

A LOVE THAT WAS PURE.

She was only eight, and I was ten,
Down by the brook in the valley;
But then we thought we were women and men
As we wandered down the valley.
Did you ever read the entrancing story
Of sweet Virginia and her lover Paul?
We acted it all in the summer glory,
Under the pines by the waterfall.

Oh, there's something pure in this childish love
That never may come thereafter,
When the robin will nestle along with the dove,
And the raven will croak with laughter;
For the raven is wise and cautious, be sure,
He mates for a settlement—sharp old raven—
But we little prattlers, not looking before,
Thought we were married and dwelling in Heaven.

This childish love! Why, perhaps, after all,
'Tis the only love that is really pure,
Too pure for the earth since the Eden fall,
Too bright, too beautiful to endure.
Yet I sit and dream of that innocent love,
And see her face in its shower of brown hair,
And I know that her spirit is happy above,
And her form in the grave—oh, I wish I were there!
For the longer we live the more unprepared
Are we for the change that will come in due time;
And we doubt if the Heaven that childhood has shared
Shall be ours at the last in that wonderful clime.

WHY I EXCHANGED.

Some five years ago I was a subaltern in a marching regiment, and quartered in a large garrison town in England. My duties consisted of the usual round of morning and afternoon parades, visiting the men's dinners and teas, and other regular work. In addition to this we had, occasionally, to mount guard, and to pass twenty-four hours in a sort of half imprisonment.

It is one of the regulations of the service that when officers or men are on guard they should always be in a state of readiness to "fall in" on parade in a moment's notice. If you feel very sleepy and desire rest, you must take it whilst you are buttoned up to the throat and strapped down at the heels; a lounge in an arm chair, or probably a little horizontal refreshment upon a sofa, is the extent of rest which an officer on guard is supposed to indulge in.

Among my brother subalterns in garrison it was our usual practice to infringe upon this strict letter of the law; and when the principal part of our duty had been accomplished we used to indulge ourselves by divesting our limbs of their armor, and seeking refreshment between the sheets of a little camp bed that was placed in the inner guard-room.

It was part of the duties of an officer on guard to visit all the sentries during the night, the time for visiting them being usually an hour or so after the field officer had visited the guard; the field officer being colonel or major who was on duty for the day, and who came once by day and once by night to see the guards and to see that all was as it should be. There was no exact limit to the number of times that the field officer might visit the guards, but it was the usual thing, and had become almost a custom, for him to come once by day and once by night, so that after the last visit the subalterns usually waited an hour or so, walked round the limits of his post, visited all his sentries, and then turned into bed.

It was a bitter cold morning in January that my turn for guard came on. I marched my men to the post, relieved the old guard, and then, having gone through the regular duty and dined, endeavored to pass the time until the field officer had visited me. The previous evening I had been at a ball in town, and in consequence was very tired and sleepy, and looked with considerable longing to the period when I could refresh myself by unrobing and enjoying a good snooze.

At length I heard the welcome challenge, "Who comes there?" which was answered by the response, "Grand rounds," and "Guard, turn out!" was a signal which I willingly obeyed, for I knew that in an hour afterwards I should be in the arms of the god of sleep.

Slipping on my cloak and cap, and grasping my sword, I placed myself in front of the guard and received the field officer, who briefly asked me if everything was correct, directed me to dismiss my guard, and rode off without saying "Good-night," a proceeding that I thought rather formal.

Giving directions to the sergeant to call me in an hour, for the purpose of visiting the sentries I threw myself into my arm chair and tried to read a novel. The time passed very quickly, as I had a nap or two, and the sergeant soon appeared with a lantern to conduct me round the sentries.

It was a terrible night, the wind blowing hard, whilst the snow and sleet were driving along before it. The thermometer was several degrees below freezing, and I felt that I deserved much from my country for performing so conscientiously my arduous duties. The sentries were very much scattered, and I had to walk nearly two miles to visit them all. I accomplished my task, however, and returned to the guard-room, where I treated myself to a stiff glass of grog, and throwing off my regimentals

I jumped into bed, feeling that I really deserved the luxury.

