

# THE STAR.

## Conscience.

Conscience makes cowards of us all!" I cry  
Not so! nor care by whom this thing was writ,  
Nor heed that through the centuries gone by,  
All cowards have for truth accepted it.

When in a human heart some thought of ill  
Like a foul weed takes unexpected root,  
And spreads, and springs, and burgeons there until  
It shows rank promise of unwholesome fruit.

If haply, ere this fruit be ripe to fall  
Upon the earth as an abhorrent deed,  
Is he a coward whom the imperious call  
Of Conscience bids pluck forth the noxious weed?

Which is the coward? He who fears the wrong  
And does the Right, though wrong the most allure;  
Or he who lulls his Conscience with the song  
Of some to-morrow which all sores shall cure?

Conscience make cowards! Why 'tis bravest then  
To fly than fight, to lie than tell the truth;  
To rob than give; to sin with many men  
Than to be virtuous with the few, forsooth!

All this is sustain! He who dare obey  
His Conscience hath a courage sterner far,  
And nobler, and more difficult, than they  
Who calmly face the fiercest front of war!

## Faithful Love's Reward.

Under the shadow of a great fig-tree a young girl sat, in a deep reverie. Such a tender light was in her eyes, such a sweet smile of full satisfaction on her face, that a stranger would certainly have said, she is thinking of her lover. But no lover had Mabel Rae, and her pleasure sprung from a far less dangerous source—from the handful of tuberose in her lap. Their spiritual, dreamy beauty and rare, rich perfume always held her as in a spell of measureless content. To breathe their odor was to fill her soul with holy and tender thoughts, and the lovely waxen flowers, pale, pure and white as moonshine, haunted her heart and imagination, and received from her a perpetual love and worship.

There she sat until the heat and stillness of the tropic noon drove her to the house, a grand old home hid among giant live-oaks gray with the solemn waving southern moss. She went first to the large dim parlors, intending to put her favorites among the damp moss of the hanging baskets; but the dreamy languor of the darkened room overcame every desire but that of sleep, and she lay down on the nearest couch, holding her flowers in her hands.

Half an hour later, Mr. Rae opened the door and ushered in a gentleman who had accompanied him from New Orleans.

Sit down, Allan, he said. I will soon arouse the house. You see it is the hour for siesta, and I believe all take it at the same time when I am away.

For a few minutes the young man believed himself alone. The subtle, powerful perfume—quite unknown, but delicious beyond expression—was his first sensation. Then, as his eyes became accustomed to the dim light of the carefully closed shutters, he saw a picture that he never more forgot—a most lovely girl, in the first bloom of maidenhood, fast asleep on the silken cushions piled on a low divan. Her white robes made a kind of glory in the darkened corner. One hand had fallen down, and the flowers gemmed the carpet at her side; the other lay across her breast, as if embracing the tuberose which it had scattered there.

Never in all his native mountains, never in any dream of love or fancy, had Allan Monteith seen a woman half so fair. Almost entranced, he stood gazing on Mabel as if he had seen a vision. There lay his destiny asleep; he knew it, and opened his whole soul to welcome love's young dream. But when Mr. Rae, followed by a negro valet, returned, and Mabel languidly opened her great pensive eyes, and stretched out her arms for her father's embrace, Allan almost thought he should faint from excess of emotion, and it was with difficulty he controlled himself to receive the introduction and apologies necessary.

Allan Monteith was a young Scotchman, the only son of a gentleman with whom in early life Mr. Rae had formed a most ardent friendship. Allan was rich, and by nature and birth equally noble; but he was utterly devoid as yet of any experiences but such as his college and his mountain home had brought him. Nevertheless, he was not destitute of the traditional business capacity of his houses as some late transactions in cotton and sugar in New Orleans had proven to Mr. Rae. And partly because he liked the young man, and partly as a matter of interest, he had invited him to his home

among the woods and lagoons of the ever-green bryou. Mabel, in this transaction had scarcely been properly considered; but to her father she was yet a child. True, he recognized her wonderful beauty, and was very proud of it; he knew too that she possessed an exquisite voice, and great skill in music, and the passing idea of showing his pearl of price to the foreigner rather flattered his vanity than alarmed his fears. He did not dream that he was introducing a new claimant for its possession.

Yet so it proved. Allan lingered as if in an enchanted castle, till he had no life, no will, no hopes but those which centered in Mabel Rae. And she, innocent and impressible, soon returned his passion with a love even more absorbing and far less selfish than her lover's.

Oh the sweet, warm, love-laden days in those solemnly shaded woods! Oh the blissful hours in the cool evenings, when the perfume of tuberose and jasmine and oleanders filled the air! When the soft calm moonlight glorified every lovely and every common thing. It was like a dream of those days when the old rustic gods reigned, and to live was to love, and to love was to be happy.

