

EVERY YEAR.

BY ALBERT PIKE.

The spring has less of brightness
Every year,
And the snow a ghastlier whiteness.
Every year;
Nor do summer flowers quicken
Nor autumn fruitage thicken,
As they once did, for we sicken
Every year.

It is growing darker, colder,
Every year;
As the heart and soul grow older,
Every year.
I care not now for dancing,
Or for eyes with passion glancing,
Love is less and less entrancing,
Every year.

Of the loves and sorrows blended
Every year;
Of the charms of friendship ended
Every year;
Of the ties that still might bind me,
Until Time to Death resigned me,
My infirmities remind me
Every year.

Ah! how sad to look before us
Every year;
While the cloud grows darker o'er us,
Every year;
When we see the blossoms faded,
That to bloom we might have aided,
And immortal garlands braided,
Every year.

To the past go more dead faces
Every year;
As the loved leave vacant places
Every year;
Everywhere the sad eyes meet us,
In the evening's dusk they greet us,
And to come to them entreat us,
Every year.

"You are growing old," they tell us,
Every year;
"You are more alone," they tell us,
Every year;
You can win no new affection,
You have only recollection,
Deeper sorrow and dejection,
Every year.

Yes! the shores of life are shifting
Every year;
And we are seaward drifting
Every year;
Old places, changing fret us,
The living more forget us,
There are fewer to regret us,
Every year.

But the truer life draws nigher
Every year;
And its morning star climbs higher
Every year;
Earth's hold on us grows slighter,
And the heavy burden lighter,
And the dawn immortal brighter
Every year.

THE GOLD OF CHICKAREE.

BY

SUSAN and ANNA WARNER.

AUTHORS OF

"WIDE, WIDE WORLD," and "DOLLARS AND CENTS," "WYCH HAZEL," etc.

CHAPTER XII.

If Mr. Rollo was good at reading faces, he might see that remarks about him were considered quite too much for his own personal property to be repeated to anybody in the world but himself. Wych Hazel sat silent, stirring her coffee.

"We are ready to hear the rest," he remarked with a smile. "Go on to the broken arm. How did you get hold of that?"

"One of the children came for you. And somebody had to go," she answered simply.

"And 'somebody' had to keep the broken arm in place, I suppose. But how came you to think of doing that?" said Rollo, who all the while was looking after the comfort of his two guests in his own fashion of quick-eyed ministry.

"I did not, till I had the child in my lap," said Hazel; "and then I remembered all of a sudden something in one of my old Edgeworth story books. So I tried, and succeeded."

"I wish every one read story books to as good purpose," said Dr. Arthur. "There is no describing from what you saved the child. But at first I suppose she made great resistance?"

"Very great."—Hazel did not want to enlarge upon that part of the subject. And here Reo entered.

"Ha, Reo! are you made up for your journey already?" said Rollo. "You can report to Mrs. Bywank that Miss Wych was too much fatigued to take the drive home; and bring the carriage over in the morning."

Wych Hazel looked up, but her courage failed her for a protest. She was obliged to let the order stand.

The fire was bright, the coffee was excellent, the little party so oddly thrown together were happy in mutual confidence and sympathy. Such hours are not too common, and a certain kindly recognition of this one sat upon every face. Gyda was busy preparing a room for Miss Kennedy and had not joined them.

"How does the work of the world look to you, Arthur, from this corner?" said Dane, when they had subsided a little from supper to the consideration of each other.

"Every spot of true Christian work is a centre," said his friend. "The 'corners' are for

darkness—not light. Work is the most enticing thing in the world to me, Dane!"

"Gyda's fireside was the corner I meant,—it's not dark just now!—and I was thinking, that from this nook of quiet the work looks easy. So it is! It is a hand to hand and foot to foot battle; but it is easy to follow the captain that one loves."

"I don't know that it is always easy," said Dr. Arthur; "but it can be done. Once in a while, you know, we are sent to carry a redoubt with only his orders before us. The Lord himself seems to be in quite another part of the field."

"That is, to those who do not know."

"Of course. I speak only of the seeming. But I like the fight, and I like the struggle. I like to measure battlements and prepare my scaling ladders, and lead a forlorn hope. It suits me, I believe."

