

THE DYING BOY.

It was night among the mountains,
Near the far-famed Shipka Pass,
And the great moon glared in splendour
O'er each crag and deep morass,
Throwing fitful shades and glimmers
Far athwart the gory ground,
Where, through all the awful daytime,
Had pealed out the battle's sound.

Deep adown the Vale of Roses
Was its glimmering radiance spread,
Where it shed a vivid lustre
O'er the dying and the dead,
And it shone upon the figure
Of a youth, once brave and bold,
Lighting up his pallid features,
And his clotted curls of gold.

He had fallen in the conflict,
And a deeper, duller red
Had his life-blood dyed the roses,
That then formed his dying bed;
And his voice in plaintive murmurs
Ever rose upon the air,
Mingling with the ghastly groaning
Of the wounded gathered there.

"I am dying, mother, dying
Far away from home and thee—
Far away from fair old England!"
Rose the words right piteously.
"Ah, I feel the death chill coming!
There's a mist before my sight!
Yes, your wandering boy is dying.
Far away from home to-night!"

I am dying, but dishonour
Does not rest upon my brow.
For I fished not from the conflict,
And I fished not from the now.
I'm an Englishman, dear mother,—
Englishmen fished not from death!
But I fain would kiss you, mother,
Ere my last expiring breath.

What a vision flits before me
Of the bygone, golden days,
Ere the star of fame allured me
With its weird, fantastic rays,
To desert the dear old homestead,
In that isle beyond the sea,
Where the loving and the loved ones
Pray so anxiously for me.

Never more I'll meet you, Mary!
Ebb'd the tide life, sure and fleet!
Little thought I, loving sweetheart,
We had parted ne'er to meet!
Little thought I death would claim me,
Mid those mountains wild and high,
Where the Turk and Russ in battle
Pealed their war notes to the sky."

"Darling Mary," he said softly,
Then his weary spirit fled,
For a coward Russ had stabbed him,
And the Englishman was dead;
Dead upon a bed of roses,
Far from country and from home,
With his ghastly face upstaring
To the stars in Heaven's dome.

Fast within his frigid fingers,
Clasped with gold and clasped with gore,
Was his mother's last memento
To the son, whose life was o'er.
And the Russian roughly wrenched it
From the fingers cold and damp,
And as sounds were heard approaching,
Fled away into his camp.

Little value did the robber
Find the precious prize to him:
It was but the brave boy's Bible
By his life-blood stained and grim,
And within its clotted pages
Were two curls of hair enrolled,
One of which was pale as silver,
And the other pallid gold.

Loving mother, loving maiden,
Watching, waiting, pray for him,
Who upon a bed of roses
Fought the death fiend, fierce and grim;
But their bowed heads, gray and golden,
Will be silent, dead and cold,
Ere their spirits meet the spirit
Of their soldier-boy so cold.

Stayer, Ont.

C. E. JACKWAY, M. D.

FASHION AND FANCY.

(Continued From Our Last.)

"You here!" exclaimed Mrs. Car, as she streamed in, all muslin, lace, and sweet-smelling blossoms. "I thought I was ready so soon. I was standing in the hall to look at the view. What a pity that this window does not look out on the sea! It seems as if the idea of the people who built these old houses, was to exclude every possibility of a view from all the principal rooms!"

She then paused, and it seemed as if an idea had occurred to her.

"By the way, I meant to speak to you," she said, with something of an effort. "I was so vexed about it. I don't know what you must have thought of us. We were only in joke, you know. That is—you see—that is—"

"Listeners never hear any good of themselves, of course, my dear. But with the exception of my bald head, which got a rap from Miss Bessie I believe, I don't know that I have any particular charge to lay against any of you."

This not being what she had anticipated, doubled the good creature's confusion, and I was revengeful enough to enjoy seeing how impossible it was for her to justify herself, when no fault had been imputed.

At last pity moved me. "You thought I should be offended because you ridiculed the old gown?" said I.

She seized the opening. "It was not the gown, indeed, it was only the fashion of it. Everybody said how—how handsome the material was." (Everybody meant Maria, I presumed. She alone had recognized its merits.)

