

ELYSIUM.

Afar in the depths of the bright blue sky,
To an isle unknown, in the airy sea,
Where we could forever so happy be,
We long to fly away, my love and I.

To a haven of rest, a saintly place,
Where love is lovely, and nothing of care,
Or sickness, or sorrow pervades the air:
Where sin has not left its death-dealing trace.

I'd build a temple in our home in the sky,
And my love should be a goddess divine,
My heart, the censor, burning at the shrine,
Sweetest incense; and we should never die.

F. M. DEVBREUX.

Kemptville, Ont.

MARK-ERSKINE'S VISION.

Mark Erskine was a young man of twenty-five. There was a perpetual shadow on his brow, a touching sadness in his eyes, and the gloom that had settled upon his handsome features moved not even when he smiled.

I felt a powerful interest in this man the moment I saw him. I was fascinated by his face.

I was drawn towards him. Even in my sleep his face haunted me—the great, mournful eyes looked on me till my soul was stirred, my heart was wrung to agony, and I awoke longing to share his burden, impatient for the day to dawn that I might seek him.

Yet, when we met, I durst not approach the subject I had so much at heart. I feared my awkwardness would wound him, and that I should lose his esteem.

I loved him with a fervour that surprised me. Months passed away—our friendship gradually ripened; but the strange sadness that oppressed him was still a mystery to me.

His father, who had been dead for many years, was a clergyman. His widowed mother lived at P—with her sister; while Mark held a good appointment in a bank in our little town.

At length I began to notice a slight improvement in his appearance. The cloud seemed less sombre on his brow—there was even a slight vivacity in his face at times, and I was thrilled with the hope of seeing his dark sorrow depart from him.

One evening he took me to a neat cottage on the outskirts of the town, and I was surprised when he unlocked the door and entered unannounced.

I followed; and the joyful light that beamed from his countenance, as he turned to watch my surprise, filled me with an indescribable pleasure.

"This is my new home," said he, with a cheerfulness that was quite new to him; "my mother is coming hither to live with me. Do you think I have chosen a pleasant spot?"

"You have chosen admirably," I replied, with emotion, as I grasped his hand. "My dear fellow, you are a worthy son."

I remained with him a considerable time; and when I left him my hopes were very strong—for the brightness still illumined his face, and the cheeks that had been so pale were tinged with a warm, animated hue.

Sleep visited me not that night. I was restless and nervous—a strange feeling of dread and apprehension had taken hold of me, and I could not cast it away.

I was in full health, had neither ate nor drank inordinately; my condition, therefore, was beyond comprehension.

I had heard nothing, seen nothing, to excite my nerves to this unwonted tension; but there was a something that I felt—something intangible, but very potent—something beyond the grasp of sense and faculty alike.

I arose and left the house, for I was impelled by a power I could not withstand—impelled to seek my friend.

I had no ability to act or even feel independently. Without the persuasion of reason, without the faintest mental perception of necessity, I was impressed with a sense of duty, filled with a single purpose.

It was long after midnight when I passed the "Crown and Sceptre."

I heard the voice of a young man of my acquaintance within, but why I was attracted by it I know not.

I sought admittance, obtained it, and drank with the landlord and his customer.

The latter invited me up stairs (he appeared oblivious of the fact that it was "after hours"); he conducted me to a room where a dozen young men sat at card-tables.

They were all desperate gamblers; and there were some there at that moment who had madly staked and lost their whole—some who had even gone further than that, and encumbered themselves with "debts of honour."

Some of these broken ones—broken for the present, and their fair prospects blighted—sat opposite those whose pockets contained the lost money—whose tables recorded the extent of future claims.

Yet all were "dear familiar friends"—daily companions.

"Erskine is a long time away," observed one of them.

"Do you expect him here to-night?" I inquired.

"Yes; I have a wager with him. I left my cane to-day, through forgetfulness, on the tomb on 'Haunted Common,' and I challenged him to fetch it. He should be here by this time."

I left the "Crown and Sceptre," and hastened to the common.

"Haunted Common," as it was called, was a piece of waste, rocky land, about a mile distant.

"The Tomb" was a large, flat stone, overgrown with lichens, and generally believed to mark the resting-place of some departed lonely one, who, having lived in solitude, chose that his bones should lie apart from other human dust.

