

The Drunkard Sat in his Rustic Chair.

The drunkard sat in his rustic chair, Beside his lonely hearth, Where once was mingled the proud and fair.

The drunkard rocked in his time-worn chair, And he thought of days gone by, While the goddess sleep wove a silken lair.

The tumult and strife, and wild waves' roar, And the foaming abyss below, The deathless groans, near the dismal shore.

And the groans and curses were deep and long, With each victim's gasping breath, And they fiercely sang the drunkard's song.

Then the storms increased, and the lightning flashed, And the tempest grew fierce on the main, The drunken wretches were fearfully dashed.

And vined a most solemn vow, That if such was truly the drunkard's fate He'd be a cold water man now!

SELECT STORY.

A Beautiful Woman.

OBSERVATION is not experience, I finally said. Miss Randolph, I love your cousin. I shall ask her to be my wife.

She looked as if she had expected this though she might have hoped differently. Whatever happens, she said, you will know that I have spoken in all kindness and sincerity of purpose.

She walked hurriedly away, leaving me terribly depressed and unhappy. Shaw's conversation, earnest though it had been, had not affected me as this had done. I was chilled and desponding; but every thought of Mrs. Legare, every memory of her flamed through my frame with all the power of the despotic passion she had inspired.

I wandered beneath the kindly moonbeams till almost midnight. The night was more soothing and friendly than anything else.

On my way to my room I went by the hotel where Mrs. Legare was stopping. Music stole through the open windows, and I saw the figures of the guests floating through the measures of a waltz.

I walked up the approach without thinking whether I should enter or not. As I reached the terrace I saw at the end of it, where it ran along the side of the house, in the deep shadow of trees and shrubbery, a figure leaning over the railing. Without seeing her distinctly enough to know, still I was sure that it was Mrs. Legare, and I walked directly to her side.

She greeted me without any surprise. There was an air of languor, of regret about her that hastened the words I said. I held her hand in mine, I pressed it to the wild pulsations of my heart; with vehement utterance I poured forth all the intense feeling of my life.

I do not know what I said—my words feel like fire from my lips. I looked at her with entreating eyes.

Was it a flash of exultation that passed across her face? Whatever it was I thought it was mingled with some sincere feeling.

Blinded as I was, I could not be mistaken in the expression of her eyes as

she raised them to my face. They were tender, melting; they gave me liberty to stoop and touch her lips with mine with all the fervor that prompted me to do it. Her forehead drooped until for one blissful instant it touched my shoulder.

I heard, without noticing, a faint clicking sound in the shrubbery near Mrs. Legare lifted her head quickly, and the next instant I felt a stinging pain.

I grew faint and blind, but not so faint but that I felt the warm touch of Mrs. Legare's arms around my neck, her breath upon my face.

I lay motionless upon the floor of the piazza, my head in Mrs. Legare's lap. I heard, as in a dream, the exclamations of the people who rushed out of the hotel. Then, like the voice of doom, I heard, in Castello's tones:

Curse him! She is my wife! Then I swooned in truth, I thought I fell into an unfathomable well, where there was no light and no hope. I did not know anything, but throughout that long insensibility, and the raging fever that followed it, I seemed always to hear those words:

She is my wife. And often I seemed to feel again the touch of her arms and lips, and thought that all but that had been a horrible dream.

When finally I began to grow convalescent my friends hastened to call on me; but I was so morbidly sensitive that I would receive no one. In those lonely days when I walked feebly to and fro in my room there commenced a slow death of the passion that had grown upon me so suddenly and intensely.

When once I had hopelessly lost my respect for her I could not long be moved at the thought of the wonderful charms of face, and voice, and manner. I knew and felt she was false, and, mercifully, all else that she had inspired me with vanished slowly from me.

It was January. I had been out to walk for the first time. All the fashionables had fled, and I was glad that I encountered no one I knew. I was sitting in my lounging-chair, out of breath, but already invigorated, when I heard a voice at the door, saying to the servant:

Pshaw! I know he'll see me, I'm going in! And Shaw pushed by the man and came up to me, took my hand with unusual gentleness, and looked with moistened eyes at me.

