

A Sunset Walk.

Purple, gold and ruby tints,
Are fading in the sunless sky,
And yearly, dim, uncertain glints
Mark one lone star on high.
The cricket's tiny bell is rung,
The last song of the bird is sung,

Far away the din and fret—
The daytime hurry, and the strife—
The weary toil and sad regret,
Which haunt our daily life—
Oh, far away these leave me now,
With sunset's kisses on my brow.

Leaves, which all day idly tost,
Now pause to listen for the Night,
Fast riding with his radiant host,
O'er hills of dying light,
Around me falls the hush of prayer,
And dimmer grows the pulseless air.

Peace and love on all descend!
Oh, surely in an hour like this,
Kind heaven seems nearer earth to bend,
To give one good-night kiss!
Fair home-lights now the wanderer sees,
Like fire-flies, twinkle through the trees.

Loving ones return to him,
And rosy cheeks with love light glow,
Fond hopes arise at twilight dim,
In dreams of long ago,
And all the joy sweet memory gives,
Touched by the hand of sunset, lives.

Oh, tranquil sunset of the soul,
When all the jar of earth is past!
When storms no longer round us roll,
And heaven is near at last!
We know, though faint, and fall we may,
Calm sunset ends the longest day.

SELECT STORY.

Over the River.

(CONCLUDED.)

Mr. Logan's only child, a son, was away at school, little Lizzie at once became a great favorite. Life seemed a flowery pathway of pleasure, and as the years glided on, the love and kindness of her new friends formed her character into one of sweetness and gentleness, which was the admiration of all who knew her.

A few years after James Logan's return from college, and just after he had been admitted to practice as a lawyer, she had accepted his love, and was led to the altar, a happy bride.

No woman could have despised the pure and devoted love which James Logan gave his wife, and she felt she was indeed blessed, and for many years her bright dreams of happiness were fully realized.

But at last there came a change. James Logan's kind words were changed to petulance and fault finding; his absence from home became more and more protracted; his business was neglected, and he at last became a confirmed drunkard.

After years of success in business, he sought for recreation and pleasure in the wine-glass and at the gaming-table. Suddenly, and as it were by one fell swoop, his fortune was taken from him. Then, goaded on by a terrible thirst for drink, he lost the confidence and respect of all his friends.

This was a heavy blow to Mrs. Logan. In order to keep a home for her family, she knew it would fall to her lot to clear away the debts, with what aid her son, then a mere boy, was able to give. So vast did the obstacle seem and so insignificant were her strength and ability in comparison to the great work before her, that she was filled with dread lest she should fail in her efforts.

Thus months passed on, and neither reason or love could influence the habits and desires of James Logan. His heart seemed dead to all kindly feelings, and his patient, gentle wife had to endure much harsh treatment at his hands. As she reflected upon the past, and contemplated the future, she could not restrain her tears.

Soon a white-robed form glided across the room, and touched her gently on the arm, while a sweet, childish voice whispered,—

Mamma!
O Julia, my darling child, said her mother, Tim has gone to town, and we are alone. But O merciful Father, even though all else were taken from me, this precious possession is still mine. Oh, keep her from all harm!

She pressed the little one to her bosom, and covering her face with kisses. Holding her still closer in her fond embrace, she rocked to and fro in silence. But soon the rocking became less regular and finally ceased. Both were asleep.

The hours flitted swiftly by, and at last the mother, after a fitful, feverish slumber, awoke with a sudden start, and gave a bewildered stare about the room. So terrible had been her dreams, and so hot and dizzy was her head, that for a full minute there seemed a blur before her eyes. But it was gone at last, and glancing toward the little clock she saw the unerring hands pointing to the hour of midnight.

Midnight! and he has not come yet.

Merciful God, what can have happened? I can endure it no longer; I must find my boy.

Placing the sleeping child upon the bed, she turned down the light, and quitted the house.

The night was dark and dreary, and the storm-king stayed not in his wrath as the frail woman stepped forth into the darkness, determined to bend every energy to the task before her.

A rapid walk through the deep snow soon brought her to the ferryman's home. With hands chilled and numb, she rapped on the door.

Who's there, and what's wanted? a surly, gruff voice asked.

Can I cross the river? she asked, faintly.

Madame, it is impossible. the river is full of ice. There have been heavy storms above us, and it would be utterly impossible to cross at this time.

But, kind sir, Tim is in town, and surely something terrible must have happened to keep him away.

Drunk, most likely, was the unfeeling reply. My boy, Ebenezer, saw him at Lucas Wright's early in the evening.

