

dan and questionable an attachment. You are rich, fashionable, and with influence; I am the last of a line proscribed ever since Culloden. Your place is the gay world, where you will be surrounded by troops of friends; mine is in the humble cabin where a few poor dependents have been my only companions ever since my father's fall. If you really love me, you will return at the end of the year; and if you forget me,"—her lips quivered, but she went on,—“if you forget me, I shall live here, with the heather and murr-cock as I have lived before.”

Her lover was therefore compelled to submit. But think you he honoured or admired her less for her resolution? No, he worshipped her the more for it. There was a proud independence in her banishment of him which became, he said to himself, the daughter of chieftains who had fought at Bannockburn and Flodden Field, and sacrificed their all at Culloden.

Two weeks from that time Donald and his friend left the Highland cabin, and Helen was alone. Never before had she known what it was to be really alone. She continually missed the presence of that manly form, the light of that manly eye, the deep tones of that manly voice. She never knew how much she loved till her lover was away.

But even a year will pass, and just a twelvemonth from Donald's departure Helen sat at the spring side, which she had named for the trysting spot if her lover proved faithful. She had been there already for many hours, watching with an eager timid heart, half trembling at her own folly in expecting him, half angry with herself for her doubts; but now, as the gloaming came on, yet no Donald appeared, her bosom swelled nigh to bursting. She rose frequently, and looked up the bridle path, but nobody was in sight. At last the stars began to come out; the wind grew chill; and with an almost broken heart she rose to return to the cabin. Her tears were falling fast.

“I might have known this,” she said sadly. “Do not all my books tell me the same? Ever the old story of trusting woman and deceiving man.”

At this instant an arm was thrown around her waist, and a well-remembered voice whispered in her ear—“Now, Helen dear, one of your cruel sex, at least, is falsified. I thought to steal on you unawares and surprise you; and so went round by the cottage to leave my horse there. Had you looked behind instead of before you, you would have frustrated my little scheme by seeing me coming up the gloaming.”

What could she say? She had nothing, but burying her face on his shoulder, wept glad tears.

“I have waited a whole year impatiently for this day,” said he; “thank Heaven, I find you true at last.”

A month from that time Sir Donald Alayne introduced his bride to his ample domains in England; and never had a fairer wife entered the splendid halls of his ancestors.

In the great gallery of the castle is a picture of a young Scottish girl, with a half-pensive face, sitting by a mountain spring; and the old housekeeper, as she goes the rounds with visitors, pauses before the portrait to say, “That is the likeness of the last Lady Alayne; and lovely she was, and as good as lovely. By her husband, the late baronet, she was always called the Lily of the Valley. Why, I have never heard.”

But you have, reader; and if you should ever visit Alayne Castle, you will have no need to be told the tale again. J. U. D.

‘Merry Christmas’—Happy Christmas!

How it flew from one laughing lip to another!—trembling on the tongue of decrepitude; hushed by prattling infancy, and falling like a meteoric knell on the ear of the grief-stricken!

Little busy feet were running to and fro, trumpeting the fame of “good Santa Claus.” The pretty blue-eyed maiden blushed, as she placed her Christmas gift on the betrothal finger. Yes, it might have been ten times colder than it was, and nobody would have known it, everybody's heart was so warm.

See that great house opposite! How bright the fire-light falls on those rare old pictures; on marble and damask and gold and silver! Now they are decking a Christmas tree. Never a diamond sparkle brighter than those children's eyes. ‘Tis all sunshine at the great house.

Kathleen sits at her low narrow window. She sees it all. There are no pictures on her walls; though she has known the time when they were decked with the rarest. There is nothing there now that the eye would look twice upon, save the fair sad face of its inmate. But it is not of gilded splendour she is thinking.

Last Christmas the wealth of a noble heart was laid at her feet. Now she is written “widow!” How brief a word to express such a far-reaching sorrow! Walter and she were so happy! “Only one voyage more, dear Kate, and then I will turn landsman, and stay with you on shore!” And so Kathleen clung, weeping, to his neck, and bade him a silent farewell. And since!

Oh, how wearily pass Time's leaden footsteps to the watchful eye and the listening ear of love! “Her eyes were with her heart, and that was far away.”

