

I, having the best share of looks, was petted and flattered till self-comfort became the chief aim of my existence.

Now that the scales were fallen from my eyes, I turned away, disgusted, from this living picture, discouraged, but not despairing, I would hope, at least, until I no longer had the right.

So came quickly the night of Belle's wedding. That young damsel, somewhat daunted and subdued by the nearness of the approaching ceremony, looked withal very pretty in her costly lace dress. The ceremony over, we all stood stiffly—as must always be at these abominations called "wedding receptions," receiving congratulations, etc. Belle leaned over, interrupting a *l'été-à-tête* with Eleanor, and half-whispered,—

"Fred, here comes your old flame, Estelle Honori—beware!"

She was crossing the room towards us, in her usual stately fashion, with her sweeping, amber-hued satin brightening her rich, dark beauty. After the usual formula to Belle she turned to me.

"You completely ignore me, Mr. Gordon," she said, flashing her brilliant eyes and diamonds on my companion.

I bowed, with some flattery in insincerity, over her small gloved hand, and she passed on, forgotten at once—at least by me.

Later, when Eleanor and I were promenading, she looked up suddenly in my face, and said, without the slightest preamble,—

"She is very beautiful."

"Who?" I asked, at a loss for her meaning.

"Miss Honori," she answered simply.

I looked down at her a little curiously.

"Oh! Estelle, you mean," I replied, carelessly. "Yes, she married for position. She was quite a fancy of mine once, until I learned she was a gambler's daughter."

I was returning a bow while speaking, and when I looked again at my companion, I was fairly startled by the gray pallor of her face.

"Great Heavens!" I cried, thoroughly alarmed. "Eleanor, you are ill!"

We were close to the conservatory, and I led, almost carried her there—then into the garden beyond, where the cold air seemed to revive her.

But she was very quiet and *distracted*, her head resting on her round white arm, her profile clearly defined to my admiring eyes, the very prototype of youthful purity in her white dress.

I could not help it; then and there, to the sound of distant music swelling, and dying on the air, I told her, without useless paraphrase that I loved her, and asked her to become my wife.

She heard me silently, with the long dark lashes veiling her eyes from mine; but the quivering droop of her sensitive mouth, and tumultuously heaving bosom, told the agitation she tried hard to repress. She asked me to give her time for reflection until to-morrow. I could not but acquiesce, though reluctantly. She thanked me, and turned to leave me; she was too unwell to return to the parlor. She had ascended two or three of the conservatory steps when she turned and extended her hand, saying,—

"Good-bye, Frederick."

The unwonted mention of my given name filled me with hope. I clasped her soft hand in a firm, strong pressure.

"Not good-bye, but good-night, Eleanor," I answered. "One word more," I added hastily; "let your answer to-morrow be what it will, remember, I hold you blameless; I have everything to fear, nothing to hope—but I trust my whole future in your hands."

Her lips framed, almost inarticulately,—

"May God bless you!"

In another instant she was gone.

I made my adieu to my new sister—Eleanor was to fill her place at home until their return from the wedding trip—and sauntered homeward—to a restless night, haunted by tumultuous dreams, with a wild longing for the morrow to come and bring the fruition or destruction of my hopes. I reared endless "*Châteaux en Espagne*," in which Eleanor Atherton incited me to labor and industry.

I was in the saddle, and en route for the Wilford mansion full an hour before "propriety" permitted my entering the house, so I turned my horse's head in the direction of the park.

When I finally dismounted and presented my card at the door, the astounding response was,—

"Miss Eleanor left town unexpectedly, this morning, sir. I was to give you this note."

I accepted it in a stunned, mechanical way, and remounted my horse, waiting outside. I had gone aimlessly two or three blocks before I read the few lines; they were simply this:—

"My heart is always yours, dear Frederick, although my hand can never be. I am the daughter of a gambler."

Not knowing or caring what I did, I dug the spurs sharply into the horse's sides. The spirited animal plunged, reared, and flung me upon a pile of stones lying on the road. My left arm was so horribly mutilated that they were obliged eventually to amputate it. My collar bone was dislocated, while a frightful gash across the forehead spoiled my good looks forever. In this dilapidated condition I was conveyed home, delirious.

It was two weeks before I recovered consciousness. I was as weak as an infant, and equally as helpless. The slightest exertion or excitement was prohibited. I could only lie still and brood over the ills to which I had fallen heir.

