

THE VOYAGERS.

From the depths of the Unknown,
From the throne of the Throne,
All these countless millions come.

Launched out into childhood's sea,
Charged with joy and misery,
Struggling for supremacy.

Bearing in their childish eyes—
In their quaint thought replies,
Great unfathomed mysteries.

Onward come with youthful years,
Grander hopes and darker fears,
Interspersed with smiles and tears.

Gliding into fane's realm,
With no hand to guide the helm,
Passions ofttime overwhelm.

When life's labor doth begin,
Some to honor, some to sin,
Rapidly are ushered in.

Some will care for naught but pleasure,
Some will strive for worldly treasure,
Some seek glory in full measure.

Some will journey, ever singing,
Radiant hearts about them clinging,
Glorious fruits thus homeward bringing.

Some from their abundant store
Will so help the sorrowing poor,
That they'll hunger never more.

Year by year will pass away,
Bringing age and slow decay,
Bringing locks of silver gray.

Then the shadows slowly lengthen,
Strangely then the pathways darken,
As with eager souls they hearken

To the rustlings in the air,
To the last adieu of care,
To the pastor's parting prayer.

To the whispering from the river,
To the heart's instinctive quiver,
To the voice, "I will deliver."

Then the soul, on angel's wing,
Seeks for life's eternal spring—
Seeks the new awakening.

Hears the greeting from the Throne,
"O my child, well hast thou done!
To thy Father's mansion come."

ETHEL'S FLIRTATION.

"Then there's Captain Crawford. Of him it behooves us to speak with bated breath. He is fairly good looking, but thinks himself an Adonis, has a comical dry way of saying things which makes you laugh, and is agreeable to a certain extent, but believes himself to be an original genius who would take the world by storm if—mark the 'if'—he thought it worth so taking. He is also rich, and is possessed by the idea that every mother wants him for one of her daughters, and that all the daughters are in love with him; therefore, as the world will generally take you at your own valuation, providing you have sufficient confidence on the subject—which he certainly has—he is regarded with awe and admiration by lots of women who ought to know better. Of course he is a flirt, though he flirts in a manner quite peculiar to himself. It is against his principles ever to put himself out for anything or anybody; but, coming, as to-night, on a party of strangers, he will look about, know at a glance which woman will be the most likely to amuse him, and, tacking himself on to her with slow deliberation, will gracefully permit her to do so for as long or short a time as she may happen to be easily get-at-able. In this way he has broken a good many hearts, and boasts, or rather doesn't boast—for that isn't in his line—but contrives to imply, by the calm superiority of his manner, that his own has never been touched."

This description of one of one of the guests at a country house was given by its youngest daughter to another guest, a fair, pretty girl with pale yellow wavy hair and big blue eyes fringed by long black lashes. She was sitting on the hearthrug, amidst an untidy confusion of outdoor garments and wraps, and was busily employed in curling the feathers of her hat. Before she could answer a third girl looked up from the flowers she was arranging in bouquets and remarked:

"Alice hates him."

"So I perceive," replied the golden-haired damsel on the hearthrug; and, looking up mischievously into Alice's face, she added, "Are you one of the victims of this hero's peculiar style of flirtation?"

"Oh, dear no," Alice answered, with perfect candor. "I don't amuse him; so he treats me with great civility, because he considers it due to himself as a gentleman and one who can trace his family back to one of Boadicea's followers—none of your vulgar modern Conqueror's for him!"

"I shall make it my business, as long as I am here, to take him down," remarked the owner of the blue eyes.

"I think, Miss Ethel, you had better leave him alone," said Flora, still busy with the flowers. "Alice has been hardly fair to him, for he is undoubtedly popular, both with men and women."

"Besides," chimed Alice, "he won't give you the chance. You are not his style."

"Pooh!" retorted Ethel. "I shall find the chance; and, as for not being his style, girls, before he leaves this house he shall propose to me, and I shall refuse him!"

The sisters were so scandalized by this an-

nouncement that it was some time before they could find words to express their horror; at last Flora said:

"I hope, Ethel, you don't intend to become fast."

"Fast! No; but I intend to confer a benefit on society by taking down this man who thinks so much of himself."

"You will be clever if you do," muttered Alice.

"I will. Oh, won't I dance upon his feelings, Alice! You may come and listen through the keyhole to his proposal."

