

IN LIQUOR.

A mouse one day on frolic bent,
About a brewery roaming,
Into a beer-butt sudden went,
And called, with sighs and groaning,
Into a oat which passed that way,
"Though to its sight most hateful,
"Sweet puss, come lift me out, I pray,
And I'll prove ever grateful."

"How would it help you in the least,"
Replied Grimalkin, grinning,
"When I at once should on you feast—
And where would be the sinning?"
"And better so than here to drown,
Dear puss—so help me speedy,
And I'll to you my life pay down,
And will not call you greedy."

"Quick, quick, or you will be too late!
I perish, I am freezing!"
Puss helped him out, but, luckless fate,
The beer fumes set her sneezing.

The mouse she dropped, which sped away,
And in its hole safe nestled;
Puss, disappointed of her prey,
With craft and anger wrestled.

"Come from that hole," she cried, "and roam
With me in regions upper;"
"Excuse me, puss, I'll keep at home—
So seek elsewhere your supper."

"You cheating rascal, think, oh, think,
You promised I should eat you
If I would help you; now you shrink—
Come out, let me entreat you."

"I know I promised," mouse said,
"Yet wonder not nor bicker,
For when such promise it was made
You know I was 'in liquor.'"

WHAT RELATION.

When Mary Abwell received the intelligence that an old uncle, dying, had made her heiress to one of the finest and most valuable estates in Australia, she and her young husband concluded to visit it. For Charles Abwell, though in comfortable circumstances in his native land, was yet only the second son of a nobleman, and as, at the time we write of, it was a disgrace for the son of a noble to engage in trade, and he had no fancy for the ministry or military, his proud, energetic nature felt a yearning to escape from the thralldom of lethargy forced upon it by birth, and seek a new country where no honourable employment of brain and hands would be considered a disgrace. His brave little wife sympathized with him in his yearning for a broader sphere of action, and so, with their household effects, they took passage for themselves and their little ten-year-old daughter, Mima, in a vessel bound for Sydney.

A single day, however, before the sailing of the vessel, and after they had taken leave of their friends, and gone aboard, a message came to Charles Abwell announcing the probably fatal illness of his father. The dying man pleaded with his son to come to him once again for a last farewell.

The grief-stricken son could not refuse. A hurried consultation was had between him and his wife, at which it was determined that the young wife and child should continue their journey to their new home, Mary's presence there being required at once, to properly secure to her the legacy from her uncle, while Charles should go to his father's bedside, receive his last blessing, and rejoin his family by the first vessel sailing thereafter.

The parting between these loving hearts, though it seemed to them their separation could only exist a few months at the most, was indeed a sad one.

Mary Abwell and little Mima had a prosperous voyage; they safely reached their new home and were enchanted with it. And now the days passed to them in familiarizing themselves to their new, strange, happy lives, and picturing the delight of the loving husband and father when he came to them.

But he did not come. Instead of his own beloved form, there came intelligence that the vessel in which he took passage had been lost, with all on board. Ah, those were fearful days of agony that followed, to the poor, weeping, widowed mother in her darkened chamber and to the little awe-stricken child, who realized that something awful had happened, but could not comprehend the nature of her loss.

"He will come to me; he is not drowned; his dear eyes will yet look into my own, or upon the mound marking my last resting-place," the poor, weeping wife would constantly repeat, even when months of waiting and watching piled upon each other, forming years.

Mary Abwell realized that her own life could not be a long one, and through these sorrowful years her one joy was in training her child's mind and person to every sweet, virtuous trait, impressing upon her strength of purpose and self-reliance, that, when left alone in the world, she would not be helpless.

Mima Abwell was in her twentieth year, a lovely girl, noble, brave and womanly, when her mother, feeling that her life's mission was done, went quietly to her eternal rest. Even in her last breath her faith in the one inspiration of her life all these years found its expression to her weeping child.

"Your father will come," she said; "watch for him, and tell him that I waited here as long as I could, hoping to meet him."

Her presentiment proved itself true.

The flowers planted by the loving hands of Mima over the mound that marked her mother's resting-place were blooming their first time when a foreign letter came to the faithful heart ever at rest. It devolved on Mima to open it.

