

and the complexion only passably fair. In the throat and shoulders there was a mixture of pride and grace. The hand was beautiful, and her nails as delicately cast as those of the highest lady in the land. Her voice was mellow, and her movements had an irresistible charm, conveying the intense and sublimated sensuousness of her nature, and the restless activity of her intellect.

If you contemplated the countenance of this woman, at that point where profile and full face merged, unless you were a bold man, you would be repelled. There was a treacherous shade in the features; something at once to fascinate and to warn. She was no common woman, and while she might be an inspiration to a lover, a paradox to a philosopher, and a subtle opponent to a foe, she would be a dangerous friend. When she smiled, there was something almost cat-like in the fineness and the regularity of the sharp, pearly teeth, and it was very difficult to imagine she had ever been a laughing, gleesome babe, upon a mother's bosom.

The attire of this woman, on the Friday afternoon, when you first make her acquaintance, was most exquisite in its simplicity. The waves of amber hair were lightly combed away from the brow, and looped up with ribbons of a bluish white. The dress was of purple lawn, full in the skirts and gently trailing on the polished gallery. The sleeves were long, loose, and flowing, open at the waist with Marie Louise lace underneath. The neck was low, but partially veiled by an over sacque of white *brillante*, embroidered with green sprigs, in silk. Her tiny feet were encased in bronzed half-gaiters, and as she paces to and fro, while the waves are washing on the shore hard by, she seems rather a nymph of the sea than a carpenter's daughter.

Now, mark you, how that golden setting sun lends its last rays to catch a resting place for a moment in the glossy wealth of her amber tresses, ere it sinks down to sleep in the deep blue waters of the bay! She hears the song the salt waves are singing as they lash the sands of the beach. Do they tell her that she is faithless, cowardly, and unworthy of the love of a man like Lansing Dacre? Does she know she is untrue to him, hourly, in her heart, and that the more opaque shadow of the German ever rises between him and her first attachment? Refinement, habit, early recollections plead for Lansing in tones deep and gentle; her worsened self is intoxicated by Mr. Schrieff and the energy of his clandestine wooing. Then she is nearly two years older than Lansing, and to marry him no obstacles intervene.

The hearts of some women are bundles of contradictions. He is a very good, or a very young man, who does not believe in the imp of the Perverse. To take a straight road is as hard for some persons as it is for all serpents. They delight in side ways, and crawling around Robin Hood's barn, and Miss Emily had more than one woman's share of the inclination to wind about the Tree of Knowledge. Had she been Eve in the Garden, it is more than possible she might have obtained more information from his unmentionable Majesty than has yet been gathered by the sex, since the forbidden fruit was plucked.

Mr. Dacre and Mr. Schrieff approach, and she is now very busy surveying the beach. It is only when she sees they are hard by that she pretends to observe them—just as if the witch had not been straining her eyes for an entire mortal hour to catch sight of her betrothed and her German suitor. The dear little hypocrites!—old men sadly smile, and young men sometimes go mad over them. You and I, sir, are long past all that sort of danger, but what would you give to have the fresh heart of two and twenty once again?

"Good evening, gentlemen. I hope you have enjoyed your ride, Lansing? Mr. Schrieff, did you show him the new cathedral, that is yet, like many other things in Corpus Christi—a magnificent promise? Yes, I know you did. Father will not be home till next week. Mother is rather unwell, and will not be visible till supper. How tired your ponies look! Shall Sam ungarth them?—Yes?" and Miss Emily gives the order, like a Queen of the Sea.

"We have had a fine ride Emily: I am sure I am much obliged to Mr. Schrieff for his kindness, and he did show me the projected cathedral. We can possibly spare your mother for half an hour, if you will be very amusing, and walk with us in the drawing room, and send Peter for some water. There! Emily, I have answered you seriatim, said Lansing, with animation in his face, a flush on his cheeks, and love in his eyes.

Mr. Schrieff, spoke very deliberately, and looked at Emily steadily. His part, was difficult and his determination to succeed very fixed. He insinuated, rather than expressed some fine complements upon the youth's horsemanship. Mr. Dacre bore the fatigue very well: better than any one he had accompanied, who was so unused to the climate and the peculiar style of saddle and pony. Mr. Dacre was delicate; Texas air would bring him out in a few months.

Women admire strength; Mr. Schrieff know this well. He was a magnificent King in the Body. He magnetized Emily with his dark, piercing eyes. Dacre was more a man of society. In the Louvre, at Rome, at Bath, at Westminster Abbey or at Saratoga or Ballston, he would have had the German at a disadvantage; on the frontier, Carl Schrieff was the better man of the two. Only two years transplanted from the North, Emily looked up to the strong man.