My mind constantly vacillated between writing to Eleanor and silence; for maimed and disfigured for life as I was, had I a right, or was it generous, to ask her to mate her lovely

eyes with my deformity? But my heart rose

up in arms against my pride. It maddened me to think that I was lying there, a helpless log, while Eleanor—what must she believe? That I had given her up, knowing she was the daughter of a gambler.

I had been a solitary man in the way of friendships; there was not one of whom I could demand as a right his sympathy and assistance. As a "*dernier ressort*," God help me! I determined to confide in my mother—to ask her to write to the woman I loved, and beg her to come to her heart as a daughter.

She heard me through in silence to the end, then answered in her coldest, proudest manner,—

"If you have no pride, you must, at least, excuse me from participating in the disgrace of our name," and swept out of the room.

Ah, well! At last Harry and Belle came home. They knew nothing of my illness until their arrival. I would not let their wedding trip be marred or curtailed by the knowledge of my accident. When Harry went out of the room, awhile, with my mother, I told Belle, in my feeble, disconnected way, all that I have tried to express here. She looked very grave.

"I thought something had happened," she said. "I had a short note from Eleanor while I was away, telling me she was unexpectedly obliged to go home. But one is so happy when married—I haven't found time to answer it yet. But I'll do it to-morrow, Fred, and tell her as much as even you could desire. I forgot the Gordon pride, or I should have told you Eleanor's position. I did not think it necessary, but I was mistaken."

I groaned in very bitterness of self-reproach.

"Now, Fred," continued Belle, in her bright, cheerful way, "take my receipt; get well as fast as possible, and go over to New York to see her. In the meantime, as I said before, I'll write. No more morbid fancies about deformities and such trash. I'm sure if you had lost both your arms, and those obsolete articles, legs, likewise, she would love you quite as much, if not more, than when you had the full prescribed number."

Somehow, Belle's visit did me a wonderful amount of good. The very eagerness with which I obeyed her counsel seemed to retard my recovery. Therefore it was fully two months longer before collar bone readjusted, I was literally "on my legs" again. Very faint and dizzy I felt as I stepped on board the cars, though hope buoyed me up—a very faint hope, however, for Belle's letter had not been answered.

I went at once to the house where Belle had directed me—an elegant brown stone, with couchant lions on either side of the wide steps. I saw at a glance the house was unoccupied. However, I pulled the bell; the gong sounded dismally through the house; but after an instant that seemed an hour, the door opened. I asked for Miss Atherton. The servant replied that she and her father had sailed for Europe a month before. I managed to enquire if she knew their address. She hobbled into the house, and came back shortly with their direction. I copied it—they were in Paris—and went back to my hack. I formed the rapid resolution to follow her to Europe. I might as well employ my time in that way as any other. Belle voted my resolve as highly sensible; indeed, my little sister did everything in her pretty, kind way, to rouse me from my despondency.

In a few days I had made all other arrangements, and went down to the bank to see how my account stood, and to arrange for my journey.

"Been making some pretty heavy draws on us lately, Gordon," said one of the partners, who had known me from a boy. "This betting and gambling is very bad in a young man—let me advise—"

I suppose he would have preached me a homily on the spot, but I interrupted him.

"What in the deuce do you mean?" I demanded, for my drafts had been comparatively light of late.

For answer, he handed me some papers.

"You don't mean to say—" he commenced, as he saw me start violently.

"I don't mean to say anything," I interrupted, hotly, and walked off, my brain in a perfect whirl of rage and passion. For who would dare to attempt the forgery of my signature unless it were my brother Ralph, he whom I had so often attempted to save from ruin, and who now had effectually ruined me? My doubt was confirmed by a note awaiting me at the house; it ran thus:—

"MY DEAR FELLOW,—As you've been so philanthropically engaged in trying to reform me, I know you won't mind my borrowing a few thousand for a year or so. Tell the old lady to be careful of the family honor. In return, I'll look after her diamonds."

RALPH.

I went at once to my mother's dressing room; she was preparing for a dinner party.

"Do you wear your diamonds to-night?" I asked, abruptly.

The question and my presence there were so unusual, that she turned suddenly, with a gesture of surprise, to look at me. She must have seen something strange in my face, for she sank into a chair, and asked, faintly,—

"What is it?"

I handed her the note, and the dreadful truth flashed upon her. There came into my mother's face a look of real sorrow, as she held out her hands to me and sobbed,—

"My poor son!"

I went to her, and took her in my arms; from

that hour we were as mother and son should be.