Then, indeed, he is in danger. I fear he will attempt to cross the river. Oh that I were able to warn him!

He has probably been taken charge of by the authorities, and is safe. But as for crossing the river to-night, that is impossible.

The poor woman saw that her case was hopeless. The cold, cutting words of the ferryman had gone deep into her heart, and bitter, wicked thoughts came to her mind as she trudged on her way to her lonely home.

* * * * *

Tim reached the village in safety, and followed the course of its principal street, with apparently only one object in view—to find the whereabouts of his father; but where the search should be made he seemed to have no definite idea. However, he soon reached Lucas Wright's saloon, and as he passed the door, the desire was strong to step in and take a drink. But he remembered his promise to his mother, and for a time he succeeded in battling against the longing. Had the weather been less disagreeable his craving appetite might have been overcome. But the storm was increasing and the temptation for something warm to drink was so strong that at last he halted in his walk, and turned hesitatingly back.

As Tim entered the saloon he saw a number of men and boys lounging about, while the sickening fume of smoke and rum filled the air. A searching glance about the room told him his father was not present.

Tim was soon surrounded by a number of boys, all of whom had been his companions in scenes of dissipation; each took his hand with a warm grasp, and heartily greeted him. He was soon invited to drink, and it required but little urging to induce him to step up to the bar. He raised the glass to his lips. But no sooner had he done so than he thought of his promise. His hand trembled nervously, and the glass dropped suddenly to the counter, with a crash.

A deep oath escaped the bar-keeper as he set about to gather up the fragments, while Tim turned away, and solemnly resolved not to touch a drop. Several times he determined to leave the saloon, then on one pretext or another turned back again.

But he could not overcome his weakness when so near temptation, and as he did not leave there was no alternative but to yield. One drink followed another, until at last his father, mother and sister, were all forgotten, and he became the victim of those who, though they termed themselves his friends, knew well his weakness, and had no compunctions in profiting from it. What little money his pockets contained was soon gone to satisfy their greedy appetites.

Tim then seated himself beside the stone, his head drooped, and he was soon lost to all consciousness of his own pitiful condition. The hours flew swiftly by, but he had no consciousness of the rapidity of their flight, and midnight found him alone with the bar-keeper, who, finding he was not likely to receive any more custom that night, gave Tim a rough shake, saying,—

Come, Tim, old boy, it is time for you to go.

Tim rose slowly to his feet, while the bar-keeper led the way to the door.

Come, give me another drink before I go.

Have you any money?

Tim fumbled about his pockets in the vain search for money, but every penny was gone.

Come, come, Logan, said the bar-keeper, hurry up! It is time my saloon was closed! And grasping Tim by the collar, he led him to the door, and forcibly put him outside. Then, leaving him to his fate, he returned to his money-drawer to count his receipts, much of which was the hard-earned money of those whose strength and manhood were sacrificed to bring gold to the coffers of the greedy bar-keeper.

Slowly and staggeringly Tim dragged himself along toward the river. He found the boat where he had left it early in the evening, and with half-numbed fingers he managed to loosen it. As he stepped from the shore into the boat, his brain was in a giddy whirl. Everything about and beneath him seemed reeling. He swayed to and fro as he passed along, till finally he dropped heavily into a seat. The wind was fast chilling his body through, and his suffering would have been terrible had it not been that his half-deadened sensibilities made him almost unconscious of it.

As the boat left the shore it came in contact with several large pieces of ice, and he made a bold effort to row through it. The more he tried, the less progress he seemed to make, until at last his hands becomg so cold as to be entirely useless, his strength failing, and the oars so heavy with ice he could hardly lift them, he gave up in despair. He rose to call for help, but only a feeble sound issued from his lips. Just then a huge piece of ice hit the boat; he lost his balance, and fell into the water. At that moment his ear caught the sound of a voice calling his name from the shore he had just left. But there only came a low gurgling sound in reply. However, help was at hand. Strong, willing arms rowed a second boat through the heavy ice, and lifted him gently from his helpless position.

It was the ferryman's son who had thus come to the rescue. He had been a silent listener to the conversation between Mrs. Logan and his father, and knowing the probable condition which an evening's dissipation would leave Tim in, he had returned to find him. The noble-hearted young man went immediately to the saloon where he saw Tim in the early part of the evening, but found that he had just started for the river. Following quickly in his footsteps, he saw him launch his boat, and ultimately succeeded in saving him from a watery grave.

