

Wrinkles.

In this world's waves, we all can see
The ever-present wrinkle:
Its acts, its forms—for nought is free—
Produce a constant twinkle;
For if we do but look around,
To view its pristine brightness,
We find these largely to abound—
Eccentric lines, quite lightless.

When life at first itself makes known
In childhood's early morning,
We hear brought forth the feeble moan,
Of future trials warning
Felt is the pain of man's estate;
For wrinkles it must suffer,
And, meekly bowing to its fate,
Grow up to meet things rougher.

Then passing on to manhood's prime,
Led by hope's faithless promise,
We strive to find joys in this clime,
To be taken from us.

Of, ere the bud has fully blown
Into a beautiful flower,
The blasts of ill success have shown
Deep wrinkles as its doer.

Where blessings should exist in life,
Some wrinkles cause sorrow:
The aged from their toilsome strife
Look wistful for the morrow,
No picture is at our command
Where sin casts not its shading:
No thought exists without the brand
Of sin to meet upbraiding.

Our lives, so fleeting, move along
More rapid than a river:
When listening for its quiet song,
Exceptions make us quiver,
The jutting cliff and ragged rock
In home life oft give trouble:
When wrinkles thus our effort mock,
Our sorrows are made double.

Embarked upon the busy tide
Of daily avocation,
With canvass full, we feel we ride
High in commercial station;
But adverse winds may flap the sail,
And wrinkles form, portending
An utter wreck, and in a gale
Our course we may find ending.

Our nation's life has been at stake.
Corruption's fruit is treason:
Its atmosphere doth wrinkles make,
Not movable by reason,
Stations of trust are made to subserv
The vilest kind of passions,
And better feelings often swerve
To follow sinful fashions.

Religion, like a soothing stream
Found in a desert wasteful,
Is ever helping to redeem
From much that is distasteful;
But, under false religious garbs,
Black, wrinkled hearts are found,
Whose efforts, with their poisoned barbs,
Would e'en run faith aground.

SELECT STORY.

MABEL VANE;

OR THE DOUBLE SECRET.

[CONTINUED.]

Who was she, and where did she come from? asked Richard.
I do not know who she was, but I know that she came from New York City, for she said she must go back where she came from, and that is where she intended going when she left us.

Richard Hartly's voice trembled as he asked—
Did she go in that train?
Yes, answered John, I went in with her.

Go on, said Richard; tell me all from beginning to end—all you know of her.
John then told all the circumstances, detailing even their conversation. Richard drew a long breath, and then said to himself, "Can it be that it was my brother's wife, and, if so, did she perish in that awful accident?"

He shuddered, and asked them if she had told her name. Martha made reply.
No sir; but, when she was leaving us, she said that at some future time we might know who she was, and that then we would not regret our kindness to her.

Martha, there has been an accident; the train which that young lady was in was thrown from the track last night, and a number of persons were killed and injured.
Martha began wringing her hands, and blaming for letting the girl go. Richard silently motioned for the old couple to leave the room, which they did, Martha weeping, and John reproaching himself for not having forced her to stay.

Richard walked to the window, and looked forth with a troubled look on his face; suddenly his countenance lighted up, and he said—
I will see him; after all, it may not be.

Chapter III.
Richard Hartly left the house, and a few moments after might be seen walking quickly away. He went on until he came to an undertaker's shop, over which was the sign, Harvey Boynton, undertaker. Entering, he asked if Mr. Boynton was in; the young man addressed replied in the affirmative, and led him into an inner room, or office, where Mr. Boynton sat, writing; when he saw Mr. Hartly, he stood up and respectfully asked his visitor to be seated, moving a chair towards him.

No, answered Richard, hastily, shuddering, as he spoke. No, I had rather not. I am sure it is a young lady connected with our family, but as I have never seen her alive, it would do no good to look at her now.
It had grown quite late, and Richard was very tired after the excitement of the last few days. He sought the only hotel the place afforded, and, after partaking of a light supper, retired to his couch, and, in a little while, was sleeping soundly.

The next morning he rose early; saw that all the arrangements had been made, and then attended the lonely funeral that afternoon, he being the only mourner. After all was over, he saw the depot-master, and, once more obtaining his promise to see that there was a handsome stone erected over her grave, he took his departure for home.

In the midst of life we are in death, he said to himself, as he gave a farewell glance backward.
When he reached home, he went directly to his own room before seeing his mother, and, sitting down, tried to decide whether 'twas best to tell her of his brother's marriage, or to keep it a secret for a time. He finally concluded that it would not be advisable to tell her any part of the sad story, at present, lest he might be obliged to tell her all.

Three weeks after, Richard paid a visit to the grave of Mabel, and there found that his instructions and wishes had been obeyed, for, over her grave was a neat and handsome stone, bearing her name and the date of her death.
Chapter IV.
Five years passed away. Years fraught with joy and sorrow, bearing on their wings life and death, life to some, death to many.

