

"The Dreamers" is a companion piece, and equal to stand beside it. In these poems the poet is so unique that we are at a loss to know under what influences they were written. Perhaps it is unfair to presume an influence, yet the latter does recall "La Légende des Siècles," and breathes a spirit of Eastern mysticism that lets imagination slip her leash to wander forth beyond the worlds. Face to face with this poem, we again forego criticism, only praising the splendid achievement.

It would be invidious, if not to Mr. Campbell, at least to fellow-poets, to attempt to assign him rank among them or above. In closing we must express the sincere interest with which we look forward to the appearance of future volumes created in the intervals of uncongenial labour.

PELHAM EDGAR.

THE FULFILMENT.

I
Soft June that dreams beneath fair skies of blue,

And all the days alive with lilt of birds;
The fields all odorous, and dawn's faint dew
A gleam within the buds; while half-heard words

Re-echo with the wind, throughout the wood—
But yet an unknown want, scarce understood.

II
Dark, bleak December days, with wind a-wail,
And all the fields bereft of birds and flowers;
No gleam of blue above, but storm and gale
Low sweep across a sky that always lowers:
Yet all the joy of June here dwells apart,
For Love has wandered in a June's void heart.

ARTHUR J. STRINGER.

ANNIE LAURIE.

CHAPTER I.

The long July day was drawing to a close. The shadows were deepening; and from where the two girls sat near the thick-leaved maple they could see that the lamps had been lighted in the farm-house. At this moment a gate was flung open, and from the lane of trees five or six cows filed lazily past, and behind these came a colley dog with the air of one relieved of responsibility. The gate was shut and the farm-hand slouched heavily after the cows into the barn-yard.

As he passed out of sight the tuning of a fiddle came through the open doors and windows of the house. A young man appeared in the doorway and looked enquiringly out. He then walked quickly through the small enclosed flower-garden and stood at the little gate which let into the field where the girls were sitting.

"Aren't you coming?" he asked in a low tone.

"Frank, come here!"

He opened the gate and went toward them. "They're about ready for the first set," he said; "won't you come in?"

"Is Mr. Harnton in there, Frank?" It was the smaller and slighter of the girls that spoke, though the taller one had called him.

"Yes, he's there, 'Titia."

"Well, then, I'll not come in a step till he goes," the girl declared.

"You know he won't go, 'Titia," said the taller girl.

"I guess old Harnton's come after you, 'Titia," the young man remarked with a smile. "He says you're the prettiest girl in Renfrew County, and he never comes here unless he knows you're about."

"Annie! Letitia! Frank! where are you?" Two other girls, arm in arm, came dancing down the garden path.

"O, here they are! Do come on! What are you waiting for? Mr. Mullin's been ready the last ten minutes."

"We may as well go, 'Titia," said Annie. "Yes, Lizzie, we're coming."

"Well, Mr. Harnton, may just dance with some one else," said Letitia, rising. "You can take pity on him yourself, Annie."

"O, you'll be sure to," said Annie, as they followed Frank Laurie and the other girls into the house."

A stranger would have been at a loss to discover any ardor for dancing among the young people therein assembled. The large dining-table had been removed, and at one end of the room the fiddler sat, with his chair tilted against the wall. He was a half-witted, nearly blind old man, who lived at a short distance, and who could always be had for an impromptu occasion like the present. His music was not the best in the world, of course, but it had often served. Having tuned his fiddle he had placed it beside him on a sort of dresser, from the top of which the stock of a gun protruded, and he now sat calmly waiting directions to begin. The walls were covered with a neat, though cheap, design of wall-paper, and they showed by way of ornament a picture or two and a few prints taken from illustrated papers. They were also festooned with evergreens which remained from the previous Christmas. A certain homely comfort pervaded the place.

