

[Written for the Canadian Illustrated News.]

BY THE BROOK.

(A STUDY FOR A WATER COLOUR.)

The aged chestnut droops
By frequent tempests blown,
And underneath is thrown
A mossy log that bridges o'er the brook.
Brown shade and breezy coolness in that nook,
Where the large kine come down to drink,
And munch upon the brink
The small wet mushrooms of the rocks;
And the fair barn-maid stoops,
With white feet on the rail,
To wash her shining pail
And fill it with sweet water for the flocks.

The knotted roots support my head
As I lie upon the grass,
The waters near me pass,
Murmuring in their pebbly bed,
Or gurgling o'er the nuphars, fall
In diminutive cascades
Adown the tremulous blades
Of feathery rushes tall.

The grey stones are ingrained
With lichens blue and white,
And the chestnut's bark is stained
With star-shaped mosses bright,
That glisten like a ring
Of silver deftly braided
Around the giant waist
Of the fabled King.

The oriole swings
Her panier nest,
And with the rest
Of the wood birds sings
Her brooding song
Unto her young;
Bright insects glide
Among the flower roots,
And the hummer shoots
O'er the vapory tide;
The fern-leaves flutter on the waves,
The irises their spathes unfold,
And the marsh marigold
Its fiery bosom lavels.
The mollusks peep
From out their shields,
The lizards creep
From the sultry fields,
And the whole air of my leafy bower
Is scented with the breath
Of hay and clover from the swath,
Dew-silvered at this sunset hour.

And yet I heed it not,
My mind is far away,
Filled with my lovely fay
Up in the trellised cot;
I read, but never a word
Fixes my soul;
I sing, but my mind is stirred
By other melodies that roll
From the far hills beyond the stream.
I lie listless on the grass
And let the shadows pass
Across my eyes as in a languid dream.

Upon the porch I see
My soft-eyed, brown Gulee,
Reclining in her rustic rocking chair,
And to and fro,
I watch her go,
Her white dress fluttering in the air.
O love—my love!
Like a fair dove,
She floats before me on snowy wings,
And as she moves, she sings,
Till in the shady nook
Beside the murmuring brook,
Under the sunset beams,
Amid the silence deep,
I sleep—I sleep,
Balanced in amorous dreams.

JOHN LESPERANCE.

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THE GOLDEN LION OF GRANPERE.

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XVI.—Continued.

"But people betrothed are very often not married," said Marie quickly. "There was Annette Lolme at Saint Die. She was betrothed to Jean Stein at Pugnac. That was only last winter. And then there was something wrong about the money; and the betrothal went for nothing, and Father Carrier himself said it was all right. If it was all right for Annette Lolme, it must be all right for me,—as far as betrothing goes."

The story that Marie told so clearly was perfectly true, and M. le Curé Goudin knew that it was true. He wished now to teach Marie that if certain circumstances should occur after a betrothal which should make the marriage inexpedient in the eyes of the parents of the young people, then the authority of the Church would not exert itself to insist on the sacred nature of the pledge;—but that if the pledge was to be called in question simply at the instance of a capricious young woman, then the Church would have full power. His object, in short, was to insist on parental authority, giving to parental authority some little additional strength from his own sacerdotal recognition of the sanctity of the betrothing promise. But he feared that Marie would be too strong for him if not also too clear-headed. "You cannot mean to tell me," said he, "that you think that such a solemn promise as you have given to this young man, taking one from him as solemn in return, is to go for nothing?"

"I am very sorry that I promised,—very sorry indeed; but I cannot keep my promise."

"You are bound to keep it, especially as all your friends wish the marriage, and think that it will be good for you. Annette Lolme's friends wished her not to marry. It is my duty to tell you, Marie, that if you break your faith to M. Urmand, you will commit a very grievous sin, and you will commit it with your eyes open."

"If Annette Lolme might change her mind because her lover had not got as much money as people wanted, I am sure I may change mine because I don't love a man."

"Annette did what her friends advised her"

"Then a girl must always do what her friends tell her? If I don't marry M. Urmand, I shan't be wicked for breaking my promise, but for disobeying Uncle Michel."

"You will be wicked in every way," said the priest.

"No, M. le Curé. If I had married M. Urmand, I know I should be wicked to leave him, and I would do my best to

live with him and make him a good wife. But I have found out in time that I can't love him; and therefore I am sure that I ought not to marry him, and I won't."

There was much more said between them, but M. le Curé Goudin was not able to prevail in the least. He tried to cajole her, and he tried to persuade by threats, and he tried to conquer her by gratitude and affection towards her uncle. But he could not prevail at all.

"It is of no use my staying here any longer, M. le Curé," she said at last, "because I am quite sure that nothing on earth will induce me to consent. I am very sorry for what I have done. If you tell me that I have sinned, I will repent and confess it. I have repented, and am very, very sorry. I know now that I was very wrong ever to think it possible that I could be his wife. But you can't make me think that I am wrong in this."