Day after day crept on. Then came at last these crushing words—“All on board perished!”

With that short sentence the light of hope died out in her heart, and the green earth became one wide sepulchre. The blight fell early on so fair a flower. There were many who would gladly have lit again the love-light in those soft blue eyes; but from all Kathleen turned heart-sick away to her little lonely room, to toil and dream, and weep, and pray.

And now the twilight has faded away, and the holy stars, one by one, have come stealing out to witness her sorrow. There she sits, with a filling eye and an aching heart, and watches the merry group yonder. Life is so bright to them; so weary to her, without that dear arm to lean upon. Could she but have pillowed that dying head; heard him say but once more, “I love you, Kathleen!” But that despairing struggle with those dark, billowy waves; that shriek for “help,” where no help could come; that strong arm and brave heart so stricken down! Poor Kathleen!

Blessed sleep! touch those sad eyes lightly. Torture not that troubled heart with mocking dreams. See, she smiles!—a warm flush creeps to her cheek and dries away the tear. Sleep has restored the dear one to her. Dream on while you may, sweet Kathleen!

“That is the house, sir. God bless me, that you should be alive! That one, sir, with the small windows. No light there. Find the way sir?”

Tap, tap on the window! Kathleen wakes from that sweet dream to listen.—She does not tremble; for grief like hers knows neither hope nor fear. She is soon apparelled, and shading the small lamp

with her little hand, advances to the door. The flickering ray falls upon the stalwart form before her. What is there in its outline to pale her tongue and blanch her cheek? This torturing suspense! If no stranger would but speak!

“Kathleen!”

With one wild cry of joy she fell upon his neck.

Ah, little Kate! Dreams are not always mockery. A “Merry Christmas” to you! FANNY FRAS.

THE BUILDERS OF THE WORLD.—Amongst the objects which crowd the ocean is the family of minute plants called Diatomaceae. The pieces or joints of which these plants are composed, are called frustules; and each frustule consists of a single cell, whose coat is composed of a very delicate membrane made of organised silica. That these plants have thus the power of withdrawing silica, or flint earth, in some manner from the waters of the sea, and fixing it in their tissues, is certain; but the exact method in which this is effected has not been ascertained. A remarkable point in their history results from this power of feeding on flint. It is this; their bodies are not destructible. Thus, their constantly accumulating remains are gradually deposited in strata, under the waters of the sea as well as in lakes and ponds. At first the effect produced by things so small—thousands of which might be contained in a drop, and millions picked together in a cubic inch, may appear of trifling moment, when speaking of so grand an operation, as the deposition of submarine strata. But as each moment has its value in the measurement of time, to whatever extent of ages the succession may be prolonged, so each of these atoms has a definite relation to space, and their constant production and deposition will at length result in mountains. The examination of the most ancient of the stratified rocks and of all others in the ascending scale, and the investigation of deposits now in course of formation, teach us that from the first dawn of animated nature up to the present hour this prolific family has never ceased its activity. England may boast that the sun never sets upon her empire, but here is an ocean realm whose subjects are more numerous than the sands of the sea. We cannot count them by millions simply, but by hundreds of thousands of millions. Indeed, it is futile to speak of numbers in relation to things so uncountable. Extensive rocky strata, chains of hills, beds of marl, almost every description of soil, whether superficial or raised from a great depth, contain the remains of this little plant in greater or less abundance. Some great tracts of country are literally built up of their skeletons. No country is destitute of such monuments, and in some they constitute the leading features of the soil. The world is a vast catacomb of Diatomaceae; nor is the growth of these old dyablers on our earth diminished in its later days.”—*The Sea Side Book*, by Dr. Harvey.

A New York paper announcing the wrecking of a vessel near the Narrows, says:—The only passengers were T. H. Nathan, who owned three-fourths of the cargo and the captain's wife.

The Empress Eugenie, of France, declares that no State Balls shall take place, and no unnecessary expences shall be incurred by the Emperor's household, until the taking of Sebastopol is “*un fait accompli*.”

Punch says the reason why Editors are so apt to have their manners spoiled, is because they receive such a vast number of civil communications.