

THROUGH TEARS.

BY ELLA WHEELER.

An Artist toiled over his pictures—
He laboured by night and by day;
He struggled for glory and honour,
But the world—it had nothing to say.
His walls were ablaze with the splendours
We see in the beautiful skies;
But the world beheld only the colours
That were made out of chemical dyes.

Time sped. And he lived, loved, and suffered;
He passed through the valley of grief.
Again he toiled over his canvas,
Since in labour alone was relief.
It showed not the splendour of colours
Of those of his earlier years;
But the world—the world bowed down before it,
Because it was painted with tears.

A Poet was gifted with Genius;
And he sang, and he sang all the days;
He wrote for the praise of the people,
But the people accorded no praise.
O his songs were as blithe as the morning,
As sweet as the music of birds;
But the world had no homage to offer,
Because they were nothing but words.

Time sped. And the Poet, through sorrow,
Became like his suffering kind;
Again he toiled over his poems,
To lighten the grief of his mind.
They were not so flowing and rhythmic
As those of his earlier years;
But the world—lo! it offered its homage,
Because they were written in tears.

So ever the price must be given
By those seeking glory in Art;
So ever the world is repaying
The grief-stricken, suffering heart.
The happy must ever be humble;
Ambition must wait for the years,
Ever hoping to win the approval
Of a world that looks on through its tears.

BENEATH THE WAVE.

Owing to the miscarriage of one of the advance sheets, we have to postpone the sequel of this interesting story for one or two numbers. The tale is now verging to a close.

MY COMEDY.

II.—(Continued.)

I checked an unguarded moment of expansiveness which was novel with me, when Miss Aubrey asked, "Does your mother know anything about me?"

"Certainly. I have sounded your praises. I told my mother that your engagement would assure my success. I always detail to my mother the incidents of the day."

"All—all of them—even the disagreeable ones?"

"Without any familiarity with the theatre, my mother admires it—from afar. She reads about it. Think of that dear old soul giving me the other day a wonderful scrap-book, red and gold, and in it she had collected all the kind notices she could find about her son."

"And the unfavourable ones—those that bite and hurt so?"

"The good woman had never seen any. I had always kept them from her."

"An act of filial devotion on your part. Would—would"—here the lady paused—"would she like to know me?"

"Why, certainly," I replied.

"If the piece succeeds, won't you bring her to me some day? Of course she will come to the theatre while your play is running."

"My mother rarely ventures out in winter."

"I understand, Mr. Carter. I have had a lesson in manners which I accept."

"How—how, Miss Aubrey?"

"Oh, I don't blame you—serves me right."

"It is her health which is delicate; and if I must tell you, it is you who should come and see my mother."

"Oh, is that it? I understood you so differently."

Then there was a dead silence. Still I lingered.

"Look here," at last she said, and she opened the door and spoke to the coachman, giving him an address, "you may buy me my gloves after all, Mr. Carter. Will you ride with me, sir?"

I hesitated for an instant, somewhat wonder-stricken at the suddenness of the invitation. My moment of irresolution I hoped had escaped her. The hand was withdrawn from the door. In an instant I was by the lady's side. It was a soft, luxurious coupé, a very boudoir on wheels.

"My caravan, Mr. Carter," said Miss Aubrey, evidently desirous of putting me at ease. "Here is my ambulant library. See my tools." Here the lady opened a kind of case in the side-lining of the vehicle, and exposed to view a collection of small play-books. "Thumb-marks, and grease, and dog-eats. See that one! Scraped up for weeks, a penny at a time, before I could call that old thing mine. It's an awful rubbishy farce, but I made my *début* in it years—years ago. You may fish down to the bottom. That is a manuscript play; they follow me all around, and drive me crazy. Yes, that is an old Bible. I read it sometimes, have read it ever since I knew how to spell. There, unlock that bottom. That is my hand-mirror. I study all my most killing grins in that. What is in that box? Candy, sir; have some? Yes,

look there, if you want to. I do not hesitate to show you the whole menagerie. That is riddle, and the best riddle that money can buy. Comes to me from France, and is worth more than its weight in gold. Every one of the women pester me to learn where I get my rouge for use on and off the boards, but I never will tell them. It is my secret; but it is nasty stuff at the best. There, now, is your curiosity satisfied? Some day when I am old and fagged out, the time will come soon enough. I may go round and round, not in a coupé, but in a circus-van with a screaming caliope. That's the end of many of us. Please don't fidget so. Oh, I see there is a parcel on the seat and you are not comfortable. Just place it on the floor."

