

MY TEMPLE.

A heavenly workman fashioned in my heart
A church of God,
Upon a shining eminence, apart
From the earth-road.

Oh! what a wondrous architect He is,
Whose touch divine
Reared high these sun-girt walls, my destiny's
Immortal shrine!

He carved so noiselessly, I never knew
The work begun,
Nor what it was God sent him here to do
Until 'twas done.

He carved it white, as God meant life to be;
Strong and sublime,
To bear the wild winds of eternity
That sweep through time.

O shrine of God! what human soul would dare
Stretch out a hand
Defiled to touch thee or seek without prayer
To understand?

Deep as the sea thy shining altars are;
Yet are they high
Enough for God to know their light afar
In the soul's sky.

Here silences, uplifting to the sun
Their foreheads broad,
With mysteries move grandly one by one,
Prophets of God,

And here and there upon thy sun-stained floor
A white thought kneels,
With hopes grouped round it beautiful, whose
power
That great God feels.

And here and there dreams gorgeous to the
sight
Shine to and fro
With burning eyes, whose meanings of delight
The angels know.

This heavenly workman once for every soul
Builds church and shrine;
Ah! when he builds for thee, pray God they
be
Godlike as mine.

SUSIE.

CHAPTER I.

The first time I saw Susie was on a June evening, when she wore a wreath of blue convolvull on her curly brown hair, and blue kid shoes on her dainty feet.

I don't think I should ever have married Susie if it had not been for Stenie; for it was Stenie who first proposed that I should marry an heiress, in order to save myself from the fate that awaited me. I thought Stenie's scheme sheer nonsense at the time, but we all know that great events are often the result of mere trifles. I am very sure that if Stenie had known of the pain and bitterness that the scheme would bring into his life he would never have proposed it.

The story does not begin on that June evening when I first saw Susie in the convolvull wreath, but about a week before, when I returned to the apartments I shared with Stenie near Hyde Park, from a visit I had just paid to my uncle Bubb, senior partner in the great shipping firm of Bubb and Barnett, whose wealth was supposed to be fabulous.

The object of the visit was an unpleasant one—a very unpleasant one. My father had lately lost all but a fragment of his large income, through the failure of some mines of which he was owner. For him the blow was not so terrible as for me, his only son. He had still the house in Glamorganshire, which our family had held for generations, his precious books, and a trifle to supply his wants. To me the blow was intensely severe. My prospects in life appeared ruined; from a position of easy affluence I was reduced to the necessity of earning my bread. My last resource was my uncle Bubb. My father fondly hoped that he could assist me so far as to obtain a lucrative situation for me; and, armed with a letter containing a request to that effect from my father, I had paid a visit to my uncle.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon when I entered our pleasant room overlooking the park, and, throwing myself face downwards on the sofa, gave vent to my misery in a groan of despair. Stenie had been reading with a cigar in his mouth and his feet elevated considerably above the level of his head. He dropped the book and started to his feet.

"What news, Ju? What did your uncle say?" I groaned again.

"Speak out man! What has the old rascal said to you?"

"Offered me a choice of two professions," I answered bitterly—"clerk in his office at twenty shillings a week and a half-holiday on Saturday, or a berth on board one of his ships, if I'm not particular about spoiling my hands."

"The old porpoise!" muttered Stenie, with emphasis. "You don't mean to say that he had the cheek to propose sending you to sea in one of his old tubs?"

"He has not a relation in the world but me, and he has money enough to bury himself in," I said, in indistinct murmurs, my face still bu-

ried in the pillows, where I lay listening with evil satisfaction to Stenie's abuse of my uncle Bubb, whom he called by turns a demon, a porpoise, and a rascal. For my heart was very sore as I thought of all the good times I and Stenie had spent together, but that now were lost to me forever through this unlooked-for calamity.

At length Stenie ceased abusing my uncle Bubb, and, seating himself on the sofa by my side, unfolded a brilliant idea he had conceived—namely, that I should accompany him down to Brighton, and woo, win, and marry a certain Miss Crallan, an heiress, whom an old chum of Stenie's, at present staying at Brighton, had often lately mentioned in his letters to Stenie.

"Phinny will introduce us," concluded Stenie triumphantly.

"What bosh!" I returned, savagely. "Of course the girl has got dozens of suitors already."

