

ROSEY, DEAR.

Dr. Johnson was very severe on the quondam poets of his day. Our readers will not have forgotten these celebrated lines descriptive of the majority of the productions of that class of hopeful aspirants:

"With my hat upon my head I walked along the Strand,
And there I met another man with his hat in his hand."

We wonder what the worthy doctor would have thought of the following brilliant production had he been favoured with it.

Rosey, dear, for you I am pining,
Sure, my poor heart is worn away;
All day, love, for you I am whining,
In sorrow all night I decay.

Ah! when you are gay, I am sighing,
Small wonder you no'er think of me;
I'm moping about slowly dying,
While you are so light and so free.

On my rivals you smile so winning,
It makes the blood rush to my head;
Then jealousy drives me a sinning,
To wish you and I were both dead.

Oh! what have you done with your feeling,
For my weeping you haven't an ear:
To-night at your feet I am kneeling,
To-morrow you won't see me here.

[Would it not be an improvement, Mr. William, to substitute this for the last line, "To-morrow I'll be on the beer (or bier)"]

Oh! Rosey, dear, you love another,
There's no chance for me, I suppose;
Then why should I trouble, or bother
My brain with a changeable rose?

'Tis your sex, I fear, that is killing
The poor boys, instead of disease;
To gain their affections you're willing,
But gain them, dear, only to tease.

Sept. 9th, 1865.

WILLIAM.

TURNED TO ICE.

SHE will freeze you to death," said Minnie Holmes, finishing an elaborate description of her friend, Miss Helen Ramsey; "anything so cold and still I never saw. It is so strange, Mordaunt!"

"So strange, that I can scarcely realise it," said her brother. "She was the gayest of the gay when I last saw her. To be sure, that is three years ago. What does it mean, Minnie? Some love story?"

"Nobody knows," replied Minnie. "Soon after you left home, she went to Madeira with her mother, who was in a consumption. In a short time she returned, bringing home only the remains of Mrs. Ramsey. Since then she has lived in a state of gloomy apathy. She was inclined to shut herself up entirely; but her aunt, after the year of mourning was over, insisted upon her resuming her place in society. Still, wearing heavy mourning, she looks strangely out of place among her old friends, for her dress is not more gloomy than her dark face. She has turned to ice."

"Was she so fondly attached to her mother?" inquired Mordaunt.

"She loved her very dearly," replied Minnie; "but her death was not sudden. For five years she had been sinking slowly."

"Strange!" said her brother. "Poor Helen! Do you think I had better call, Minnie?"

"Certainly," was the reply. "She receives visits—and you are such an old friend."

Three years before, when Helen Ramsey was a belle and heiress, winning hearts by her beauty and wit, and admiration by her faith and taste, Mordaunt Holmes had learned to love her. He was the eldest of nine children, and his father, a physician in full practice, had given him every advantage of education and position; but when his college course was finished, he knew that his duty was to earn his own livelihood. No idler, he earnestly sought employment, and became an active member of a large commercial house. Still, at the time he first learned the secret of his own

love, his salary was small, his position uncertain, and he fell from the train of the heiress's followers, proud and honourable enough to shrink from the appearance of fortune-hunting. The way soon opened to amend his fortunes. A responsible position in the Parish branch of the house where he was employed was soon after offered him, and, at the end of three years passed abroad, he returned home a member of the firm. Not a day had passed without Minnie, his pet sister, being called upon for a full description of "everybody," and thus he learned the change in Helen.

His card was taken up, and he was shown into the large drawing-room of the fashionable house, where the orphan heiress resided with her aunt. Upon the table lay the inevitable album for photographs, which serves so well to fill up the tedious minutes a morning caller has to wait. Mordaunt opened it. Several well-known faces of old friends met his eye, but he turned leaf after leaf, till two pictures, facing each other, arrested his attention. So like, yet so different! The one, a tall, handsome brunette, standing in an evening dress of rich silk and lace. The heavy, black braids interwoven with pearls, encircled a face full of animation and life. The large, dark eyes, frank and fearless, shone with joyous light; the rosy lips were just parted in a smile. Well Mordaunt remembered the merry party who went to "sit for portraits" when this one was taken; but the companion, facing it, was new to him. Her heavy, black drapery shrouded her neck and arms. The glossy braids were gone, and plain bands swept the pale cheeks. The dark eyes looked forward as if the vacancy before them was filled with haunting shadows; and the perfect mouth was set with stern, resolute sadness. One year only had flung its shadow between the two pictures. He was still studying the faces, when the rustle of a dress beside him made him turn.

"I am glad to see you, Mr. Holmes. We have missed you from our circle."

That was all: the cool yet kindly greeting of mere acquaintanceship. Yet her hand trembled, and was cold as ice, as he took it within his. If his life had paid the forfeit of his boldness, he could not have resisted the impulse to break the icy barrier she offered him.

