

THE LIVING AGE.

This is the poet's age of light. The age of kingly-born desire: When thought like eagles, soaring higher, Breaks through the barriers of the night. This is the poet's age supreme. The age of life's ineffable sway. Whose splendor is no idle dream. Nor crumbling image of decay.

Sweet light that glows in golden hours. That floods with fire in the dust of years. Sprung from dark dooms and pallid fears. Yet soft a breath blown fresh from flowers. I love thee for thou art to me The harbinger of a life whose will Shall thro' in holier mystery. And make the soul sublimer still.

O age of fearless love and might. Whose scope is infinite as the air. Whose sweetness glows through dark despair. Like stars through darkening paths of night! Thou art the towering height of truth. The radiance of the vision sun. Faith free as flushed desires of youth. Immensity and hope made one.

Then shall the poet fear to sing. Or man to whom the years have brought The power, the passion and the thought. The world in which each soul is king! Nay, with unfeigned power, his song Shall burn, and tremble, and aspire. And echo, clear and strong. Forever higher, higher, higher.

Through dim and ghostly lights we see The shattered idols of the past: O living age! thy dreams are cast In shapes of god-like modesty: The dreams that burn the soul are thine. The union of time and space: Behold me at thine feet! I pine For all thy sweetly human grace.

GEO. EDGAR MONTGOMERY.

THE GOLD OF CHICKAREE.

SUSAN and ANNA WARNER.

CHAPTER XXI.—(Continued.)

THE LOSS OF POWER.

Perhaps it was well, however (for a young lady of her wayward moods and tempers), that the next thing she had to do was to jump up and receive Dr. Arthur, who had come by appointment to dine at Chickaree. Dinner followed presently, and thus hostess' cares and responsibilities for a time took the first place. But so grave a young hostess at the head of that table was a new thing. She did not forget one of her smallest gracious duties and offices; and she talked at least as much as sometimes; but her face kept its soberness. The eyes did not flash and the lips did not curl. Dr. Arthur gave her a keen glance once or twice, at first; but finding a certain complement to all this in the face at the foot of the table, he turned at least his outward attention to other matters.

"Charteris takes it hard that you intend to keep running, Dane," he said. "Some other people find it hard that he don't."

"Hard things affect people differently: they don't agree with him. And he announces that he will try how they agree with you."

"I don't see what he can do to me at present."

"Self-confidence is not one of your unlevelled graces. But I wish you had bought that gown at the top of the Hollow, as I bade you."

"Powder did not care about selling, at one time; and latterly I have had my hands too full. Why do you wish that just now, Arthur?"

"Because Powder has sold it now. And if I remember, your lease of the water power has not long to run." Wych Hazel was listening, intently, with a sparkle in her eye at last.

"I have no lease of water power. What I own I own. But anybody above me on the stream could make me trouble. To whom has Powder sold?"

"Just what I cannot find out," said the doctor, "though I went to himself. 'It was no matter,' he said, 'so long as the property was not in the market.' But of course it is Charteris. Josephine's marriage makes that pretty sure."

Rollo laid down his knife and fork for a moment and sat with his head leaning upon his hand.

"As the Lord will!" he said. "But I will not give up until I know more. I do not believe my poor people and I are to be in that man's power. I will wait and see."

But the interest of the dinner was gone for one member of the party; and the attention he gave to other people or things was a preoccupied and shadowed attention.

Wych Hazel stood it a little while, watching him, much wishing that there was nobody else to hear; then she could not bear it any longer. After all, Dr. Arthur was just his brother.

"Mr. Rollo," she said timidly, "what means do you think the Lord can use to prevent this—that you fear?"

It was worth something to get the look he flashed across the table to her; it was so brilliant with meaning and so sweet with confidence.

"A thousand things!" he said heartily; "and you remind me that I am a fool to allow myself to be disturbed about it. I was thinking

of those hundreds of families. And I half forgot for a moment that the Lord thinks of them too. I believe he will take care."

"Would you like to know how?" said Wych Hazel. The tone was indescribably sweet, but the eyes had gone down before this.

"Would I like it?" said Dane watching her. "Yes! I am afraid I am foolish enough still to like to know that, if I could. But I believe it anyhow, Hazel."

"Governor Powder sold the land to me."—"To you?" said Dane in great amazement. "What did you buy it for?"

"I thought it was well it should be bought," said Hazel demurely. "When did you do that?"

"A good while ago. Before the sickness in the Hollow."

She got another look, if she could see it, which it was also worth while to get. After which Dane remarked sedately,

"I am curious to know how Mr. Falkirk liked that investment."

"Mr. Falkirk never knew. It is a great comfort sometimes," she went on, the loveliest roses waking up now all over her face, "to have a little independent power. And to be able to act without one's guardians. Mr. Falkirk was not consulted,—any more than Mr. Rollo."