To this spot I directed my steps. The moon was up, and by its pale light I saw my friend standing, with folded arms, against the trunk of a blasted fir-tree, whose limbs, withered and naked, stretched in the pale light like the arms of a giant skeleton.

While I hesitated, thinking how I might attract his attention without alarming him—his head was bent upon his breast, and he appeared to be wrapped in profound reflection—he started from his position, discovered me near him, and came towards me.

"This is very strange!" he ejaculated. "How came you hither?"

"I came to see you. Come, let us get away from this place."

"Indeed!" he cried, gazing earnestly into my face. "Then you, too, are inspired? But come." He linked his arm in mine, and drew me away. "I must catch the night mail."

"Why?" I asked looking at him wonderingly.

"I am going to my mother's funeral!"

I trembled, for the terrible idea flashed upon my mind that he was mad.

I dared not question him. I did not even look upon his face, but hurried him away.

As soon as he perceived my intention of taking him to my house, he resisted.

I humoured his mood, and suffered him to lead me to his rooms.

"You are too late for the mail," I said, seeing him put some articles into his travelling-case.

"Be persuaded by me, my dear fellow, and take some rest; you need it sadly."

"Listen," he began. "I went to that tomb to-night to decide a wager."

"I saw my mother there as plainly as ever I beheld her."

"I had no power to move, nor speak, but stood gazing at the apparition till it vanished; and, even then I continued to gaze at the vacant place, fastened to the spot where I stood."

"The bell of the church clock struck the hour of two, and its tones startled me from my reverie."

"I was faint and sick, and leaned against a tree for support. You found me so."

"You are my dearest friend, but you have not known the secret of my gloomy countenance. I will tell you now."

"I was a reckless gambler. My passion for it was all-absorbing."

"I raised the demon, and it fettered me, body and soul, till my bondage was complete. This was the canker that corroded my manhood; the infernal power that imperiled my immortality, and set its black seal upon my forehead."

"You who have never felt the power of this abominable vice that I encouraged, can never conceive the terrible thralldom into which it inevitably lures its votaries."

"But I have broken from my chains. Oh, may I ever shun even the very outside, feeblest current of that pool, whose treacherous eddies whirl its wretched victims at every turn nearer to the fatal vortex at its centre, which descends even into hell!"

Presently the day dawned, and Erskine expressed his intention of taking the early train to P—, for he professed himself firm in the belief he had adopted at the tomb on the common.

I used every argument to dissuade him from his purpose, but in vain; he was steadfastly resolved to go.

While he was preparing to start, the door-bell rang. I answered it, and trembled when I received an envelope, which I knew contained a telegram, from the hands of the official messenger.

Erskine came towards me; his face was pallid, but his voice steady when he said, "In that envelope you will find a message written thus: 'Your mother died at two o'clock this morning.' Open and read."

I obeyed.

The message contained the very words he had uttered; adding only, "Come at once."

A year passed away. Erskine was an altered man, indeed. He was cheerful, happy; his melancholy had flown, but there was just a little sadness in those great, glorious eyes of his.

He came to me at my house one evening, and, when we were comfortably seated at the fire, he looked at me so earnestly that I feared he was in trouble.

"George," he said, "I have come to tell you something that will make you sad. I should have broken it to you before this but that I knew it would grieve you to know that we must part."

"Part!" I cried. "That must not be. I could not bear to lose you, Mark. Surely you are jesting with me?"

I looked into his eyes, and oh! how I wished I had not spoken of jesting! He gazed at me with such a depth of tenderness, such a wealth of love and friendship, and withal, a sorrow so chastened, so pure, that I felt as though I looked upon the face of an angel.

"I have only one regret," he continued, grasping my hand, "in leaving this world; and that is, that you will sorrow for the loss of your gloomy friend. But, for my sake, check your sorrow, my dear George; our separation will not be for long—a lifetime is so short."

He rose, still pressing my hand, and, though I would have remonstrated with him for indulg-

ing in such melancholy forebodings, my utterance was choked with emotion, and I pressed his hand in silence.

He looked at his watch, and then said, "I must be going, old friend; my time is very short. My spirit yearns towards you; I cannot satisfy its ardour now by one poor formal pressure of hands."