"Go in and cut 'em all out, dear boy; you know women all confess you're irresistible," said Stenie, promptly.

"But it's only a chance after all," I returned, miserably.

"Only a chance, truly; but a drowning man is glad to catch at a straw," observed Stenie, coolly.

"But how base—how sordid!" I began, obstinately, bent on opposition.

"Not at all; hundreds of fellows do it. Besides, hang it, old boy, a handsome fellow like you is a desirable acquisition for any woman, be she ever so rich. Beauty against money any day. Heiresses are generally ugly," cried Stenie with energy.

"Suppose she's engaged?" I questioned.

"Then you must give up Miss Crallan; but there's sure to be lots more of these nice heiresses in Brighton. Phinny knows troops of people, and he will introduce us. I'll write and tell him to take rooms for us at the 'Old Ship,' where he is staying. I will be a capital skylark for us."

"And if I fail?" I suggested, hopelessly.

"Oh, you won't fail; you're too good-looking. But, if you do, why, there'll be the stool in old Bubb's office, and the twenty shillings a week, and the half-holiday on Saturday, as a last resource, you know."

Stenie opened his desk and wrote to his friend Phinny Kelly, while I lay silently bemoaning the fall of my air-castles. For I had dreamed so fondly of the pale, proud face and the amber hair of the woman I was to call "wife" at some bright future day, when fate should lead the identical amber-haired "she" across my path; while now I must cast aside my dream of love, and wed some wretched girl solely for her money, to save myself—the scion of a noble house—from becoming a city clerk at a pound a week Oh, miserable man!

Two days later we started for Brighton in pursuit of Stenie's chimera—for such I persisted in calling it. Yet before the journey was ended I had become infected with a part, at least, of his exuberant spirits, and when Stenie introduced me to his friend, Phinny Kelly, who had come to the station to meet us, I was fast becoming interested in Stenie's little plot.

The first mistake we made—a mistake that led to great bitterness for more than myself—was not frankly confiding to Phinny Kelly our object in coming to Brighton. Partly from a feeling of shame, partly from a dread of ridicule I had made Stenie promise to keep the affair a secret between our two selves. We therefore allowed Phinny to imagine our visit merely one of ordinary pleasure. Had we told him the truth, what did happen never would have happened.

We dined together in capital spirits. Stenie artfully alluded to Miss Crallan, but Phinny had become suddenly obtuse concerning that young heiress, and gave no sign that he heard the remark.

"Never mind—I'll make him introduce us all the same," whispered Stenie, nodding cheerfully at me when Phinny's back was turned.

After dinner we went on to the pier. Stenie kept a vigilant watch upon the people Phinny saluted. The first three were gentlemen, one of whom Phinny introduced as Mr. Macadams, a peculiarly vacant-looking person. The fourth was a stately lady, in green raiment, who returned Phinny's bow with a sweet smile and an outstretched hand.

"Perhaps it's the mater," whispered Stenie, excitedly, in my ear. Then he gave Phinny a delicate hint to introduce us.

The lady, however, to Stenie's disappointment, was not Mrs. Crallan, but a Mrs. Helston. "Shall we see you to-morrow at our little party, Mr. Kelly? It will be quite a friendly gathering—only sixty of us; the Pointers and the Crallans will be among the number," said Mrs. Helston, sweetly.

"I will most certainly be there, madam," returned Phinny, bowing.

If ever a man's eyes and general air said "Do invite me," Stenie's did at that moment; I felt quite ashamed of him. But Mrs. Helston did invite us on the spot.

"Perhaps your friends—Mr. Yonge and Mr. Erle—will favor us?" she said, graciously.

Stenie gracefully accepted the invitation for both without reference to me, and soon afterwards Mrs. Helston sailed away.

The second thing that led to that miserable mistake I have alluded to was a telegram which had arrived for Phinny Kelly during our absence summoning him to Ryde on account of his father's sudden illness.

Phinny consulted a Bradshaw, and found that he had just time to catch the last train for

Portsmouth. We drove with him to the station, both expressing our regret at the recent news.

"If my father's illness turns out not to be anything serious, I'll run over again and join you in a day or two," he said at parting; "and, Stenie, if you go to the Helstons' party to-morrow, make my apologies to Mrs. Helston, and tell her why I was called away from town, will you?" Stenie promised, and we two walked away, arm-in-arm.

