

THE BALLAD OF THE HOPELESS MAN.

(Translated from the French of Henri Murger.)

"Who knocks for entrance at this hour?"
 "Open!" "Who art thou first?" "Tis I."
 Thy name. I cannot open the door
 At midnight to a stranger's cry.

"Thy name?" "Oh! let me in thy room—
 The snow falls fast—it blinds my sight!"
 "Thy name?" "A corpse within the tomb
 Is not more cold than I to-night."

"For I have wandered all the day
 From north to south, from east to west;
 Oh! let the wanderer in, I pray,
 One moment by thy fire to rest!"

"Not yet! Who art thou?" "I am Fame—
 To immortality I lead."
 Hence mocking shade, delusive name!
 Thy faithless voice I dare not heed."

"Oh! hear me; I am Love and Youth,
 Akin to Heaven." "Pass on thy way.
 My mistress failed me in her truth—
 Love, Youth for me both died that day!"

"Hush! I am Poesy and Art,
 Prescribed by man. Quick, open." "No—
 I go!" "All music from my heart
 Died out with love, long years ago."

"But I am Wealth; thou ne'er shalt lack
 Vast treasures of victorious gold.
 And I can lure thy mistress back—
 Alas! but not our love of old."

"Unbar thy dwelling! I am Power,
 And I can throne thee as a king."
 "In vain—the friends that are no more
 Back to those arms thou canst not bring."

"Then hearken! If for him alone
 Who tells his name, thy doors unclose
 Learn that my name is Death. I own
 A balm that cures all earthly woes."

"Hark! at my girdle clank the keys
 Of gloomy vaults, where sleep the dead;
 Then, too, shalt slumber at thine ease
 And I will guard thy dreamless bed."

"Come, then, thou stranger, pale and thin,
 Scorn not my garret's naked floor;
 My hearth is cold, but enter in—
 I welcome thee—I can no more."

"Hope's self my bosom cannot thrill,
 And I am weary of life's cheat;
 Had but my courage matched my will,
 My heart long since had ceased to beat."

"Come, sup with me, and sleep; and when
 Thy reckoning thou shalt seek to pay
 At morn—O, gentle Angel, then,
 Far bear me in thine arms away."

"Long for thy coming I have pined,
 And I with joy will be thy mate;
 But leave, Oh! leave my dog behind,
 For—so—one friend shall mourn my fate!"

Montreal.

GEO. MURRAY.

ELEANOUR: A TALE OF NON-PERFORMERS.

At five o'clock only, they were hunted out, the precious document being then well out of sight; and no one thought of asking how their afternoon had been spent. Anthony said it was time to go home, but did not go; and finally they stayed till it was dusk; and could hardly then be got away.

"But nothing has come of it," sighed Cecil, giving up at length the ghost of hope. She had watched, and hinted, and kept away when not wanted, and stepped forward when the breach needed filling up, and done everything that fond and valorous champion could do to bring about an understanding,—but with no result. Nothing, she was fain to confess, had come of it; and nothing was likely to come of it.

The provoking part was, that the persons chiefly concerned seemed one and all most excellently satisfied; even Eleanour, her own dear sensible Eleanour, who might have been reckoned on to see the pity of it,—even she let fall not a syllable of dejection.

It had been Cecil's original scheme, certainly; but Eleanour had pledged her participation in it by that smile, and now a look of sympathy would not have been amiss. For it, however, she watched in vain.

On the charade night, the night on which Oliver in all his glory was bustling from one to another—directing, advising, rehearsing, and dragging—Anthony was both blind and stupid. Absent, too; he could not be brought to see any beauty in the show, or any merit in the speeches. Mary and Honoria Stuart, who preferred tableaux, and who suggested that since Mr. Delamere disliked acting he might perhaps be induced to take one of a picture group, met with a cold rebuff. A rule could not have been more stubborn until they got Eleanour to ask him as a favor; and then he obeyed, but was so evidently out of temper, that they wished he had been let alone.

The whole came to a speedy end, and dancing took its place. "Neither would he dance; but that had been understood before; it surprised no one when he was missed from the room, to find him out upon the terrace, with a dark slender figure by his side.

