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Always Mine.

You say the joy that has just come to me
To crown my life with glory and with grace
Will perish, leaving but the agony
Of loss in its dear place.

And that 'twere better to forego the bliss,
And so be spared the loss. I tell you nay :
Because the night is coming must I miss
The brightness of the day ?

But yesterday the flowers and birds were here,
To-day I watch the whirling, drifting snows ;
Nor am I saddened, thinking of the dear
Departed bird and rose.

Give me the gorgeous skies, the sweet perfume
Of flowers, ay, all the royal Summer's charms,
Though I must see her, robbed of all her bloom,
Die in the Winter's arms.

I would not take your little negative
Delights ; I have no petty fear of death ;
Life is not worth the living, if to live
Means just to draw the breath.

No doubt my feet shall tread the valley's ways,
My eyes shall dwell on lesser, lower sights ;
But, ah ! they cannot rob me—those drear days—
Of this day on the heights.

—Lippincott's Mag.

Carlotta Perry.

[Written for THE FAMILY CIRCLE.]

THE LAST REQUEST.

By J. F. L.

CHAPTER II.

As we may well imagine, the question of marriage with a deceased wife's sister was one of too great interest to Robert to permit him to rest long without investigating it. And in deference to the supreme regard of his sister-in-law for the authority of the Bible, as well as his own sense of moral rectitude, he resolved to settle the question of moral principle involved by an appeal to the sacred writ. But this he found not so easy a task as he had anticipated ; not because so much was said upon the question, but because so little could be found bearing directly upon the question. At length, however, he satisfied himself that the little reference made to the question in the Scriptures was rather favorable to his wishes than otherwise, and he not unnaturally came to the conclusion that a question of so much consequence would not have been passed over in silence if the Divine being had intended a prohibition of such marriages ; and he argued with himself that the absence from the Bible, (and

especially from the eighteenth chapter of Leviticus, where a list of unlawful connections is given) of anything prohibitive, constitutes at least a permissive sanction to such alliances.

Having satisfied himself that, so far as the Bible is concerned, there was nothing to warrant a prohibitive enactment preventing marriage with a deceased wife's sister, he next considered the question in its prudential aspects, for, he acknowledged to himself, a thing might not be prohibited by any Scripture, direct or implied, and yet there possibly might be such strong prudential reasons in the interests of society as to warrant interference with individual freedom for the public good. But the more he investigated the matter the more he became convinced that such prudential reasons did not exist. He weighed the arguments, pro and con, which had been advanced in the British House of Commons and in the Canadian Parliament on the question, and while he admitted that in isolated individual cases freedom of action in this matter might lead to unhappy results, yet it would not do so in nearly so many instances as thousands of other matters in which our legislators did not exercise or even admit the right to interfere with the freedom of individual action, and that in view of all the facts involved it was not within the province of human law to interfere with the right of individual choice to contract matrimonial alliance with a deceased wife's sister, and that therefore the law prohibiting such marriages was itself, in the higher sense of moral obligation, *illegal*.

When Robert arrived at this conclusion, he resolved to embrace the first opportunity to ascertain the sentiments of Anna toward himself, and, if favorable, when a suitable time should arrive, to state his views regarding the matrimonial relation and the arguments by which his views were substantiated.

An opportunity soon occurred. It was on Easter Sunday ; the services of the day had been unusually impressive ; the peace and good will which constituted the burden of the discourse, and which rang out in the sweet voices of the choristers and in rich deep tones of the organ, left its impress upon all hearts, and not least upon the heart of Anna, and now after the services and duties of the day had terminated and the children had gone to their snowy couch, she sat with her elbow upon the centre table, and her head resting upon her hand in deep thought. The past, the present, and the future passed like a panoramic view before her ;—the past, with her sister as the central figure, and she saw her as, upon the couch from which she should rise no more, she calmly and peacefully awaited her change, her face radiant with the anticipations of Christian hope and faith and no cloud upon her brow except a slight shade of anxiety, as she asked her the second and last time to be a mother to her children ;—the present, with the two children as the central figure, her heart yearning over them with no less than maternal solicitude. They were her charge, and could she now give them up ; resign them to the chances of failure through possible want of thoughtfulness and care after she had done what she could to guide their young footsteps into the path leading to a noble and honorable manhood, and a grand immortality.