How powerless are words to express her emotions, her bewilderment and her intense flood of joy, when these written lines revealed to her the knowledge that her father, mourned so long as dead, was alive, and would soon be with her. His letter revealed all that was mysterious in his long silence.

When the vessel that, more than ten years previous, was conveying Charles Abwell to Australia, to rejoin his wife and daughter, foundered in the great ocean, he clung to a floating spar, and for many fearful hours of thirst and hunger and suffering he was beaten about from wave to wave.

On the second day, when life seemed hopeless to him, and reason had almost deserted him, a vessel bore down upon him, and he was plucked out of the cruel waters, only to face a more cruel fate.

His rescuers were pirates, and in their stronghold he served as a slave for ten long years, each day being a succession of abuse and suffering more pitiless than death itself.

The hope of escape, the hope to once more clasp his wife and child to his bosom, gave him strength to live on, and deliverance came at last. His letter to his dead wife was dated from his native England, and it terminated with the glad intelligence that as soon as he had regained sufficient strength to undertake the sea voyage he would hasten to his wife and child.

It was a hard task to write the words that must add a great, life-long sorrow to the awful weight of woe this poor, frail, suffering man had borne. Amidst tears of love and sympathy, Mima revealed in tenderest words to him the death of her mother, telling him of her patient love and trust during all the waiting years, and of her last message for him. And then she told him how fondly she, as his daughter, loved him, and how much she needed his loving presence and counsel, begging him to hasten to her.

In due time an answer came from him, assuring her that she was the only dear link binding his heart to the earth now. He would hasten to her, that he might bestow upon her the fondest love of a father, and be near his wife's last resting-place. He would leave by the first vessel following that which carried the letter to her.

"It is more than ten years, Mima, since you last looked into your father's face. Do you think you will know him?"

The speaker was Caird Meredyth, a young man of twenty-five years, son of a neighbour, and a dear friend and welcome visitor always to Mima Abwell, as he had also been to her mother during her life, although, after all, in a different way. For the sweet experience which rounds out and makes perfect in loveliness every woman's nature, the experience without which her life is a failure, had already come to Mima. She loved Caird Meredyth; he was worthy of her love, and returned it with a passion as strong and pure.

"Know my dear father!" she exclaimed, in astonishment at his query. "I could recognize him among a thousand, I feel certain."

"Then you must have a distinct recollection of his features as you saw them last, dear Mima. Please describe him to me, for am I not most interested in him, next to yourself?"

She looked bewildered; how could she describe him when her only remembrance, being put to the test, was most vague and shadowy—the remembrance, simply, of a face of noble outline, of soft, tender eyes, filled with honesty and sincerity, and of kind voice?

"His eyes will reveal him to me," she persisted; "then he will look so noble, so grand and self-reliant—so honorable, that I cannot mistake him. Surely, Caird, there must exist such an intuitive sympathy between us that we will be irresistibly drawn to each other."

He sighed deeply as he answered:
"I hope you are correct, Mima, but I cannot be anything but miserable until I know him. Have you thought, darling, that he may refuse to ratify the gift that you have given me of yourself—that he may deny me the privilege of soon calling you my wife?"

Her arms clung in a moment round his neck, on witnessing his distress, while she said, looking bravely into his eyes, for she loved too fondly, and was too pure and innocent to be ashamed of showing her affection.

"My father will be too noble, Caird, to be guilty of anything that would make his child miserable. Besides, I know he will be proud of you, for no one who knows you can help feeling so."

His hand, laid tenderly over her mouth, stopped the utterance of all else that she would honestly have added in the same strain, but her loving words were not without their effect upon the young man. He parted from his betrothed reassured and happy.

And she retired to her chamber, and quietly thought over all that her lover had said, going to sleep after it happy and without fear.

Nothing could have been more startling than the information that awaited her on opening her eyes the following morning. Her father had arrived during the night, and was in the library now waiting for her. How she robed herself, how she reached the threshold of that room holding her long lost parent, she never after could realize. There she stopped, clinging to the door for support, while she eagerly searched the face of the elderly man opposite her, who stood with

his outstretched arms and eager face, welcoming her.

But from that face and figure her eyes wandered searchingly, unsatisfied, around the room, coming back to it again with an awful depth of disappointment in her face.