But it was a hard, bitter time. My dream of future happiness, with Eleanor Atherton as my wife, was vanished. Even should I seek and find her, I had nothing to offer her acceptance, and honor forbade my binding her, for years, perhaps, to an engagement with an almost penniless man. For my mother's sake, and my own as well, I let Ralph and the money go. It would only have wasted time and substance to have sought him in person—to detectives I would not trust it. So I gave it all up, and settled down to the plodding life of a young lawyer.

Thus ten years had passed, and I, toiling onward on my self-marked path, had risen to eminence and fortune. But the impetus to my exertions was long since gone. Eleanor Atherton was married. I never forgot her. In time and absence the bitterness of my regret wore off—but I never could or did marry.

My mother, a gray haired woman now, looked at me with wistful eyes, sitting in my silent study, night after night. At length, noticing her drooping figure, and pale, sad face, I took myself to task for leading her such a solitary life, and mentally resolved, for her sake, to make some concessions to gaiety.

That very evening Belle came to me, her eyes shining like illuminated windows.

"I want you to come to my re-union. Thursday night, with your mother," she commenced, breathlessly. "Will you promise?"

And to that lady's no small astonishment, and evident satisfaction, I consented without the slightest demur.

"That's a dear good fellow," she said, with patronizing approval, and being, as she termed it, in "frantic haste," she vanished like a sunbeam out of my dusty office.

When we entered Belle's well-lighted saloons, next evening, I quietly ensconced myself in the shade of some ample skirted votary of fashion, and glanced carelessly around. What was it that made me start and then bend forward eagerly? Was that full, voluptuous figure, robed in shining satin and delicate lace, the form of Eleanor Atherton? With fiercely beating heart, and with all my long dormant love fully awakened, I scrutinized each feature. She was standing beneath the blaze of a chandelier, her brightly gleaming hair, and jewels reflected from it, almost statuesque in her proud composure as she listened to the endless batteries of half a dozen scented coxcombs of fashion. By some magnetic impulse her eyes met mine. The same instant she recognized me, and I came forward. She started, and—ah! I saw it—she pitted me. That maddened me, I merely touched her extended hand, murmured some commonplace incoherency, and quitted her for my mother's side.

At length Belle came floating toward me, a wonderfully pretty vision in sea-green.

"You lazy fellow!" she apostrophized. "You need not think to dream away your evening thus—I wish to speak with you."

Forthwith we sauntered out into the hall.

"Did I not surprise you nicely? Have you spoken to Eleanor yet?"

At which I answered "Yes," so shortly, that Belle pursed up her pretty mouth, vented, laconically, an "Oh!" which spoke volumes.

"She never received the letter I wrote her while you were sick, Frederick," said Belle, after a moment's silent pacing up and down the hall.

"Her father made her very unhappy, and forced her to break off her correspondence with me. She married, at last, to please him, a man old enough to be her father, and between them, she was perfectly wretched. They both died of malarious fever at Rome, two years ago; she was very ill a long time herself; as soon as she recovered, and her business affairs were in such order that she could leave, she left France, to come to me. Frederick, do you love her still?"

"Belle," I answered, bitterly, "it cannot matter to Madame La Comtesse D'Arville whether Frederick Gordon loves her or not."

While my sister had been talking, I was watching Eleanor with a fierce pain, jealousy and despair tearing at my heart-strings. Beautiful, prosperous and rich, with the whole fashionable world fallen gladly at her feet, so grandly, coldly lovely.

A month passed, and for all Belle's many diplomatic manoeuvres, we were still estranged and reserved.

I think my solitary life had made me morbid. Certain it was that in Eleanor's presence I was always cold, distant and reserved. It was the only barrier I could rear between my passionate love and her. It grew to be such a fierce struggle between pride and passion, that I determined to go away until I conquered myself. I made all my preparations in silence, until, at last, it only remained for me to say farewell.

She came into the parlor to see me, looking almost as she did when I first knew her in her simple blue gown; but she was quiet and *distracted*, while I was even more cold and formal than usual. In ten minutes, I found I had reached the limit of my endurance; I rose to go, and clasped her soft, warm hand in a close pressure. I felt my face contort with the pain I could not repress. Her hand turned cold in mine, and she shuddered. I fairly sickened with the thought that I was repulsive to her. I turned abruptly, and advanced a few steps to the door, but I was not so strong as I used to be. My brain reeled—I lost consciousness for an instant, and fell heavily. Then, in a sort of delicious trance, I became sensible of warm, quick, passionate kisses upon my head and lips.

