

THE GIFTS.—RONDEL.

BY ROBERT BUCHANAN.

These are flowers for favors!
Wear them on thy breast—
Red roses, red roses
As bright as earth discloses,
Red roses with sweet savors
Blown in the spicy west.
These are flowers for favors,
Flowers of sweetest savors,
Wear them on thy breast!

Flowers too cold for bosoms,
Take them in thy hand—
White lilies, white lilies,
And purest daffodillies;
These lilies are the blossoms,
Thine arm the lily-wand—
Flowers too cold for bosoms,
Lily leaves and blossoms,
Take them in thy hand.

These are flowers for dreaming!
Wear them in thy hair—
Blue pansies, blue pansies
As pure as maiden fancies;
Blooms like blue eyes beaming,
For golden locks to wear—
These are flowers for dreaming,
Blue, and bright, and beaming,
Wear them in thy hair.

These are flowers thy lover
Strews beneath thy feet:
Oxlips, bluebells, daisies,
Sweetest the meadow raises—
Orchids, thyme, and clover,
That trod upon scent sweet.
These are flowers thy lover,
Where thy footsteps hover,
Strews beneath thy feet.

Wear these flowers for favors,
Lady of them all—
White lilies, red roses,
Blue pansies, be thy posies;
And countless flowers give savors
Beneath thy soft foot-fall.
Wear thy flowers for favors,
Drink their sweetest savors,
Lady of them all!

GUNNAR: A NORSE ROMANCE.

BY H. M. BOYSEN.

PART IV

CHAPTER X.—Continued.

"Do you call this threshing?" said she severely, picking up a sheaf of rye from a large pile which the men had just been clearing off the floor. "Do you call this threshing, I say? Only look here!" (and she shook the sheaf vigorously); "I would undertake to shake more than half a bushel of grain out of this pile which you pretend to have threshed. Mind you, men soon get their passports from Rimul, if they work that way."

Gunnar, supposing that he had been unobserved, took the last words as a warning to himself, and was already taking his departure when a sharp "Gunnar Henjumhel!" quickly called him back.

"It is damp weather to-day," stammered he, as he slowly drew nearer. A few steps from her he stopped, pulled off his cap again, and stood twirling it in his hands, expecting her to speak.

"Whom do you want to see?" asked she, having measured him with her eye from head to foot.

"Ragnhild, your daughter."

"Ragnhild, my daughter, has never yet been so pressed for wooers that she should have to take up with housemen's sons. So you will understand Gunnar Henjumhel, that housemen's sons are no longer welcome at Rimul."

A quick pain, as if of a sudden sting, ran through his breast. The blood rushed to his face, and he had a proud answer ready; but as his glance fell upon the stern, stately woman whom he had always been taught to look up to as a kind of superior being, the words died upon his lips.

"She is Ragnhild's mother," thought he, and turned to go. He had just gained the foot of the barn-bridge when a loud, scornful laughter struck his ear. He stopped and looked back. There stood Lars Henjum in the barn-door, doubled up with laughter. This time it was hard to calm the boiling blood; and had it not been for the presence of Ragnhild's mother, Lars might have had occasion to regret that laughter before nightfall. So Gunnar started again; but no sooner had he turned his back on Lars than the laughter burst forth again, and grew louder and wilder with the distance, until at last it sounded like a defiant scream. This was more than he could bear. He had tried hard to master himself; now he knew not whither his feet bore him, until he stood face to face with Lars and Ingeborg of Rimul. He clinched his fist and thrust it close up to the offender's face.

Lars forgot to laugh then, turned pale, and sought refuge behind the widow's back.

"Gunnar, Gunnar!" cried she; for even she was frightened when she met the wild fire in his eye. She was a woman; it would be a shame to strike when a woman begged for peace.

He sent Lars a fierce parting glance. "You and I will meet again," said he, and went.

The two remained standing on the same spot, half unconsciously following him with their eyes, until the last dim outline of his figure vanished in the fog.

"Lars," said Ingeborg, turning abruptly on her nephew, "you are a coward."

"I wonder if you would like to fight with a fellow like him, especially when he was in such a rage," replied Lars.

"You are a coward," repeated the widow emphatically, as if she would bear no contradiction; and she turned again, and left him to his own reflections.