"I see," said I. "You meant no harm, my dear, bless you! Don't let me have all those blushes to answer for. And as for the gown, why, it seemed very fine to me forty years ago, to be sure, but we have rushed together. A new

generation has sprung up, which knows not Joseph nor his coat of many colours. I was accustomed to regret my mother as one of the finest of her sex; she was a woman the like of whom one seldom sees now—one seldom saw then; but if it won't turn your head, my dear, I may say that you sometimes bring her to my recollection. Perhaps it may be some compensation for all the jests made at your expense this morning. Mrs. Brand, to hear that an old man thought he had not seen so pretty a sight for many a year.

"Did you? Really?" She looked to see whether I too was making fun of her.

"Yes, I did." "And you are sure, quite sure, you did not mind?"

"Quite sure," replied I. "And so there's no more to be said."

"Oh, how good you are!" she exclaimed with a sigh of relief. "This has been vexing me the whole day. I was so afraid you had been hurt, and I thought you would hardly comprehend how it was, for of course it is different to you—"

"Quite so, quite so," said I, with sudden recollection. "And that reminds me—as you say it is different to me, and certainly it is—for the sake of auld lang syne, I have a favour to ask. It is a whim, a fancy of mine, my dear, but I think you will not refuse me. I seem to feel as if I could not bear to think that any thing she wore, that I remember her in so well, was cut to pieces to cover furniture. So you won't think me unreasonable, will you, Carry?" continued I, hurriedly, for I feared I was, "if I ask you not to do that! Don't wear it, my dear, never put it on again, if it makes you the least uneasy; but lay it by, and keep it safely somewhere, for her sake."

"I will—I will." Her dearest eyes filled with tears. Why, I cannot imagine, unless my voice was less firm than I had hoped it was.

"It shall never be touched," cried she, emphatically. "I don't care what the girls say. And if it would give you any pleasure,—I mean, if you would like to see me in it sometimes—I—I will certainly put it on."

"No, no. You are the best of girls; but I demand no such sacrifice. Just let it alone, and we will never speak about it again."

She turned a ring on her finger, and hesitated. "That was one thing I was thinking about."

If you spoke of it, the others would hear how I had been caught, and they would quiz me unmercifully—Captain Thorne particularly. He never lets a thing drop. But," added she, quickly, "tell me, how came you there? That door is usually bolted."

"It was not," said I; and, impelled to a bad pun, I added, "so I bolted in. I know no more."

"And were you there the whole time?"

"Ah, that I cannot tell. But, to tell you the truth, I fancy so; for your remark about having had a narrow escape leads me to imagine that you had fled from the same set of intruders that persecuted me."

"Well," said Carry, after considering, "you must have been there, and you heard the worst. But you have forgiven us"—putting her hand in mine—"so I will try to forget the rest."

"Except your promise," I ventured to remind her.

"My promise? Oh yes. No fear. It is a compact."

The door opened as all was thus harmoniously arranged, and one after another dropped in till the party was complete.

I kept my promise, and no doubt Carry would have kept hers; but, owing to no fault of ours, all were not equally discreet.

The jokes had transpired. The Captain had seen something. He had insisted on knowing what that something was—what they were all laughing about.

Bessie, or Lily, or Selina had told; and Mrs. Brand was exposed to the full fire of the gentleman's wit.

She must appear once more in her Noah's ark costume. She must give them all the treat from which they had so cruelly been excluded.

But the lady was obstinate. No importunities could move her until, in the confusion of the moment, I transgressed, and, following my own train of thought, joined my entreaties to those of the others.

Carry gave me a look that might have said, "Et tu, Brute!"

One part of my engagement I had forgotten. I was never to have asked her to wear the gown.

I was mute; and, seeing my penitence, there arose an evident struggle in her bosom.

She stepped to my side and, whispered, "If you wish it, I will."

"No, no," said I, "it was only—"

But she was gone. I suppose she read in my countenance how very greatly I did wish it.

"Now," thought I, "is my hour of triumph. The minds of men," I mentally argued, "are less gregarious and frivolous than those of women, which, afraid for a moment to differ from those around them, follow their leader like a flock of sheep. If I am wrong in this matter, I am wrong; but I should like to be pronounced so by a good independent judgment."

A good independent judgment!

Listen!

The beautiful creature reappeared, blushing betwixt modesty and vexation, and stood in a blaze of dazzling wax-light. My exultation was complete, but so was my scorn; for whilst no doubts could now shake the conviction that my judgment was correct, I read in the looks of all around, one universal—titter.