Flora's face expressed strong disapproval; but Alice asked:

"But how are you going to set about it?"

"Oh, when I have met Captain Crawford, and understand him a little, I shall see! Thackeray says—oh, bother, I forget what he does say—but it's something about any woman being able to marry any man. Now I don't want to marry this creature; I only—Ah, there's the dressing-bell, and I haven't unpacked a thing!" Springing up with astonishing alacrity, she gathered her wraps together, rattling on—"I'm sure I've forgotten the key of my box! Oh, dear, I wish I could pick up a rich husband! I do hate unpacking. I shall be late for dinner. Happy thought! I will be late, and burst suddenly on his admiring gaze alone in my glory, instead of dawning slowly on his perceptions among everybody else. The old room, I suppose, Flora?"

Away she went, dropping veil, gloves, and various small articles before she even reached the door. But Ethel Raine, though she talked so recklessly in private, was usually tolerably well-behaved in public, and nothing was farther from her thoughts than to be intentionally late for dinner. Therefore she was much dismayed to hear the bell ring before she was ready; and, when she crept into the dining-room after every one had gone in, it was with a considerably heightened color and a subdued manner that contrasted curiously with the bravado airs she had given herself up stairs. When she recovered from her confusion, she found herself being greeted with some effusion by her left-hand neighbor, a youth just transplanted from Eton to Cambridge, and consequently filled with a great idea of his own importance; but he had as fervent an admiration for Ethel as was consistent with the still more fervent admiration he at present entertained for himself.

All was fish that came to Ethel's net. She was always ready to be amused by anything or anybody; so she turned her blue eyes on Tom Grainger, and forgot all about Capt. Crawford, till, in a pause in her lively chatter, she found Alice looking at her meaningly from the opposite side of the table. Following the direction of her eyes, she took a survey of the gentleman on her right, and it suddenly dawned on her that he was the famous Captain Crawford. This discovery filled her with the liveliest delight. He, however, took no notice of her, so she had to content herself with listening to his conversation with the lady he had taken in to dinner, which she did with so much interest that she had very little attention left to bestow on Tom Grainger. He wondered a little at her change of manner, but did not altogether object to it, as it gave him the opportunity of talking a little about himself, which Miss Ethel had not hitherto allowed him to do.

Apparently Captain Crawford found the handsome widow he had taken in to dinner decidedly amusing, for he sat down beside her afterward in the drawing-room, and never stirred for the rest of the evening. Ethel, observing all this, put him out of her thoughts for the present, and abandoned herself to enjoyment in whatever shape it might come.

Alice Layton followed Ethel to her room that night, to remark mockingly:

"Well, you haven't done much yet with Captain Crawford!"

"Oh, I've been taking his measure!" Ethel replied. "I have it now on my fingers' ends."

"He doesn't admire you. I heard him tell mamma that you were too small, and that blue-eyed women were always humbugs."

"He shall find out the truth of that to his cost, and admire me, too, before he leaves the house."

But Alice shook her head.

"I'm afraid Mrs. Lord is already in possession of the field. What will you do about her?"

"The widow! Leave her alone, to be sure! You don't suppose I am going to lower myself by quarreling over any man with any woman! As long as Mrs. Lord can keep him, she may; but I have taken his measure, as I said, and I think—recollect I have the reputation of a beauty, and, though he may not admire me, that goes a long way with a man—I rather think a judicious mixture of politely-veiled indifference and a small amount of skillfully spread butter, together with a studiously concealed tendresse for somebody else, unknown, will settle him."

This struck Alice as being nonsense; but it also had a worldly ring in it that, Flora not being there to do so, she felt it her duty to reprove.

"You talk so wildly, Ethel dear. I don't think mamma would like to hear you."

"Well, she doesn't hear me," replied the incorrigible Ethel. "And now good night. I can't afford to lose my beauty sleep, for I want to look my best to-morrow."

And she did look her best the next morning, though her dress was only a plain dark serge; for Ethel was an orphan, without a relative in the world except her grandfather, with whom

she lived, and who was by no means overburdened with this world's goods; therefore she had not the means of dressing smartly; but she had the knack of making everything she wore look nice.