Stenie turned his blue eyes, full of mischief, upon me.

"Now all you will do to-morrow night is to look as killing as possible. See how fate has played into our hands! Without any effort of our own, we are to meet Miss Crallan. I see the end of the story distinctly. I can even hear your wedding-bells, and taste, in imagination, the peculiarly rich and delicate flavor of your wedding-cake. Don't forget, Ju, that I was the first to offer my congratulations," concluded Stenie, relighting his cigar which had gone out during his speech.

It was long before I slept that never-to-be forgotten night. I thought long of the girl Stenie had decided I should marry, the prevailing feature of my thoughts being pity for myself that I was reduced to the necessity of marrying a rich girl to save myself from the fate magnanimously suggested by uncle Bubb.

CHAPTER II.

"Julian, do you see that little brown-haired girl by the door? What a pretty little mouse she is!"

Stenie and I were standing in a curtained recess of Mrs. Helston's ball-room, keeping a sharp look-out on the guests as they arrived. We had taken care to be early ourselves, and were on the *qui-vive* for the heiress, whom we imagined we would recognize the moment she appeared, by the brilliancy of her jewels or the splendor of her attire.

I looked across the room in the direction indicated by Stenie, and saw, seated by the door, a girl in a plain but exquisitely-fitting dress of blue gauze, beneath the flounce of which peeped a tiny foot in a blue kid shoe. A wreath of blue convolvull lay among her short brown curls. Her eyes were dark, and of the most exquisite beauty—their brightness lent an inexpressible charm to her piquant face. Round cheeks, in which lurked a bewitching dimple, and a resolute mouth, made a picture as charming as it was uncommon.

"How fresh and bright she looks!" said Stenie, in a low, eager whisper; and it seemed to me that a new tenderness shone in his blue eyes for a moment.

Some one came into the recess where we stood; it was the vacant-looking gentleman to whom Kelly had introduced us on the pier—Mr. Macadams. He saluted us and made some trifling remark about the heat of the room.

"Do you know that young lady in blue?" asked Stenie of him, by a slight movement, carelessly indicating the brown-eyed girl.

"It's Miss Crallan, I fancy. I've heard she's awfully rich—got more money than she knows what to do with."

"Will you introduce us?" said Stenie, with well-suppressed eagerness.

"Sorry to say I'm not acquainted with her; I'm almost a stranger. But Mrs. Helston will introduce you, I've no doubt. Here she comes."

Stenie made a quick movement to intercept our hostess. He asked the favor of an introduction to the "young lady in blue."

"In blue? Ah, yes, certainly," and Mrs. Helston's mild eyes gleamed placidly beneath her half-closed lids.

The next moment we stood before the wearer of the convolvull wreath.

"Susie, allow me to introduce Mr. Yonge and Mr. Erle," said our hostess, smiling down at the brown eyes—"Miss Crallan."

The brown eyes gave a swift upward glance at us, and then the long lashes fell till they swept the dimpled cheeks.

At that moment the first notes of a valse sounded. Stenie gave me a quick admonishing glance. I understood him, and asked Miss Crallan to favor me with the first dance.

The next moment I had Susie in my arms. She was always Susie to me in my heart, from that moment.

"Shall we go into the next room to dance? It is cooler," said Susie, shyly; and we waltzed into a long, half-lit cool outer room with windows wide open to the night. Some half-dozen other couples were dancing in it, preferring it to the heated ball-room, whence every note of the band came distinctly to our ears.

That valse was like a dream. The sweet, dim light, the delicious rise and fall of the music; the soft, graceful form I held, were all alike most pleasant to me. I looked down at Susie's dimpled shoulders and her curly brown hair, and I decided that the girl Stenie had made up his mind I should marry was not at all objectionable; for, although I felt that I could never love her, being so very unlike my ideal, yet I might like her very well.

After the valse Susie and I walked up and down the cool room together. I asked her to introduce me to her parents. Susie's brown eyes opened wide.

"I have no mother and my father is far away, Mr. Erle—at least it seems far to me. My home is in Kent. I am here only on a visit to my aunt. I have never been in Brighton before, and I am enjoying it, oh, so much!"

There was such genuine rapture in the tone that I was astonished. Could a girl accustomed

to wealth and society find such intense pleasure in a visit to Brighton?