Yes, they absolutely were unable to conceal their diversion. Out of, I daresay, a dozen of my own sex, only two or three had the boldness, the audacity, or what you will, to affirm that the dress became the wearer—and they with one exception, were old codgers like myself.

That exception, I am glad to record it, was her husband, who said, and almost swore, that never in his life had he seen Car look handsomer.

The rest, to a man, deserted to the ladies. "Mrs. Brand, to be sure, could wear anything; still—" and a smile and shrug supplied the verdict.

Old-fashioned dress, dress in general, dress to come, and dress exploded, was now the talk.

The majority were all for the reigning fashion. They could see no beauty, elegance, in anything that had had its day, although it surprised me to observe how ready they were to acknowledge the claims of the most daring novelty, provided it were only new enough.

"The last thing," which was "scarcely to be had;" the style, which Madame l'Impératrice was just "introducing;" what any court milliner had pronounced "was to be,"—all of these were recognized to have merits; and only against one outrageous invention did I hear the involuntary protest—"Dear! how hideous!" which, however, was instantly afterwards converted into "but, no doubt, it will be very becoming."

As, in this discussion, the men were, to the full, as deeply engrossed as the women I soon turned aside, and buried myself in a book of prints for the remainder of the evening.

A few months after this I went abroad, the fogs and earth-mists of November proving bad for a delicate chest. The south of France was tried, and discarded; some change more complete than this was urged by the doctor.

To the East my thoughts had long inclined; and at length, overcoming all obstacles, I found myself on board the steamer off Brindisi, little guessing that five long years would pass ere I should again tread its deck, homeward bound.

For five years, however, I wandered about the Holy Land, till at length, renewed in body and mind, I was pronounced fit for Old England again.

How green the meadows looked, how fresh they smelt! Yet it was not to country lanes and winding streamlets that first my steps were bent, but to great, noisy, busy London, then in the height of that madness, which, I am told, is called by learned folks the "season."

Emerging from Charing Cross, I drove to a quiet hotel, and with justifiable complacency regarded the innumerable carriages filled with surging billows of millinery, or the hansoms with their solitary white-necked occupants, which crossed me on my way.

I was not going in for eight o'clock dinners, folly, and humbug.

I could lead a rational life in the metropolis of the world, if no one else could.

I had lived too long in other lands to be carried away by the blandishments of society.

All very fine. Three days afterwards, at ten o'clock—positively at ten o'clock, almost my usual bed-time—there was I a man of sixty, with not a chick or a child to lead me to such places, preparing myself to go out to—abomination of abominations—an evening party.

Not a dinner, not a ball, but a great gathering of people for no object whatever, whose only hope for the time being is, that they may have half a foot of carpet to stand upon, and half a glass of champagne, ere they are hurried to the door.

For this was I laboriously decorating at that unearthly hour, and greatly were my feelings tried by the persistency with which the two ends of my neck-tie turned the wrong way.

It took me fully ten minutes longer to dress than I had calculated upon, and fearing to be late I ordered my driver to lose no time.

I was afraid of missing the pleasure in store for me, for it had been agreed with my hostess, that I was to be in the room before the arrival of Henry and Carry Brand.

For this I had come. I had not seen them previously, as they had only come to town the day before, and I had kept my arrival a secret.

B—Square was reached duly. The rooms were ready, brilliantly lit and decorated when I entered, but they were empty.

For some time I was left to their contemplation, or to that of my own figure reflected in innumerable mirrors; but at length the mistress of the mansion hurried in armed with a thousand apologies.

For these, however, I soon found there was not the slightest occasion. She was in perfect time, whereas I had been at the party nearly an hour before the party had commenced.

The guests, however, had no sooner begun to arrive, than, as if by common consent, they all appeared together; and the rolling of carriages, the bawling of names, and the chatter and rustle of a myriad tongues and dresses ceased not for a moment, after the din once fairly set in. Not a single face did I recognize. Wandering disconsolately about the great London ball-room, I came at length upon a little group that recalled bygone days.

The ladies of the circle (several of them were now married) were the same with whom I had often stayed at Henry Brand's, cousins of him and of each other; these were Bessie Dale, Maria Harday, and Lily—I forget her surname, for she had changed it.