Rollo's lips twitched and curved, but on the whole he maintained a decorous composure.

"We don't know our privileges, Arthur," he remarked. "No," said his friend concisely. "How ever in the world came Governor Powder to let the lady have the land? Why he has refused half the county!"

"I do not know," said Wych Hazel. "I think I made him."

Listening to her, looking at her, Dr. Arthur thought that likely. "And did he tell you that Charteris wanted it?" he said.

"O yes,—and that, perhaps, Mr. Rollo might."

"But he did not know that he was playing into my hands, in letting you have it!" Rollo enquired.

"Of course not. I merely told him I wanted it more than Mr. Rollo, and would give more than Mr. Charteris."

"Witchcraft!—when all's done," said Dr. Arthur. "Dane, when your independent power is in the market, let me know."—He followed them into the red room, and took a cup of coffee there, standing; but then went off at once to see some patient, promising to call for Rollo on his way home.

And for once Wych Hazel would have been quite willing to have him stay. What would her "other guardian" say to her, for such meddling in his affairs; such tampering with masculine business? She retreated behind her salver, and sat there sngaring Mr. Rollo's empty cup, but not counting the lumps this time.

Rollo however hardly justified her fears. He did come and sit down beside her, and he did relieve her hand of the sugar tongs and kiss it, and from there the kiss did come to her lips; but it was all done so gently and gracefully and deferentially, as if he had been a knight and she a lady of olden time.

"How am I going to thank you, Wych?" he said. "There is never a good way of doing needless things."

"No. But hardly anything at this moment could have given me equal satisfaction. The way is cleared for me to work without hindrance. I'll plant the banks with wych hazel!"

"You will have a grand clearing away again, if you do. Then you really are glad, Mr. Rollo?"

"You do not mean to say that you will pull up what I plant?"

"I said you would. See," she said, not ready for repartee or discussion or much of anything else to-night, "you have cut short your allowance of sugar, and quite prevented the cream. Give me the sugar tongs, please."

Divining that it was in some sort a help to her, he quietly let her have her way; and he did not tell her how fully creamed and sugared he tasted his cup to be that night.

"I have learnt a lesson," he drily said after he had watched her. "Whenever I want to give you anything, I shall know henceforth that you would like nothing so well as power."

She smiled a little bit, looking down at her folded hands, but she did not say a word. And Dane drank his coffee, for form's sake, without knowing whether there was either sugar or cream in it. And then he took Wych Hazel away from the table, and talked of things as far as possible from weddings and journeyings; till Arthur came again.

Dr. Arthur did not come in. But when his friend, in obedience to the summons, had reached the door of the red room, his progress was stayed.

"Mr. Rollo,"—came falteringly from the grave figure he had left standing by the fire,— "could you stop one minute?"

It is needless to say that Rollo's steps paused and came back instantly.

"Nobody to speak but me,—nobody to consult but him!" the girl thought as he approached her. It was rather hard, just now. But things had to be done.

"I will not detain you," she said, hesitating over her words,— "not long,—but you did not tell me—will you tell me—how much time I have?"

As gently as if it had been her mother's, Rollo's arm came round her.

"Just as much time as you choose!" he answered. "I must go to New York the day after Christmas,—that is, Friday; but the times that concern you are in your own hands. I was going to write you a note to-morrow, to ask you about it. Supposing that you go with me, we must be married either Friday morning, before we set out; or Christmas evening. I must be all Christmas day busy in the Hollow; but I could be here by five o'clock. What would you like best?"

Hard to say!—"The Marylands were coming here to spend Christmas," said Hazel,— "and they are so pleased—I do not like to forbid them. So it cannot be Thursday. How early Friday?"

"Six miles to drive to the station, and must take the morning train. It's not quite an 'owl train'—but comes along, I believe, by eight o'clock. Why Hazel, if the Marylands will be here Christmas, that will just fit."

"Fit Friday. You could reach the train in time still, could you not?" she said timidly. It was dreadful to mix herself up with other people's business in this way!

"It shall be as you like, Hazel. It would be a little sharp work, to drive Dr. Maryland over here in the morning, time enough for breakfast and for the other drive afterwards. The words to be said, that you dread so much, I suppose will take very few minutes; but they must have a few. I could drive all night contentedly, with them in prospect; but it is something different for him."

Dr. Maryland—Yes, Hazel saw that at a glance. She had left him quite out of her calculations. It must be Christmas.

"Then will you tell them they cannot come?" she said. "Only do not say why. Do not tell anybody that, till the last minute."

"Tell them not to come! Why no, you do not mean that! Will you forbid Prim and Arthur to be with us?"

"I am forgetting everything but myself," said the girl with a gesture of impatience. Of course,—they were in effect his brother and sister. And she could not be so discourteous as to bid them dine at home. "But you will not tell them, beforehand?" she said eagerly.

"Not a word!" he said smiling. "But when shall we have the thing done? before dinner, or after?"