He put his head upon my shoulder, wept—not for himself, but for the grief he knew that I should have to bear.

The bitterness of that moment makes me shudder even now.

I verily believe my heart stood still. A pressure fell upon it; I thought it had crushed it. At length it throbbed again; and then the anguish burst over me unchecked, and I, too, wept upon his neck.

One long embrace, forgetful of all conventionality, and then he gently disengaged himself.

"You would not see me die?" he asked.

"This is a mere illusion!" I cried. "I pray you shake off this gloomy thought. You must not—"

But he interrupted me.

"I saw my epitaph upon the rugged tomb on the common; and my mother's spirit, on that night you found me there, pointed to the date that limited my life. I feared to grieve your heart with this before. Within an hour I shall have left this world of many sorrows."

He would have bidden me farewell, and hastened to his own house, but I would not have it so. I kept him with me, and strove hard to shake his strange conviction; but I failed.

I now began to realize my position, and telling him I had something I wished him to look at, I left the room as if to fetch it.

I flew to the doctor's house, and summoned him to my friend.

He returned with me, and I ushered him into the room; but on the couch, where I had left the man whose friendship was dearer to me than life, we found but a dead man.

HEARTH AND HOME.

AN UPRIGHT LIFE.—Nothing is more certain than that human conduct produces its effect upon human character and determines its future weal or woe. Virtue and uprightness give the pure heart and clear conscience, whose working is an ample reward for effort and sacrifice. Vice and wrong inevitably leave their marks upon the soul and tend to misery. Retribution follows as the night the day upon human action. Goodness hath its reward; sin hath its punishment.

CORNERS.—Corners have always been popular. The chimney-corner, for instance, is endeared to the heart from the earliest to the latest hour of existence. The corner cupboard! What stores of sweet things has it contained for us in youth—with what luxuries its shelves have groaned in manhood! A snug corner in a will! Who ever objected to such a thing? A corner in a woman's heart? Once get there, and you may soon command the entire domain. A corner in the Temple of Fame. Arrive at that, you become immortal.

MANLINESS.—There is nothing in this world so important as that a man should be manly, or as that a young man should grow up right-minded, straightforward, and sturdy, with the habit of judging what is best for himself clearly and on moral considerations; and, if a man has formed that habit, he can be trusted anywhere, but, if he has not, he will go wrong. A man should "be fully persuaded in his own mind" that he is right in regard to whether it is safe for him to go to this place or that. If he is not so persuaded, he had better stay at home.

FEMALE EDUCATION.—Brilliant talents, graces of person, and a confirmed intrepidity, and a continual habit of displaying these advantages, is all that is aimed at in the education of girls; the virtues that make domestic life happy, the sober and useful qualities that make a moderate fortune and a retired situation comfortable, are never inculcated. One would be left to imagine, by the common modes of female education, that life consisted of one universal holiday, and that the only contest was, who shall be best enabled to excel in the sports and games that were to be celebrated on it.

A CHEERFUL FIRE.—What can be more cheerful, or more conducive to home comfort, than the open fire, with its blue and gold of smoke and fire curling and twisting together as they find their way up the open chimney? Who does not love to sit before such a fire and look into it, and dream away the hours with eyes half closed, forgetting the corroding cares and sorrows of life as in fancy they behold such pictures as nowhere else are revealed to those who really desire to see them. It is a comfortable arrangement, too, this fire on the hearth; but, above all, it is a very healthful one, for by it the room is well ventilated. Let the family sit by it during the long evenings, and so enjoy it to the fullest extent. We believe the open fire will do much to check the desire of the young to be out evenings, to make the house seem more truly like home.

A SORRY FELLOW.—Girls, will you listen to a few words of advice? Do not marry if you cannot find a suitable husband, for a bad husband is infinitely worse than none. Never marry a fellow who is ashamed to carry a small bundle; who lies in bed until breakfast, and until his father has opened his shop, or office, and swept it out; who frequents taverns, bowling saloons,

prize fights, &c.; who owes his tailor, shoemaker, washerwoman, jeweller, barber, printer, and landlady, and never pays his debts; who is always talking about his acquaintances, and condemning them; whose tongue is always running about nonsense; who thinks he is the greatest man in the neighbourhood, and yet whom everyone despises and shuns. We say never marry a fellow with all or any of these qualifications, no matter how handsome he is, or how agreeable he can make himself on occasion. He will make a bad husband.