In a few moments I was fast asleep, not even dreaming of any of my fair partners of the ball, but sound asleep. Suddenly I became conscious of a great noise, which sounded like a drum being beaten.

At first I did not realize my position, and could not remember where I was, but at last it flashed across me that I was on guard, and that something was the matter. Jumping out of bed, I called to know who was there.

The sergeant answered in a great hurry, saying:

"Sir, the field officer of the day is coming, and the guard is turning out."

I rushed to my boots, pulled them on over my unstockinged feet; thrust my sword-arm into my large regimental cloak, which I pulled over me; jammed my forage cap on my head, and, grasping my sword, looked to the outward observer as though "fit for parade."

I was just in time to receive the field officer, who again asked me if my guard was correct. I answered, rather in a tone of surprise, and said: "Yes, sir, all correct."

I could not imagine why my guard should be visited twice, as such a proceeding was unusual, and perhaps my tone seemed to imply that I was surprised. Whether it was that, or whether a treacherous gust of wind removed the folds of my cloak and exhibited the slightest taste in life in the end of the night-shirt, I know not; but the field officer, instead of riding off when he received my answer, turned his horse's head in the opposite direction and said:

"Now, sir, I want you to accompany me around the sentries."

Had he told me that he wanted me to accompany him to the regions below I should scarce have been more horror-struck, for already I had found the change of temperature between a warm bed in a warm room, and the outside air—and to walk two miles on a windy, frosty night, with no raiment besides boots, night-shirt, and cloak, was really suffering for one's country, and no mistake.

I dared not show the slightest hesitation, however, for fear the state of my attire might be suspected, though I would have given a week's pay to have escaped for only five minutes. A non-commissioned officer was ready with a lantern, and we started on our tour of inspection.

The field officer asked several questions connected with the position and duties of the sentries, to which I gave answers as well as the chattering of my teeth would permit me. The most nervous work, however, was passing the gas-lamps, which were placed at intervals of one or two hundred yards. The wind was blowing so fresh that it was with difficulty I could hold my cloak around me, and conceal the absence of my undergarments. Every now and then an extra gust of wind would come round a corner, and quite defeat all the precautions which I had adopted to encounter the steady gale. I managed to dodge in the shades as much as possible, and more than once ran the risk of being kicked by the field officer's horse, as I slunk behind him when the gas might have revealed too much.

It was terribly cold, to be sure, the wind and snow almost numbing my limbs. I had a kind of faint hope that the field officer might think that I belonged to a Highland regiment, and if he did observe the scantiness of my attire, might believe that the kilt would explain it. I struggled and shivered on, knowing that all things must have an end, and that my "rounds" must come to an end before long. But I feared that I could not again get warm during the night.

We had nearly completed our tour, and were within a few hundred yards of the guard-room, when we passed the field officer's quarters. I fondly hoped that he would not pass them, and that he would dismiss me at the door, but I was rather surprised to see a blaze of light come from the windows, and to hear the sound of music. It was evident that there was a "hop" going on inside, and I already began to tremble from a sort of instinct that even worse misfortune was yet to attend me.

My premonitions were true, for upon reaching his door my persecutor, in a cheerful tone, said:

"Well, we've had a cold tour; you must come in and take a glass of wine, and perhaps a waltz will warm you."

"I'm really much obliged," I hastily answered, "but I should not like to leave my guard."

"Nonsense, nonsense, man—the guard will be all right; you must come in."

This "must" he said in quite a determined tone.

I felt desperate, and again declared that I thought I should be wrong to leave my guard.

"I'll take the responsibility," said the demon; "so come along!" saying which, he grasped my arm, and almost dragged me into the porch of his quarters.

When we entered the house and were exposed to the light of the hall lamps, I fancied I saw a slight twinkle in the eye of the officer, and I began to wonder whether he really knew of my predicament, and wished to have his joke. He gave no other intimation, however, that I saw, but quickly took off his cloak, and said that I had better do the same. Seeing me hesitate, he said, "Come, look alive; off with it."

Further remonstrance I found would be useless, so that there was no help for me but a full confession. Summoning my courage, and fearing to hesitate, I blurted out, "Colonel, I've no treasures on."