"Battlements?" Hazel repeated. "Do you mean heights of difficulty?"

"Guarded by depths of sin," said Dr. Arthur.

Hazel looked from one to the other. Yes, she could like that too, if she were a man. How much could she do, being a woman?

"And that is all seeming too, Arthur," his friend went on. "Really, the fighter need never be out of that 'feste Burg.' I was thinking just now not only that work looks easy, but that it looks small. Individual effort, I mean; the utmost that any one man can do. It is a mere speck. The living waters that shall be 'a river to swim in,' are very shallow yet; and where the fishers are to stand and cast their nets, it is a waste of barrenness. You have never been on the shores of the Dead Sea, Arthur; you do not know how a little thread of green on the mountain side shews where a spring of sweet water runs down through the waste."

"What then, Mr. Rollo?" said Wych Hazel. "It is such a tiny thread of life upon the universal brown death."

"Is that what the world looks like to you?" said Hazel, wondering.

"And the work is even far smaller than that, if you look at it in its minute details. Did you ever read the life of Agnes Jones, Arthur?"

"Yes."

"Prim lent me the book; and I found a good word in it the other day. The writer says, I cannot give you the exact words,—'If we do every little thing that comes to us, God may out of our many littles make a great whole.' Therein lies the very truth of our work. It is so in Morton Hollow. Not building schoolhouses or making villages; anybody can do that; it is the word of interest to one, the word of sympathy to another; the holding a broken arm; giving help and refreshment in individual cases. Love, in short, like the sun, working softly and everywhere. As those threads of green on the mountain side are made up of multitudinous tiny leaves and mosses, nourished by countless invisible drops of spray."

"Working in all sorts of ways," said the doctor, while Hazel sat thinking of the green that was beginning to line the banks of Morton Hollow. "You may notice that a real spring goes literally wherever it can. Men may wall in with stone channels, or force it into the air; but let it alone, it follows every possible opening. The deep main stream, and the little side rills, and the single drops that go each to a single leaf."

Rollo looked up and smiled. "There is Gyda coming to fetch you, Hazel."

"Well," said Hazel. "And you will go on talking all sorts of things that I ought to hear."

She rose up and stood looking down into the fire. The other two rose also and stood looking at her. It was a pretty picture. Gyda, a little apart, watched them all with her little bright eyes.

"But," Hazel began again,—"to do that,—for every little drop to do that—there must be a head of water. It is not the mere trickling down of something which happens to be at the top!"—Whereupon the little fingers took an extra knot.

"Each drop may do the ministry of one, may it not?" said Rollo. "You need not count the drops. The only thing is that they be living water."

"Yes, the living water comes with a will. I remember—in Mme. Lasalle's brook—how busy the drops were. Not in a hurry, but in such sweet haste."

"True!" said Dr. Arthur. "Each with a clear bright purpose, if not a plan."

"Perhaps, best not the plan," said Rollo.

She stood gravely thinking for a moment, then looked up and shook hands with Dr. Arthur, wishing him good night. But no words came when she gave her hand to Mr. Rollo; only—perhaps in default of words—a beautiful, vivid blush.

The room to which the old Norsewoman conducted her was a very plain little place, with whitewashed walls and the simplest of furniture. Gyda manifested some concern lest her guest should suffer for want of a fire. "But the gentlemen had to have the other room," she said.

"O the fire is no matter," said Hazel. "But where do you sleep—with such a houseful?"

"I have my little nest just by, my lady. I'd be glad to keep it! And yet this is a strange place for my lad to have his home; and it's been his home now for a year nearly. How much longer will I keep him, my lady?"

Gyda asked the most tremendous questions with a sort of privileged simplicity; she looked now for her answer.

"Keep him?"—Hazel repeated the words in a maze.

"Yes, my lady. I know I must lose my lad from this home; but when is it to be?"

"A great while—I don't know—nobody knows," said Hazel, very much disturbed. "Nobody thinks anything about it yet. So you need not even recollect it, Mrs. Boerresen."

Gyda looked at her with a tender, incredulous, pleased smile upon her face. "Do you think he will wait a great while, my lady?" she said. And then she came up and kissed Wych Hazel's hand, and went away.