Again there was a quick, vigorous rowing, and the shore was no sooner reached than a woman stepped down to the water's edge, and the haggard face of Mrs. Logan was recognized.

After leaving the ferryman's house for her own home, Mrs. Logan's route lay for some distance near the river. Her anxiety was so great that she could not yet return to the house; so she kept walking backward and forward, pausing every now and then as she gazed through the murky darkness that intervened between her and her son, who was unconscious of the danger surrounding him.

As Tim was lifted from the boat, Mrs. Logan saw that his head drooped, and uttering a low wail of anguish she cried,—

Oh, tell me, is he—
Dead? No, not as bad as that; but he is beastly drunk, and very cold. However, I think we shall soon be able to restore him to consciousness.

As he placed his helpless burden on the bed, a sickening sight met his gaze, and sent a chill through his whole frame. There was a deep and ghastly wound in Tim's head, which he had not before observed, and which was caused by his fall in the boat. The blood was flowing freely, and his head and face were entirely covered.

A neighbor was despatched for a physician, but an hour passed, and yet he came not.

Pressing her hand against her throbbing brow, Mrs. Logan paced the room, ever and anon straining every nerve to catch the first sound of approaching footsteps. Again she paused by the bedside and gazed anxiously into the face of the unconscious sufferer. At last she uttered a joyful cry. His eyes opened, his lips slowly moved, but he uttered no sound.

O Tim, my boy, she cried, do you not know me?

He gave her a wild stare, then turned his head away.

Again she bent forward and called his name.

Tim, do you not know me?

Yes, mother, he replied, feebly. But, tell me, where is father? I could not find him.

Your father has not come yet, she replied, sadly.

Presently there was the sound of footsteps trudging along in the snow outside. The faces of Mrs. Logan and her companion were turned anxiously toward the door, expecting to see a doctor enter. But it proved to be James Logan instead. His bloodshot eyes, haggard face, and dull, stupid look, told of a fearful dissipation, followed by a night of suffering. He gazed at his wife in a bewildered way, as if unable to comprehend this unusual scene.

Eliza, what means this?

She took him by the hand, and led him to the bedside, while silence pervaded the room. But it was soon broken by the arrival of the physician. The mother's heart gave a wild thro, as the doctor stepped to the bed.

O doctor, cried Mrs. Logan, save him!

Yes, echoed the husband, for God's sake, save him!

He shook his head dubiously.

I will do all in my power, he said.

But Tim was already too far gone. No physician's skill could do ought to save him now. He was sleeping quietly, but it was a sleep that might at any moment end in death.

The anxious watchers remained by the bedside of the dying boy till the first rays of light streaked through the windows of the gloomy home. Suddenly Tim rose in bed, and gave a loud, piercing cry, which sent a chill of horror to the heart of Mrs. Logan. He threw his hands wildly about, as if grasping for something to support himself with. Then he fell back, there was a rattling sound in his throat, and Tim Logan was dead. The terrible demon had cut off a life in the prime of manhood, just as there was a fair prospect of a realization of many fond and long-cherished hopes.

Merciful Father! has it at last come to this? O Eliza, the rum that has been the curse of our lives for so many long years has at last cost us our noble son. And the stricken father seemed overwhelmed with a suddenly awakened sense of his own degradation. He who had so long lived a life of reckless dissipation, and pandered to a vicious appetite till all sense of shame and honor seemed to have departed, was now bowed in deep anguish.

And now, Eliza, said he, with God as my witness, I solemnly promise that I will not touch another drop of the accursed stuff.

And James Logan was never again tempted to drink, but he thought of Tim's death, and the solemn vow made over his death-bed. So he again became an honor to his family. And Mrs. Logan no longer feared to have him go over the river, where his business each day called him, knowing that at night her heart would be gladdened with his return.

NEMA;

OR,

The Flower Girl of Florence

OUR story opens about the middle of the seventeenth century, when the court of the merry monarch, Charles II., of England, was entrancing all Europe with its magnificent splendor, while it disgusted the civilized world by its obscene licentiousness. It was a gala night, and the pleasure-loving king had thrown open his saloon to the nobility of London. The ball-room was one blaze of light, reflecting with a double brilliancy the rare array of beauty assembled therein.

At the upper end of the room, conspicuous for her loveliness and rank, stood Ianthe Kensington, only daughter and heiress of the Earl of Derby. She was surrounded by a bevy of noblemen; who fell back as the king approached. The royal monarch took one of the lady's hands, and in a low flattering tone said,—

Lady Ianthe has surpassed herself this evening. She is looking superbly handsome.

