, who had the lady Silvia with music, and addressing discourse of love and admiration to her. And Julia overheard him from a window, and saw the light of the Duke of Milan and Thurio, who came there in pursuit of Silvia.

Proteus and Valentine were expressing their happiness in their reconciliation, and in the love of their faithful friend, when the Duke of Milan and Thurio, who came there in pursuit of Silvia, entered the room, and attempted to seize Silvia, saying, "Silvia is mine." Upon this Valentine said to him in a very spirited manner, "Thurio, keep back, if once again you say such words, I will have you for my enemy. Here she stands, take but possession of her with a touch! I dare you but to breathe upon my love."

Hearing this threat Thurio who was a great coward, drew back, and said he cared not for her, and that none but a fool would fight for a girl who loved him not.

The duke, who was a very brave man himself, said now in great anger, "The more base and degenerate in you to take such means for as you have done, and leave her on such light conditions." Then turning to Valentine, he said, "I do applaud your spirit, Valentine, and think you shall have Silvia, for you have well deserved her."

Valentine then with great humility kissed the duke's hand, and asked for the more part, pardon the most striking instance on record of this curious but inevitable influence is that of the Puritan period, when such names as Prudence, Mercy, Faith, Hope, Charity, and so on, came into vogue, to say nothing of such extravaganzas as Love-not-the-World, Original Sin and the notional names registered as St. Barabara's son-to-wit, If-Christ-had-not-died-for-thee-thou-hadst-been-damned-Barabarae.

The register at St. Clement Danes Church shows that among the educated and professional classes simple

fortable words coming from her kind rival's tongue cheered the drooping heart of the disguised lady.

But to return to the banished Valentine, who scarce knew which way to bend his course, being unwilling to return home to his father a disgraced and banished man; as he was wandering over a lonely forest, not far distant from Milan, where he had left his heart's dear treasure, the lady Silvia, he was set upon by robbers, who demanded his money.

Valentine told them that he was a man crossed by adversity, that he was going to banishment, and that he had no money, the clothes he had on being all his riches.

The robbers, hearing that he was a distressed man, and being struck with his noble air and manly behavior, told him if he would live with them, and be their chief or captain, they would put themselves under his command; but that if he refused to accept their offer, they would kill him.

Valentine, who cared little what became of himself, said he would consent to live with them, and so the captain, provided they did no outrage on women or poor passengers.

Thus the noble Valentine became, like Robin Hood of whom we read in ballads, a captain of robbers and outlawed banditti; and in this situation he was found by Silvia, and in this manner it came to pass.

Silvia, to avoid marriage with Thurio, whom her father insisted upon her no longer refusing, came to last of the resolution of following Valentine to Mantua, at which place she had heard her lover had taken refuge; but in this account she was misinformed, for he still lived in the forest among the robbers, bearing the name of their captain, but taking no part in their depredations, and using the authority which they imposed upon him in no other way than to compel them to show compassion to the travelers they robbed.

Silvia contrived to effect her escape from her father's palace in company with a worthy old gentleman, whose name was Eglamour, whom she took along with her, for protection on the road. She had no other way than to show compassion to the travelers they robbed.

The robber who had taken Silvia, seeing the terror she was in, bid her not be alarmed, for that he was only going to carry her to a cave where his captain lived, and that she need not be afraid for their captain had an honorable mind, and always showed humanity to women. Silvia found little comfort in hearing she was going to be carried as a prisoner before the captain of a lawless banditti.

"This I endure for thee!" she cried, "this I endure for thee!"

But as the robber was conveying her to the cave of his captain, he was surprised by Proteus, who still attended by Julia in the disguise of a page, having heard of the flight of Silvia, had traced her steps to this forest. Proteus now rescued her from the hands of the robber; but scarce had she time to thank him for the service he had done her, before he began to distress her with his vows, and to urge her to consent to marry him, and his page (the forlorn Julia) was standing beside him in great anxiety.

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ment; which being done, the lovers, all returned back to Milan, and their nuptials were solemnized in the presence of the duke, with high triumph and feasting.

