

LOOKING BACK.

I sat by the side of the river to-night,
And gaze at the moon as it beams;
My soul is enchanted by its soft silver light,
And my heart is deep buried in dreams.

It is long since I married my husband and lord,
And twice since that terrible day,
I have brought him fair children whom I have adored
With a love that can never decay.

But tho' he's my husband, and tho' I should love
As the ivy clings fast to the tree,
Still my thoughts are away with the spirits above
With one who is dearer to me.

I sigh for the power to recall for a day
The lost time that can never come back;
To enjoy what has hastened for ever away,
And is lost on Time's measureless track.

I long for a voice that for ever is hushed,
Tho' the words might be bitter with pain;
And to-night o'er my brain all the memories have rushed
Of a love that is silent and vain.

If tears could recall all my folly and pride,
Or if prayers could awaken the dead,
He would sit at this moment down here by my side,
For the tears are sincere I have shed.

I remember he stood the last time that we met
By the foot of yon stately old oak,
And I never can think but with thoughts of regret,
Of the words of derision I spoke.

I remember him standing and kissing the place
Where our names had been carved on the tree,
Whilst he looked with a passionate love in my face
And whispered his feelings to me.

I can feel even now the firm clasp on my wrist,
And the kisses he gave with delight,
But now they are shrouded for ever in mist
That is black, and as dreary as night.

I remember the kiss that I gave in return
As I swore I would ever be true,
Tho' the lie made me quiver, and tremble, and burn,
As his ring from his finger he drew.

I remember the day that I went to be wed,
Still distinctly the picture I see;
And I started to hear up the aisle come the tread
Of my first love, my old love, to me.

Not a word did he utter, but I saw that his cheek
Was as pale as the whiteness of death;
His heart was too full to allow him to speak
And he winced as he struggled for breath.

Then I saw when too late, when the end was so nigh,
All the falsehood I'd sworn in his way,
And I cannot forget the despair of his eye
When he lost me for ever that day.

But down at the oak where so often I sang
With his strong arm supporting my head,
A sharp pistol shot through the still air rang
And the man that I loved was dead.

Oh! mother of God look down and see
The tears I weep on my bridal bed,
Judge me to-night by this old oak tree,
And my love for the well-loved dead.

Toronto.

A. L. STEWART.

CHRISTIAN GOTTLIEB.

By DOLZHOPOUS.

CHAPTER I.

It was a quiet Sunday afternoon in the city of London, and Christian Gottlieb, whose twentieth birthday was just smiling on him, had intimated to his old housekeeper, in the village of Maldon, some miles distant, that he intended to spend the anniversary of his arrival in this world of woe, among the only friends he had—the Smythes in the city.

Martha, kind-hearted loving old servant that she was, had clasped her hands, and cried, "why, lawks—a mercy on us! Master Christian, you're never going to that dreadful city, surely."

Poor Martha in the innocence of her loyal old heart, had a vague and horrible idea that man-traps and spring-guns were to be met with at every corner; to say nothing of terrible houses on fire; mad dogs, and run-away horses. But this time she pleaded in vain; for Christian after many invitations, had at last consented to spend his birthday with his friend Mrs. Smythe; her charming daughter, and majestic mate, in the city; and there he was, sitting in the drawing room of Mr. R. Melville Smythe's city residence, close beside his friend Mrs. Smythe.

Mr. R. Melville Smythe's gentle snore up stairs is just audible, making a sort of running accompaniment to the conversation in the drawing room; but the two people are too deeply interested to notice any outside matter.

When Christian's only friend—his father—had died ten years before, leaving him a comfortable income, his last whispered word, before he left this world, had been to Mrs. Smythe.

He said, in his strange, broken English, "Annie, you will love my boy—for my sake, when I am gone—will you not?"—and she, with the great tears welling from her eyes, had promised.

The old servant, Martha, however, had interposed; saying the big city was no place to "rare" a child; and so, had carried Christian off in triumph to Maldon, where he had grown up—pouring out his great burning soul, in music.

Christian, with his long fair hair flowing over his shoulders, would in the quiet summer evening sit for hours and hours at his piano, pouring forth nameless, wandering, passionate music—as Martha had once said, in an awe-struck whisper, to Mrs. Smythe, "talking to spirits with his fingers, mun."

Though Martha had succeeded in carrying him off to the country, Mrs. Smythe didn't forget the dying yeoman's charge; and so often as her lord and master would allow, ran down to Maldon with her little daughter, and there they three would ramble about the beach together, till the sun had set, when they would turn homeward, to demolish Martha's hot buns,

and fragrant tea. And the time crept on quietly, and Christian had come, quite naturally, to call Mrs. Smythe, "Mother."

