

THE PLEA OF MOTHERLAND.

Rachel bewailing her children and would not be comforted. St. MATTHEW II., 18. Our Baschaf's Mother Ireland, Appealing to God on high; For still she sits out, The sickening shout, O nation! O nation! And now when the Wrong is rampant— And now when the landlords dare To trample right, By what right, Our Mother's place is there!

STEPHEN J. MEANY.

HENRIETTA TEMPLE

A gentle rustling sounded at the window; Henrietta looked up, but the sight deserted her fading vision, as Ferdinand seized with softness her softer hand, and pressed it to his lips. A moment since, and she had longed for his presence as the infant for its mother; a moment since, and she had murmured that so much of the morn had passed without his society; a moment since, and it had seemed that no time could exhaust the expression of her feelings. How she had sighed for his coming! How she had hoped that this day she might convey to him what last night she had so weakly, so imperfectly attempted! And now she sat trembling and silent, with downcast eyes and changing countenance. 'My Henrietta!' exclaimed Ferdinand, 'my beautiful Henrietta, it seemed we never should meet again, and yet I rose almost with the sun.' 'My Ferdinand,' replied Miss Temple, scarcely daring to meet his glance 'I cannot speak; I am so happy that I cannot speak.' 'Ah! tell me, have you thought of me? Did you observe I stole your handkerchief last night? See! here it is; when I slept, I kissed it and wore it next my heart.' 'Ah! give it to me,' she faintly murmured, extending her hand; and then she added, in a firmer and livelier tone, 'and did you really wear it near your heart?' 'Near mine; for thine it is, love! Sweet, you look so beautiful to-day! It seems to me you never yet looked half so fair. Those eyes are so brilliant, so very blue, so like the violet! There is nothing like your eyes!'

He looked upon the radiant brow of his Henrietta, wreathed with smiles of innocent triumph, sparkling with unalloyed felicity, and beaming with unbroken devotion. Should the shade of a dark passion for a moment cloud that heaven, so bright and so serene? Should even a momentary pang of jealousy or distrust pain that pure and unswerving breast? In the midst of contending emotions, he pressed her to his heart with renewed energy, and bending down his head, imprinted an embrace upon her blushing forehead. They seated themselves on a bank, which, it would seem, Nature had created for the convenience of lovers. The softest moss and the brightest flowers decked its elastic and fragrant side. A spreading beech tree shaded their heads from the sun, which now was on the decline; and occasionally its wide branches rustled with the soft breeze that passed over them in renovating and gentle gusts. The woods widened before them, and at the termination of a well-contrived avenue, they caught the roofs of the village and the tall grey tower of Ducie Church. They had wandered for hours without weariness, yet the repose was grateful, while they listened to the birds, and plucked wild-flowers. 'Ah! I remembered,' said Ferdinand, 'that it was not far from here, while slumbering indeed in the porch of my pretty farmhouse, that the fairy of the spot dropped on my breast these beautiful flowers that I now wear. Did you not observe them, my sweet Henrietta? Do you know that I am rather mortified, that they have not made you at least a little jealous?' 'I am not jealous of fairies, dear Ferdinand.' 'And yet I half believe that you are a fairy, my Henrietta.' 'A very substantial one, I fear, my Ferdinand. Is this a compliment to my form?' 'Well, then, a sylvan nymph, much more, I assure you, to my fancy; perhaps the rosy Dryad of this fair tree; rambling in woods, and bounding over commons, scattering beautiful flowers, and dreams so bright!' 'And were your dreams bright yesterday morning?' 'I don't know of you.' 'And when you awoke?' 'I hastened to the source of inspiration.' 'And if you had not dreamt of me?' 'I should have come to have enquired the reason why.' Miss Temple looked upon the ground; a blended expression of mirth and sentiment played over her features, and then looking up with a smile contending with her fearful eye, she hid her face in his breast and murmured, 'I watched him sleeping. Did he indeed dream of me?' 'Darling of my existence!' exclaimed the enraptured Ferdinand, 'exquisite, enchanting being! Why am I so happy? What have I done to deserve bliss so ineffable? But tell me, beauty, tell me how you contrived to appear and vanish without witnesses. For my enquiries were severe, and these good people must have been less artful than I imagined to have withstood me successfully.'

He sat down on the trunk of a tree and buried his face in his hands. His reverie had lasted some time, when a gentle sound disturbed him. He looked up; it was Henrietta. She had driven over the common in her pony-chair, and unattended. She was but a few steps from him; and he looked up, he caught her foot smile. He sprang from his seat; he grasped her hand in an instant; his heart beat so simultaneously that he could not speak; all dark thoughts were forgotten; he seized with a trembling touch her extended hand, and gazed upon her with a glance of ecstasy. For, indeed, she looked so beautiful that it seemed to him he had never before done justice to her surpassing loveliness. There was a bloom upon her cheek, as upon some choice and delicate fruit; her violet eyes sparkled like gems; while the dapples played and quivered on her cheeks, as you may sometimes watch the sunbeams on the pure surface of fair water. Her countenance indeed, was wreathed with smiles; she seemed the happiest thing on earth; the very personification of a poetic spring; lively, and fresh, and innocent; sparkling, and sweet, and soft. When he beheld her, Ferdinand was reminded of some gay bird, or airy antelope; she looked so bright and joyous. 'He is to go in,' said Henrietta, with a smile. 'And to drive her to her cottage. Have I not managed well to come alone? We shall have such a charming drive to-day.' 'You are so beautiful!' murmured Ferdinand. 'I am content if you but think so. You did not hear me approach? What were you doing? Plunged in meditation? Now tell me truly, were you thinking of her?' 'Indeed, I have no other thought. Oh, my Henrietta, you are so beautiful to-day. I cannot think of anything but your beauty.' 'And how did you sleep? Are you comfortable? I have brought you some flowers to make your room look pretty.' They soon reached the farm-house. The good-wives seemed a little surprised when she observed her guest driving Miss Temple, but far more pleased. Henrietta ran into the house to see the children, spoke some kind words to the little maiden, and asked if their guest had breakfasted. Then, turning to Ferdinand, she said, 'Have you forgotten that you are to give me a breakfast? It shall be in the porch. Is it not sweet and pretty? See, here are your flowers, and I have brought you some fruit.' The breakfast was arranged. 'But you do not play your part, sweet Henrietta,' he said; 'I cannot breakfast alone.' She affected to share his repast; that he might partake of it; but in truth, she only busied herself in arranging the flowers. Yet she conducted herself with so much dexterity, that Ferdinand had an opportunity of gratifying his appetite, without being placed in a position, awkward at all times, inferable for a lover, that of eating in the presence of others who do not join you in the occupation. 'Now,' she suddenly said, sitting by his side, and placing a rose in his dress, 'I have a little plan to-day, which I think will be quite delightful. You shall drive me to Armine.' Ferdinand started. He thought of Father Glastonbury. His miserable situation recurred to him. This was the bitter drop in the cup; yes! in the very plenitude of his rare felicity he experienced a pang. His confusion was not unobserved by Miss Temple; for she was very quick in her perception; but she could not comprehend it. It did not rest on her mind, particularly when Ferdinand assented to her proposition, but added, 'I forgot that Armine is more interesting to you than to me. All my associations with Armine are painful. Ducie is my delight!'

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Continued on Third Page.