He sat down, saying, you are rather pale, but there's a promise of health in your face. I'm getting on bravely, I said, already wishing he'd break the long silence concerning past affairs.

I think he saw the wish expressed in my face, for after a conversation about indifferent matters, he asked: Do you want to hear any news I can tell you?

I bowed affirmatively. Have you really recovered from your past folly? Whatever I feel, I said, nothing you can say will alarm me, for I despise that woman, I have had time for reflection, and a shock sufficient to set me thinking. I thought her unmarried, when suddenly I was shot by her husband. You can imagine what a different sensation I should have felt had it been a rival lover.

I think you are safe from a broken heart. For all that you will be shocked, responded Shaw. Castello and his wife sailed for Havana a fortnight ago. Why did he keep pausing?

Go on, I said, impatiently. Did the captain fall in love with her? I don't know. The steamer was burned, and all but six were lost!

My heart gave so violent a bound that for an instant I was almost suffocated. I leaned back helplessly in my chair. Shaw rose in alarm, handed me a glass of wine saying, I was imprudent. You are weaker than I thought.

No, no—it is over. I might as well know it now. She was not saved? She died—she and her husband, he replied.

After a long pause, I said, we can forgive the dead, can we not? For answer he pressed my hand warmly in both his own.

It seems to have been only a whim—her old desire for the unobstructed admiration to which she was accustomed made her impose secrecy upon her husband for the first few weeks of their marriage. She had been married to Castello but a fortnight when they came here, I believe. He is immensely rich, I heard. You may be sure there was a nice scandal here while you were unconscious of it all.

It is ten years since then, and I look back with a smile of wonderment at myself; but it was all terribly real to me then. I again met Miss Randolph. It is she, and she alone whom I have loved. I am happy—I vainly regret nothing; for in the inexhaustible mutual love we

bear to each other my wife and I journey on in unmistakable peace and content.

Hetty's Disappointment.

ETTY Leeds looked with regretful eyes at her bonnet of home-made straw—not that its generous proportions did not suit her, though they would scarcely delight a modern belle—not that it was not snowily bleached, or deftly sewn—but that a yard or so of ribbon was wanting to its completeness.

The spot she lived in was a sleepy little town in the heart of the hills, where sound of steam whistle had never penetrated, and whose inhabitants lived as primitive a life as our forefathers of Revolutionary memory. Their garments were woven dyed and made in each individual household; the journeyman shoemaker paid them a visit once a year, leaving a stock behind sufficient to last until his return; even the hats and bonnets were made of the native straw, woven, sewed and pressed by the hands of the women folk.

What wonder Hetty was in despair; if she had had a fortune at her command, there were no stores within a stone's throw, but miles of weary stage ride between her and the nearest one. And the coveted ribbon she had once possessed; that was the bitterest reflection of all.

It was Hetty Leeds' unhappy fate to live on sufferance, for the people with whom her life was spent were only so nearly related that they would not see her starve, not nearly enough to give her ever so little of the sweet home love that makes life precious.

But the good old farmer who was her adopted father was very kind to her in his way, and when his girls had their summer bonnets made and bleached, he brought from town the ribbon wherewith to trim them, and Hetty had her parcel as well as the rest.

A bright, pure blue, just like the sky of a clear, cloudless day. She drew the silken loveliness through her fingers, rejoicing in the luxurious, delicate softness of the strip of cerulean lustering.

But when Maria, who had a taste in millinery, had drawn her ribbon across the straw and fastened it with a stitch, she must needs have a bow at the side before she could be quite suited.

Maria could coax very prettily when she would, and before Hetty was quite aware what she had done, she had been beguiled of her newly acquired treasure, and received instead a promise of another just as fine when "pa" went to town.

So, when the returning stage brought the good farmer home, the girl stood waiting with sparkling eyes, indulging in pleasing fancies that the ribbon might turn out to be a pink this time, which color she rather preferred to blue; or that possibly there might be enough to admit of a bow at the side, like Maria's.

