

THE SONG OF FAITH.

Faith sat, and swiftly span she, a white-robed, deep-eyed maiden,
While the autumn sunlight bathed her, like a shower of ruddy rain,
And her voice rose like a harp, which a skillful hand has played on,
Which has caught a thought of beauty, from a weak uncertain strain.

All thro' the Indian summer, she marked the swallows going,
While the chestnuts and the beeches change from green to fiery gold,
The robin sang out boldly to the streamlet's softened flowing,
And she learned that ere 'twill youthful be the world must first grow old.

"Oh swallows, and oh finches!— She paused no in her spinning,
Still her wheel went whirling gaily as in July's fairest day—
"Our Summer must be ended, ere we look for Spring beginning,
"And our flowers must die to bring us fruits more precious still than they."

"There must be abnegation, to make a perfect ending,
To a life however simple, to a life however grand;
As there is death in Nature, to insure the perfect blending
Of the seasons, ere the Summer we can welcome in our land.

"From Nature passing upward, we read the solemn story,
We can join the mystic anthem, which above the angels sing;
How Christ, this Earth's Redeemer, must first die to win us glory,
How the Earth was clothed in mourning, ere she knew eternal Spring.

"The streams are chained and silent, the pleasant sky is clouded,
Ere in June we mark their beauty, though for June we oft wait long,
The upper room is silent, and sad Golgotha lies shrouded,
Aid to lend a richer chorus, unto Olivet's clear song.

"*Te Deum!*" sing the angels. "That word had ne'er been spoken—
Had the solemn *Te Deum* not on Calvary been said,
I weave life's faulty numbers, to a song of joy unbroken
In a book whose blazoned pages mortal eyes have never read!"

Sing to your eager swallows, serenely-spinning maiden,
While the chestnuts and the beeches stand in calm and grand decay;
Ye work a shining fabric, which with hope and peace is laden,
Ye have taught our souls a lesson, which will last eternally!

MASTER OR MAN?

Lois Brand leaned over the low railing of the bridge to watch the ripples on the waters for one brief idle moment, and the minnows darting about in that restless fashion of theirs which made her think of the shuttles flying back and forth through the warp in the weaving-room of the great factory where, day by day, she toiled for the bread she ate and the clothes she wore. She wished she might forget everything connected with the factory for a little while. If she could, she thought, it would be rest. But she had watched the shuttle flying back and forth so long that the sight of almost any moving thing brought it before her. And for so many years had she listened to the thunder and crash of the great looms that she heard them everywhere. She often wondered if she should ever get the sound of them out of her ears.

As she stood there on the bridge thinking in a spiritless kind of way of what a pleasant thing life must be when there is no such drudgery, no such terrible monotony in it as had been hers since childhood, shutting out like cruel hands that bar a door, all she had hoped for and longed for most, a step aroused her.

She turned and saw Dick Evans. His honest face grew bright at sight of her.

To him she was the one woman in the world. "Good-morning, Dick," she said, in a tired kind of way. "Are you going to the mill?"

"Yes; of course," he answered, as if it were scarcely possible for him to be going anywhere else.

"What a fool I was to ask such a question," she said. "As if there was any other place for us! When we get into the mill once we never get out till death puts an end to the work. If it wasn't for Fan, I wouldn't care much how soon my work was over, I think, though I never liked to think of dying. But if one were dead, he'd know something about rest, wouldn't he? That's more than any of the mill hands will while they live."

"I don't like to hear you talk in that way, Lois," Dick said, in that grave, gentle way of his, when talking to this woman he loved. "There's no need of your killing yourself at the loom as you are doing. It's only for you to say Yes, Lois, and you know there is nothing I'd be gladder to hear."

"I know, Dick," she answered, a little more tenderly, but with much bitterness in her voice yet. "I am sure I could be quite happy with you, Dick, but there's Fan. It wouldn't be right for me to marry you and bring you such a load as two women, and one of them helpless as a baby would be. You'd find your hands full with me alone, I'm afraid, and when you come to think of Fan! No, Dick; when I think of the burden both of us would be, I can't make it seem that it would be right for me to say Yes."