Even Captain Crawford, in spite of his professed antipathy to blue eyes, could hardly have helped being pleased with her appearance, when, on coming out, he found her standing on the doorstep watching the party mount.

"Are not you going to ride, Miss Raine?" he asked.

"No; I'm afraid."

"That's a pity. You lose a great deal of pleasure."

"Do I?" she questioned listlessly, all her interest apparently centered on the horses; then, glancing indifferently at him—"I see you are got up for riding. I shouldn't have thought you were a hunting man."

"Why not?"—a little gleam of triumph coming over his face at the reflection that she must have been observing him pretty closely.

But she had no idea of allowing him to cherish this pleasing delusion, and answered carelessly, her eyes still idly roving round:

"Oh, I don't know! Everybody one sees, if only for a moment, leaves some sort of impression on one's mind. I suppose that is the one you have left on mine."

"That I am not a hunting man? Curious, isn't it?"

"Yes," then, as if suddenly aroused to a consciousness of what she was saying—"Oh, dear, what am I saying! I'm sure I don't know!"

"Where is your horse, Captain Crawford?" cried Mrs. Lord, who, mounted on a fine animal lent her by a friend in the neighborhood, and attired in an exquisitely-fitting habit, looked remarkably handsome.

"Coming," he said laconically, and then, to Ethel, with a glance toward the widow, "Admire her!"

He looked down at her with evident curiosity for the answer.

"I do indeed; she is very handsome."

There was not a trace of reluctance or pretended enthusiasm in her tone. It was simply the natural statement of a fact. His horse being led round at this moment, she disappeared within doors without seeing him mount; nevertheless she noted from the window that he rode down the avenue beside Mrs. Lord.

The party returned very early, all more or less cross, having had a bad day. About five o'clock Captain Crawford strolled into the drawing-room, in search of amusement. There was Mrs. Lord ready for him, arrayed in her most fascinating of tea-gowns; but perhaps he had had enough of her society in the hunting-field, for he did not take the chair beside her, and, declining tea, went on into the inner room, where he found Ethel buried among the cushions of a huge arm chair, reading a novel, from which she merely looked up on his entrance, and then took no further notice of him.

"You seem very comfortable," he said at last, when he found that she had no intention of starting the conversation.

"I am, thank you," she replied, just glancing at him over the top of her book, as he leaned against the mantelpiece, and then continuing to read.

Captain Crawford was beginning to have a notion that this little lady, though she was small, fair and blue-eyed, might be able to amuse him if she choose; but she evidently did not choose, and he was much surprised thereat. Without being quite so vain a man as Alice Layton had been pleased to represent him, he was accustomed to be petted by the fair sex, and, though he had occasionally experienced hard snubbing, this careless indifference was something new—so new that, in order to fathom it, he exerted himself to make another remark:

"What have you been doing with yourself all day?"

"Meditating"—this time not even raising her eyes.

"Meditating?"

"Yes—on my ball dress for to-morrow."

Then there was silence again, till Ethel looked up with an impatient air that said plainly, "I wish you would go away and leave me in peace," which roused a spirit of opposition in him, determining him to stay; but he could not make up his mind to go so far as to offer another observation. How much longer Ethel would have read, and Captain Crawford have stood before the fire, glancing at her furtively and stroking his moustache, it is impossible to say, for, after the silence had lasted about two minutes, Mrs. Lord came in. She looked suspiciously at Ethel, but addressed herself to Captain Crawford.

"We are going to play billiards; won't you come, Captain Crawford? Indeed you must; we cannot do without you."

"Can't you? Miss Raine, do you play billiards?"

"Sometimes."

"You had better come too."

"No, not this evening."

"Oh, you must!" said Alice, who had just entered. "You really can play well."

"I can't. My heroine is being pursued by a wild bull, and the hero, who has only one leg, is looking on helplessly over the hedge. I really can't leave them in that deplorable position without knowing what becomes of them."

"No, indeed," said Mrs. Lord, with great enthusiasm. "I never can lay down a novel when once I get fairly into it."

In point of fact, she never took one up, nor a book of any kind except a fashionable magazine; and yet she contrived somehow to make herself agreeable to men; and she walked Captain Crawford off now before he could say another word, Alice lingering to observe:

"I don't think you will succeed at this rate."

"Indeed! That you opinion, is it? But, Alice, you maligned that poor man dreadfully. I rather—no, I don't; but he is rather nice."