Thank you, sire; I see you can still flatter, replied the lady, a little haughtily.

A smile of scorn wreathed the King's lips as he said,—

Lady Ianthe, gentlemen, would have us believe that she is an exception to her sex; that she is too strong-minded to care for admiration.

Her eyes flashed proudly up to his face, while her answer came sharp and quick,—

It is not fair that the monarch of England should judge all of Britain's daughters by a few of the beauties who find royal favor just now. There are exceptions, sire, to all generalities.

The king's face reddened with anger as the full force of her sarcastic rejoinder dawned on his mind, and bowing his head low he said,—

Beware, lady, how you court our displeasure, for even lady Kensington is subject to our royal power; and then, as if already sorry for his insulting words, he added, a truce to this idle war of words. It ill becomes the sovereign of England to quarrel with one of its fairest subjects. Now, as a sign of our royal favor, fair lady, allow me to kiss your brow.

She drew haughtily back, the red blood dyeing her cheek with a rich crimson as she replied,—

Not so, sire; I intend to reserve such marks of affection for my future husband, whoever he may be.

Be it so, lady; but perhaps you may some day remember bitterly the hour in which you refused the king of Britain a kiss of friendship.

It can scarcely matter—this refusal of mine—to one who has so many upon whom he can bestow his royal favors; and the lady tripped away with a derisive smile on her lip, a mocking light in her eye, leaving the bewildered monarch almost petrified by the home thrust,

Few in that vast assembly, where the good and evil were strangely mixed, would have dared to brave kingly power as the Lady Ianthe Kensington had done; but she was brave to the heart's core, for the blue old Norman blood of her ancestors coursed fearlessly through her veins, while her rank gave her a position which few had attained.

Lady Ianthe Kensington was beautiful as a poet's wildest dream, brilliantly beautiful, just Spanish enough to give her the long midnight hair of her mother's people; black eyes, clear, but not olive, complexion, perfect features, and pearly teeth. The hours came and went, but in all the vast saloon Ianthe Kensington was unrivalled. Her costume was superb. Shimmering folds of cherry-colored satin fell in a heavy court train to the floor, their richness veiled by an overdress of rare lace, old and costly, looped here and there with a spray of sparkling diamonds. A tiara of the same jewels crowned her purplish black hair, and heavy bracelets encircled her arms; but the symmetry of her figure, the faultless grace of her movements, constituted her crowning charms. Lord Montford watched her supple form moving through the mazy dance, and setting his teeth hard together he vowed that the bells of Charles' court should be his or rue the day where-in she refused him.

It was late when Montford found an opportunity to approach Lady Ianthe, and with courtly grace he led her to a seat within a draped alcove. Here they were free from intrusion, and, seating himself near her, he took one of her small jeweled hands in his. The lady, with an angry frown, turned to him, withdrawing her hand as she said,—

My lord, I came here to rest, not to be worshipped.

Thank you for your timely warning, lady; but your bewildering beauty, and the great love I bear you, compel me to declare my passion in spite of all expostulations to the contrary. It is needless to tell you that the earl favors my suite; and it lies with you now to make my happiness complete.

I am afraid your happiness, will never be perfect, my lord, if my hand is to fill the cup.

But, lady, consider your decision. My rank equals yours; my income is large, and I can see no reason why you should refuse me.

Enough, Lord Montford, enough. Instead of feeling honoured by your suit every pure emotion of my soul cries out against a proposal of marriage from one of the most profligate of licentious court. Go, my Lord, and make your proposals to some of those whom you have dragged down to ruin.

I will go, proud woman, but woe to you and yours for this insult. You shall bitterly remember this night in the future, for you may go to the ends of the earth, but my vengeance will overtake you. You may hide in the jungles of India, or flee to the wilds of America, but when my hour comes I shall find you out. Remember, lady, that in the hollow of my hand I hold the peace of your grey-haired parent.

Lady Ianthe paled to the roots of her hair as she exclaimed,—

Not on him, Lord Montford, but on me, do your worst, for he has striven to make me love you.

A cruel smile played around the bad man's lips as he replied,—

Not even him will I spare unless you revoke your decision. You have deliberately spurned me with insult; you have scorned my love, and cast it from you; so, lady, I repeat, beware of me! She stretched out her hands imploringly, and then, as if ashamed to plead further, she arose, saying,—

I see it is useless to ask mercy of one who knows nothing of the term; and not even to save my father will I sell myself to you.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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