Her only child was her dark-eyed little daughter of seventeen summers; Margaret—commonly called "Madge"—"wild Madge"—Christian used to say, with his quiet smile, after she had done some extra mad freak, and crept to him, half frightened, to tell him all about it.

Christian looks rather excited as he leans from his chair toward Mrs. Smythe.

"Mother," he says, "I have been keeping something from you, for a long time; this is my birthday and I can keep the secret no longer." His voice is sunk almost to a whisper, as he says this.

"Mother—I love little Madge—may I ask her to be my wife?" He looks so wildly in earnest, as he says this, that the happy little woman's heart goes out to meet him, and the bright, pleased look in her face, tells him all is well. But there is not much time left for pleasant thoughts or words, for the sire's ponderous step is heard descending the stairs. His nap is evidently finished.

R. Melville Smythe was a very short man, of that type vulgarly called "stubby"; but R. Melville Smythe didn't think himself short by any means, and an application of the word "stubby," to his pompous figure, would have given him refined and excruciating horrors, and caused innumerable raisings of the eye-glass, and flourishings of the stick—for R. Melville Smythe carried both these very necessary appendages—the eye-glass very large, and the stick very small. But although R. Melville Smythe was a very small man, he had an uncommonly big cough, which was most imposing, and carried great weight at Board Meetings, Vestry Meetings, &c.

R. Melville Smythe's first name was an imposing, not to say stupendous one—to wit—"Roxborough"; and this good gentleman's enemies used frequently to call him, (behind his back, of course) "Roxy Smythe," entirely ignoring the aristocratic vowels which served to emblazon, as it were, his goodly name; and indeed, some of those more case-hardened than the rest, were sceptical, nay, even sarcastic, in their remarks on the origin of the aforesaid vowels. But R. Melville Smythe's lofty soul could afford to look down, (metaphorically speaking) on such narrow minded and illiberal people, for he had what most men covet—a long purse, and a name as good as gold, in the market.

Mr. Smythe had a way of loading his wife with absurd and useless attentions, especially in the presence of strangers, and was always ready to drop on his knees and cry, theatrically, "my Queen, my own, &c." all of which the poor little lady was forced to submit to.

However, the worthy gentleman's love was of a peculiarly narrow kind, and if she so much as stooped to say a kindly word to a child on the street, he became "huffy" for the rest of the day, and on the slightest pretext, would break forth into torrents of abuse, hurled indiscriminately at the nearest objects. Now Mrs. Smythe loved Christian with all her heart, and as a natural consequence, her noble lord hated him most cordially; but as Mr. Smythe was in the habit of cloaking his feelings, under a guise of intense and gushing friendship, no rupture had ever occurred.

As he entered the room now, catching a glimpse of Christian, he stopped suddenly, dropped his eye-glass, clasped his hands and seemed to mutter a prayer of thankfulness; then darting forward, he seized Christian's hands—slapped him on the back—called him "dear soul"—"good lad"—"so glad to see you I'm sure"—"God bless me, how glad I am to see you"—and begging him about six times every five minutes "to be seated"—he kept pacing around the room, evidently in the highest state of ecstatic bliss, on having his "dear Christian" in the bosom of his family once more.

Poor Christian dropped into his seat, very warm and uncomfortable, and wished devoutly that his affectionate friend hadn't waked up. All things must have an end, however, and Christian's misery was brought to a close by the arrival of Madge, and Mr. Smythe's confidential clerk and friend, Robert Onslow, who had been to afternoon service at church.

Robert Onslow's quick determined eyes noted the blush on Christian's cheek as Madge entered the room, and he drew his own conclusion, evidently an unpleasant one, for as he turned over the leaves of an album, his lips were quivering, and his eyes had a wicked look in them. He put down the album and came over to where Christian was sitting, and dropped languidly into a chair by his side, smiling, and captivated. They were friends in half an hour. Mr. Onslow very soon discovered Christian's weak point—music—and then of course, he became a passionate admirer of it, and went into long discussions of the old masters. His easy, gentlemanly manners won upon Christian, who found himself actually becoming quite confidential, and asking Mr. Onslow if he wouldn't run down and see him, at Maldon.