In April fog and April sleet the days creep slowly. Every day Gunnar looked longingly toward the mountains, wondering how that great world might be on the other side. Every morning awoke him with new resolutions and plans; every evening closed over a tale of withering courage and fading hopes; and only night brought him rest and consolation, when she let her dream-painted curtain fall over his slumber, like a *mafrage* over the parched desert.

CHAPTER XI.

THE WEDDING OF THE WILD-DUCK.

Berg was the name of a fine farm west of Rimul. Peer was the name of the man who owned the farm. But the church and the friendly little parsonage were on the Henjum side of the river, and in the summer, therefore, the fjord was the church road of the Rimul people and all who lived on their side of the water. This Peer Berg was a very jovial man, and had a great many daughters, who, as he was wont to say himself, were the only crop he had ever succeeded in raising; in fact, there were more daughters on Berg than were needed to do the work about the place, and it was, therefore, not to be wondered at that Peer Berg never frowned on a wooer; the saying was, too, that both he and his wife had quite a faculty for alluring that kind of folks to the house. Gunnar knew the Berg daughters; for wherever there was dancing and merry-making, they were as sure to be as the fiddlers. As far back as he could remember, the church-road had never missed the "Wild-Ducks" from Berg, as they were generally called, because they all were dressed alike, were all fair and gay, and where one went all the rest would invariably follow. Now one of the Wild-Ducks was to be married to a rich old bachelor from the neighboring valley, and people knew that Peer Berg intended to make a wedding the fame of which should echo through seven parishes round. Summons for the wedding were sent out far and wide, and to Gunnar with the rest.

It was early in the morning when bride and bridegroom from Berg with their nearest kinsfolk cleared their boats, and set out for the church; on the way one boat of wedding guests after another joined them, and by the time they reached the landing-place in the "Parsonage Bay" their party counted quite a goodly number. The air was fresh and singularly transparent, and the fjord, partaking of the all-pervading air-tone, glittered in changing tints of pale blue and a cool, delicate green. Now and then a faint tremor would skim along its mirror, like the quiver of a slight but delightful emotion. Towards the north the mountains rose abruptly from the water, and with their snow-headed heads loomed up into fantastic heights; irregular drifts of light, fog-like cloud hung or hovered about the lower crags. Westward the fjord described a wide curve, bounded by a lower plateau, which gradually ascended through the usual pine and birch regions into the eternal snow-fields of immeasurable dimensions; and through the clefts of the nearest peaks the view was opened into a mountain panorama of indescribable grandeur. There gigantic yokuls measured their strength with the heavens; wild glaciers shot their icy arms downwards clutching the landscape in their icy embrace; and rapid, snow-fed rivers darted down between the precipices where only a misty spray, hovering over the chasm, traced their way toward the fjord.

About half-way between the church and the mouth of the river a headland, overgrown with birch and pine forest, ran far out into the fjord. Here the first four boats of the bridal party stopped on their homeward way to wait for those which had been left behind; in one sat the bride herself, with breast-plate and silver crown on her head, and at her side the bridegroom shining in his best holiday trim, with rows of silver buttons and buckles, according to the custom of the valley; in his hand he held an ancient war-axe. On the bench in front of them Peer Berg and his merry wife had their places; and next to them, again, two of the bridegroom's nearest kin. The second boat contained the remaining Wild-Ducks and other relatives and connections; and the third and fourth, wedding guests and musicians. But there were at least nine or ten loads missing yet; for the wedding at Berg was to be no ordinary one. In the meantime Peer Berg proposed to taste the wedding brewage, and bade the musicians to strike up so merry a tune that it should sing through the bone and the marrow. "For fiddles like hops, gave strength to the beer," said he, "and then people from afar will hear that the bridal-boats are coming." And swinging above his head a jug filled to the brim with strong homebrewed Hardanger-beer, he pledged the company, and quaffed the liquor to the last drop. "So did our old forefathers drink," cried he; "the horn might stand on either end if their lips had once touched it. And may it be said from this day, that the wedding guests

