

SWEET STARS.

Shine on, sweet silver star,
And twinkle from afar
On me down here;
Each time you meet my view
I long to be with you
Away from here.

Oh! star of silver light,
With flickering beam so bright,
Oh! tell me pray,
Up in the calm blue skies,
Are you men's souls or eyes?
Oh! tell me pray.

Do people dwell up there,
Amidst the balmy air,
Do people live and think,
And eat and sleep and drink,
Up there, as here?

Is there the same soft breeze
To move the great green trees,
Up where you are?
Are there great mountains high,
And flowers that never die,
Up where you are?

Are there sweet birds that sing,
And fly on trembling wing,
Up in the stars?
Do they sing all the day,
A song that seems to say
Beautiful stars?

Have you cool silver streams,
And fish that lie in dreams,
Up in the stars?
Say, do the rain drops cool
Fall on the shady pool
Up in the stars?

Have you the noisy clash
Of the rude thunder's crash,
Up in the stars?
Or does the lightning's beam
Ever around you gleam,
Beautiful stars?

Have you great belts of wood,
For toys in sportive mood,
To sit and play?
Have you the meadows green
Where children love to wren,
To sport and play?

Have you bright children there,
With their long golden hair,
Or have you none?
Have you some narrow street
To whoo back their feet,
Or have you none?

Have you fond lovers there
Up in the cold, pale air,
To make sweet vows?
Say, if within your lands
Your lovers join hands
Kissing sweet vows?

Do mothers gaze with pride
At loved ones by their side,
Amidst the stars?
Do mothers drop hot tears
Over their fondled dears,
Up in the stars?

Are there great fights and wars
Up where you are, sweet stars,
Beautiful stars?
Do dying shrieks and groans
Disturb you there, or moans,
Dear stars?

Say, does the murderer's knife
Shed the red blood of life,
Up in the stars?
Or are there sorrowing heads
Bending over dying beds,
Up in the stars?

Have you what we have here,
Despair, and grief, and fear,
Beautiful stars?
Or is there naught but love
And joy, and peace above,
Up in the stars?

Toronto.

A. L. STEWART.

GEIER-WALLY:

A TALE OF THE TYROL.

CHAPTER III.

UNYIELDING.

This was the short story of love and sorrow which now once more awoke with all its bitterness in the young heart, as she looked down where she fancied she had seen Joseph, who so often passed by and never found the way up. She wiped away the perspiration from her brow, for the sun was beginning to shine fiercely down, and she had already mowed all the grass from the house to the "Sonnenplate," as the ledge where she stood was called, because it was the highest spot of land, and always the first reached by the sun. From this the village took its name.

"Wally, Wally!" cried a voice behind her, "you must come to your father; he wants to tell you something." Old Luckard was approaching from the house. Her father was sent for! What could he want? Since the affair at Sölden he had said nothing to her except what concerned her daily work. Wavering between fear and reluctance, she rose and followed Luckard. "What does he want?" she asked.

"Great news," said Luckard. "Look there." Wally now saw her father standing before the house, and with him Vincenz, a young peasant belonging to the village, with a large bouquet in his buttonhole. He was a sturdy, morose fellow, whom Wally had known to be obstinate and ill-natured from childhood. He had never vouchsafed a kind word to any human being except herself, whom he had persecuted with his attentions from her school days. His parents had died a few months before; he was now independent, and, now next to Stromminger, the richest peasant in the neighborhood.

Wally's blood froze in her veins; she knew what was coming.

"Vincenz wants to marry you," said Stromminger. "He has my consent, and the wed-

ding will take place next month." With these words he turned and went into the house, as if there were nothing more to be said.

Wally was silent a moment, as if struck by a thunderbolt. She needed time to reflect, to collect her thoughts. Meantime Vincenz boldly approached and tried to put his arm around her. She shrank back with a cry of terror, but she now knew what was to be done.

"Vincenz," she said, trembling with anxiety, "pray go home; I can never become your wife—never. You will not wish my father to force me into your arms; I tell you, once for all, I do not love you."

A dark frown shadowed Vincenz' face; he bit his lips, and his black eyes rested upon Wally with a fierce, passionate gaze. "So you don't love me! But I love you! And I'll stake my life that I win you! Your father has given me his promise; I'll never release him from it, and I think you'll change your mind, if this is your father's will."