"The deuce you haven't!" he said. "Well, you'd better go and put them on, and then come here as soon as possible, and have a glass of something warm."

I rushed out of the quarters, half determined not to return. I was fully awake now, and shivered like a half-drowned dog; but no sooner had I dressed myself than the colonel came over to say that a quadrille was waiting for me.

I determined to put a bold face on the matter, and entered the drawing-room, where a party of about fifty had assembled. It was evident by the titters of the young ladies, the grins of the men, and the subdued smiles of the dowagers that my story was known.

The colonel had told it as a good joke to the major, who had whispered it to his wife, she had breathed it into the ear of two of her friends, and in about ten minutes every person in the room knew a young subaltern had unwillingly gone his rounds in his night-shirt.

As long as I stayed in that garrison I was a standing joke. When the girls saw me they always looked away and smiled, and it seemed as impossible for me to obtain a serious answer from any of them as for a clown to preach a sermon. They even seemed to be afraid to dance with me, fearing, as I afterwards heard, to look at my legs, lest I might be deficient in some article of raiment.

I soon exchanged and went into another regiment; and years afterwards I heard my own adventure related in a crowded drawing-room, all the details of the story being true except the name of the prisoner—my misfortune having been attributed to an unfortunate fall. I never went to bed on guard after that night.

CEUR DE LION.

On a lovely summer morning a troop of horsemen was passing through the country in which lay a portion of the Hartz Mountains. Three noble-looking men rode forward, evidently the leaders of the troop which followed. The middle horseman was dressed as a minstrel, and on his face was an expression of deep pain and anxiety. Suddenly he stopped his horse to catch the note of a shepherd singing in a far-off field. No sooner was the song finished than he dashed towards the astonished singer.

"My boy, sing that again! See, I have gold for you!"

"'Tis a song I love!" said the boy, as he took the gold and recommenced his music.

"Now, tell me, lad," said the minstrel, "who taught you that song?"

"I dare not tell!" replied the boy, as he glanced with suspicion at the knight.

"Aye! But you must tell me! No harm shall come to you! See, here is more gold for you."

"I have heard it sung in the castle of Triefels, near which I often feed my sheep."

"Oh, God!" exclaimed the minstrel, bursting into tears as he knelt on the ground, "How wondrous are thy ways!"

His companions approached him with amazement to hear him exclaim: "We have found him! On to Triefels!"

After the excitement of their supposed discovery had abated, they decided first, to get a view of the fortress, and then mature their plans for getting within it. The shepherd boy, who was to guide them thither, told them no strangers were allowed to cross the draw-bridge, and the keeper was imperious and unsovereign. Soon the towers of Triefels glittered in the sun, and after a careful survey of its surroundings they moved away for further deliberation.

"My friends," said the knight, "in my minstrel's dress I must try alone to gain admission to the castle. Meanwhile this boy will find you lodgings in the hamlet below. If our noble king is imprisoned here we must release him."

Thus saying, and with one servant to bear his shield and harp, he rode to the bridge and demanded food and shelter for himself and servant. After much parley he was received; but very ungraciously. However, within these dreary walls he found a beautiful woman, the keeper's niece, whose smiles were like the warm sunlight on a winter's day.

After dinner the minstrel sung to the drowsy uncle and the charming niece. As the former, after a while, seemed to sleep soundly, the knight began.

"You seem to like music, fair lady! But surely you do not often hear it in this lonely castle."

"No! only myself and one poor prisoner sing."

"A prisoner?"

"Yes; and he must be of gentle birth! But I dare not say more, lest my uncle wake. He will be angry if I talk of him."

"Tell me one thing, dear maiden, can I hear the song of this one, who sings for freedom?"

"Yes, if you listen, to-night; his melancholy brings the tears to my eyes often enough!"

Just now, the old keeper awoke, and giving orders to lead the stranger to his apartment, he himself went out. When our knight entered his chamber, he went to the window, and vainly strove, through the deepening twilight, to find the tower in which he supposed his dear king to be. Soon, a melancholy voice was heard singing these words:

"The golden stars wander over hills and valley, messengers of my longings and my griefs. In this gloomy prison I pass my life and can only confide my woes to Heaven."