With the fall, however, there came imperative letters from Scotland, and Allan could no longer delay. Love has its business as well as its romance, and this side was not so satisfactory. Mr. Rae would hear of no engagement for two years, by which time he said he hoped to be able to give Mabel such a fortune as would make her acceptable in the eyes of Allan's father. But for the present he absolutely declined to look upon the young people's attachment as binding on either side.

In less than two years when the first tuberose bloom, I will be here again, Mabel, darling! were Allan's last whispered words, as he held her tenderly in his arms, and kissed again and again the face dearer than all the world to him. And Mabel smiled through her tears, and held the last tuberose of the summer to his lips for a parting pledge.

But the two years brought many and unexpected changes. That very winter the first war cloud gathered, and long before Allan could redeem his promise, the little inland plantation was desolate and deserted. Mr. Rae had gone to the war and Mabel boarded in a ladies' school in New Orleans. These were but the beginning of sorrows. Another year found her an orphan, and cruelly embarrassed in money affairs. Claimants without number appeared against the Rae estate, and creditors forced the plantation into the market at the most favorable time. She was driven from her home, in strict accordance with the letter of the law, but she felt and knew, though powerless to prevent it, that she had been shamefully wronged.

Poverty is a grand teacher however, and has many learned disciples, and now, for the first time in all her life, Mabel thought for herself and dared to look the future in the face. She had promised her father never to write to Allan without his permission, but she considered that death annuls all contracts, and surely now, if ever, it was Allan's duty to befriend and care for her. So she sent him word in a few shy, timid sentences, of her sorrow and loneliness. But it was doubtful if ever the letter would reach him; mails those days were not certainties; and even if it did reach Allan, it was still more uncertain whether he could reach Mabel.

And in the mean time she must work or starve—a blessed alternative in great sorrows, I say. People who have to fight a sea of troubles do not go mad. Work, the oldest of all preached evangelists, is the consoler, and brings them through. And though Mabel Rae could command no higher position than that of a nursery governess, yet she found in it a higher life than ever the dreamy, luxurious selfishness of her father's home had given her.

Her employers were of the ordinary class. I can weave no romance out of them. They felt no special interest in Mabel, neither did they ill use her. She was useful and unobtrusive, and asked neither for sympathy nor attention. No letter came from Allan Monteith, though she waited and hoped with failing heart and paling cheeks for more than a year. She had not the courage to write again, and her anxiety and distress began to tell very perceptibly on a naturally frail constitution. Then a physician advised her to try at once a more invigorating climate, and she not unwillingly agreed to accompany the invalid wife of an officer returning to her home in New York.

This was the dawn of a brighter day for Mabel. She found friends even if she did not find health, and her rare beauty and wonderful musical talents soon procured her the admiration of a large and influential circle. By the advice of her friend, she established herself in a fashionable locality and commenced the teaching of music. I think few women could have been more successful. Part of this was undoubtedly due to the social power of her friend; but neither this nor her own loveliness and winning manners would have been sufficient, without the genuine knowledge of

her art and that wonderful voice which charmed all who heard it.

So, in the second winter of Mabel's residence in New York, it became the thing to invite Miss Rae to preside over select social and musical entertainments. I have a friend who met her during this season frequently, and who describes her tact and influence as something extraordinary and magnetic. Her rare beauty was undiminished, though more thoughtful and spiritual in character; her dress was uniformly the same—a pale pink lustreless silk, with tuberose in her hair and at her breast, for her passion for these flowers was stronger than ever; and when they were to be procured at any trouble or cost, her little room was always full of their peculiar fragrance.

During this winter Mabel had many lovers, and report said, more than one excellent offer of marriage, but she quietly ignored or else decidedly refused all advances. Her heart was still with the tall, fair mountaineer who had won it, amid the warmth and perfume of tropic noons and moonlit nights; and though twice two years had passed, she refused to believe him false.

And she was right. Allan deserved her fullest faith. Her letter had never reached him, and yet he had with incredible difficulty made his way to New Orleans, only to find the Rae plantation in the hands of strangers, his friend dead, and Mabel gone, none knew whither. After a long and dispiriting search, he left Mabel's discovery in the hands of well-paid agents, and returned to Scotland almost broken-hearted at the destruction of all his hopes.

But he still loved her passionately, and often in stormy nights, when the winds tossed the tall pines like straws, and mountain snows beat at barred doors and windows, he thought of the happy peace and the solemn silences in which he and his love had walked, listening only to the beating of their own hearts, or the passionate undernotes of the mocking-birds. Often, both in sleeping and waking dreams, he saw again that dim parlor, and the beautiful girl sleeping on the silken couch; and with these memories there always came the same sensation of some delicate perfume in the air. Far away amid the heather and the broom, and the strong fresh breezes of the North Sea, he still was visited by the breath of the tropic woods, and the fragrance of the tuberose and the memory of his lost Mabel were one and indivisible in his heart.