When I opened my eyes, my head was upon her bosom. Our eyes met and lingered lovingly while the sweet pink flush stole softly into her

white cheeks. I put my one poor arm about her neck, and drew her lips to mine.

Oh, perfect happiness! She loved me. Shall I ever forget the halcyon happiness of that soft spring day, when, with her bright, upturned face upon my shoulder, and my arm about her waist, she told me the story of her sad young life? But what need of its relation here? For she lay upon my heart—my own—my love—mine, mine at last!

THE TALLEST BRIDGE IN THE WORLD.

The highest bridge in the world is said by *Van Nostrand's Magazine* to be the Verrugas viaduct, on the Lima and Oroya Railroad, in the Andes of Peru. The viaduct crosses a mountain torrent, called the Agua de Verrugas, in a wild and picturesque locality, 12,000 feet above the level of the sea. The structure consists of four deck spans of the Fink type of truss, three of which are 110 feet long, and one, the central span, 125 feet long. The spans rest on piers built of wrought-iron columns. The piers are 50 feet long by 15 feet wide on the top. There being three piers, the total length of the viaduct is 575 feet. The piers are the principal features of interest, and are respectively 145 feet, 252 feet, and 187 feet high. Each pier consists of twelve legs, which in plan form a rectangle. The legs are composed of a series of wrought-iron six-segment columns, in lengths of 25 feet, connections being made by cast-iron joint boxes, having tenons on each end running into the column. The tenons and the face of casting against which the column bears are machine-dressed, so as to obtain an accurate fit and perfect bearing surface. The columns have an exterior diameter of 12 inches, and a diameter, including flanges, of 16 inches. Compared with other works of a similar type, such as the Crumlin viaduct, which has hitherto borne off the palm, it is far ahead, both in magnitude and perfection of details.

SUMMER DRINKS.

The general want in summer of some refreshing drink is widely known by the return to the shop windows of the ice-cream advertisements—and here let it be remarked that no more injurious custom obtains than that of eating or drinking iced preparations; the sudden check to the stomach has on more than one occasion caused death. Thirst is commonly caused by the loss of fluid from the blood through the pores of the skin; therefore a certain amount of water is required to counterbalance such loss; and this requires to be piquant and palatable, for, owing to the enervating influence of warm weather, the mouth becomes constantly dry. The fluids which best quench thirst are, first, hot tea, which, if sipped, slightly inflames or stimulates the mouth, and causes a constant flow of saliva; secondly, aerated waters, which are very refreshing, but they lack an important element—cheapness; thirdly, very good ginger beer and ginger ale. Another pleasing drink is made by adding to a tumbler of water two teaspoonfuls of lemon syrup. The last may be made as follows: Obtain two and a half ounces of citric acid and two scruples of essence of lemon; boil four pounds of loaf sugar in a quart of water, skim it carefully, and add the acid and essence. This will keep for any length of time in well-corked bottles. Ordinary beer, spirits, &c., do not quench the thirst effectually, the first, savored with salt, really tends to increase it, while spirits, by inflaming the coats of the stomach, increase the want; weak wine and water is a refreshing draught, but is not required except in enfeebled systems. In large ironworks and other factories where the men are exposed to great heat, oatmeal is mixed with water and drunk with great benefit; we fear it would not recommend itself, however, to a fanciful palate. For children toast and water is very wholesome. Toast slowly a thin piece of bread till extremely brown and hard, but not the least black, then plunge it into a jug of cold water and cover it over an hour before use. The water should be of a fine brown color before drinking.

I HAVE told the following to so many people, all of whom found it new, that it may be so to half the world. Colonel M., of the —th, war, twenty years ago, the best billiard player in the British army; and, walking into a billiard room in the Quadrant, met there an American, who was knocking about the balls. "Sir," said he, "I like your style of play," in rather a patronizing tone. "Wal," said the Transatlantic, in an off-hand way, "you are not the first man who has said that." "Suppose," said the colonel, "we play a game together, what points shall I give you?" "Guess I'll play you for anything you like, without the points." "Sir," said the colonel, rather taken aback, "perhaps you are not aware that my name is M." (expecting an immediate acceptance of any number of points). "M. presents no idea to me," said the stranger. "Very good, sir," said the colonel, with a pitying smile, "then I will play you even." And before ten strokes he found, to his utter astonishment, that he had, for the first time for many years, got more than his own match. After easily administering a most hollow defeat, the American turned to the colonel, and said, "You had the goodness, sir, to tell me that your name was M.; which, I said, presented no idea to me. Mine is Jonathan Kentfield; which, I guess, will present some idea to you."