On the deck of an American steamer, outward bound, stood four persons, gazing toward the shore they were leaving behind. They were Richard Hartly, his mother, and his sister Grace, with her husband, a fine-looking gentleman of about thirty years old. Grace had been married the day before, and was now starting on her wedding tour, accompanied by her mother and Richard. Mrs. Hartly's health had been failing fast, of late, and her physicians had recommended a sea voyage; and Richard, had been working hard at his profession, for he preferred to practice law rather than lead an idle life, had made up his mind to make one of the party. They intended travelling through England, Ireland, Scotland and France, then to Italy, and, after remaining there for a short time, return to their native land.

Six months passed away, and our travellers were comfortably settled in a lovely little cottage in the suburbs of Naples. Grace was sitting at the breakfast table, with an open letter in her hand.
Here we have been for two whole days, she was saying, and have not found Aunt Hartly yet; I am dying to see her, and that beautiful niece of hers, that she speaks of in her letter. Here comes Richard and Mark from their morning ramble, she added, perhaps they have found them.
The young men entered the breakfast room; Richard greeted his mother affectionately, and, catching one of Grace's bright ringlets in passing, took a seat at the table.

Well, exclaimed Mark, drawing a chair to his wife's side, and kissing her fondly, guess whom we have seen.
Aunt Hartly, cried Grace. I have just been speaking of her, and regretting that we have not been able to find her.
Yes, said her brother, she is living in a handsome villa about a mile below here. She was walking in the garden as we were going by, and I, catching a glimpse of her, knew her at once; she was very glad to see me. I introduced Mark to her, and he blushed like a girl when she looked at him with those keen, bright eyes of hers, and said she was sure that Grace had made a good choice.

Mark laughed, and Grace, smiling archly, said—
How mistaken Aunt Hartly is, for once in her life!
Mrs. Hartly, who had not yet spoken, turned to her son and said—
Why not call on your aunt this morning? I believe there is something to prevent our going.

I think it would be a very good idea, answered Richard, as she very cordially invited us to come and see her, and made us promise to bring you with us, that is, if you feel well enough to go.
I am very well to-day, replied Mrs. Hartly, whose sojourn on the Continent had improved her wonderfully; and if you will order the carriage, we will consider the matter.

They then separated, to prepare for their morning visit. Aunt Hartly was the widow of the oldest brother of Richard's father; being childless, she had declared her intention of dividing her money equally between the children of her husband's brother. But it was not for this that Mrs. Hartly and her children loved her; she was a good woman, in the truest sense of the word, being kind-hearted, pleasant, and very benevolent to the poor. When Louis Hartly died, she mourned for him almost as deeply as his mother did. A short time after his death she wrote that she had found a niece of whom she had not known before, and she signified her intention of adopting her, and bequeathing to her the money she had intended for Louis Hartly.

A week afterwards, she sent another letter, saying that her niece was in delicate health, and that it was her intention to travel through Europe; they

might remain abroad for some years, but she would come and see them before she went. Accordingly, in a few days after her second letter, Aunt Hartly came, bade them good-by, and in another week sailed for Europe; and Grace and her mother were now to see her for the first time in five years.

Mrs. Hartly greeted the party very warmly when they arrived at her beautiful home, and soon they were seated in her cool, elegant parlor. After they had partaken of refreshments, and were talking of the many events that had transpired since their last meeting, Grace's thoughts reverted to the niece of whom her aunt had spoken in her letter.

We have not seen your niece yet, aunt, said Grace.
No, replied Aunt Hartly. I will go for her myself, if you will excuse me.
She left the room, and in a few moments returned, accompanied by a young lady. Richard fairly held his breath, for in all his travels he had never beheld such beauty.

His aunt introduced her to Grace, then to Mrs. Hartly; the girl bowed gracefully, but seemed shy and embarrassed at first; but she saluted each of the strangers with unsurpassable grace.

She was rather above the medium height, graceful and well proportioned, with a beautiful, clear complexion. Her hair was brown, with here and there a tinge of gold, and was coiled around her shapely head in thick and glossy braids; one or two little curls lay coquettishly on her beautiful white brow; her eyes were large and of a clear and bright hazel, with a wondrous depth and power, and were shaded by long, dark lashes. Her mouth was small, and the red lips were beautifully curved. She was dressed in pure white muslin, which flowed gracefully around her, and wore no ornaments except an exquisite chain, which was fastened around the slender throat, from which hung a golden locket, richly chased, and set with diamonds, and a plain gold ring on one of her slender fingers.

She seated herself near Grace, and, in a short time, they were engaged in a lively conversation. Mrs. Hartly, her sister-in-law, and Mark, talked on different subjects, but Richard was unusually silent. Aunt Hartly, turning to her niece, said—
Will you not sing something for us, dear?
The young lady colored slightly, but answered—
Certainly, if you wish it. And she seated herself at the piano.