"Oh! my king!" sobbed the knight, as a pale

face appeared at a tower window. "How can I tell you how near your friends are?"

"The harp!" he cried suddenly and snatching it up, with trembling fingers, he played a romance which he had once composed for the king.

"No sooner had he finished a few bars than a voice in the tower caught up the air and finished it. "Blonde!" exclaimed the king. For answer, the minstrel again seized the harp and sang:

"Oh, Richard! oh my king,
The world abandons thee,
And no one now is seeking
Thy deliverance but me.
I'll save thy precious person,
I'll break thy cruel chain,
I pledge myself in song
Thy freedom to regain."

Blonde spent the night in laying plans for the deliverance of Richard. He resolved to gain admittance into the castle for his followers through his friendship with the lovely girl, who had already made an impression on his heart.

Within a day or two the newly elected Emperor was to be crowned at Frankfurt. On the evening of the coronation, he directed the landlord of the little inn near Triefels to give to the garrison of the castle a banquet, that with proper ceremony they might drink to the health of the new monarch. Meanwhile, one by one his own trusty knights stole through the twilight to the woods behind the castle.

At a late hour of the evening the little side-gate of the fortress opened, as the young maiden cautiously stole out to meet Blonde.

Then for the first time he unfolded to her the real object of his meeting with her, entreating her to fly back to England with the King, whom he was about to liberate, and himself, assuring her that tokens of love and gratitude should be shown her if she would yield to his wish.

With a cry of astonishment and pain she exclaimed, "Oh, traitor, oh, woe! my poor uncle!" As she turned to fly within the castle walls, the followers of Blonde—who, in the darkness, had approached unperceived—flocked about her, and made their way to the castellan's room, where the tower keys were kept. The few defenders of the fortress who were not at the village feast were soon overpowered. The old keeper was powerless to do aught; but he cried out, as the liberated Richard stood before him: "Against this deed, contrary to the law of nations, I protest and swear that you shall not leave Germany in safety!" The poor maiden threw herself upon her knees, and accused herself the cause of this terrible disaster.

Meanwhile, the report of the attack upon the castle had reached the inn, and the warriors came back in hot haste to find themselves barred outside the walls, with a threat if they did not disperse the castellan should lose his head and the castle be destroyed.

Blonde and the king urged the maiden to return with them to England, but she could not forgive the man who had used her heart for an act of treason.

Blonde left her, but not until she had accepted a ring and chain of gold in token of his remembrance of her love and service towards him. We do not propose to follow the fortunes of Cœur de Lion after his escape from Triefels, but to tell our readers what tradition says of the minstrel Blonde and the unhappy maiden. Many, many years after the events which we have described and on another summer day, a gray-haired cavalier rode over the same mountain pass, where the King had been sought and found.

"Here," murmured he, "here have I felt in days gone by the highest bliss and the deepest woe of my life!" Slowly he rode till he had reached the little inn.

As he looked into the face of the landlord he discovered the features of the young shepherd boy. With an almost tender interest the two (one of whom was Blonde) talked of the past.

In tears the now old minstrel learnt the sad fate of the castellan and his niece. He was killed by some hidden hand after the flight of Richard was discovered. The broken-hearted maiden entered a convent near Baden, where henceforth her life and history were lost to the world.

None can visit this ancient ruin of Triefels without a melancholy interest as they recall the dreary prison life of the great King Richard, the touching romance of the minstrel-knight Blonde, and the lovely, loving maiden, over whose story centuries have now rolled.

A GERMAN paper contains a reply from a clergyman who was travelling, and who stopped at an hotel much frequented by wags and jokers. The host, not being used to have clergyman at his table, looked at him with surprise; the clerks used all their artillery of wit upon him without eliciting a remark in self-defence. The worthy clergyman ate his dinner quietly, apparently without observing the gibes and sneers of his neighbors. One of them, at last, in despair at his forbearance, said to him:

"Well, I wonder at your patience! Have you not heard all that has been said against you?"

"Oh, yes; but I am used to it. Do you know who I am?"

"No, sir."

"Well, I will inform you. I am chaplain of a lunatic asylum; such remarks have no effect upon me."