Thus two walked apart who should have walked hand in hand, and it seemed as if the years only widened that breach over which two souls looked longingly and called vainly. But there are pills which happen for good; and I think any one who would have taken the trouble to analyze the gain in character which this separation and struggle produced, would have said so.

For after five years of battle with life, Mabel was no longer a lovely, impulsive, thoughtless child; she was a noble woman, beautiful in all the majesty of completed suffering. And Allan's whole nature had swelled under the influence of a mighty and unselfish love, as seas swell under the influence of the sun and moon.

If we wait, however, the harvest of the heart will come. One day early in the winter, Mabel got a note from a friend, announcing her return from abroad, and begging her to be present at a small informal reunion at her house that evening. She went early in the day, and spent the afternoon in that pleasant gossip which young and happy women enjoy. Her hostess rallied her a good deal upon her growing years, and laughingly advised her to secure a young Scotchman with whom they had had a pleasant acquaintance in their travels, and who was now in New York and going to spend the evening with them.

Did Fate knock softly on Mabel's soul then? For she blushed violently, and instantly, as if by magic, there sprung up in her heart a happy refrain which she could not control, and which kept on singing, "He comes! he comes! My lover comes!"

She dressed with more than ordinary care, and was so impatient that her toilet was completed before others had begun. So she sat down in the unlighted parlors, saying to herself:

I must be still. I will be calm; for how should I bear a disappointment, and what ground of hope have I? Absolutely none but that he comes from the same country. No, there is no hope!

But still, above the doubt and fear, she could hear the same chiming undertone. He comes! he comes! My lover comes!

She became nervous and superstitious, and when the silence was broken by a quick ring and a rapid footstep, she rose involuntarily from her chair, and stood trembling and flushing with excitement in the middle of the room. Ah, Mabel! Mabel! your heart has seen further than your eyes. Allan has come at last.

Ah, my darling! my darling! my fair, sweet flower, whose perfume has followed me o'er land and sea, I have found you again at last! exclaimed Allan, as he clasped Mabel to his bosom.

And so Mabel's winter of discontent

and sorrow was over. Never more did she have grief or pain unsoothed or uncomforded. I only wish I could close as the old fairy tales do, and say, so they lived happy ever afterward. But, alas! though a lovely Mabel Monteith, with her father's hair and her mother's eyes, makes light and gladness in Allan's home, the far dearer one has gone to the abodes where the eternal are.

In a little country church-yard not twenty miles from New York, the beautiful Mabel Rae sleeps the sleep that knows no waking. Half the year round you would know her grave by the delicate odor of the tuberose with which it is covered; and even when snows cover it, and wild winds and rains beat over its senseless turf, one noble heart offers there still the incense of an undying affection.

For be sure that a true love strikes but one hour, and he or she has never loved at all who can say, I loved once. Was Mabel's short life a lost one? Oh no! Life is perfect in small measures, and she left upon the mountain tops of death a light that makes them lovely to those who shall follow her.

## To Much for Midget.

Timkins, Tarbox, and Midget were a convival trio. They were married men, and yet they spent many of their evenings at the tavern, thus leaving undone duties which ought to have been done, and doing a great many things which ought never to have been done. One night the trio sat at the festive board of Pimple's tavern until very near to midnight, at which hour they were about as drunk as men could be and not be dead. A dispute arose touching the payment of the bill for the evenings entertainment.

"Hole on," said Timkins. "Let'r be till t'morrow. When we get home our wives'll be sure to tell us to do some unaccountable thing, and if any one of us refuses to do the first thing his wife tells him to do after he gets into the house, he shall pay the whole bill for the party."

This was agreed to, and it was further stipulated that each should give a true account of the result at their next meeting. On the following evening the friends met again. Timkins led off.

"Well, boys," said he, "I had a tough one, but I did it. It was dark as pitch in the house when I got home, and as I was lumbering through the kitchen, I stumbled against the stove, and knocked the tea-kettle off onto the floor. That started my wife, and she sang out to me,—'Say, you brute, tip over the cooking-stove, and done with it!' No sooner said than done. I gave the old thing a h'ist, and over it went.—My eyes!—didn't my wife come out of bed! But I did it."

Tarbox next gave his experience:

Good for you, Tim; but I'm even with you, though my job wasn't quite so tough. When I got home I had to get into the house through the buttry window, as usual, and I've no doubt that I made considerable of a clatter among the tin pans. If my wife had been asleep she woke up. "That's right!" she called out, at the top of her voice. "Tip things over, won't you! Don't miss the cream pot. Upset that too!" I knew the pot must be nearly full of cream, but I'd got the order, and was bound to obey, and over went the next churnin' on to the floor. What befell me very shortly afterward, and what particular language Mrs. Tarbox used on the occasion, I won't say,—but I obeyed orders.