With her I entered into conversation, but as we had no topics of interest in common, and as I found her, like the rest, to be engrossed with much that was altogether unknown to me, we

were soon reduced to the level of spectators. Presently she was joined by another young lady. "You never knew any one more lucky," said Lily. "They only came up last night, and Carry is in such good looks, and in such good spirits. They have succeeded to a large property, you know, and Henry means to stand for the county."

This was news to me, and, as I could not help hearing what was said, I thought it fair to listen.

"Henry has given her some diamonds," continued Lily. "They are to be worn for the first time to-night."

"They are beautiful," said Bessie Dale, turning round at the word "diamonds." "I saw them this afternoon. And you will be astonished when you see her dress, I can tell you; it is more like a Court train than anything else."

"You have seen her, then?"

"Went there at five, and we had tea in her dressing-room. That girl Sophia was there too, whom they have adopted. She will prove a thorn in their sides, or I am mistaken! She wanted to go about this season, fancy! A great school-girl. Car won't take her, and quite right, too; but you have no idea what spiteful, disagreeable things she kept saying the whole time I was there."

"What about?"

"Anything and everything. Carry's things which were being spread out by the maid, for instance. The one for to-night is magnificent. Miss Sophia turned down her lips, and observed that it was certainly more fit for a foreign princess or an Eastern sultana than for plain Mrs. Henry Brand; but of course her opinion was of no value, as she was never taken anywhere, and could not judge."

"Impertinent creature! What did Carry say?"

"Let it pass, as she always does. Told her her time would come, or something of that sort. Ah, there she is!"

I bent forward at the words. But Carry Brand, coming up the staircase (we were on the landing), was arrayed in—or did my wits really forsake, wilfully mislead me!—my mother's gown, the once hooted at, despised garment, of other days! Could it—could it—could it be?

The likeness between the two women was startling as I gazed upon her, and was probably the reason of my instant recognition of its cause.

The hair which had formerly hung in curls over her shoulders was now drawn back and piled above her head, and diamonds crowned the glossy bandeaux. She was my mother's picture.

Yes, Carry Brand, followed by the admiring looks of all who witnessed her arrival, wore the ridiculed robe in which she had a few years before scarcely ventured to present herself, and I fancied that I could even detect that she wore it proudly.

"Isn't it lovely?" cried every lady who looked.

"Well," said Bessie, drawing a long breath, and giving her shoulders a comical little shrug, "how the men do stare! One positively does not like to be eclipsed in that way. I shall give way to despair."

"What about, Miss Dale?" A black moustache had strolled towards us, and caught the last words.

"Because I'm jealous, Sir John. I'm jealous of that beautiful lady and her beautiful gown. Women always are jealous of each other, are they not?"

"Pon my word, I don't know," said he.

"Who is she?"

"My cousin, Mrs. Brand."

"Ah!" he said. "Good-looking. Where are you going after this?"

He had no more to say.

I now made a vigorous effort to sally from my corner, and was slowly edging in by a side doorway, when a slight tap on my arm preluded a

"Ah! I thought so; remember me, Mr. Old-man?"

It was Captain Thorne.

"Happy to see you are not a mummy yet," said he. "How do you do? Town very full."

It was kind of him to stop me, and though we had never been intimate, he seemed all at once to become a friend. With warmth I grasped the two fingers he extended towards me, and looked into his kindly stupid face with enthusiasm.

He observed that Egypt was "all the go," and wanted to know what specimens I had brought home. Ah! I didn't shoot! But at least I had brought with me an Arab costume for private theatricals! No? really?

With this his interest in the subject came to an end. For I observed that although he ejaculated "Ah!" and "Indeed!" or "You don't say so?" at proper intervals, his eyes and ears were roving all the time.

Seeing this I stopped. This appeared to give the captain satisfaction; and as I began to show the preliminary symptoms of moving on, he inquired where I was steering for.

"That room," I said. "Mr. and Mrs. Brand are there, and I have not seen them yet."

"Are they? I'll take you in tow. Amazing fine woman, Mrs. Brand. There she is, one can always see her above the rest. Just stand still where you are, and we can't fail to encounter."

We did so, and in the interval it occurred to me to test the Captain on the subject of the old gown. Awkwardly enough, I referred to its former appearance, and inquired, hypocritically, whether he did not think it was the same?

"Very pawbably, I dessay," said he. "Fine rig. Quite the rage now."

"Oh indeed?" said I. "You admire it,