Whatever thoughts were in Hetty's mind, she held her peace while the farmer had his supper and related the news of the day; waited patiently while he smoked his evening pipe on the porch; but when he arose with a yawn, so announcing his intention of retiring for the night, she pulled Maria's sleeve gently, and reminded her that her father had not yet unpocketed her purchase.

Maria's blank countenance betrayed her before she had opened her lips. Satisfied with her own millinery achievements, she had totally forgotten her promise. There was nothing to be done. The disappointed girl went to her own room and wept out her bitterness. The grand picnic to the Elm Woods was to take place in two days. Her pretty blue and white calico was folded away for the occasion. There it lay, looking fresh and bright as need be, but all to no purpose. She could not go without a bonnet; a bonnet could not be worn without trimming; and, in tearful despair, Hetty laid her head on the window sill, and so sat till the moon had risen, and the thought of to-morrow's duties warned her to rest.

She rose in a happier mood. A faint hope had dawned within her breast that last year's trimming might be made to look almost as good as new. There were no idle hands in the household. For mere subsistence, clothing, food and shelter, all must toil day in and day out. A Saturday afternoon ramble was a rare treat, and a whole day given over to pleasure, a thing to be looked forward to for weeks. Among these busy ones, Hetty was the happiest; yet, late in the forenoon, she stole a few moments to try her experiment.

Knowledge of chemistry was not one of Hetty's strong points, and, when the faded pink ribbon acquired faint streaks of green from its contact with the soapy water, she was more surprised than pleased. But she patted and rubbed it and got ready her fat-iron, hoping, poor child! that the ugly marks would not show so plainly when they were dry.

Then came a step outside on the porch, and Walter Weir's curly head intruded at the kitchen window. The adventurous laundress gave a nervous

start. Down came the hot iron, crisp- ing the pink ribbon into little wrinkles and searing it with a great brown mark. Truly absurd it looked now, and Hetty, thrust it into her pocket in a little crumpled heap, and went forward with the best grace she could master to hear what her visitor might have to say.

Oh, bitter, bitter mysteries of human life! Hear was the very thing that had seemed the acme of delight, the thing that she had only dared to dream of afar off, laid at her feet, and she could not stoop to take it. Walter Weir had singled her out for his companion on the festive day that was coming.

Was it only that he was the lion of the occasion, an honored guest, a young man who had made his way in the great world beyond the hills? Was it that there were strifes and envyings already in the girl world of Monticello, in prospect of this very honor?

Was it only this that made her heart throb, first with pleasure that he had asked her, then with a pain that she must answer 'No,' and then with shame that she could say no word to make him understand her reason?

The mingled joy and grief and trouble made the little waiting minute seem an age to Hetty Leeds.

I think you had better ask some one else, she stammered out. She had not meant to say it, but somehow the words slipped from her. She only meant that he was a visitor, and worthy of all courtesy; that though she refused him, she did not intend to be rude; that any other girl would accept his escort with pleasure; and she was aware that she had made a sad blunder of her polite speech.

She remembered, in her confusion, that she must stay at home. But what did it matter? she asked herself. She could not tell him why. It would be like saying that these people she lived with were unkind to her. She wished in her inmost heart that he had asked her, but that she could not tell him either so went back to her work with flushed cheeks, and swallowed her tears, while Walter Weir strode off in a sulky fashion.

In the course of the day, Hetty learned that he had invited Maria, who, nothing loth, accepted the invitation though she had already given her promise to a certain George Hildreth; but the hero of the day was not to be refused, and George Hildreth could be put off with Hetty's company, if necessary, or something it must be managed. Such were Maria's secret reflections.

When the all-important day arrived, and the discovery was made that Hetty could not accompany the party, affairs assumed a more complicated complexion but still the little schemer trusted to her native tact and readiness to extricate herself from the dilemma.

The busiest days were over—the harvest well-nigh gathered in. It was a holiday for old and young; and there was a pang in poor little Hetty's heart when she saw the gay party moving away, the faithless Maria already whispering and laughing with Walter Weir, while George Hildreth strove in vain to conceal his hurt vanity under a lively exterior.