"Didn't I know all about Fan when I asked you to marry me?" cried Dick. "Do you think I would have asked you any such ques-

tion if I hadn't been willing to take care of both of you? You know better, Lois. I've thought the matter all over, and I'm willing to run the risk of the consequences. Poor Fan wouldn't be half the burden to me, if you were to marry me, that she is to you. I can work well now. I'm laying up a little money every year. A man can work better if he thinks he's working for some one who loves him. Now, it doesn't seem as if I was working for anybody or anything in particular. Don't you know that the thought of home puts life and energy into a man? If I knew that you were waiting for me in a home of our own, no matter how humble it was, the hardest day's work would seem pleasant to me. The thought of the kiss you'd give me at the door would help me more than the promise of a better place or extra wages. You'd better say Yes, Lois."

Clang! clang! clang! rang out the factory bell like a great brazen voice that bade men and women who heard it cease thinking of anything else but work. Lois shivered. The sound of that bell was so tangled up in her life that the two could never be separated, she thought, as she roused herself from her listless mood and turned towards the factory.

"I don't think I'd better take your advice, Dick," she said, with a little shake of her head. "Not yet a while, anyway. It wouldn't be right, I think."

"I don't ask you to say Yes till you've thought it all over," he said, walking along beside her through the street leading to the factory. "Don't let the thought of Fan, or the hard work I'd have to do, keep you from saying Yes, if you love me, Lois. If you love me, you've no right to say No. That's the way to look at it, Lois."

They went into the factory together. As they crossed the threshold the machinery started into motion. The wheels began to turn in their tireless, swift way, and everywhere was din and clangor. Dreams might answer for out of doors, but there was no place, no time for them here. No time to think of love, either.

The warp was waiting for her at her loom. It made Lois think of a spider's web. The old factory seemed more like a great spider to her to-day than it ever had before. How many men and women were caught fast in its webs, she thought, as she looked down the long room and saw the white, wan, tired faces by their looms.

It was nearly noon when Ralph Leveson came to her loom and paused there to watch her at her work.

Ralph Leveson was her employer. This great factory and the men and women in it were his.

He stood there, silently watching her deft, well-trained fingers as they moved among the threads for many minutes.

By and by—

"Those fingers of yours seem to work of themselves, Miss Brand," he said.

"Yes," answered Lois, scarcely pausing to look up, "we are machines."

She said it with an accent of bitterness in her voice. Poor Lois! This life was wearing her out. It was making her old before her time, and the weariness of it told upon her temper and embittered her thoughts.

"I want to talk to you," young Leveson said, leaning over the loom, and pushing back the lever that caused the iron-brained machine which seemed to keep up a steady thinking of one thing from morning till night, to stop its tireless motion.

"Well?"

Lois folded her hands upon the iron frame and waited for him to speak.

He carefully seemed to know what to say. He began once and paused.

"Something was wrong about my last web, I suppose," she said, at last. "Don't be afraid to find fault, Mr. Leveson. We are used to that. Mill hands don't mind such trifles. We can't afford to be sensitive, you know. Such luxuries are not for us."

"If you think I came here to talk about such things you are mistaken," he said. "I—I suppose you never thought about such a thing as—as my caring for you, Lois?"

She looked at him in blank amazement. Had she gone crazy at last? She had often said that she believed the roar of the looms would make her insane some day.

"You are surprised," he said. "I supposed you would be. I do not wonder, for it comes to you suddenly. I ought to have made you understand it by degrees, perhaps, but I have always been an abrupt man, and you must pardon me. I do care for you, Miss Brand. I've watched your face for a long time, and I've grown fond of it. Will you be my wife?"

Lois had often wondered why he was so kind to her. Now she understood.

He was a perfect gentleman. She knew that he was in earnest, for he was too honorable to stoop to deceit, too honorable to allow any doubt of his motives.

She thought about it in a swift, muddled way. She thought about Dick, and her heart gave a little thrill at the recollections of his love for her that was like a reaching out of hands to him. And yet, Dick was poor—miserably poor. Leveson was rich. He could give her all the beautiful things she had craved so long. A confused vision of pictures and flowers, of rich dresses and beautiful books went whirling through her brain to the accompaniment of the grinding, pitiless wheels.

"I can't think now," she cried, putting up both her hands to her throbbing brow. "Don't ask me to. Some other time I'll tell you."