At last the afternoon wore away; tea was announced, and then came evening service at the Cathedral, where Mr. Smythe's pious heart had an opportunity of arousing itself, which opportunity he took great advantage of; praying very loud; singing the hymns with great gusto (though unfortunately a trifle out of time and tune) and being perfectly invincible in his sonorous "Amen's."

After church, the worthy soul dilated upon the follies and weakness of human nature, es-

pecially inveighing against hypocrisy; while Mr. Onslow, behind his back, amused himself by making the most horrible grimaces at poor Christian, whose efforts to maintain a facial gravity, were quite painful to witness.

At last the time arrived for Christian's departure, and accepting Robert Onslow's offer to see him to the coach, he bade his friends "good-bye," and had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Smythe wiping a tear from his eye, as he bade "his dear boy" farewell.

The two young men strolled down the street together, and as Mr. Onslow helped him into the coach, he wrung his hand heartily, and calling out a promise to run down to Maldon soon, he left Christian thinking he was the pleasantest fellow he had ever met.

II.

Mr. Smythe and family had removed to Maldon for the summer, and naturally Madge and Christian saw much of each other. Christian never could explain, even to himself, how the affair came about; but now it was an incontestable fact that the only thing that remained was to ask R. Melville Smythe's consent.

Christian and Madge had been sitting together on the verandah of his house, one evening, and Christian, slipping away from her side, had sat before his piano and told his little story of love. As the wild strains of passionate pleading came stealing out, on the soft summer air, Madge, as if impelled by some hidden power, rose from her seat and followed him, standing in the dusk of the evening by his side.

When Christian's story was ended, he held out his hand, and whispered softly, "Madge"—and Madge had crept to him, and nestled to his heart; and so it was, that the father's consent was required.

It was some days, however, before Christian could "screw his courage to the sticking point," and unfortunately for him, on the very day he had spoken, Mr. Smythe had received a telegram from Robert Onslow, telling him of an absconding debtor, who would "let him in" for about £1000. Mr. Smythe's temper was naturally spoiled, and when Christian had come to him, he had rubbed his hands together, smiled and said blandly—"should be so happy, my dear boy, but unfortunately, I have other views for her—pray say no more about it."

Robert Onslow arrived that night, and was closeted for some hours with Mr. Smythe. He came to Christian's house afterwards, and chatted so pleasantly that Christian, in the innocence of his heart, told him his trouble.

Robert Onslow laughed quietly, and said, "never mind, old fellow! you just run to London with me, for a few days, and keep out of the old man's sight, and when he has got over this loss, you will have nothing but plain sailing before you." Christian consented and, in spite of all Martha's remonstrances, they mounted the coach, early next morning, and a few hours after, Christian found himself in Mr. Onslow's chambers, ensconced in a large easy chair, and already beginning to feel happy and more hopeful.

Always yielding, and easily led, he was soon plunged into all manner of debauchery. Robert Onslow had introduced him to his club, and there they played cards every night, and somehow Christian always came home with lighter pockets, and very often with an unsteady gait; on which occasion he would seize Onslow by the hand and declare he would "never go home—never—never," and Onslow would invariably reply, "quite right, old fellow!—nothing like enjoying yourself when you're young." The next morning he would wake with a splitting headache, and Onslow, or Bob, as Christian now called him, would prescribe innumerable eye-openers and refreshers, in the shape of Brandy and Soda, Gin Cocktails, Sherry Cobblers, &c., which always had the effect of leaving him as drunk as before. And so the days crept into weeks, and Christian had no thought of going home.

His frequent drafts on the Bank began to make terrible havoc in his little estate, and one morning he woke, and found he had to meet a so-called debt of honour, amounting to five hundred pounds, and nothing to meet it with. Christian drank heavily all day to drown his misery and, at night, found himself standing on the club steps with Robert Onslow. It was a dark, murky night, and the rain descended in torrents. Christian felt desperate, as Onslow took his arm, and walked him out into the streets.

They walked on and on, never exchanging a word until at last Onslow stopped, and turning his keen piercing eyes full on Christian's, said in almost a whisper—"something must be done. You have no money, neither have I, and if this thing is not settled in some way, you'll have to go to jail—that's all; and then there'll be a pretty row, down at Maldon."

A look of utter recklessness and desperation came into Christian's eyes. "Onslow," he whispered, "tell me what to do, and I'll do it."

They turned into a low tavern, where Onslow ordered some brandy. Christian drank greedily like a desperate man. After a pause, during which Christian was gnawing the end of his cigar, and staring gloomily into the fire-place—Onslow touched him on the shoulder.