I removed the package which was incommending me, when the wrapper came off, showing me a couple of books.

"Yes, it is an Ollendorff, and something on French pronunciation. I bought them at the book-store, but had I seen you there I should not have entered the shop." Then she added, simply: "I am capable of sitting up half the night to catch an idea. What is a diæresis? How should a lot of idiots know what a diæresis is?"

I explained briefly what a diæresis is. Miss Aubrey was all attention, and in an instant understood it.

"Well, a diphthong, which isn't a diphthong. We will try Beaulieu, if you please, schoolmaster." Beaulieu was at once pronounced correctly. "But we shall quarrel over the very next thing which comes up—see if we don't, Mr. Carter."

"If other dissensions should arise, with such pleasant terminations, I might court them, Miss Aubrey."

"Better not try. Well, I shall study these books all the same, if only for the chance I may have of picking other people in their French. You did not bother much in showing me?"

"I have had a good many pupils in my time, and never had an apter scholar," I said, smilingly.

"And pray how?"

"When I taught night-school in the slums of New York I had very refractory pupils at times. I earned seventy-five cents a night, and I wanted it."

"Of course all the children adored you."

"No, they did not. I have had more than one inkstand hurled at my head."

"Is that why you have a little bald spot on the top of your head? It isn't a very big one, Mr. Carter."

"I don't know precisely. We all caught typhoid fever together, master and pupils, and I suppose the disease made me lose my hair. When I got well I made an awful trouble with the school commissioners about the bad ventilation and unwholesome quarters for the children. I carried my point. A more healthy locality was chosen, but I was discharged."

"Then you are not anybody of consequence! Funny change from a schoolmaster to a dramatic author! Did you know that Mrs. Launcelet was a schoolmarm? and when she married Launcelet there wasn't a madder, wilder actor than Launcelet in the world? She has kept him straight. We are getting quite confidential, Mr. Carter. Mrs. Launcelet was a teacher in a primary class in a school I once went to. What stuff one hears about all our people! My mother was a German rope-dancer—my father an Irish chorus-singer. They both went, father and mother, to Cuba, when I was two years old, and died there of yellow fever. An aunt, a good woman, was janitress in a public school in the East, and she took care of me. I was to have been taught bookbinding, but it was no use. After six months' stitching books I wanted to dance tight-rope. I believe I should have been successful with a balancing pole. My feet used to itch to have chalk rubbed on them. What is the use of people fibbing about these things? Nothing is ever going to turn up for me! My aunt used to take care of a library in the school-building, and let me have the run of the books. I dusted them when she swept the rooms. I picked up a smattering here and there. Teachers used to say I got my knowledge by intuition. Mrs. Launcelet—she was Miss Polly McGee then—taught me my first little speech. When my poor old aunt died, Mrs. Launcelet cared for me, and when I am in trouble, even now, and I often get into it, it's Mrs. Launcelet that gets me out of it. I love, though, to recur to my schoolgirl days. See—see! That group of little ones there, crossing Eighteenth street? Aren't they darlings? Quick, Mr. Carter; bid John draw up to the sidewalk. Watch that chubby-faced little girl, with that smother of curls—and that pretty boy! Can't you understand that I want those sugar-plums?—There, my darlings; one handful for you, and one for you, and what's left in the box—for the children at home." I did as I was bid, the coupé was stopped, the children were hailed, and I distributed the sugar-plums equally among the astounded children.

The carriage sped on a block or so, Miss Aubrey remaining quiet. Suddenly she broke out: "I am a goose—ain't I? Whimsical—capricious—and make a display of myself."

"Oh—a goose! a goose—it's a harsh epithet!" I recalled mentally an unspoken syllable on her part—"between swans and geese there is, though, but a trifling difference as to species."

I was glad that she did not seem to remember, but I was sorry that I had adverted to a disagreeable incident.