"Vincenz," said Wally, "if you were wise you wouldn't have spoken so, for you would know I never allow myself to be forced to do anything. And now go home, Vincenz; we have nothing more to say to each other."

With these words she turned her back upon him and entered the house.

"Oh!" exclaimed Vincenz, in a tone of angry pain, clenching his fist. Then he controlled himself, and muttered between his teeth, "Well, I can wait, and I will!"

Wally went straight to her father. He was sitting with his head bent over his accounts, and turned slowly as she entered. "What is it?"

The sun poured its rays through the low window full upon Wally, so that she stood before her father as if surrounded by a halo. He could not help admiring his child, she looked so beautiful at that moment.

"Father," she quietly began, "I only wanted to tell you that I will not marry Vincenz."

"Indeed!" cried Stromminger, starting up. "What does this mean? You won't marry him?"

"No, father; I don't love him."

"Ah! did I ask whether you loved him or not?"

"No. I tell you so without being asked."

"And I also tell you, without being asked, that you'll marry Vincenz in four weeks whether you love him or not. I've given him my promise, and Stromminger doesn't break his word. Now, be off."

"No, father," said Wally, "the matter isn't settled. I am not a beast that must be sold or given away, as its master chooses. I think I ought to have something to say about my own marriage."

"No, you have not; for a child belongs to the father as much as a calf or a heifer, and must do as the father chooses."

"Who says so, father?"

"Who says so? It is in the Bible!" and the angry blood crimsoned Stromminger's face.

"The Bible only says that we must love and honor our parents; not that we ought to marry a man who is repulsive to us, merely because it is a father's will. If it could do you any good for me to marry Vincenz—if it could save you from death or poverty, of course it would be my duty to obey, though my heart broke. But you are a rich man, who is not forced to ask favors from any one. It can make no difference to you whom I marry, and you give me to Vincenz merely out of malice, that I may not wed Joseph, whom I love, and who would certainly love me if he knew me; and that, father, is a wicked thing, and the Bible does not say a child must submit."

"You impudent creature, I'll send the priest to you; he shall teach you what the Bible says."

"It will do no good, father; if you sent ten priests, and they all told me ten times over I must obey you in this, I would not."

"And I tell you you will, so true as my name is Stromminger. You will, or I'll drive you out of the house and disinherit you."

"Very well, father; I'm strong enough to earn my bread. Yes, father, give everything to Vincenz, except me."

"Nonsense," said Stromminger, in great perplexity. "Are people to say that I can't even govern my own child? You will marry Vincenz, if I have to flog you to the church."

"And if you do flog me to the church I'll say no at the altar. You can kill me, but you can't force me to utter the yes; and if you could, I would throw myself over a precipice rather than marry a man I do not love."

"Hark ye!" shouted Stromminger, and his broad forehead seemed cleft in twain by a blue vein that swelled with anger; his whole face was distorted, his eyes were bloodshot; "don't put me in a rage! You tried me enough on the Kerbholz; now take care, or harm will come of it."

"Harm came of it a year ago, father, for when you beat me so on my confirmation day, I felt that all was over between us. And, father, ever since that time I have not cared whether you were angry or pleased with me, whether you treated me kindly or beat me, it was all the same; I no longer have any love for you. I'm just as fond of the Simlaun or Vernagt, or Murzoll glaciers!"

A suppressed cry of fury burst from Stromminger's lips, as, half petrified with amazement, he listened to the girl. Then, unable to speak, he rushed upon her, seized her by the waist, raised her from the ground high above his head, shook her in the air till his own breath failed, then threw her on the floor and set his nail-shod

heel on her breast. "Beg my pardon for what you have said, or I'll crush you like a worm," he gasped.

"Do so," said the girl, fixing her eyes steadily on her father. She breathed with difficulty, for the old man's foot pressed upon her like a leaden weight, but she did not move; not an eye-lash quivered.

The old man's power was broken. He had threatened what he could not perform, for at the thought of crushing his child's beautiful, innocent breast, his wrath subsided, and he was suddenly sobered. He was conquered. Almost staggering backward, he raised his foot from her chest. "No, Stromminger will not end his days in a prison," he said, in a hollow tone, and sank exhausted into a chair.