at Berg proved that they had the true old Norse blood in their veins." A turbulent applause followed this speech of Peer's, and amid music, singing, and laughter the beer-jugs passed from boat to boat and from hand to hand. Now and then a long, yodding halloo came floating through the calm air, followed by a clear, manifold echo; and no sooner had the stillness closed over it than the merry voices from the boats again rose in louder and noisier chorus. All this time the bridal fleet was rapidly increasing, and for every fresh arrival the beer-jugs made another complete round. No one drank without finding something or other to admire, whether it were the liquor itself or the skillfully carved silver jugs in which, as every one knew, Peer Berg took no little pride; indeed, they had been heirloom in the family from immemorial times, and the saying was that even kings had drunk from them. There were now eighteen or nineteen boats assembled about the point of the headland, and the twentieth and last was just drawing up its oars for a share of the beer and the merriment. In the stern sat Gunnar, dreamily gazing down into the deep, and at his side his old friend Rhyme-Ola, his winking eyes fixed on him with an anxious expression of almost motherly care and tenderness. In his hands he held some old, time-worn paper, to which he quickly directed his attention whenever Gunnar made the slightest motion, as if he were afraid of being detected. When the customary greetings were exchanged, the bridegroom asked Rhyme-Ola to let the company hear his voice, and the singer, as usual, readily complied. It was the old mournful tale of Young Kirsten, and the Merman; and as he lent his rich, sympathetic voice to the simplicity of the ballad, its pathos became the more touching, and soon the tears glittered in many a tender-hearted maiden's eye.

There is a deep, unconscious romance in the daily life of the Norwegian peasant. One might look in vain for a scene like this throughout Europe, if for no other reason than because the fjord is a peculiarly Norwegian feature, being, in life, tone, and character, as different from the friths of Scotland and the bays of the Mediterranean as the hoary, rugged pines of the North are from those slender, smooth-grown things which in the South bear the same name. Imagine those graceful, strong-built boats, rocking over their own images reflected in the cool transparency of the fjord; the fresh, fair-haired maidens scattered in blooming clusters among the elderly, more sedately dressed matrons; and the old men, whose weather-worn faces and rugged, expressive features told of natures of the genuine mountain mould. The young lads sat on the row-benches, some with the still dripping oars poised under their knees, while they silently listened to the song; others bending eagerly forward or leaning on their elbows, dividing their attention between Rhyme-Ola and the titling girls on the benches in front. They all wore red, pointed caps, generally with the tassel hanging down over one side of the forehead, which gave a certain touch of roguishness and light-heartedness to their manly and clear-cut visages. And to complete the picture, there is Rhyme-Ola, as he sits aloft on the beer-kegs in the stern of the boat, now and then striking out with his ragged arms, and weeping and laughing according as the varying incidents of his song affect him. As a background to this scene stands the light birch forest glittering with its fresh sprouts, and filling the air with its spring like fragrance; behind this again the pines raise their dusky heads; and around the whole picture the mountain close their gigantic arms and warmly press forest, fjord, and bridal party to the mighty heart of Norway.

(To be continued.)

AN EARLY RISING FALLACY.—In olden times children were early taught that the instant they woke in the morning they must bounce out of bed, not waiting for a moment's consideration until they were safely landed on the floor. Some wide-awake children, whose eyes naturally opened with the coming dawn, could easily accomplish this feat; but alas for the poor little creatures who found it nearly impossible to shake off the drowsiness that pervaded their entire systems! In a pitiful state of semi-sleep they dragged themselves from bed and tried to dress. Those who retain vivid remembrances of such experiences of childhood will be gratified to know that Dr. Hall says that up to eighteen years every child should be allowed to rest in bed, after sleep is over, until they feel as if they had rather get up than not; that it is a very great mistake for persons, old or young—especially children and feeble or sedentary persons—to bounce out of bed the moment they wake up; that fifteen or twenty minutes spent in gradually waking up, after the eyes are opened, and in turning over and stretching the limbs, do as much good as sound sleep, because the operations set the blood in motion by degrees, tending to equalize the circulation; for during sleep the blood tends to stagnation, the heart beats feebly and slowly, and any shock to the system sending the blood in overwhelming quantities to the heart is the greatest absurdity.