But why did Eleanour stand so long at her little window that night, listening to the chatter of sea-birds, and watching the solemn flowing in of the dark tide below? Why did she sob and sigh, and wring her hands, as though her heart would break; and throw from her, and anon catch to her bosom, a spray of starry jessamine, such as might have hung from the boughs on the terrace beneath? It cannot be that Anthony

had anything to do with it? It is true that he sought her there, and that his first words stabbed her to the heart, and his second drove the breath from her lips. It is true that she turned from him, answering she knew not what, conscious only of one wild desire to fly and never see his face again.

They have been much together of late; but if they do talk, talk by the hour, whilst the others are frolicking, surely it is only because sheer inability to join in all that goes on excludes them from the circle?

The others left them behind,—he because he had never learned, she because she had renounced their amusements; they cannot possibly now take part in them. And so he found his way to her. He does not now allow her to pursue her studies uninterrupted, but prates and prosers all the time; and has so much to say, and says it so well, that Alexander would stare if he could see. Oliver, even if he so desired, is in far too great request for him to obtain leave to retire into the shade. He trims the flower-glasses if there is nothing else for him to do; his accomplishments are so varied and so numerous, that nothing comes amiss to him.

On the whole, regarded as a month of pleasure, as a visit taken merely *pour passer le temps*, the brothers' stay has gone off well enough for all concerned, although from the fortnight which had first been named for its duration, it has lengthened out to double the time. Alexander does not complain; he is philosopher enough to feel that he does not even care much about it; that he is indifferent as to whether they go or stay, by this time. When at last a day is definitely fixed, he is able to say heartily, "Are you really obliged to go?"

And since they were, at least Oliver was, and insisted on carrying Anthony off with him,—more could yet be added, "Next time I hope you will have better luck!"

For the sport, as we have said, was bad, early rains having spoilt the hatching season; and, perhaps, to this cause may be attributed the young men being seen so frequently in the Castle shrubbery. Be that as it might, they bore the deprivation bravely; and so high did they stand at last in their brother-in-law's good graces, that he was fain to confess to himself that he would not, after all, have objected to seeing one of his pretty sisters mistress of Blatchworth,—now that there appeared no chance of such a thing's coming to pass.

It is just possible that he was a little nettled to find it was out of the question. He was not very anxious to have Mary and Honoria Stuart over for the charades, thinking the charades could have got on very well without them. But it was so near the end of the brother's visit—there being indeed but one other night of it—that he did not say much. The charades and the dancing took place, and we know what happened.

On the next morning, Cecil made one final attempt.

"Dear Anthony, I am so sorry you are going."
 "Well, you see, Cis," slowly, "we can't stay here for ever."

"But why need you both go at once? Why should not Oliver go, if he has to go, and you stay a little longer by yourself?"

"Noll wants me to know his fellows; and perhaps it's—just as well," said Anthony, the latter part of the sentence having a meaning known only to himself.

"Are you going with him to the regiment?"

"I'll stop a few days with him, and then go on to Blatchworth, and settle down."

"Oh, Anthony, I wish it were settling down! Why don't you really mean what you say? Settle down, altogether, and—and marry, you know!"

"I'm a non-performer, as usual, eh?"

"You never do anything like other people. You and Eleanour—What! What did you say?"

"Nothing. Do you see that mountain-side over there, that wood with the open height above it? It was on just such a stony bit of rising ground that I killed my first bear in the Nilgherries. He got to the crest of the ridge—it was as like that knoll there as possible—before I got my first shot at him. He turned and dashed into the wood again, grinding his jaws like a devil; and I made off to the left, had him again five minutes after, and bowled him over as dead as a ninepin."

"I daresay you did. But I do wish, Anthony, that you would listen to me for a minute. You never can sit down quietly, and have a nice comfortable chat about people we know, and things we are interested in. You always fly off to such odd, out-of-the-way subjects."

"Choose your own subject, then."

"I want to know what you think of my sisters-in-law?"

"Charming."

"What, all?"

"Yes, all."

"Well, but individually? We will allow that as a whole they are charming—at least I think so, though they are Alexander's sisters, and people said we would be sure to quarrel. But we never do quarrel; and I think they are as fond of me as I am of them."

"Creditable to you both."

"And now I want to hear what you think of each? Many people consider Kate the flower of the flock, but by candlelight I don't myself think she is equal to Julia. Do you?"

"Well, I don't know; perhaps not."

"The young ones are very engaging, too."