Wally rose; she was deadly pale, her eyes were tearless, as if made of stone. Standing motionless, she waited for what was to come next.

Stromminger reflected a moment, and then said, hoarsely, "I can't kill you, but since Simlaun and Murzoll are as dear to you as your father, you shall henceforth stay with Simlaun and Murzoll. That's where you belong. You shall never put your feet under my table again. You shall tend the flocks on the Hochjoch, and stay there until you have learned that Vincenz's warm nest is more comfortable than Murzoll's heap of snow. Pack your bundle, for I'll never see you again. Start early to-morrow morning. I'll send the flocks after you next week; take some bread and cheese, that you may have enough till they come. Klettenmaier shall show you the way up. And now be off; these are my last words, and I'll stick to them."

"Very well, father," said Wally, gently, as she bent her head and left the room.

CHAPTER IV.

EXILED.

On the Hochjoch! That was a terrible word; for among the inhospitable regions of the Hochjoch there is none of the merry life of the alpine mountain pastures whose soft, spicy air echoes with the ringing of bells and the jibbels of the shepherds and shepherdesses. Here there is naught save eternal winter—the repose of death. The sun kisses these cold glaciers lightly and mournfully, as a mother kisses the pale forehead of a lifeless child. Scanty patches of grass, the last remnants of tenacious organic life, extend into the wintry wilderness, until the last blade dies, the last drop of sap is frozen. It is a gradual death of nature. But the frugal peasant uses even this scanty remnant. He sends his flocks up the mountains to feed on what can be found, and the sheep, struggling greedily to crop some plant, a native of milder regions which chance has suffered to grow here, often fall down some chasm in the ice.

So the child of the proud Stromminger, whose property stretched for leagues around, and extended up into the clouds, was to spend her girlhood in perpetual winter. While the May breezes swept over the earth below, the rising sap swelled the buds, the birds built their nests, and everything stirred in joyous anticipation of the spring, she must take her shepherd's staff in her hand and wander up into the wilderness of the glaciers, not to descend until the autumn winds blew and winter was preparing to come down into the valleys, as if she were sold to it forever.

No peasant in the whole region sent his shepherds up to this spot; they had leased the pastures to the Schnalser villagers on the other side of the Joch, who lived nearer, and the latter despatched a few half-savage, weather-beaten men, who dressed in skins and lived leagues apart from each other in stone huts, like hermits, and now Stromminger, who had hitherto always leased his pastures, condemned his only child to the life of the Schnalser shepherds. But no complaint escaped Wally's lips. She quietly prepared for her cheerless pilgrimage. Toward morning, long before sunrise, while her father, the men and maid servants still slept, Wally left her home to go up the mountains. Only old Luckard, who had known all this from the earls, and been up all night with Wally to help her to pack her bundle, fastened a bunch of me in her hat as she bade her farewell, and went part of the way with her. The old woman wept as if she were accompanying a funeral procession. Klettenmaier followed with the baggage. He was a faithful old man, the only one who had grown gray in Stromminger's service, for, being deaf, he could not hear when the latter stormed and raged, so he had given him to his daughter for a guide. Luckard went with them to the point where the path grew very steep; there she took her leave and turned back, for she was obliged to reach home to get breakfast. Wally ascended the height and looked down on the path, where the old woman was walking with her apron raised to her eyes, and her heart almost softened. Luckard had always been kind to her; although old and feeble, she at least loved the girl. Just at that moment the old woman turned and pointed upward. Wally's eyes followed the direction of her finger, and saw something sailing clumsily through the air along the edge of the cliff, like a paper kite that has not enough wind; flying only a short distance, then falling and struggling again. The eagle had fluttered wearily after her with its clipped wings, but its strength now seemed exhausted, and it only hobbled along, flapping its broad pinions.

"Hans! oh! Hans! how could I forget you?" cried Wally, springing like a chamois from rock to rock, the shortest way back to the

faithful bird. Luckard stood still till Wally reached the path, and greeted her as if after a long separation. At last the girl overtook Hans, and, raising him in her arms, pressed him to her heart like a child. Since the evening before she had so associated the bird with Joseph in her thoughts, that he seemed like a silent mediator between them, or as if Joseph were transformed into the eagle, and she clasped him in her arms when she held the bird. As fervent faith creates tangible symbols to bring the unattainable near, and a wooden cross and painted picture become miraculous, so ardent love also forms its own symbols, to which it clings when the beloved object is beyond its reach, and thus Wally drew from the bird a wondrous consolation. "Come, Hans," she said, tenderly, "you shall go to the Hochjoch with me. We will never part."