Midget came next, and he approached the subject of his narrative with downcast looks. Well, boys, he said, I s'pose I've got to foot the bill. Unfortunately my wife asked too much of me. When I got home I found the back door unlocked, so I got into the house without making much noise; but in going up stairs, I stumbled, and the racket of my fall was quickly echoed by Mrs. Midget's voice, pitched in a most snappish and peremptory key. "There, Midget," she cried, "tumble again! Tumble and break your worthless neck!" Sa's I, that's too much for Midget! I'd rather pay the bill at the tavern. And so, boys, I'll settle up.

## A Ready Response.

Dr. Sam. Duncan, Chancellor of St. Mary's, was a radical man, as set and rigid in his opinions as he was odd and restive, and as fond of the good things of life as he was of dusty books. Among his peculiar tenets, which he strove to impress upon the minds of the students, was an adherence to the principles of the fathers. He would have the young honor the creeds of their ancestors, and had no confidence in the man who could cast aside the religion of his parents.

One evening the Doctor was at table where a fine roast spare-rib of pork was served, and his mouth fairly watered as he prepared to carve it; for, of all his gastronomic partialities, roast spare-rib was his favorite. He had just plunged his fork into the brown and juicy mass, and was ready with his knife, when one of the company interrupted him:

Doctor, if you had been born and educated one of the Lord's chosen people,

how, when very hungry, do you think you would have deputed yourself in the presence of such a spare-rib of pork as this?

My dear sir, replied the Doctor, I should have made it a very respectful bow, and said to it, as Agrippa said to St. Paul, 'Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.'

And he went on with his carving.

## WIT AND HUMOUR.

SOME time ago on a Monday, a well-known angler was fishing at a trouting stream, when he was accosted by the minister, who asked him as to his success. The angler, after replying, said to the minister—"Dae ye no try the rod yourself?" Oh, no, replied the minister with pious awe and eyes upturned, I am a fisher of men. Oh, indeed, replied Sandy, but I doot ye're nae great hand o't, for I lookit in to your creel yesterday, and it was unco empty.

A young mother was in the habit of airing the baby's clothes at the window. Her husband did not like it, and believed if she saw her practice as others saw it she would desist. He so directed their afternoon walk so as to bring the nursery window in full view from the central part of the town. Stopping abruptly, he pointed to the offending linen flopping unconsciously in the breeze, and asked, sarcastically, my dear, what is that display in our window? Why, she replied, that is the flag of our union. Conquered by this pungent retort, he saluted the flag by a swing of his hat, and pressing his wife's arm closer within his own, said, and long may it wave.

A POSER.—Two weavers who were drunk went to the Rochdale Canal. One of them attempting to bathe was drowned; the other who was too drunk to attempt bathing, slept on the bank, and consequently wasn't drowned. We should like to know the temperance view of the case. The obvious conclusion is that the more drunk you get, and the more you avoid cold water, the better for you. Eh?

AN AMERICAN ELECTION LYRIC.—The following gem is by the author of "Mother, may I go to swim?"—"O, pa, may I go out to vote?" "Yes, my boy, and freely." Put on your old white hat and coat, And go for Horace Greeley."

GARDENING FOR LADIES.—Make your bed in the morning; sew buttons on your husband's shirt, do not rake any grievances; protect the young and tender branches of your family; plant a smile of good-temper on your face, and carefully root out all angry feelings, and expect a good crop of happiness.

A SHABBILY dressed genius being treated disrespectfully by strangers, was asked why he didn't resent it. "It was my rusty old hat and coat that were slighted, and not myself," he replied. "If they choose to take it up and make a fuss about it they may, but I shall have nothing to do with it."

A LAST RETORT.—A recent obituary of an old lady concluded thus:—"She lived with her husband fifty years, and died in the confident hope of a better life." She surely had not much to complain of, for, after the fifty years of married life, she thus got the last word—and rather a severe one.

A YOUNG lady entered a country bookstore just as the proprietor had killed a rat, and said to the clerk, "I want to see 'What He Will Do With It.'" "Well," said the clerk, "if you'll just step to the rear window, you'll see him sling it into the back lot."

A PARSIMONIOUS merchant, at a fashionable dinner the other day, astonished the company, on the appearance of the fifth course, by laying down his knife and fork and exclaiming, "See here; I'll take the rest of this dinner out in money!"

JUDY is now buying coal by the pound and putting it on the fire with the sugar tongs.

## THE STAR

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