"No, no, you are not my dear father," she said. "Oh, where is my father? Has he not come? Have they been deceiving me?"

And, with heart-breaking sobs, she turned to fly from the room.

"Mima, my daughter?" exclaimed the strange man, in sad reproach, "you deeply wound me by your conduct. Alas! have I, too, lost the love of my child? Have I been spared through so much suffering to feel the ungratefulness of the only object on earth I love? Cruel fate, why has life been preserved to me that I may only curse it?"

He sank into a chair, and, holding his face in his hands, wept bitterly.

Mima hesitated but a moment longer, and then springing to the side of the bowed form, wrapped her arms about it, exclaiming:

"Forgive me for my heartlessness. I did not mean to wound you, or ever give your cause to feel a sorrow. But it is all so sudden I cannot think—I cannot understand. Tell me, I pray you, as you hope for peace hereafter, are you indeed my own long-lost father? Oh, do not deceive me!"

The poor girl's pleadings would have touched the hardest heart, they were so pitiful.

He looked up reproachfully, his cheeks wet with tears.

"Alas! my daughter," he exclaimed, bitterly, "have you let the world usurp your mind so much as to wipe away from your memory all remembrance of my face? What stronger proof can you ask than which may be found in my looks?"

"Forgive me," he added, hurriedly, wrapping his arms around her, as he saw the pain his words occasioned her, "I was too hasty in condemning you, forgetting how the sufferings I have undergone must have changed my appearance. I have abundant proofs of my identity, dear child, but can you not recognize some familiar features in me?"

She looked long and searchingly into his face. "It is like, and yet not like," she murmured in a bewildered way.

Then with an effort she added,

"I may have been wilful, my father, but if you can forgive me and bear with me, you will at least find me a dutiful daughter. I do not know my own mind—I am bewildered. I need time to think over all this—time to grow familiar with your appearance and your tastes—time to know you. Bear with me, I pray you, if it is for months that I ask it, and surely the love and devotion that I had thought were already in my heart will come back and be yours."

He pressed her shrinking form to his breast, and kissed her, saying:

"The suddenness of my arrival and your long expectation and anxiety have overcome you, my dear child. Go now to your room, and rest yourself."

She tottered, rather than walked, away. When within her own room she paced its floor for hours, pressing her throbbing temples and trying to think, to reason, to understand. But ever before her, like a dreadful nightmare, was the memory of that face, like and yet so vastly unlike that which she expected to see in her father. The contour of the face was in some respects similar to her ideal face, but alas! there was no nobleness, no true bravery nor honesty, no gentleness nor forbearance in the small, cunning deceptive eyes and the thin, cruel, scornful lips of that man who called himself her father.

Then, and many times in every succeeding day during the following month, Mima would flee from his presence, look herself within her room, and throw herself down in the wild abandonment of grief, moaning:

"He is not my father! Oh, I cannot call him that!"

But quite as many times a day she censured herself, and wept bitter tears over what she termed her wilfulness in not giving him, without question, doubt or condition, the love of a daughter. Her life was indeed one of most pitiful misery, divided as it was between a desire to do her duty and a fearful horror of this man who claimed to be her father.

She might have learned in time to be more like a daughter to him but for certain outcroppings of his character, which manifested themselves after he had been established as master of his new home a week. He was tyrannical and cruel to the servants, who had been used only to kindness from Mima and her mother. He was parsimonious, treacherous and dishonest in his dealings. He began to be overbearing and unkind to Mima, often speaking rudely to her, and, when Caird Meredyth paid his usual visits, he was so boorish and ungentlemanly in his treatment of him as to make it almost unbearable to that proud-spirited youth. It was only, however, after he learned that Mima's sense of duty to him as her father was so great as to overcome her own yearnings that he forbade her from encouraging the attentions of Caird and treated her harshly.

The first month of life since the arrival of her parent was indeed a most sorrowful and bitter one to Mima.

Caird Meredyth was in agony over the way matters were progressing. He realized every time he saw Mima's sad face—which was seldom now, for he had almost ceased his visits to her home, that he might escape constant insults

from her father—that a few months more of such dreadful life to her would kill her.