LANSING.—Mr. Schrieff, you told me you were building a house. Can you show me the site from here?"

CARL.—Yes—but as the sun is nearly descended, suppose we go, with Miss Hazleton, and see what I am doing; you can see the corner of the building, if you turn a little to the left. There it is. That will do! It is directly back of that chapel. Not ten minutes stroll from here.

EMILY.—I will accompany you; and, we can pass the Artesian well. Mr. Dacre makes wry faces over the water, but we all do that, and come to drinking it, after a little,

CARL.—I believe that well is the only well-to-do physician in the place, and, as much as the climate, has something to do with our exemption from the fever. Yellow Jack never came here but once, and then he went away, for the first man he took hold of was old Mr. Dethous, who is too lazy to die.

LANSING.—Well, Mr. Schrieff, this is a glorious atmosphere. I don't wonder everybody takes life so easy here. There is indolence in the very air.

EMILY.—Have a care, Mr. Dacre?—(how funny it sounds to call you so!) I do not want you to get infatuated with this country and have the Texas fever.

LANSING.—What is that, Emily?

EMILY.—Laziness, to be sure.

CARL.—I am sure any command of Miss Hazleton will be law to Mr. Dacre; but I doubt if even woman's wit can contend with the weather.

LANSING.—Ha! ha! That is the most cruel thing I have heard you say.

Miss Emily now donned her flat, and the two started for a promenade. She took the arm of neither, but Dacre walked outside of her, and Carl Schrieff followed at her left, nearly a pace in her rear, as an evil genius, or a snake in some fair garden.

The walk of a man is very expressive. Mr. Schrieff put his foot lightly but firmly down. Ant, or harmless grasshopper was crushed beneath his heel; while Lansing, felt, as if walking amidst violets, for Emily Hazleton was beside him, and he often stepped aside for some harmless worm to pass. The young lady floated along, now turning to the one, anon to the other, chatting gaily and easily about any and everything save what she most cherished in her heart.

The Artesian well is in the very centre of the city, but then Corpus Christi is a place of magnificent distances, and does not to-day contain but three or four thousand people, though, at the time of which I am writing, there were probably, thanks to the hard dollars disseminated by old Uncle Sam, twice that number of sojourners in the town. At morning and evening, everybody, rich and poor, high and low, black, white, yellow and red, flock to the well and fill their glasses, monkeys and bottles with the sulphurous waters. As a tonic it is superior to

Congress or empire springs, and though almost as disagreeable to the unaccustomed palate as Harrowgate, it is very clear and cool, and is a physician to the people, without money, and without price.

Dacre's unaccustomed eye, noticed the entire social democracy, that prevailed at this well. Nobody was in a hurry, and each took his, or her turn, with perfect politeness, and good humor, many a young senorita, giving place voluntarily, to some infirm old man, who could not have raised six reals in a year's time, had his life depended on the negotiation. There were no drawers or dippers, each pe' on filling his vessel from the crystal stream, as it gushed forth from the rock.

"Who says the Mexicans are not a classical people? see how those gentlemen offer a libation to Bacchus, ere they raise the cups to their lips," said Lansing.

"Yes," said Emily, looking scornfully at two Senorittas, who, it is quite possible, were not thoroughly versed in the proprieties of the North, though nobody could deny they were beautiful, "but I am inclined to think Bacchus is not the only deity they worship."

Mr. Schrieff "took," to use a very expressive slang term, but Lansing looked grave, for he comprehended that the thought expressed, both envy and indelicacy; but Emily was his idol, so in a moment he blamed himself, for misunderstanding his beloved, and when he spoke to her, there was a new inflection of tenderness in his voice, always very gentle, when he addressed, even the humblest woman in the land.

The party now proceeded to the house Mr. Schrieff was building. It was evidently going to be substantial, and it had progressed sufficiently far, to show the design: it would be two stories high, with a gallery running about the front and rear; the right wing was almost finished, the other, had scarcely been touched.

"Why have you left this uncompleted?" said Emily, with a spice of Eve's native curiosity.

"I expect to have some assistance, before I finish it," answered Carl quietly.

The young man understood him to mean, he was awaiting funds. Emily knew the remark was intended for herself, and as Carl looked at her, while Dacre was examining the quaint cornice, of the main building, her eyes flashed back upon the German a glance that awoke all the latent fires within him, and made every nerve quiver, with internal exultation.

"But, who is that coming this way?" said Emily, as an odd figure siddled up the road towards them.