Then she left him, and as soon as she was gone, Madame Voss returned to hear the priest's report as to his success.

In the meantime, Michel Voss had reached Basle, arriving there some five hours before Marie's letter, and, in his ignorance of the law, had made his futile attempt to intercept the letter before it reached the hands of M. Urmand. But he was with Urmand when the letter was delivered, and endeavoured to persuade his young friend not to open it. But in doing this he was obliged to explain, to a certain extent, what was the nature of the letter. He was obliged to say so much about it as to justify the unhappy lover in asserting that it would be better for them all that he should know the contents. "At any rate, you will promise not to believe it," said Michel. And he did succeed in obtaining from M. Urmand a sort of promise that he would not regard the words of the letter as in truth expressing Marie's real resolution. "Girls, you know, are such queer cattle," said Michel. "They think about all manner of things, and then they don't know what they are thinking."

"But who is the other man?" demanded Adrian, as soon as he had finished the letter. Any one judging from his countenance when he asked the question would have imagined that, in spite of his promise, he believed every word that had been written to him. His face was a picture of blank despair, and his voice was low and hoarse. "You must know whom she means," he added, when Michel did not at once reply.

"Yes; I know whom she means."

"Who is it then, M. Voss?"

"It is George, of course," replied the inn-keeper.

"I did not know," said poor Adrian Urmand.

She never spoke a dozen words to any other man in her life, and as for him, she has hardly seen him for the last eighteen months. He has come over and said something to her, like a traitor,—has reminded her of some childish promise, some old vow, something said when they were children, and meaning nothing; and so he has frightened her."

"I was never told that there was anything between them," said Urmand, beginning to think that it would become him to be indignant.

"There was nothing to tell,—literally nothing."

"They must have been writing to each other."

"Never a line; on my word as a man. It was just as I tell you. When George went from home, there had been some fooling, as I thought, between them; and I was glad that he should go. I didn't think it meant anything, or ever would." As Michel Voss said this, there did occur to him an idea that perhaps, after all, he had been wrong to interfere in the first instance,—that there had then been no really valid reason why George should not have married Marie Bromar; but that did not in the least influence his judgment as to what it might be expedient to do now. He was still as sure as ever that as things stood now, it was his duty to do all in his power to bring about the marriage between his niece and Adrian Urmand. "But since that, there has been nothing," continued he, "absolutely nothing. Ask her and she will tell you so. It is some romantic idea of hers that she ought to stick to her first promise, now that she has been reminded of it."

All this did not convince Adrian Urmand, who for a while expressed his opinion that it would be better for him to take Marie's refusal, and thus to let the matter drop. It would be very bitter to him, because all Basle had now heard of his proposed marriage, and a whole shower of congratulations had already fallen upon him from his fellow townspeople; but he thought that it would be more bitter to be rejected again in person by Marie Bromar, and then to be stared at by all the natives of Granpere. He acknowledged that George Voss was a traitor; and would have been ready to own that Marie was another, had Michel Voss given him any encouragement in that direction. But Michel throughout the whole morning—and they were closeted together for hours,—declared that poor Marie was more sinned against than sinning. If Adrian was but once more over at Granpere, all would be made right. At last Michel Voss prevailed, and persuaded the young man to return with him to the Lion d'Or.

They started early on the following morning, and travelled to Granpere by way of Colmar and the mountain. The father thus passed twice through Colmar, but on neither occasion did he call upon his son.

CHAPTER XVII.

There had been very little said between Michel Voss and Urmand on their journey towards Granpere till they were at the top of the Vosges, on the mountain road, at which place they had to leave their little carriage and bait their horse. Indeed Michel had been asleep during almost the entire time. On the night but one before he had not been in bed at all, having reached Basle after midnight, and having passed the hours 'twixt that and his morning visit to Urmand's house in his futile endeavours to stop poor Marie's letter. And the departure of the travellers from Basle on this morning had been very early, so that the poor innkeeper had been robbed of his proper allowance of natural rest. He had slept soundly in the train to Colmar, and had afterwards slept in the little *caboché* which had taken them to the top of the mountain. Urmand had sat silent by his side,—by no means anxious to disturb his companion, because he had no determined plan ready to communicate. Once or twice before he reached Colmar he had thought that he would go back again. He had been, he felt, badly treated; and, though he was very fond of Marie, it would be better for him perhaps to wash his hands of the whole affair. He was so thinking the whole way to Colmar. But he was afraid of Michel Voss, and when they got out upon the platform there, he had no resolution

ready to be declared as fixed. Then they had hired the little carriage, and Michel Voss had slept again. He had slept all through Munster, and up the steep mountain, and was not thoroughly awake till they were summoned to get out at the wonderfully fine house for refreshments which the late Emperor caused to be built at the top of the hill. Here they went into the restaurant, and as Michel Voss was known to the man who kept it, he ordered a bottle of wine. "What a terrible place to live in all the winter!" he said, as he looked down through the window right into the deep valley below. From the spot on which the house is built you can see all the broken wooded ground of the steep descent, and then the broad plain that stretches away to the valley of the Rhine. "There is nothing but snow here after Christmas," continued Michel, "and perhaps not a Christian over the road for days together. I shouldn't like it, I know. It may be all very well just now."