Thinking it all over one evening, he determined to go over to Mima's home, knowing that her father would be absent on that evening, and attempt to induce her to become his wife at once, and thus secure his protection.

It was a lovely moonlit evening, and as he approached Mima's home he saw her on the verandah, and hastened his steps, feeling his heart beat faster and more joyfully as he approached the lovely girl. She did not see him; she seemed intent in thought, and he had planned how he would surprise her when, suddenly and with a startled scream, she sprang from her seat.

Looking hastily to perceive the cause of her alarm, he saw that a man in sailor's costume, had sprung from the shrubbery up the verandah steps to within a step or two of Mima.

Before Caird could carry out his purpose to spring upon him, thinking his intentions there not honest, the man spoke:

"Don't be afraid of me, Miss Mima," he began.

"What do you wish? I do not recognize you," Mima said, trembling with apprehension.

"Why, you see, miss, there's a poor old man lying over here who is very ill, and if you'd just come over and talk with him I know your sweet voice would do him good. When it bewitches young fellows out of their senses it might bewitch sense into the old man. Oh, what's that?"

Caird had laid his hand on the man's collar, and he showed every sign of terror and a strong desire to escape until he learned that his captor did not belong to the Abwell household.

"Won't you go, miss?" he continued, pleadingly.

"Yes, I will, hoping I may be of use to the poor sufferer," the brave girl answered. "Caird, you will accompany us?"

The man in great delight hastened away, the lovers closely following. He led them to a lonely spot on which stood a log hut, in which they found, stretched upon a pallet, the emaciated form of a man. His thin, worn face, and gray head and beard, were a sad enough spectacle, but when, awakening from a slumber by their entrance, and perceiving them, he sprang away in wildest terror from them, guarding himself behind the sailor and pleading piteously with the faithful fellow not to let those strange people take him away or harm him, they realized that his ailment was a mental one—that his reason was affected!

What was there in that sad, crazed face that irresistibly drew Mima to it? A great love and pity welled up in her heart at once for this poor, frail man; she could not have helped going to him, laying her electric fingers upon his hands, gently detaining them, and asking him to trust and love her. With a glad look of surprise the sufferer followed her to the pallet, murmuring as if to himself:

"She is not one of my enemies; she will not harm me. She is an old, old friend of mine. I recognize her now."

And then, while she smoothed his gray hairs with her magic touch, he prattled away to her in child-like, silly talk; and she answered him as if he were indeed a child.

Caird and the sailor left them thus, realizing that Mima alone with the invalid could soothe him as no medicine might do. When they returned a half-hour later they found that gray head nestling trustingly on Mima's bosom and those wild eyes closed in peaceful slumber. Already this suffering man was much better from Mima's ministrations.

Before they left the humble hut the sailor again impressed upon them, almost with terror in his voice, the importance to his suffering master and himself that Mima's father should not know of this mission of theirs nor of the refugees and the hut, lest they should fall under his wrath.

They promised to be silent. Caird, though using all his eloquence, could not convince Mima that it would be right for her to disobey her parent and without his consent become his wife.

"We will wait," she said, with such trusting confidence in their future that it conquered him.

"Though years of separation should elapse, it cannot change our love, dear Caird, and our happiness then will be greater for having performed our duty to others."

But Caird found some joy. He met Mima frequently, for every day she stole away from her home down to the hut there to spend an hour with the poor, stricken old man in it and afterwards to walk home with her lover. She could not account for the irresistible way she was drawn to the strange old man. She was happier with him than with any other, except Caird; she clung to him with all the anxious intensity that a mother would to her stricken child—learning to eagerly watch every changing expression of his face and anticipate his every wish.

Mima's visits to the invalid were not fruitless. He grew to watch for them with painful eagerness, going into wild despair if from any reason she was delayed in reaching him. His eyes grew to be not so wild, his face not so sad and his speech more sensible. Under Mima's soothing influence reason was attempting to again assert its throne. It was most pitiful at such time to witness the efforts of the poor, weak man to grasp some thread of memory that, however, when he felt sure of the victory, eluded him and left him in despair.

During one of these visits to the hut Mima proposed a walk, which the invalid gladly acceded to, leaning on Mima's arm and prattling