Richard arose, and, taking one of the music books that lay open on the piano, placed it before her.
To which page shall I turn? he asked, while his glance rested on the beautiful white fingers that lay on the keys.
You may select something for me to sing, she said.

He turned the pages, selected a song, and asked—
Do you sing this?
I used to sing it years ago.
I had a brother with whom it was a favorite, he said, that is why I choose it.

She started, and, turning her face toward him, gave him a quick, searching glance from her dark eyes. But his thoughts were with the past, and, as she saw his eyes fixed, in a dreamy way, upon the book, she gave a sigh which might have been of relief or pain.
After playing the prelude she began to sing, first in a low sweet voice, and then, as her voice rose, it gained volume and power, and filled the room with its impassioned sweetness. Well might her hearers intently listen, for never had they heard such singing before. It was a piece from the opera of "Norma," and, as the last note died away, the beautiful songstress bowed her head and wept aloud. Richard leaned over her as the others arose from their seats, and asked the cause of her emotion.

It is nothing, she said, only that song has awakened memories that are both happy and sad.
Forgive me, said Richard, I should not have requested you to sing it.
I have only to blame my own weakness, she replied. Will Mrs. Melton sing something now, and dispel the gloom that my song has brought?

Oh, no! not gloom! cried Grace. It was beautiful! I hardly dare to play or sing after hearing you.
The young girl smiled, and, playfully leading her to the piano, begged her to be seated. Grace played very well, and, after singing two or three lively songs, in which Mark joined, arose from the piano, to find only smiling faces around her.

After spending a happy day, the Hartly family returned home, delighted with everything, and especially with Mignon, as Mrs. Hartly called her niece.
Day after day passed, and still they remained in their pleasant cottage; each day was spent by the young folks in walking or in riding over the country, while their aunt and Mrs. Hartly passed the time together, at either the cottage or the villa.

One beautiful morning they started out, mounted on strong, fleet ponies, to visit the remains of an old church many miles distant. Grace and Mark were a little in advance, while after them rode Mignon, with Richard for her escort. 'Twas a lovely day, one of Italy's sunniest, and they rode along, chatting and laughing, and enjoying to the fullest every passing moment.

In a short time they reached the broad open country, and, after half an hour's ride, arrived at their destination. It was an old church, one half fallen to ruin, and situated in a wild and beautiful place; on one side, and at the back, rose a lofty hill, crowned with rocks and low-growing bushes, to the right, and, in front, the ground sloped down into a green and lovely dell, with flowers growing here and there among the rocks, while a clear stream of water flowed musically from somewhere on the hillside, and fell into a little pool near the centre of the dell, and, again finding an outlet flowed on, singing its glad song in shade and sunshine. A romantic spot truly.

After tying the ponies, they proceeded to inspect the ruins. By some means Richard and Mignon became separated from the rest of the party, and wandered far up the hill, until they reached its very summit. They gazed around. The whole surrounding country seemed lying almost at their feet; after admiring the beauties of the scene, they walked on until they came to a rock, covered with soft green moss, which formed a seat upon which they could rest.

Everything was silent and lovely around, and a strange silence had fallen upon them. After they were seated, Richard, taking Mignon's hand said,—
Can you not guess why I have brought you hither?
The beautiful brow and cheek of Mignon grew crimson, and, raising her hand to brush back a little curl that would persist in escaping from its confinement, it came in contact with the chain which she usually wore, and which she caught in time to prevent its falling to the ground. Without answering Richard, she started up and exclaimed—
My locket is gone! where can I have lost it?
She was pale now, and she looked around in an excited manner, trying to see if she could find it lying near.

Perhaps you dropped it when we were standing near yonder rock. I will see if I can find it; remain here, and I will come back to you in a moment.
Richard reached the rock, but not finding the locket, hurried on, and soon espied it, lying a few paces beyond. He reached the place, and as he stooped and picked it up, saw that it had been stepped upon, and was broken. Of course either he or Mignon had broken it, as there had been no other person there; as he held it in his hand, he noticed a white paper folded closely, and laid in the side that was broken. The other half held a small picture, painted on porcelain; he glanced at it; what was this? Surely it could not be—and yet it was—his brother's portrait! Yes, there was Louis Hartly's face smiling at him from the locket.

As he stood, in silent astonishment, gazing at it, he did not hear footsteps, or notice that Mignon stood beside him. Some instinct told him she was there, for, turning, he pointed to the picture, and said—
My brother! Why do you carry this?
She made no reply, but bowed her head, and covered her face with her hands.
I cannot tell you now, she said.
Yes, tell me all there is to be told. Come—we will go back to our resting-place, and we will sit there while you tell me the story of the picture.
First look at this, she said, reaching forth her hand, and taking the paper from its resting-place in the locket.
Richard took the paper, opened and read it. It was the certificate of his brother's marriage with Mabel Vane. He read, while Mignon sat gazing far out to the west.

[CONCLUDED IN OUR NEXT.]

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