CHAPTER XIII.

UNDER THE CHESTNUT TREES.

Mr. Falkirk did not go out to breakfast that Sunday morning; and no one at Chickaree but the two old retainers knew how Miss Wych had tired herself, nor where she had rested overnight. Monday came and went in uneventful rain, and Tuesday was the day of the party in the woods.

A simple enough affair,—just chestnuts and lunch; but rarely had the young lady of the domain been so hard to please in the matter of her dress. For words do leave their footsteps, drive them out as we will; and this Prim's words had done. Not quite according to Prim's intent, however; for the one clear idea in Wych Hazel's mind, was that Mr. Rollo was (or would be when he noticed it at all) dissatisfied with her dress. And that was precisely the line in which she had never before met criticism. Hazel took off one colour after another, until Phoebe was in despair and Mrs. Bywank turned away and smiled out of the window.

"And dear me, ma'am," cried Phoebe at last "there comes a carriage!"

Hazel looked towards the window, caught the old housekeeper's eye, and suddenly embellishing her proceedings with a pair of scarlet cheeks, she opened another press, seized the first white dress that came to hand, and put it on without more ado. A dainty white piqué, all on the wing with delicate embroideries and lace, and broad sash ends of the colour red gold.

"But, Miss Wych!" Mrs. Bywank remonstrated. "The wind is very fresh."

Wych Hazel made another plunge after seal-skin jacket and cap; turned over a box of gloves till she matched her ribbands; gave Mrs. Bywank a laugh and a flash from her eyes, and was off. But that carriage it seemed had rolled by, and there was no one at the meeting place in the woods when the girl seated herself there to await her guests.

"Do you think Dane will like to have you dress as you do?"—so ran her thoughts. "Well,—how do I dress?"

She sat looking into the soft silence of the October air, feeling that for her life was changing fast. The old bounds to her action had somehow now stretched out to take her will; her own pleasure now often in the mood to wait, uncertain of its choice, till she knew the pleasure of somebody else. There was the least bit of rebellion at this here and there; and yet on the whole Wych Hazel by no means wished herself back in the old times when nobody cared. Ah, how lonely she had been!—and how full the world seemed now, with that secret sense of happiness pervading all things! Meanwhile, as Prim had said, what was she going to do about dress?

It happened that the first interruption to her meditations came from a visitor who did not intend to be a guest. No less than Gov. Powder; a portly, gentlemanly, somewhat imposing personage, who was less known to society than were his wife and daughters. However, without wife and daughters here he was.

"Good morning, my dear, good morning!" he began blandly, shaking Wych Hazel's hand with a sort of paternal-official benignity. "Your guardian has not come upon the scene yet? I thought I should find him here. Why how cool you look for October!"

"Yes, sir—I like to look cool," said Hazel, conscious that she could not accomplish the feat. "Especially when I have the world on my hands. Just now I am undefended, Gov. Powder; but I suppose both my guardians will be here by and by."

"What do you do with two guardians, eh? Keep 'em both in good humour?"

"One at a time is as much as I often try for," said Hazel. "But Gov. Powder, I wish you would let me have a little fun right over the heads of them both."

"I?" said the ex-governor, somewhat surprised. "Eh? It does not often happen to me now-a-days to have the honour of such an appeal—unless from my own mad daughters. In what direction do you want me to come over your guardians, Miss Kennedy? and which of them?"

"O it is nothing mad at all, in my case," said Hazel. "And neither of them must know. But will you walk a little way down the wood with me, sir? I did not want them even to see a consultation."

A man must be much set in his own purposes who would not go more than "a little way" after such a voice; and Gov. Powder was but an ordinary man. So, finding the white ruffles a very pretty sort of a convoy, the ex-governor strolled down among the golden hickories and ruddy oaks, and never once guessed that he had a siren at his elbow.

"Last winter," Hazel began, speaking fast now, to keep pace with the minutes, "I had quite a large legacy left to me."

"Somebody who wanted to protect you against misfortune, eh?" said the governor.

"Or who did not believe in guardians, sir; for mine were to have no control over it whatever."

"I see!" said the governor. "Pocket money to purchase sugar-plums."

"But perhaps you know, sir, that we girls like sugar-plums of many sorts."