THE DEVOTED MOTHERS.—Many a poor mother in a humble cot, with no money or position, has struggled hard to feed and clothe her little ones, to train them to be an honour to their country and a blessing to the world. Most of our useful, prominent men came from such homes. Our church-yards are full of such sleeping mothers, whose hands are folded over their breasts. No worldly eye ever saw the records of their lives. No tall monuments and high-sounding epitaphs mark their resting-places. What a responsibility rests upon the mothers of this country! Life is too short to be spent in accumulating the things of this world that must perish. The children do not stay with us long enough to permit us to waste our hours in the pursuit of fashion and gaiety. What we sow now we shall reap hereafter. Heaven gives to all mothers grace and strength to fulfil their duties aright, that their influence for good may be felt from generation to generation.

A HINT TO YOUNG HUSBANDS.—Love and appreciation are to a woman what dew and sunshine are to a flower. They refresh and brighten her whole life. They make her strong-hearted and keen-sighted in everything affecting the welfare of her home. They enable her to cheer her husband when the cares of life press heavily upon him, and to be a very providence to children. To know that her husband loves her, and is proud of her, and believes in her; that even her faults are looked upon with tenderness; that her face, to one, at least, is the fairest face in all the world; that the heart which to her is the greatest and noblest, holds her sacred in its inmost recesses above all women, gives her a strength, and courage, and sweetness, and vivacity which all the wealth of the world could not bestow. Let a woman's life be pervaded with such an influence, and heart and mind will never grow old, but will blossom and sweeten, and brighten in perpetual youth.

SOCIETY'S INNOCENTS.—There are certain old people who go about the world continually asking others to tell them the scandalous stories which may be afloat in their society, and which they have heard twenty times already. They do not repeat them, but their pleasure is to hear them told by different "hands" and to note the discrepancies in the various accounts. They are innocents, and never know anything, but look blank and unconscious when all the world is ringing with the story, and they themselves have heard it in every house where they have a footing. To the last they profess ignorance of the whole affair, and hear the twenty-fifth version with the same freshness of ignorance. They are safe people in their way possibly, but all the same they are unpleasant.

THE ADVANTAGES OF MARRIAGE.—Marriage, says Jeremy Taylor, has in it less of beauty but more of safety than the single life; it hath not more ease, but less danger; it is more merry and more sad; it is fuller of joys; it lies under more burdens, but is supported by all the strengths of love and charity—and those burdens are delightful. Marriage is the mother of the world, and preserves kingdoms, and fills cities and churches, and heaven itself. Celibacy, like the fly in the heart of an apple, dwells in perpetual sweetness, but sits alone, and is confined and dies in singularity; but marriage, like the useful bee, builds a house, and gathers sweetness from every flower, and labours and unites into societies and republics, and sends out colonies, and feeds the world with delicacies, and keeps order, and exercises many virtues, and promotes the interest of mankind, and is that state of good to which God hath designed the present constitution of the world.

PERSONAL.

LIEUT.-GOVERNOR LETELLIER has gone to River Ouelle.

PREMIER JOLY is travelling on the Inter-colonial Railway.

LIEUTENANT GLADSTONE, R.N., son of the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, is in Quebec.

LORD DUFFERIN, when in New York, was a guest at the Manhattan Beach Hotel.

GENERAL SIR SELBY SMYTH left for Europe in Friday's out-going mail steamer.

It is reported that Col. Gzowski is to be honored with a knighthood & baronetcy by Her Majesty.

SIR EDWARD THORNTON, the British Ambassador at Washington, is the guest of the Governor-General at Quebec.

MR. E. H. HARRINGTON, of the Civil Service at Ottawa, fell down the stairs of his house last week, and was severely injured on the head.

NOTICE TO LADIES.

The undersigned begs respectfully to inform the ladies of the city and country that they will find at his Retail Store, 196 St. Lawrence Main Street, the choicest assortment of Ostrich and Vulture Feathers, of all shades; also, Feathers of all descriptions repaired with the greatest care. Feathers dyed as per sample, on shortest delay. Gloves cleaned and dyed black only. J. H. LEBLANC. Works: 547 Craig St.