"Take your own time to think it over in," he said. "Try to think favorably, Lois, for I want you very much. I need you."

When she went back to her loom after dinner she was more like a machine than ever, for she scarcely comprehended the details of her work. It is likely that she attended to them all, but she did so mechanically. Her thoughts were elsewhere.

The wheels went round and round. Her thoughts went on and on. Should she choose for her heart? If she did, she should choose Dick—dear, patient, willing Dick. Should she choose for her selfish self? Then she thought of what Leveson's wealth could give her. The machinery seemed to be crashing at her with iron jaws. She fancied it was a great animal snarling at her.

"I'm going home," she cried, at length. "I'm sick, dizzy, faint. If I stay here I shall go crazy. I've got to get away by myself and think. I shall have no rest till I get it all thought out."

She put on her bonnet and shawl and went out into the cool October air.

How peaceful the blue hills looked far off. She wished she were one of them. Then nothing would fret her; her restlessness would be gone.

Oh, which to choose—which to choose!

The words made a little verse of themselves, and her brain set them to the monotonous tune of turning spindles and darting shuttles.

She went towards home in a slow, roundabout way. She saw men and women and little children. Some of them bowed or spoke to her. She did not recognize one face among them all. Her thoughts were not with the things about her. She seemed a thousand miles away from earth and everybody.

Suddenly the great factory bell filled the air with a swift clangor that hurt her aching head as if cruel hands had smote it.

"Something has happened," she cried, turning to look back. But the houses hid the factory from her sight.

The bell rang out its hoarse alarm. She ran up the street. When she reached the end of the block she saw a great black cloud of smoke breaking above the roofs of the building between her and the factory. Then she knew the truth. The factory was on fire.

"Oh, Dick, Dick!" she thought, and hurried towards the burning building. Perhaps there was something her tired hands could do to help the poor wretches who were trying to escape death. What would become of them, of her, if the factory burned?

She knew, before she reached it, that the factory could not be saved. The windows were loopholes of fire. The eaves were wreathed with flames that coiled and uncoiled themselves like writhing serpents.

Suddenly a great cry rang out from the crowd, and she saw hands pointing to the window of a room over the main entrance. Looking up, she saw Leveson standing there. His face was very white. He must have been asleep, men said, and the fire had roused him from what might have been a pleasant slumber, to put him face to face with an awful danger.

"It is death for him," thought Lois, with stilled breath. "There's no possible way of escape."

"I'll try to save him," cried a voice she knew—Dick's voice, and there was something grand in the sound of it.

Then she saw him fighting his way through the flames, and the last glimpse of his face showed her how brave it was in the wild tempest of fire and smoke.

She held her breath, and waited, pale and trembling, while her heart kept saying over and over, in a prayerful kind of way:

"Dear Dick! Oh, God save him!"

She knew then, in the face of the awful danger, that the lover who was risking his life so nobly was more to her than the lover he was risking his life for could ever be. She had made her choice at last.

Suddenly, through the flame and smoke, she caught sight of Dick's face at the window of Leveson's room. He had Leveson in his arms.

"Throw up a rope," shouted Dick. "Be quick, for God's sake."

Some strong hand flung the line he asked for. He fastened one end of it beneath the arms of the unconscious Leveson, and lowered him to the ground just as the flames burst out of the window below him, wrapping the whole front of the mill in a seething sheet of fire.

A groan went through the crowd. There was no hope for Dick. He had saved a life at the loss of his own.

"Dick, Dick!" rang out a woman's voice, sharp and shrill, and full of terrible entreaty. "Try to save yourself for my sake!"

He heard, and leaped far out of the window in a wild desire to save his life for the sake of the woman he loved. He saw the wire of one of the lightning rods not a foot away from the window. Maybe it was strong enough to hold his weight. But could he go through the hell of fire beneath him? It seemed death to venture. It was certainly death to stay where he was. Lois had called him. He would make a wild effort to save himself.

He leaned out and grasped the rod, and swung himself over the window sill, and slipped down, down, down! The rod blistered his hands, but he clung to it. The flames billowed up all about him, but he held his breath, and slid down, down, down! The last he remembered was that he was in the midst of a whirlpool of fire, with

the thought in his brain that he was always going down, down, down!