"Miss Kennedy, do you know my daughters?"

"Well, sir," said Hazel weighing her words, wondering to herself whether diplomats get along without telling fibs; and if they do, how they do,—it would be quite a novelty of a bonbon to invest this money in some splendid way, all by myself. Not the whole of it, you know, sir,—only a few thousands." She was so eager! and so terribly afraid of shewing her eagerness.

"That is a sort of bonbon that is very tempting to old fellows like me; but, pardon me, I should think it was more in Mr. Falkirk's way than in yours?"

"Mr. Falkirk may admire it afterwards, if he chooses, but I want to make the investment. And I learned from somebody," said Hazel careful of her words, "that the best thing I could do, was to buy that bit of land of yours, Gov. Powder, lying just at the head of the Hollow. It is not worth more than twenty thousand, is it?" she went on, suggestively. "And I was told, sir, that you were ready to dispose of it."

"Somebody spoke too fast," said the governor, looking unmistakably surprised this time. "Really, I am in no hurry to dispose of that piece of land. Its value is in its water power. You don't want to build mills, do you?"

"No, sir,—the whole of my legacy would not cover that. And I would rather not invest more than twenty thousand at first."

"Twenty thousand" has a pleasant sound to a man with "mad" daughters, and other expenses! Nevertheless the governor looked steadily into the face of facts.

"My dear Miss Kennedy, I must remark to you, that if you do not want to put mills on that ground, it would be a very poor investment for your twenty thousand. The water power is all the value there. And Paul Charteris has been trying to get it of me for his own purposes. Now I know what he wants; but I do not see what you want with land in Mill Hollow."

"Why, Governor Powder," said Hazel, "Mr. Falkirk would go to sleep in luxury, if he could only see why I want things! One might as well be a man—or Mr. Paul Charteris—at once!"

"Isn't Paul Charteris a man?" inquired Gov. Powder laughing. Hazel laughed too, but returned to the charge.

"I shall not invest in him," she said, "even so much as an opinion. What I want is the land, and the water power and the fun."

Gov. Powder stepped back and took a survey of the little lady.

"You mustn't break your teeth with a bonbon," said he. "Suppose you let me speak to my friend Mr. Falkirk about it?"

"No indeed, sir! Mr. Falkirk never approves of anything he does not suggest himself. All great men have their weak points, Gov. Powder," said Wych Hazel.

"Well, let us say Rollo then. I think he is a wild man with his own fortune; but I reckon he would look out for yours. By the way! he may want the land for himself? eh?"

"Of course he may," said Wych Hazel, "but not half so much as I do. To consult him, would be saying no to me, Gov. Powder. And you know you are going to say yes."

"I don't understand doing business with ladies!" said the poor governor, shaking his head. "I can get along with my own sort. Miss Kennedy, there are certain complications, which I cannot explain to you. Paul Charteris has been at me to get those very acres that you want. What would he say, if I threw him over and sold them to you? I guess you must let me settle with him first."

"Tell him you sold the land to somebody who offered more," said Hazel. "That is easy enough. How much would he give, sir?"

"Ah but, the thing is, there are complications,—there are complications," repeated the governor. "Give? He don't want to give above the half of your twenty thousand; and I couldn't in conscience take the whole. The land is not worth so much as that, Miss Kennedy. But young ladies don't understand complications," he added with a smile. "I can't just throw Paul over, without a word."

"Push him off," said Hazel. "Nobody can teach me anything about complications!—Push him off, sir. Just give him a negative and do not say why."

"What do you want it for?"

"Just now," said Hazel, "I want to get ahead of Mr. Charteris."

"I may tell him I have an offer of twelve thousand?" said the governor, who was badly in want of money.

"Certainly, sir. If you will first say three words to make sure Mr. Charteris will not get ahead of me."

"Well, well!" said the governor—"here come people, Miss Kennedy,—he shall not get ahead of you. At any rate, I'll settle nothing with him without letting you know. He can't outbid you—you're pretty safe. Do I understand that you want this affair kept private, between you and me?"

"O yes, sir!" cried Hazel softly,—it is to be terribly private. And if you will only let women vote, Gov. Powder, I will certainly vote