"Once," she said, gleefully, "I read Hans Andersen's story about the ugly duck to a lot of

people, and I never had a more appreciative audience. You did not know Mrs. Tibbets! No! Well, she was a good, honest soul, a general-utility woman; not much talent, played anything she could get, and never had a chance. Old Tibbets did something dreadful—ran off with the cash-box of a side-show, and had to leave the country. For years that poor Mrs. Tibbets slaved for her husband's honour, and supported her family as well as she could, and little by little, by almost starving herself, paid back the money Tibbets had made away with. It wasn't much, not five hundred dollars. It took her five years to grub it up, cent by cent. It was Mrs. Launcelet—maybe Launcelet—that arranged the matter, and the side-show man was paid in full. Then they wrote to Tibbets, somewhere in Peru, to come back, but Tibbets they found out was dead and buried. Then that poor old woman couldn't stand it any longer, but lay down and died, and left a parcel of children to starve—as many as four of them. We tried to interest some church people about these children, but, somehow, not much came from it. That stupid Jenkins, all out of his own head, suggested a kind of reading for the benefit of those children, in a private house. Jenkins hee-hawed in his best manner, and I read some of Andersen's stories, and we cleared almost four hundred dollars. But what was better, having put the Tibbetses in the front row, I washed and brushed and sand-papered them all, and attended to their make-up; some good people in the audience kind of took a fancy to them, so we distributed the Tibbetses' brood, and I do think that it looks as if they would be provided for for some years to come. That's how I learned Hans Andersen's story. I know I was good. The very best thing in my whole repertory is "Free little toad-stools." That is naturalness for you! You shall have it, though I will allow of no criticisms." Miss Aubrey repeated, with charming sweetness, mingled with drollery, those baby verses.

"You don't laugh nor applaud! Will not even a hiss, the result of hours of study, fetch you? Want 'Little Bopeep'? It is full of pathos."

"Laugh, Miss Aubrey! I was thinking of Rachel when she read the 'Moinan de Lesbie,' or of Got repeating Alfred de Musset's verses. I can pay you no higher compliment."

"Indeed! I tell you, Mr. Carter, I crave applause."

"It is more than that. It is your goodness of heart that would make the sorriest of verses sound pleasantly to my ears. Your art is a secondary thing."

"Rachel! Got! Awful great people, both of them. Why, you must be an old man, Mr. Carter, to have remembered the first."

"I am thirty-five at least. I was twenty when I heard Rachel."

"Allow me—how can a man who has taught school at seventy-five cents a night have heard those people?"

"Permit me—how can a girl who stitched books at fifty cents a day be now the greatest of our actresses—rolling in her coupé, and patronizing a very poor author! You have risen, I have fallen."

"Stuff—nonsense!—I don't comprehend you. I wish you would not be so confidential. Only, somehow, I have got quite at my ease with you—so much more than I thought I ever could be, for you have a horrid reputation of saying disagreeable things; so that, honestly, I, who do not quake much, was half afraid of you. Pray what do you mean by falling? Falling! There are ten thousand men who would give half their lives to have your position. You rule the puppet-show, and make us dance. Fallen! You don't mean to say you dislike your vocation?"

So far the conversation on Miss Aubrey's part had been carried on with a half-averted face; now those grand eyes were turned directly on me with fullest blaze.

"Mean—mean! That I have a sensitive and impulsive nature—"

"With a thin glaze over it?"

"That"—I did not hear her—"that the petty irritations, the miserable blocks thrown in my way—by—by—"

"Professional people—go on."

"Annoy me half to death. That mental effort, the creative power, is hampered by the ten thousand physical hitches and knots which I must ever be wasting precious time over."

"You have not dyspepsia, have you, Mr. Carter?"

"Of the brain?—certainly."

"Then you don't like us—we don't agree with you?"

"Yes—and no."

"Indeed! Well, that is but half of an honest reply. Gracious! Mr. Carter, this stupid coachman must have understood Sixty-fourth for One Hundred and Fourth Street. Please bid him turn around and go down town again. Let us talk of something else. You are not a *crème glacée* after all, Mr. Carter—pronounced rightly?—but are as fluid and as readily shaken up as skimmed milk. Now I have something to ask you—it is business. You will be good enough to give me some details as to my costume in the last act."

"Miss Aubrey, I have given some thought to that second act and the trouble in regard to the rapid dressing. Perhaps your objections have some foundation, and to-night it will give me great pleasure to arrange your *entrée* some minutes later—an hour or so of work will do it."