"Oh, very."

"I know you like Eleanour."

"Eleanour?" He looked absently the other way.

"I said, I knew that you liked Eleanour."

"I wish," thought he, "that I could be as sure that Eleanour liked me."

The subject passed off, and he was not betrayed. He had to combat a few pensive complaints that they should leave her to go out with the fishermen on this their last evening; that considering neither one nor other had any reason—any fair, excellent, orthodox reason—for so doing, they should prefer to spend it in the company of the sisters, who had promised to be of the party, rather than with her.

She could not go, could not leave her little boys, since the nurse was away having a holiday; and it was a little hard to be left behind.

Why should not the girls have come over there, and they could have had tea out of doors, and a game, and a stroll along the shore afterwards for such as could go? Thus she could have enjoyed their company, and yet have been at her post; combined duty and pleasure.

Of course she wanted them to please themselves, would not for worlds have tethered them to her side against their will; but considering that they had been at the Castle every day and all day long of late, it was really hardly necessary that they should be there to the last. So very late, too. They would not be home till after midnight; and Alexander had a cold, as it was.

Alexander, however, protested against his cold being taken into account. It was the merest nothing; he had promised his sisters; it was a lovely evening, and Cecil must remember that it was not often her brothers had the chance of seeing nets drawn on a Highland loch.

He was quite cheery and genial on the subject; he was in excellent humour and spirits, reflecting that the next day he would have his house to himself; that the dreaded episode would have receded into the past; and that he had not failed in any part of his duty either as a relation or a host. The brothers had, indeed, drained his cup of hospitality to the full, and it was not probable that he would be soon called upon to fill another. Oliver but seldom obtained leave, and Anthony was not likely to come without him. For another year, at all events, he was safe.

He bustled about, making arrangements for the expedition; ordered dinner to be a full hour earlier than usual; provided coats and mufflers for every body; and even recollected to take over some extra rugs for his sisters' feet. He was into the dogcart with a schoolboy's "whoop-oop" before Cecil could catch hold of him for a whispered caution.

"Alexander, just one word; see that Eleanour goes. She ought to be in one boat, and you in the other."

"Playing propriety, eh? I'll see to it."

But either he forgot, or he did not find seeing to it so easy as he expected. Three boats instead of two had been provided, by whom it did not appear; and in the confusion the party got wrong somehow, three of the girls going off with Oliver, who was the dangerous man, leaving only Julia for her brother to look after, since Eleanour arrived late, and was hurried by her cavalier into the last boat, alone with him and the fishermen.

Her going was thus of no good to any one, Cecil would have said; and she might just as well have been left at home, as she had begged to be.

She had tried to excuse herself, had shown several good reasons why she was not needed; but Alexander had remembered at least one part of his programme, and had backed his sisters in their demand for her presence.

Anthony had said nothing—watching warily in the background; but when, overruled at last, the lady came down equipped, she found Mr. Delamere alone waiting for her.

He was not ill-satisfied. With three boats he felt he could manage, even though not present personally at the embarkation; the two other crews moving off ere they reached the spot, was just what he expected to see.

It was a warm, still night; a fine night for a haul, the fishermen said; they did not know that they had had a better night that season.

Having predicted so much, and made all snug within and without, they took to their oars in modest silence; prepared only to speak when spoken to; and sufficiently occupied by the business in hand, to prevent their giving attention to anything unconnected with it. Half an hour's pull brought all the party to the spot where the nets were stretched; and here the boats fell apart, not to interfere with one another.

They were now on the other side of the bay; in the black vast shadow of the overhanging cliffs which towered along the shore; and the phosphorus which flashed from their oars was the only light obtained, since there was no moon, and a veiled sky.

But beneath the sombre water was a wondrous world of living creatures. Like tongues of flame the supple fish darted hither and thither; now making all the surface glow, now vanishing in the depths; while in the darkness left, a silvery lamp would come floating by—luminous, iridescent, beautiful. Only a jelly-fish permeated with phosphorus; and the shining web which flung its stars of splendour through the water, was only a common fisherman's net; and the two dimly outlined figures, sitting side by side, so motionless, thrilled each with the presence of the other, were only a man and woman, lifted for the moment into Paradise.

"If I could make you happy," whispered Eleanour at last.

"You made me very unhappy last night," came Anthony's deep murmur back.