"Christian, in my desk, at Mr. Smythe's counting house, there is twice the amount you want."

Christian's head dropped on his chest, as he cried out, "don't say that, Onslow! For God's sake, take pity on me."

"You fool," the other hissed, saying—"are

you afraid?" "Drink more brandy, and try to get a little heart. We are cornered—we must have money—the thing is perfectly safe and you can repay Mr. Smythe afterwards—only you must have it immediately, or else amuse yourself by twirling your thumbs in a debtor's prison, and when that happens, your chance is all up the spout at Maldon."

Christian filled his glass, and with trembling hand, poured the liquor down his throat. They rose without a word, and went out.

III.

Christian, on the afternoon coach for Maldon, with his hat slouched over his eyes and his hands slung into his pockets, was a different being from the Christian who had travelled over the same road, a month before. His face was bleared with drink, and his eyes were staring straight ahead into vacancy—horrible, horrible vacancy—full of shame and misery for him. Martha was waiting for him at the door, and when she caught a glimpse of his face, the poor soul cried out—"oh! Christian! Christian!—what have they been a-doin' of to ye, lad?"

Christian stalked into the house; threw his hat and coat down, and dropped into a chair, with never a word of greeting for poor old Martha. She, poor soul, after waiting a moment, crept away to her kitchen, awed and half crying; and as she went, she muttered; "if I only just had Mr. Robert Onslow here, for a few minutes"—and the old woman's hands clenched, and a fierce look came into the withered face. Christian hadn't been in the house long, before a message came with a note for him. He tore it open with trembling hands, and read:

YOUNG MAN,—

"I have heard of your debauchery, and unseemly doings in London, and your efforts to lead my worthy young friend, Robert Onslow, into the vicious life you evidently glory in. Never let me see your face again. Never with your unholy feet dare to cross the sanctified threshold of my happy home. Young man, I will pray for you."

ROXBOROUGH MELVILLE SMYTHE.

Christian with his knees trembling under him, staggered like a drunken man, in the hall. "Martha! Martha!" he shouted fiercely, "why, in the Devil's name don't you bring me some supper?" and Martha, frightened at the stern, hard tone, came running to him. She had been crying quietly in the kitchen, and when he saw the tears in her eyes, his heart melted. He caught her big red hand in his—"don't mind me, Martha—I'm not well, that's all—I don't wish any supper now—I am going out for a walk, and when I come back, you can have something ready for me"—and Christian took his hat and hurried out of the house.

It was late at night, when he came in, and Martha stood waiting in the hall, with a note in her hand. Christian tore it open: this time it was from Madge:

MY OWN DARLING,—

"I do not believe what they say of you. I feel sure that if you have been wild in London, it has been Mr. Onslow's fault. My father is most unjust to you, but Christian, I will love you, no matter what they say. Keep good heart and everything will turn out well."

Ever your own,

MADGE.

"Thank heaven she doesn't know all"—cried Christian, and he submitted quietly to Martha's entreaty to eat something.

All that night he tossed about on his bed, without once closing his eyes. The thought of the robbery never left him; its haunting shadow seemed to close about him and forbid rest or sleep. He was up and dressed by daylight, waiting eagerly for the London newspapers. At last they came, and Christian, sick and faint, crept to his room, and turning the key in the lock, sat down to read his fate.

"Daring robbery—Police on the scent"—were the first words that caught his eye: the paper dropped from his hand, and he cried out in his misery "thank God my father is dead."

He waited all day, he knew it must come, and when two men entered his garden, in the dusk of evening and walked up to him, with a warrant of arrest, on a charge of robbery, he gave himself up quietly, only begging for ten minutes alone.

"Gainst all orders sir!—cannot allow it," said one of the men, but Christian's eyes, so full of entreaty, prevailed. Humanity, so rare, so hard to find, was deep rooted in this rough man's nature, and it was proof against all the orders that were ever issued. The men sat down in the hall, and Christian went into the room, and sat before his dear father's piano. He had never before played as he did now: it seemed as though all his pent-up misery had at last found vent, and come bursting forth in strains so full of heart-rending sorrow, that one of the men, with great tears trickling down his rough cheeks—whispered to the other—"I say Jim, dash me, if this ain't the toughest arrest I ever made!" Christian got up and came out of the room, saying quietly, "I am ready now"—and so they led him away, leaving Martha in the darkened house, sobbing her old heart out.

IV.

"From the supercilious prince, to the graveling mendicant," said Mr. Smythe complacently, "there is but a step. They are both human; both subject to the same diseases; and