"Oh! I don't want it, indeed I don't—I wouldn't have it; nevertheless, I am grateful; but I think I can manage. Please don't refer to

it any more. What I want to know is about the dress in the last act. Tight sleeves and a strangling corsage become me, so they say; but then it is difficult to rave and throw one's self about when you are surcungled and buckled up like—like—"

"Like a circus-horse?"

"Just so; I feel obliged to you for the most complimentary comparison. Thanks. Greek and Roman heroines are so effective because the costume allows the most perfect freedom of gesture. A toga is a splendid thing for a heroine."

"A toga?"

"Yes, a toga."

"No, a tunic, or a chlamys."

"What is a chlamys?"

"Women of the classic periods did not wear togas, but the men did. You might as well say that Sappho buttoned herself up in an ulster."

"I sha'n't say another word, Mr. Carter—but go to night-school. Maybe, if you had a rattan, you would like to rap me over the knuckles; I do nothing but blunder." Half in anger, Miss Aubrey held out her hand. I would have put it to my lips, but I saw it was trembling. In an instant the hand was withdrawn. Now the carriage stopped. I was afraid we were at the end of our journey, and I was miserable. It was only a momentary blockade in the street. I watched that hand intently. It beat a tattoo for a moment, then it was plunged to the wrist in the muff.

"Coarse manners have I, Miss Aubrey," I said at last, "and your silence is my punishment. I have deserved it. I am not a companionable person. I am childish enough to confess that a certain irritation I felt at the theatre has not passed away. I thought I had forgotten all about it, but I have not. I see. I am thoroughly ashamed of myself and my petty ways. Can we not be good comrades once more?"

"You don't consider how debasing it is to have inferiority of education always haunted in one's face! If I am to be coached—they call it coaching, don't they, sir?"

"Yes—coaching."

"The coacher—you smile; is that right?—well, then, the coach ought to be considerate, and not snap up people in an ungallant and self-satisfied way. A coach ought never to be arrogant."

"Oh, isn't he?" I said. "Little you know about it. The biggest thrashing I ever received was at college from a burly coach about boating. He blackguarded me, and because I got angry he beat me, and it served me right."

"And did he whip you badly?"

"Didn't he, though! I wasn't over it for a week."

The lady clapped her hands with glee.

"It ought to have done you no end of good. I suppose I am something like you, only I can't fight," and a little hand made a ridiculously soft and plump fist. Here was an opening once more, and I resumed: "As to your costume in the last act—"

"Yes, I have a tumble in the middle of it—an ugly sprawl at my Lord Duke Um-Um's feet, forgiveness, and all that kind of thing. That means double-stitched, re-enforced seams all over the body of the dress, and a hitch in the skirt, a bit of elastic, so that when my knee touches the ground the train shan't drag. Nothing so unpleasant as to rip things in the midst of a telling point. I have studied all that. Now, please be oracular and man-millinerish, if you please."

"Well, you know the piece is in the time of the Regency."

"What was the Regency? Honestly, my knowledge of French history is limited. There were such a lot of Louises!—Do not be afraid. Night-school away! I will throw no slate at you!"

"Have you ever read Scribe's 'Adrienne Lecouvreur'?"

"Yes; a poisoned rose was the trick. Was that in the time of the Regency?"

"Well, that's about it. Now here is a work which I have just bought, which will refresh both of us." I opened the volume of costumes and turned over the leaves for her until I came to a picture of Madame de Parabère. "What a lovely face! Was she as good as she was beautiful?" was asked.

"Good? No, far from it! This Madame de Parabère was one of the gliding stars in a singular smoky coruscation. Those lips took in many a draught of Tokay, Sillery, and Cyprus, and graced in drunken orgies. This woman existed in the most dissolute period of modern history. So vicious, so abject was this creature, and her depraved associates, that those who study such periods declare that the taint of those miserable days has not yet been entirely effaced from French morals."

"Oh!"

"Love was a play. To simulate an affection, to mimic it, was a fashion. People no longer loved sincerely, but shammed to love. Heartless intrigue, scandalous manners, were most in vogue; an honest man or woman was deemed a simpleton."

"The horrid times!"

"A most abject and wretched set were they. These perfumed dandies, these gorgeously clad women who made life a graceless revel, were, for all the world, nothing more than actors and actresses!"

"Ay! ay! Those poor actors and actresses!" cried Miss Aubrey, interrupting me, "who had no appreciation of what was fitting and proper life, who feigned passions they could not as much as feel!" Here the woman's voice had a