"But, child," said Luckard, "you can't take the eagle up there, it would starve; you have no meat, and such birds eat nothing else." "You are right," said Wally, sadly; "but I can't part with Hans. I must have something in the wilderness. And I can't leave him at home; who would feed him and take care of him if I were not there?"

"You needn't worry about that," cried Luckard; "I'll take care of him."

"Yes, but he won't follow you," said Wally. "You can't manage him."

"Ah, do let me," pleaded Luckard, earnestly. "I've taken care of you so long—I can also provide for the eagle. Give him to me; I'll carry him home." And she took the bird from Wally's arms. But the attempt was useless, for Hans resisted and pecked Luckard so fiercely that she dropped him in terror. It was vain to think of carrying him home.

"You see," said Wally, exultingly, "he won't leave me; I must keep him, come what will. I am called Geier-Wally, and I'll remain so. Oh, my Hans, so long as we two are together we need not fear. I'll tell you what, Luckard, I'll let his wings grow now, he won't fly away from me, and then he can get his food himself."

"Take him in Heaven's name. I'll send you some meat by the boy that will give him food until he can fly." So the matter was settled. Wally took the bird under her arm like a hen, and left Luckard, who once more began to weep bitterly. The girl now proceeded up the mountain without delay, following Klettenmaier, who, meantime, had gone before her. At the end of two hours she reached Vent, the last village on the frontiers of the ice-world. Wally mounted the heights above the hamlet. Here began the road to the Hochjoch. She paused, and leaning on her alpenstock, gazed down upon the silent, half-sleeping village and across to Wildsee and the last houses of Otztal, the Rofen farms, which lay almost at the foot of the Hochvernagt glaciers, and seemed to say defiantly, "Crush us!" as Wally had uttered the words yesterday to her father. And, like her father, the Hochvernagt always drew back his huge foot, as if he could not make up his mind to destroy the citadel of his brave Alpine sons, the "Klatze of Rofen." As she stood there, gazing down at the last human inhabitants, before mounting into the wilderness above the clouds, the bell in the steep at Vent began to ring for early mass. The priest came out of the door of the little parsonage, where the beds of the mountain punks nestled in the morning breeze, and with hands folded over his robe went to the church. Here and there the wooden huts opened their sleepy eyes, and one figure after another appeared, stretched lazily, and walked slowly toward the church.

Carefully, without losing a note, the breeze like a winged angel, bore the holy sound up the mountain, through the dim twilight of morning, till it fell on Wally's ear like the pleading tones of a child's voice. And as a child arouses its mother with its sweet, hushing words, the ringing of the bell at Vent seemed to have waked the sun; it opened its eyes, and the rays of its first glance shot upward over the mountains, a measureless cluster of fiery darts, that crowned the eastern peaks. The dusky gray sky suddenly became transformed into a transparent blue, which grew deeper and deeper, the rays illumined the whole heavens, and the majestic orb at last rose in all its splendor above the cloud-veiled summits and turned its radiant face lovingly toward the earth. The mountains also stripped off their robes of mists and bathed their naked forms in the streams of light. Far below in the ravines the fog heaved up and down, as if all the clouds had left the bright sky and descended into the valleys. It seemed as if wild hymns of joy were borne on the breezes of the upper air, and the earth was weeping happy tears, like a bride on her wedding morn. And as the tears hung on the bride's lashes, the drops of dew trembled on the grass and bushes. There was joy everywhere, up on the mountains, where the dazzling light was reflected in the eyes of the chamois, down in the valleys, where the lark sooted twittering above the fields of grain!

Wally gazed in delight at the awakening world, her eyes could scarcely grasp the wide glittering picture in its chaste morning beauty. The eagle on her shoulder flapped its wings as if in greeting, and gazed lovingly toward the sun. Meantime the stir of active life had begun in the village of Vent. Wally could distinguish everything in the clear morning light. The lads were kissing the maidens at the springs. White columns of smoke rose from the chimneys and vanished in the clear spring air—as a sorrowful thought disappears in a happy soul. On the