"Oh, that," rejoiced Schrieff is India, the Indian fortune teller. The ignorant Greasers* imagine, she has dealings with the Evil One. We had best keep out of her way, if we would avoid her importunities. S'death! she has caught sight of us, and is hobbling up as fast as she can. If some of us do not have our fortunes told, we shall be remembered in her prayers to His Infernal Majesty, for a twelve-month, in other words she will rate us soundly.

"Do you know, I should like above all things to have our fortune told, Emily!" said Dacre, half in jest, half in earnest. There may be a wisdom in superstition, that we can not prove by the rule of three, but is nevertheless not without reason. Everybody wants to know the Future. If yonder old hag reads it by the light of her past, I am afraid it is a very lurid flame that the inscriptions which she sees are written in.

Emily assented and seconded Lansing's proposal, and Schrieff, though he despised Christianity and second-sight as equally baseless superstitions, naturally assented to the proposition, and beckoned India to approach.

She might have been a hundred, for she had evidently outlived every womanish feeling. Tall and gaunt, with powerful arms, though wasted to a mere skeleton, she was bent by the loss of one of her limbs, and hobbled along with a crutch and a staff. Her hair was perfectly white, and gave to her swarthy, wrinkled features, a strange unna-

* A term of reproach applied by whites, to the mixed blooded Mexican men.

tural contrast, while the large, glistening, jetty eyes sat back and peered out from her overhanging shaggy brows. Her hair streamed in the wind, and a copper necklace quaintly carved in the form of a snake lent to her bony throat, an impression analogous to that, which we would feel to perceive an adder, entwined about the neck of a skeleton. On her wrists were gold bands with Aztec letters, and her dark blanket, covered her like a pall.

She looked first at the young man's hand, and marked the lines steadfastly, and then turned her piercing eyes to his face, drew with a piece of flint a circle on the sand, when she lighted a scrap of paper, and marked it burn to ashes when she chanted in a guttural croak these words:

A broken vow, shall give you truth,
The snake, into a bird shall turn;
From out this trial of your youth,
A rose shall bloom upon your urn.

Going to Schrieff, she said with a sardonic smile.

The panther woos the snake and thinks
A dove it is, he would beguile;
The poison mixing, ere he drinks,
Let him but pause a fit while:—
The snake, the panther, shall subdue,
The dove shall vanish, like a dream,
The bitter dregs remain for you,
The grave a very refuge seem.

Then approaching Emily, she took her hand, and held it like a vice, as with the other she pointed to the surging waves of the bay, lashing the beach with the fast gathering wind:

Dove or panther: snake or man,
Read my riddle, if you can,
Days will come, and days will go,
Days and nights, the truth will show,
Maiden follow light you know,
Wander no more, to and fro,
Twix the paths of day and night,
You will be lost—O, leave my sight!

And clutching the silver coin Schrieff tossed to her, she hobbled off, but Dacre felt the old hag's eyes followed them as they returned.

"Well," said Mrs. Hazleton, as they returned, "supper has been awaiting you this half an hour, and a gentleman from New Orleans is very anxious to see Mr. Dacre in the drawing-room. Ask your friend in to say 'hello' to us?" And Dacre thanking her, promised to do so, and went to greet his unannounced visitor.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

• • • Russell's Magazine has published some exquisite songs. The subjoined stanza from a poem in an old number, is very sweet. The lover thus speaks to his betrothed:—

"Indeed, indeed I do not know,
Of all thou hast, the power to grant,
A boon for which I could not show,
Some pretty precedent extant.
Oh, put the anger from thine eyes!
Or shut them, if they still must frown,
Those lips, despite you garish skies,
Can bring a timely darkness down."

• • • We notice with pain, a certain morbidity of tone, in much of the "native" verse, (or poetry, if the writers will so imagine it) that we meet with in some of our Canadian exchanges. To the unreflecting, this may seem a trivial subject, yet if straws show which way the wind blows, the productions of young writers, however crude, serve to show the temper of their thoughts. Moreover: Canadian papers, being read by the young people of the provinces must have an influence, and, while the tone of most of the editorials in these home papers are healthy, the poetical contributions often reveal the most morbid sensibilities. Perhaps this is the inevitable reaction from an over practicality, but the fact, although it may pass unnoticed or unheeded by those who only read papers for news, political or commercial items, is patent that many of our young people who rhyme for the papers, semi-occasionally, are mentally morbid. Byron, Shelley and the unhappy "L. E. L.," are doubtless responsible for much of this feverish thought, for persons of literary taste, who have neither genius to be great, nor common sense enough to be happy, will, unconsciously, imitate what they have read and admired. Matrimony, is perhaps the only antidote for this morbid sentimentalism.

• • • The events of to-day have more interest for us than those of yesterday. So men are fast giving up books for newspapers.