The uneager dancers were scattered about this room and the small parlor adjoining in knots of twos and threes. Near the front window a girl sat rocking herself with great energy and returning saucy answers to the remarks of two rustics who stood on each side of her chair. A couple were seated on a lower step of the stairway; the young man stimulated to clumsy badinage, to which his companion replied with impulsive fervor. Higher up on the stairway another couple had drawn very close together and were whispering mysteriously. Three young men stood in the doorway and at long intervals one of them would speak, when the others would laugh heavily and alternately. They had the air of waiting to be asked to take a lady out. In fact, this was the only way in which the country dance could be started.

"Now, boys, get your partners!" said Frank Laurie, bustling up to the three diffident ones. "We are going to begin. Dan there's Lizzie Soames, hurry up or someone will have her. Ned, you take Fanny. Aleck, find a partner, man."

While he was speaking two couples came out of the little parlor and took their places on the floor. The fiddler reached for his instrument, placed it on his knees, and again tilted back. He knew there was no hurry.

The two couples who had thus boldly challenged regard were Annie Laurie and Henry Neelin, the village grocer's son, and Letitia Lent and Arthur Dawson, the new school-teacher. The ladies tired standing and had seated themselves again for fully ten minutes before the required couples were induced to come out. At last the fiddler took up his fiddle, gave three or four long, sharp, prelusive scrapes, the couples bowed to their opposites, and the familiar first set of the Caledonians commenced.

There were eight couples on the floor. Mr.

Harnton, the elderly bachelor who was "picking up" to giddy Letitia Lent, failing that young lady, had taken out Lizzie Soames, Frank Laurie, in passing Letitia, congratulated her with a laugh on her escape, and Letitia answered with a smirk and a glance over her shoulder at her ancient lover. The latter was just then beaming on her with indulgent good-nature, much to his stout little partner's amusement, who made grimaces from behind his back. Mr. Harnton, it should be explained, was a very courtly gentleman for these parts, and though still enjoying—or enduring—single blessedness, had always been more or less of a lady's man. His "glamor," as it was called, for that pale-faced little flirt, Letitia seemed a retribution for lost opportunities. He was old enough to be her grandfather, and the poor man's infatuation was published to the world.

In an interval of the dance, as he was mopping his face with his spotted red handkerchief, he called to her.

"Heh! heh! pretty warm work, Miss Lent."

"Yes," simpered Letitia, turning away her head.

"By gracious! I think I'll melt," said the old man, still mopping.

"O, please don't melt here, Mr. Harnton," Lizzie Soames objected, shrinking away from him with feigned alarm.

At this sally a laugh went up in which the old man joined, but Annie and Letitia as they passed each other exchanged a deprecating, commiserating smile.

When Annie was at rest her position commanded a view of her mother and Mrs. Soames, Lizzie's mother, who sat in the kitchen waiting. These ladies glanced now and then at their spectacles at the hurrying figures in the dining-room, and Annie guessed from her mother's expression that she was the subject of their conversation. She believed her mother never wore that peculiar puzzled look except when she was talking or thinking about her.

In this instance she was not mistaken. "Yes, indeed, Mrs. Soames," Mrs. Laurie was saying, as the needles clicked in time to her swift-moving fingers, "he asked her twice. The last time on New Year's Eve, at the Cross Roads. And a nicer, better-mannered young man, as you see, can't be found anywhere. And he's just so kind. Looks sometimes as if he'd be obliged to her if she'd walk over here. And so comfortable—to have that fine new storey brick house his father's just built, and the business when the old man dies. I'm afraid she won't do better, Mrs. Soames, I'm afraid she won't do better."

"He ought to have more spunk, Mr. Laurie," Mrs. Soames rejoined. "He doesn't take after his father with them light-blue eyes and that thin little red moustache. Annie's a quiet girl, but she's proud-spirited, and I was a little bolder she might have him."

"I don't know, Mrs. Soames, he's a good young man, and can give her a good home, and he's as fond of her as fond can be, and she can more can a girl want. But Annie always has such strange notions, with her books and wanting to go live in the city. She's too discontented to be happy, I'm afraid."

Mrs. Laurie allowed her knitting to rest on her lap, and gazed abstractedly at the dancers.

"How is she coming on with her telegraph books?" asked Mrs. Soames, twitching a needle.