But Adrian Urmand was altogether inattentive either to the scenery now before him, or to the prospect of the mountain innkeeper's winter life. He knew that two hours and a half would take them down the mountain into Granpere, and that when there it would be at once necessary that he should begin a task the idea of which was by no means pleasant to him. He was quite sure now that he wished he had remained at Basle, and that he had accepted Marie's letter as final. He told himself again and again that he could not make her marry him if she chose to change her mind. What was he to say, and what was he to do when he got to Granpere, a place which he almost wished that he had never seen in spite of those profitable linen-buyings? And now when Michel Voss began to talk to him about the scenery and what this man up in the mountain did in the winter,—at this moment when his terrible trouble was so very near him,—he felt it to be an insult, or at least a cruelty. "What can he do from December till April except smoke and drink?" asked Michel Voss.

"I don't care what he does," said Urmand, turning away. "I only know I wish I'd never come here."

"Take a glass of wine, my friend," said Michel. "The mountain air has made you chill." Urmand took the glass of wine, but it did not cheer him much. "We shall have it all right before the day is over," continued Michel.

"I don't think it will ever be all right," said the other.

"And why not? The fact is, you don't understand young women; as how should you, seeing that you have not had to manage them? You do as I tell you, and just be round with her. You tell her that you don't desire any change yourself, and that after what has passed you can't allow her to think of such a thing. You speak as though you had a downright claim, as you have; and all will come right. It's not that she cares for him, you know. You must remember that. She has never even said a word of that kind. I haven't a doubt on my mind as to which she really likes best; but it's that stupid promise, and the way that George has had of making her believe that she is bound by the first word she ever spoke to a young man. It's only nonsense, and of course we must get over it." Then they were summoned out, the horse having finished his meal, and were rattled down the hill into Granpere without many more words between them.

One other word was spoken, and that word was hardly pleasant in its tone. Urmand at least did not relish it. "I shall go away at once if she doesn't treat me as she ought," said he, just as they were entering the village.

Michel was silent for a moment before he answered. "You'll behave, I'm sure, as a man ought to behave to a young woman whom he intends to make his wife." The words themselves were civil enough; but there was a tone in the innkeeper's voice and a flame in his eye, which made Urmand almost feel that he had been threatened. Then they drove into the space in front of the door of the Lion d'Or.

Michel had made for himself no plan whatsoever. He led the way at once into the house, and Urmand followed, hardly daring to look up into the face of the persons around him. They were both of them soon in the presence of Madame Voss, but Marie Bromar was not there. Marie had been sharp enough to perceive who was coming before they were out of the carriage, and was already ensconced in some safer retreat upstairs, in which she could meditate on her plan of the campaign. "Look lively and get us something to eat," said Michel, meaning to be cheerful and self-possessed. "We left Basle at five and have not eaten a mouthful since." It was now nearly four o'clock, and the bread and cheese which had been served with the wine on the top of the mountain had of course gone for nothing. Madame Voss immediately began to bustle about, calling the cook and Peter Veque to her assistance. But nothing for awhile was said about Marie. Urmand, trying to look as though he were self-possessed, stood with his back to the stove and whistled. For a few minutes, during which the bustling about the table went on, Michel was wrapped in thought and said nothing. At last he had made up his mind, and spoke, "We might as well make a dash at it at once," said he. "Where is Marie?" No one answered him. "Where is Marie Bromar?" he asked again angrily. He knew that it behoved him now to take upon himself at once the real authority of a master of a house.

"She is up stairs," said Peter, who was straightening a table-cloth.

"Tell her to come down to me," said her uncle. Peter departed immediately, and for awhile there was silence in the little room. Adrian Urmand felt his heart to palpitate disagreeably. Indeed the manner in which it would appear that the innkeeper proposed to manage the business was distressing enough to him. It seemed as though it were intended that he should discuss his little difficulties with Marie in the presence of the whole household. But he stood his ground and sounded one more ineffectual little whistle. In a few minutes Peter returned, but said nothing. "Where is Marie Bromar?" again demanded Michel in an angry voice.

"I told her to come down," said Peter.

"Well?"

"I don't think she's coming," said Peter.

"What did she say?"

"Not a word,—she only bade me go down." Then Michel walked into the kitchen as though he were about to fetch the recusant himself. But he stopped himself, and asked his wife to go up to Marie. Madame Voss did go up, and after her return there was some whispering between her and her husband. "She is upset by the excitement of your return," Michel said at last, "and we must give her a little grace. Come;—we will eat our dinner."

(To be continued.)