There's much in names History, Fads and Faith Can Be Traced in Christening Books.

Names, according to Carlyle, are the most important of all things. His majesty the King may, therefore, be looked upon as master clothier to the rising generation, for without doubt Albert Edward is the most popular name of the hour, says London Express.

A study of the baptismal registers of some of our famous churches reveals this interesting fact. Within the last few weeks the registers of such typical middle-class churches as St. Pancras, St. Mary, Whitechapel, St. Clement, Danes, the Strand and the pro-cathedral of Liverpool have been scanned and at each of these the register bristles with Albert Edwards.

Fluctuations of national sentiment are reflected as in a looking glass in the registers of the churches named. At the time of the coronation several girl babies were christened Corona, while on the declaration of peace quite a number of little Misses Peace confronted the clergy.

When Queen Victoria died many thousands of mothers christened their newly born children after that illustrious monarch. One loyal mother called her child Victoria Alexandra. There is quite a run on Alexandra in the parish of St. Pancras.

The influence of the late war upon recent baptisms was truly extraordinary. Grace Darling Pretoria is one of the Christian names registered at St. Marys, Whitechapel, in 1900. In August of that year a Whitechapel soldier sent his infant son to the font of St. Marys and had him baptized with the name of Grace Darling. Another Whitechapel soldier, about the same time, had his baby girl christened Grace Pretoria.

The Whitechapel parish church also records Sarah Pretoria, Mary Ann Pretoria and Edith Sarah Baden. St. Pancras Church register bears many names of the sort. On two pages facing each other six Pretorias are recorded. Here also is a Charles Hector MacDonald, and dozens of Badens and Baden-Powells. One St. Pancras infant was christened Carnival in remembrance of the war carnival held there in aid of soldiers' widows and orphans.

War names are recorded to an extent unique in the whole country at the Liverpool pro-cathedral. The register for 1900 positively teems with Baden-Powells, Redvers, and Bullers. By far the most popular war names were Baden and Redvers, of which there are literally hundreds.

Particular periods of our history have invariably brought forth fashions in names. Perhaps the most striking instance on record of this curious but inevitable influence is that of the Puritan period, when such names as Prudence, Mercy, Faith, Hope, Charity, and so on, came into vogue, to say nothing of such extravaganzas as Love-not-the-World, Original Sin and the notional names registered as St. Barabara's son-to-wit, If-Christ-had-not-died-for-thee-thou-hadst-been-damned-Barabarae.

The register at St. Clement Danes Church shows that among the educated and professional classes simple

ment; which being done, the lovers, all returned back to Milan, and their nuptials were solemnized in the presence of the duke, with high triumph and feasting.

There's much in names History, Fads and Faith Can Be Traced in Christening Books.

Names, according to Carlyle, are the most important of all things. His majesty the King may, therefore, be looked upon as master clothier to the rising generation, for without doubt Albert Edward is the most popular name of the hour, says London Express.

A study of the baptismal registers of some of our famous churches reveals this interesting fact. Within the last few weeks the registers of such typical middle-class churches as St. Pancras, St. Mary, Whitechapel, St. Clement, Danes, the Strand and the pro-cathedral of Liverpool have been scanned and at each of these the register bristles with Albert Edwards.

Fluctuations of national sentiment are reflected as in a looking glass in the registers of the churches named. At the time of the coronation several girl babies were christened Corona, while on the declaration of peace quite a number of little Misses Peace confronted the clergy.

When Queen Victoria died many thousands of mothers christened their newly born children after that illustrious monarch. One loyal mother called her child Victoria Alexandra. There is quite a run on Alexandra in the parish of St. Pancras.

The influence of the late war upon recent baptisms was truly extraordinary. Grace Darling Pretoria is one of the Christian names registered at St. Marys, Whitechapel, in 1900. In August of that year a Whitechapel soldier sent his infant son to the font of St. Marys and had him baptized with the name of Grace Darling. Another Whitechapel soldier, about the same time, had his baby girl christened Grace Pretoria.

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