"I will introduce you to my aunt, and my cousin Elgitha, if you like, Mr. Erle," continued Susie, in her bright voice. "Elgitha is the dearest girl in the world. She takes so much trouble to give me pleasure. Indeed every one is kind to me, Mrs. Helston especially," continued Susie, innocently.

"No wonder," thought I, and I gazed in astonishment at the childish face by my side.

"Then I suppose you go out but seldom when in the country?" I remarked.

"Oh, never—therefore it is a treat to me. Yet I confess, Mr. Erle, I am longing to see them all at home already—poor papa especially," and Susie sighed.

I concluded from the tone and the sigh that Mr. Crallan was the victim of some chronic disease, and delicately refrained from dwelling upon the subject.

We chatted for some time, and, in spite of myself, I could not but admire the freshness and charming simplicity of this girl who was so unlike all my ideas of a purse-proud heiress.

Susie danced several times with me and several times with Stenie. Later in the evening Susie introduced us to her aunt, Mrs. Crallan who was a widow, and to her aunt's only daughter, Elgitha, a pleasant, good-natured girl with very light flaxen hair. We received a cordial invitation to call at their house in the King's road, which Stenie accepted for both with his usual promptness.

I quite expected Stenie to congratulate me on the progress I had made in the heiress's good graces, but he was unusually quiet that night, and there was a wistful expression in his blue eyes that I had never seen there before.

CHAPTER III.

It was evening. The stars were shining in the sky, which was still bright in the west after the gorgeous sunset. The moon cast a stream of light upon the bosom of the ocean.

Susie and I sat together on the balcony of her aunt's house. It faced the sea. Below us, on the parade, the lamps shone star-like through the twilight. Throngs of people, allured by the beauty of the summer night, were walking to and fro, enjoying the strains of a fine band. Every note reached us. The musicians were playing a waltz by Strauss. In every pause of the music we could hear the dash of the waves on the beach. How sweet it all was! Ah, Susie, amid the doubts that came between us in after-life, the memory of this night remained fresh in the secret chambers of my heart.

Presently Stenie joined us. He went forward and stood looking down at the parade, beside Susie's chair, beating time to the music with one hand upon the iron rail. When the music ceased, he turned to Susie—

"This is perfectly charming, is it not?" he said.

"Not so charming as a June evening in a rose-garden such as mine is at home, when every flower is heavy with dew, and the air is laden with an odor so delicious that you could linger there for hours," she answered, with a quick glance up at him.

He looked down at her with a smile such as I had seen on his lips only lately.

"I suppose not," he assented gently, and then turned away abruptly and went in.

I did not believe I loved Susie, but I meant to marry her; so, when the band began to play, "Love's Young Dream," I thought it was a good time and place to ask Susie to be my wife. I had made a firm resolve to tell Susie I was poor trusting that her love for me was strong enough to outweigh that; for she did love me—I knew that. She was far too simple to hide her secret from me, yet was she perfectly unconscious that I read it.

Susie was leaning over the rail, her olive cheek resting on her hand, a white rose among her curly hair. I laid my hand lightly upon hers, and she started and turned her face towards me. Her eyes were full of tears that gleamed in the moonlight.

"Susie!" I said breathlessly, and a moment later her head was on my breast, and my lips were pressing the wet cheek and the innocent lips that half sought, half shrunk from my caress.

I had an interview with Mrs. Crallan. From her I obtained the address of Susie's father and a warm assurance that she would use her influence with him on my behalf.

"But," she said graciously, "I do not think you have any impediment to fear in that direction. Susie's father would be the last man in the world to stand in the way of his child's happiness, unless there were grave reasons, which of course it is impossible to suppose in your case. So accept my best congratulations, Mr. Erle."

I went home to our hotel and wrote an earnest and very courteous letter, which I directed to "Henry Crallan, Esq., The Laurels, Risdale, Kent."

Two days later came an answer, in which Mr. Crallan informed that acting upon the advice of his daughter's aunt, who had communicated with him on my behalf, he had decided to look favorably upon my suit, providing always Susie's happiness was bound up in me.

I showed the letter to Susie, and watched the color deepen in her olive cheeks while she read.

"When do you return home, Susie?" I asked. "In three days," she replied,