Such a wretched feeling came across her as she watched them! No one had cared that she was left behind. The farmer had asked her in an off-hand way why it was, but she was two well-trained to make accusations against a daughter of the house. If any one gave her a passing thought, they fancied that she was not well, or unsociable perhaps. And some one had whispered—it was not meant for her ears, but she had heard it—that no one had asked her company, and that she was sulky.

They were gone. Hetty had worn her blue calico, but she went into the house and changed it for a work-a-day jacket and skirt of less delicate hue; then, with a sudden under current of elation, she recalled the fact that she was free for the day, and slipped down a little by-path to a pretty pond filled with green rushes.

She flung herself down in the long grass on its banks, threw her arms above her head with a sigh of relief, and burst into a passion of weeping, then sobered into thought, while the sky-depths smiled their ineffable love into her sorrowful little heart.

Always to be set apart and despised always the one that was not missed—that was the burden of her thoughts. But through her cloud of trouble one little joy shone like a star. He had asked her. Could it have been because he was sorry for her? Out of pity? Yes, she was sure of it. Surely any one would rather have taken Maria.

But if ever, in time to come, anyone should love me, I could be a better wife than Maria, I could make him glad with my love.

She had almost uttered the words aloud. A wind startled the rushes, and she rose with a flutter in her breast, half ashamed of her own thoughts, half fearful of some unseen presence. It almost seemed to her as if the sky and the water and the rushes might read

her secret only half known to her own timid heart.

Some one had stolen through the grass and lifted her chestnut braids with a gentle hand, and she turned and looked into Walter Weir's eyes. Afterwards she thought of the untidy dress and the blown hair, with its little wilful ringlets, but then only that he was there, that he had taken her hand in his, and was looking deep, deep down into her eyes. Her lashes fell. The crimson crept up to the silken fringes, and oh! the glory of heaven was in that timid trembling breast.

Then his question. As though he had come to judgment, he asked her why she was there alone, and out came the bare, honest truth; but not a word about Maria.—She told herself she was not mean enough for that.

And I thought you were going with some one else, he said. She looked up in new surprise at his tone, and somehow in that moment the secret was told—the secret of two fresh young hearts that had given to each other the wealth of their first youth and freshness.

Will you be my little wife, my little Hetty? Will you let me take you far away from here? It seemed to her that was all she could ask of earthly bliss, and she laid her head on his shoulder and pested close, close in his arms, those arms that seemed strong enough to shield her from trouble for evermore, against the great heart that could give her all the love and tenderness her hungry one had waited for so long.

In the hush of the lonely meadows they talked of many things. First of how George Hildreth had asserted his prior claims, and Walter Weir glad to be free, had yielded with a good grace, making it his apology and Maria's as well, that he was a stranger, and then had stolen back to find his little love. Somehow the blown hair did not trouble her so much when he had taken the tiny spirals lovingly, tenderly in his fingers, nor the untidy dress when he had kissed its folds.

The setting sun found them still hand in hand beside the reed-filled pond; and ere the bright summer days were over, they had started on their life-long journey side by side. So ended Hetty's disappointment.

YANKEE PASSENGER—Why on earth do you put blinkers on the horses in this benighted old country? We've long given 'em up in America. British 'Bus Driver—Well, I'll tell yer 'ot it is, if them 'ere 'osses was only just to catch a sight of you a sittin' be'ind 'em, they'd be that frightened they'd just smash the 'ole blessed 'bus all to pieces!

A STINGY man who pretended to be very fond of his horse, but kept him nearly starved, said to a friend, you don't know how much we all think of that horse. I shall have him stuffed so as to preserve him, when he dies. You'd better stuff him now, retorted the friend, so as to preserve him living.

You should live within your income, sir, said a harsh old capitalist to a clerk who asked for an advance of wages. It's easy enough to live within an income, modestly replied the clerk, but what I should like to know is, how a fellow is to live without one.

You are the dullest boy I ever saw, crossly exclaimed a bald-headed old uncle to his nephew. Well, uncle, replied the youth, with a glance at the old gentleman's bald head, you can't expect me to understand things as quickly as you do, because you don't have the trouble of getting 'em through your hair.

IN conversation a wise man may be at a loss where to begin, but a fool never knows where to stop.

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