CREAKING BOOTS.—Calico, linen, or thin flannel, cut to within an eighth of an inch to the edge, between the upper and the lower leather of the sole, will effectually prevent creaking. For boots that do creak there is no cure.—*Ex-perto Crude.*

PRACTICAL AIR CASTLES.

BY KITTIE GRANT.

So this is the end of my dreaming,
Of my air-built castles of fame,
Of the triumphs in store that are waiting
For those who make good their claim;
A green-mantled, ivy-clad cottage
Midst roses just peeping above,
Where Peace and Contentment sit smiling
Securely defended by Love.

I'm the Eve of this fair, smiling Eden,
With my Adam to comfort and bless,
And feast on, from morn until even,
Kind words and a loving caress.
An honest heart's love is my treasure
Which the world's sordid dross cannot buy,
In the wealth that is prized beyond measure
No queen could be richer than I.

And though gold is not heaped in my coffers,
Yet I know I have carried the prize,
The most perfect bliss that earth offers—
When I look in my darling's true eyes;
Constant mirrors of truth and devotion—
They tell me the acme of my life
Was raised, "highest, best," in promotion
On the day that he first called me wife.

I thank Thee, dear Father I thank Thee,
Whilst proud, happy tears fill my eyes,
That mild blanks so ill-fated and worthless
I've won in life's lottery a prize.
Though high aims and proud hopes are defeated
I am happy, so blest by his side—
And joy, supreme bliss to me meted
While he whispers—my darling, my bride.

VENERATION FOR WRITTEN AND PRINTED PAPER IN CHINA.

One of the most curious things about the Chinese is their veneration for all written and printed paper. They do not tear up and throw away scraps of such paper, but carefully crunch them up and either put the balls into the first fire they may come across, or they pocket them until they find a basket, which they are sure to discover somewhere near, placed for the purpose, and the contents of which are scrupulously burned. Such receptacles may be noticed in the street as well as in the houses, and one way of performing a meritorious act is to place urns covered in by miniature temples on the wayside for the reception and decent disposal of written or printed scraps, with the inscription over the tiny door-way, "Respect and treat kindly inscribed paper." Another way is to hire collectors to go round the town with baskets, and, on receiving their gleanings, heap them together on a sacred bonfire.

POUND CAKE.—1 pound sifted flour, 1 pound sugar, 10 eggs, 1 pound butter, and spice to taste.

WHITE MOUNTAIN CAKE.—1 pound flour, 1 pound butter, 6 eggs, 1 pound sugar, 1 teaspoon sweet cream, 1 teaspoon soda, 2 teaspoons cream tartar.

DRIPPING CAKE.—Suitable for children and luncheon.—Mix well together 2lb. of flour, a pint of warm milk, and a tablespoonful of yeast; let it rise about half an hour, then add 1lb. of brown sugar, 1lb. of currants, and 1lb. of good fresh beef dripping; beat it well for nearly a quarter of an hour, and bake in a moderately hot oven.

SERVANTS REQUIRING THE CHARACTER OF THEIR "MISSUSES."—Servants in this country have not yet openly adopted the fashions of requiring a character of any one who offers to employ them before entering his or her service, but there can be little doubt they will soon arrive at this point, and it is interesting to learn from Consul Bidwell that the practice of insisting on employers producing a good character prevails among the cooks and housemaids in the Balearic Islands. In his commercial report for the year 1872, just issued, Consul Bidwell remarks that the year ended satisfactorily for the Majorcans, after the Spanish fashion, in consequence of the great Christmas prizes in the Madrid lottery, of about £70,000, falling to that island, this sum being divided among upwards of 200 persons, many of whom were domestic servants who had put into the lottery only a few pence, with which they won upwards of £100. Lotteries will therefore doubtless be a greater source of attraction than ever to the inhabitants of the Balearic Islands, more especially to domestic servants, who, he adds, do not require additional sources of demoralisation, and have become as scarce as they are bad. Matters, indeed, have come to such a pass in the islands that it is the servants who take their employers' character before engaging themselves, while masters and mistresses are obliged to forego all inquiry, and even close their eyes to known defects little short of immorality and dishonesty. The day is probably not far distant when ladies will have to apply to their cooks for characters, and employers who obtain servants by means of false characters will be subjected to severe penalties.