"Oh, Ethel, Ethel," began Alice, but, hearing herself called, ran off, without bestowing the advice she had intended for her friend.

The men were all out shooting the best part of the next day, so that even Mrs. Lord had very little opportunity of monopolizing Captain Crawford. However, when she came down dressed for the ball, she was indeed arrayed for conquest—in pale yellow satin, with diamonds sparkling in her dark hair. Ethel was all in white, and looked her very best; but, alas, her very best faded into insignificance besides the widow's stately beauty! But she was in exceedingly high spirits, so much so that Mrs. Layton, who took a motherly interest in the lonely girl whom nobody kept in any sort of order, deemed it best to take her with the matrons in the landau, sending her own staid girls in the omnibus with the rest of the party. Ethel was inclined to sulk in consequence of this arrangement; but, as her companions did not take the least notice, she found it expedient to recover her temper before they arrived at their destination. She danced the first waltz with Tom Grainger, and saw that Captain Crawford had Mrs. Lord for a partner. Everybody who did not know was asking everybody else the name of the woman in yellow satin and diamonds; and all who did happen to know gave themselves important airs in consequence. In fact, Mrs. Lord carried all before her; and Captain Crawford did not exactly dance attendance on her, but followed lazily in her train of admirers.

A conviction began to force itself on Ethel's mind that this ball would not be the scene of unequalled pleasure she had expected—not for lack of partners—she always had plenty of them; but even a superfluity of partners is not always sufficient for happiness, though no doubt to a well regulated mind it ought to be; Ethel's, however, was not a well regulated mind. For some time she conducted herself with great propriety, returning to her chaperon immediately after each dance. Once she was rewarded, if she considered it in that light, by Captain Crawford's sitting down beside her and inquiring how she was enjoying herself, to which she, of course, replied that she had never enjoyed herself more in her life; and then, after offering in perfect good faith to introduce some young men to her if she were not dancing enough, he strolled away to Mrs. Lord.

After this Ethel threw propriety to the winds, and plunged into a frantic flirtation with a weak-eyed and weaker-minded young man, whose head she so completely turned by her smiles and the liveliness of her conversation that for the next three weeks he spent all his spare time imitating affectionate epistles to her, in which he offered to lay his life, with all he possessed, at her feet, never having courage to send any of them, but always carrying one in his pocket, so that, in the event of being suddenly inspired with the requisite courage, he should have it at hand to dispatch at once. Ethel was routed out of a corner, where she had been sitting for about a quarter of an hour encouraging the unfortunate youth to talk nonsense to her, by Captain Crawford, who said a little satirically:

"I'm sorry to disturb you, Miss Raine; but all our party are ready to go, and Mrs. Layton is looking for you."

Up jumped Ethel, and, with a cool nod to her victim, took Captain Crawford's arm, remarking gayly as they went back to the ball-room:

"Now I shall get a wiggling."

"Pon my word, I think you deserve it," he said dryly.

"Captain Crawford did not dance with you at all, did he?" inquired Flora, as she and her sister paused at Ethel's door to say good night.

"Of course he didn't," said Alice; "he is a great deal too vain of his height and his fine figure to make himself look ridiculous by dancing with so small a person."

"I got on very well without him," Ethel said, with a little toss of her head, but something very like tears in her eyes.

"He don't really care for dancing," pursued Alice; "but he thinks he and Mrs. Lord make such a handsome couple that he does not object to showing off with her."

"Oh, I'm sick of Mrs. Lord and her smart gowns!" cried Ethel, pettishly. "Good night!" and she entered her room, slamming the door in her friends' faces with very scant courtesy.

Most of the party left the next day, with the exception of Mrs. Lord, who was going on to a house in the neighborhood, and Captain Crawford, who was to remain for a shooting party on Wednesday and Thursday. Ethel always came for an indefinite period. Mrs. Lord kept pretty strict guard over Captain Crawford all day, but went to her room to rest after tea under the delusion that her captive was safe in the smoking-room till dinner time; but he appeared in the drawing-room ten minutes after she had left it.

"Will you come and play billiards, Miss Raine?"

"Yes, I don't mind," Ethel said, her tone very demure, but her eyes sparkling.

"Miss Alice is coming to mark for us. I hear you play very well."