"I did not mean—I did not know. I was so startled, so shocked."

"Shocked, Eleanour? Why?"

"I had never, never thought of it; and all this time I have been—Oh, what must you have thought of me?"

"Thought of you?" said Anthony, softly. "If you ask what I have really thought of you—It was not that she meant, of course; but if he chose to take it so, how was she to prevent him? "Shall I tell you what I have thought of you? That you were the best, the sweetest, the most unselfish sister; the kindest, gentlest daughter; the dearest friend—"

"The air grows cold," said Anthony, after awhile; "let me draw the plaid closer; you must not catch a chill."

All at once his tone takes the tender authority so exquisite to a woman's ear in the voice of the man she loves. "I am going to take charge of you now," continues he. "You are mine, say what you will, after this. Take your hand out of the water, Eleanour."

How different was the care with which he guarded her footsteps up over the slippery tangle, to that which he had escorted her down! Then it had been with a half-resolute, half-doubtful hand,—fearful lest he should give offence, yet bent on holding such position as he had; then, too, he had hurried along 'twixt ardour and trepidation to his fate: now, all was softness, tenderness, lingering.

Shrouded by the kindly dusk he drew her gently forward, one arm supporting while the other led; and ere they quitted the treacherous pathway, more than a promise had been drawn from her lips. The flare of a lamp through the open hall door, revealed to the laggards that all the rest of the party were there before them. They had only just been missed. Alexander was in the act of saying, "Why, I thought they had come up some time ago," when they appeared, to put a stop to all surmises.

"And I think, we had a rare good night's sport," continued the host, having ascertained that all had gone well. "What do you say, Anthony? The best we have had since you came, eh?"

"Incomparably the best."

"Two hundred and thirteen head among us. By no means bad, that."

"Bad? It was excellent, first-rate. I have never enjoyed an evening more."

"Well, then, to supper," said Alexander, sitting down with freshened colour and hearty appetite. "I like these jolly suppers afterwards; they are half the fun."

"So they are, upon my word."

"But you, Mr. Delamere, take your enjoyment sadly, as they say Englishmen always do," put in Miss Dot, saucily. "Your poor boatman must have found it rather *triste* with only you and Eleanour. We had such funny sayings from our two, Hector and Tom,—but we never heard a sound from your quarter."

"Did you not? That was strange. We heard plenty of sounds from yours."

"I daresay; we were laughing all the time. But you—did either of you ever laugh?"

"Only once. I told your sister to take her hand out of the water for fear of cold, and she laughed at me!"

Dot stared.

"And I will laugh, or at least smile," continued the speaker, boldly, "if you will do me the great favour of taking his chair, instead of the one you are behind? I have a fancy to sit there to-night."

He wanted to be beside his Eleanour; to be where he could watch over her; exchange a word or look now and then. He was not going to heed the astonishment of the one sister, nor the blush on the other's cheek. They might all see now, if they chose; they had been blind enough before.

And blind they continued to be to the last.

If the marble statue in the hall had suddenly descended from its perch and come amongst them all, they could scarcely have been more amazed and incredulous than when it was made known in what way had Eleanour stepped down from her pedestal. Eleanour!

And Anthony, whom they had passed by and overlooked, and yet regarded with a certain amount of awe, as one who had neither part nor lot in their nonsense, and petty flirtations, and mock love-making,—Anthony to cheat them thus!

Outwitted as he had been, in company with all the rest, Alexander was nevertheless the first to recover; and to do him justice, he was honestly able to exclaim as soon as he could speak, "I never was better pleased in my life."

"But do tell me *how* it was," pleaded Cecil, next day,—for of course Oliver had no companion at his early start; "dear Anthony, I want so very much to know."

"I am sure, then, my dear Cis, I can't tell you. I was as much surprised as any one, when I first made the discovery. Somehow it grew upon me. She was not always flying away with the rest; crazed about singing, and dancing, and fooling; I had time to draw a breath and get to know what Eleanour was like; to find out what was *in* her; and to—well, to get a look into her eyes now and then. And they are beauties! Such fire, and yet such softness! When I read to her—I am reading to her some things I am interested in, just now—I watch the effect, and feel my way by them. Poor child! She had no notion what I was about. She was so grand and so frigid at first,—so patronising, that it was really delightful. You have no idea