Only a few words of sympathy for her loss, of pleasure in again meeting her, passed his lips, but his tone of earnest sincerity, his warm clasp of the little cold hand, and his look of sorrowful interest spoke volumes. Perhaps she understood him, for even more chilling was her tone in answering. In vain he tried, through the long call, to bring one smile to her lip, one word of cordiality to bid him hope he could move her. Each measured word, every inflexion of the hard, cold voice drove him despairing from the attempt. Minnie was right. She was turned to ice.

At last he rose to go. Yearning with painful interest over this broken life; longing to gather the sad heart into the warm clasp of his love, to comfort and love this mourner, he must bid her a conventional adieu, take up hat and gloves, and walk off as coolly as if his own heart was not aching with sympathy for her burdened one. There was no help for it, and, accepting her cold "Good morning," he left the room. As he stood with the hall door open he suddenly remembered a message of Minnie's about some fancy bazaar, in which she was interested, that he had promised to deliver. Shutting the door again hastily, he crossed the hall to arrest Miss Ramsey before she left the drawing-room. As he stood in the open doorway he saw her; not as he had left her, erect, and cold, but half lying upon the sofa, her face buried in her outstretched arms, her frame shaking with sobs. Such utter prostration of grief he had never witnessed. Her whole figure was convulsed; the little hands were clenched, and she moaned audibly. He was a gentleman, although a lover, and resaining the impulse to throw himself before her, and, entreat her to tell him her sorrow, he softly retraced his steps through the hall and left the house.

Mordaunt Holmes loved Helen Ramsey too truly, too constantly, to let his one repulse discourage him. Day after day he sought her, devoting the whole treasure of his heart and brain to her service, trying, by every tender wile to win the laugh to her lips, the fire to her eyes, fully

repaid for an evening of striving, if but once the pale lips parted to smile on him. There were hours, though rare ones, when she threw off her mantle of sorrow, and gave him thought for thought, smile for smile, nay, sometimes, he almost fancied an answering look of love for love. But some memory would break the spell, and, like the Gorgon's eyes, turn her to stone again.

At last, weary of the unequal contest, he risked all. They had been trying some new music, in a half lazy way when almost unconsciously his fingers dropped upon the opening notes of the ballad "Rock me to Sleep, Mother." A gasping cry arrested his hand. He looked up to see the still, cold face suddenly convulsed with a horror and misery that appalled him. Involuntarily he spoke.

"Helen," said he, "what is it? Let me share this burden of sorrow. I love you, and it kills me to see you suffer so."

"You love me?" she said, in a tone of passionate grief. "You would hate me if I let you see my heart. But I will, I will, for this life is killing me. I am breaking my own heart, to drive yours away. While you come, I linger in the light of your love, as a moth does round the fatal lamp, knowing it must blight my life at last; for I love you, Mordaunt—love! you more than that you so proudly drew back from me when I was rich and coveted; and now, when you are my comforter, and can so delicately try to renew my life's sunshine, I still repeat, I love you. No, do not take my hand, for—for—it is the hand of a murderer!"

"Helen, you rave," said he.

"No; I am calm, rational," she replied. "I killed my mother—my mother, for whom I would have died. It was in Madeira, where the soft air and lovely climate were restoring her life. She suffered with severe pain at times round the heart, and the physician gave me a lotion for external use that he warned me was poison. Other medicine she took hourly; and one night, wearied with long nursing, I left the bottles on the table near her to reach them without rising from my place beside her. While I slept—slept with a mother's life in my charge—she took the wrong medicine; she died in convulsions before we could summon a doctor—the phial pouring its poisonous contents from her clenched hand to the floor."

"My poor darling!" said he. "Oh, Helen!" he continued, "I have no words to comfort such sorrow. Only Heaven can help you."

"I dare not ask forgiveness," she said; "my sin is too great."

"Hush, hush!" Mordaunt. "This is your sin, Helen, that, for an involuntary omission of duty, you dare to question your Maker's mercy and love. Oh, my darling! seek Him for comfort. He will lift this heavy burden from your heart for ever."

"Oh, Mordaunt, help me!" she sobbed. "I am all yours; help me to bear my sorrow as a Christian."

The ice was broken. Throughout the engagement, through the years of love that followed the quiet wedding, it never formed again. The careless girlhood was gone. The ringing laugh, the light jest, might never return to their olden place; but the happy, earnest, Christian woman lived to bless the love that first won her back to warmth and light when her heart was turned to ice.

M. E. C.

COMMON NOT VULGAR.—Sir Walter Scott once happening to hear his daughter Anne say of something that it was vulgar, gave the young lady the following temperate rebuke.—"My love, you speak like a very young lady. Do you know, after all, the meaning of this word vulgar? 'Tis only common. Nothing that is common, except wickedness, can deserve to be spoken of in a tone of contempt; and when you have lived to my years, you will be disposed to agree with me in thanking God that nothing really worth having or caring about in this world is uncommon."

DO NOT REPINE.—Most persons will find difficulties and hardships enough without seeking them; let them not repine, but take them as a part of that educational discipline necessary to fit the mind to arrive at its highest good.