The first thing he remembered after that was a woman's face bending over him, and a woman's tears dropping on his face, and then a woman's kiss was on his lips, and a woman's voice said, brokenly:

"Oh, Dick! poor, noble, brave, dear Dick!" And he saw Lois above him and thought he had got to heaven.

They told him he was a hero. Leveson came and took his poor, wounded hands in his, and told him he had saved his life, and that he should do great things for him to prove his gratitude.

And he did!

And Lois is satisfied with the choice she made.

MISCELLANY.

AN English writer says:—I have almost ceased to believe that gastronomic enjoyment is to be procured at a French banquet. Nothing is done to a turn, and every dish is smothered in sauce. Wild ducks, quails and other such delicacies are deprived of their natural flavor. Indeed the ideal of a French cook is to give everything he sends to table the taste of many other ingredients. Asparagus is one of the few vegetables which is suffered to retain its own character. The gastronomic cunning shown in the preparation of tomatoes and artichokes is not objectionable; but delicate green peas are too much operated on by the chef. Servants hurry through the courses. Soup is one of the few things which keeps up the reputation of the French cuisine.

A CONGRESSIONAL BOX MOT.—Whatever hard things we may say about Congress, we have to confess in our just moments that it differs from the poor in this world in one respect—we can not always have it with us. Congress has risen for good, contrary to a wide-spread opinion that the late body was incapable of rising, and left us only the precious legacy of its records—precious, but disappointing to the historian, for some of its best notes are not in the *Congressional Globe*. During the last days a Western member of the House, vindicating himself upon the floor, struck a Henry Clay attitude, and cried out, with all the fervor of original conviction, "Sir, I'd rather be right than be President." "Don't worry yourself about that," shouted another member across the aisle; "you'll never be either."

OSCAR WILDE ON THE UNUTTERABLE WHEEL.—"A wheel is in itself," said Oscar Wilde, "a very beautiful object. All the noblest forms of the ceramic art are derived from the potter's wheel. And yet in England I have always found machinery such a pitiful and ugly thing; a jumble of cranks and cogs and petty pieces, you know, without a touch of grandeur about them. So I entered that castellated horror at Chicago, and there at last I came upon a wheel—the wheel of the Chicago Water Works—a mighty, majestic, unutterably harmonious wheel. I saw the beauty and the poetry of America in that revolving wonder; and I said to myself, if ever America produces a great musician, let him write a Machinery Symphony. He could have no more worthy subject. But of course they never will have a great musician out there," continued Oscar, dropping from the clouds to earth with singular suddenness, "until they have abolished the shrieking steam whistle. Their tympanums have all been ruined by these whistles."

HOW FAMILY SECRETS GO OUT.—Lucy Hooper writes from Paris that notorious Parisian journals get their accounts of family secrets from the servants of the house. This has been done in New York by more than one "keen-witted valet or lady's maid"—the making of money by revealing their masters or mistresses' secrets. A few years ago a prominent gentleman here found his conversations at his dinners repeated word for word in a morning paper. He finally questioned his waiter, who confessed that he belonged to a waiters' club, and that he was well paid by a reporter who came nightly to gain information. A lady recently dismissed a most accomplished butler because he was seen writing at odd hours and as she had reason to believe that he was putting down the conversations which he overheard. As she had been betrayed by a wicked governess a month before, she was naturally suspicious. A stray fragment, however, of the butlerian foolscap redeemed his reputation, for it was found to be a sensational novel.

MACAULAY'S PEN.—It seems no doubt to many a reader of Macaulay's History as if he wrote without effort, and as if the charms of his style were the gift of nature rather than the product of art, so spontaneously do they appear to flow from his pen. It was the general opinion of his literary friends that he wrote with great rapidity and made few corrections in his manuscripts. On the contrary, we are told by his nephew and biographer, that he never allowed a sentence to pass until it was as good as he could make it, and would often rewrite paragraphs and whole chapters, that he might gain even a slight improvement in arrangement or expression. After writing thus carefully he corrected again, and his manuscripts were covered with erasures. He paid equal attention to proof-sheets. He could not rest until the lines were level to a hair's breadth, and the punctuation correct to a comma; until every paragraph concluded with a telling sentence, and every sentence flowed like running water.