"After. You know," said Hazel, explaining her strange request, "there is nobody in the world who loves me much, to say words or send tokens,—and I could not bear them from other people. You may tell Dr. Arthur—if you must tell somebody."

"I shall not tell anybody," said Dane comfortingly. "Dear Dr. Maryland, I suppose, would like a little forewarning of what is coming upon him; but he has married enough people in his time to be used to it. I shall tell nobody until the time comes."

"I will not keep you"—Hazel said then, after a minute's silence. "I have kept you too long now." Then two impetuous words rushed out. "If only!"

"Well?" said Dane, without stirring. "Nothing,—it is not anything you could grant. I know it is impossible; but if only I need not be at that dinner!"

"You need not, if you do not choose," said Dane caressingly. "I will do my best to be head and foot of the table at once. But when the time comes, you will choose to be there, Hazel. Christmas day,—and such a glad one for you and me!"

There came a quiver round the mouth and a glitter behind the eyelashes, but Hazel kept her voice.

"Go now, please," she said, laying her fingers lightly on his hand. "You have had enough of my whims for one day,—just go—and forget them all."

CHAPTER XXII.

PREPARATORY FEARS.

Hazel could not tell how she had borne herself, through all that trying evening. But when the evening was over, then she felt as if she could not have held out one minute more; with the wheels of Dr. Arthur's buggy rolled away the last mite of her self-control. One half minute longer of such tension, and she should have broken down, and called back her promise, and done everything else to be sorry for next day. It even seemed to her as she stood there, with all the repressed excitement in "a light low," as if she could not bear the room itself; and (almost) the people who had been in it. As if she was wild and frantic and beside herself generally. She flew up stairs,—not now to solitary musings and lonely questionings, but straight to the housekeeper's room,—and was down on her knees with her face hid in Mrs. Bywank's lap, before anybody, herself included, had chance to breathe. For there are times, when in all the world there is nothing like a woman, after all. And in all the world, this was the one woman to whom she could come. But she would not speak nor look up nor at first answer questions; only hid her face closer than ever.

Now Mrs. Bywank had seen enough of her young lady, to know that every real heart sorrow Wych Hazel took to her own room alone. Also that any emergency of accident or fear, would be acted upon first, before getting the upper hand. Moreover the one look she caught as Miss Wych came in, told her much; the sweet flushed face, the shy eyes that avoided everything; the stirred, moved, frightened set of the mouth,—Mrs. Bywank was old, and drew

her conclusions. Not for many contingencies would Miss Wych have a fit of the nerves like this.

"So!" she said soothingly, laying her hand on the restless curls. "Is that it! I thought there wouldn't be much waiting now!"—Which brought such a sudden start and twist, that Mrs. Bywank smiled to herself and knew she was right.

"And when is it to be, Miss Wych?" "When I have breathed twice and turned round three times."

"My dear!" remonstrated Mrs. Bywank. "I am sure!"

"You are sure of nothing!" said the girl quickly. "And I am not. Not sure of myself. Not sure of anybody or anything."

"Except Mr. Rollo," said the old housekeeper quietly; smiling softly then at the success of her spell, for Hazel was silent. "But that is the great point. And as I was saying, Miss Wych, I am sure I am glad; for I have been worried to death about you."

"You ought to be worried to death about me now," said Wych Hazel. "I am worried to death about myself."

"Yes!" said the old housekeeper fondly, curling the dark hair round her fingers. "Are you, my dear! What about, Miss Wych?"

"How can it go right, or be right, when it is all disagreeable?" said the girl. "It ought to be pleasant—and it isn't!"

"It's all new, just now, my dear." "Never to be free again!" said Hazel. "Never to have my own way or do as I please!" "Ah," said Mrs. Bywank, "that was Eve's fault! But with a man like Mr. Rollo, Miss Wych, it will be your own if it gives you much trouble."

(To be continued.)

MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC.

MEME. PATI is living in seclusion in Brittany.

The "Pilgrim's Progress" has been dramatised.

RICHARD WAGNER is now living at Heidelberg.

The new Court Theatre at Dresden bids fair almost to rival the Paris Opera House in the magnificence of its decorations.

MADAME TITIENS has so far recovered that she could be taken to London recently. Her condition is said to be much improved.

A GREAT violinist is reported to have said: "If I stop practicing for one day, I notice it in my playing; if I stop two days, my friends notice it; if I stop three days, the public notices it."

ALFREDO BOTTI, composer of the opera "Méphistophélès," which has lately gone the rounds of the Italian theatres with considerable success, has been decorated by King Victor Emmanuel.

The musical commission of the Paris Exhibition have decided to invite the foreign commissions to choose their own musical representatives, and it is expected that England will send either Sir J. Bennett or Mr. Charles Hallé; Belgium, M. Graveny; Austria, Liszt; Italy, Verdi; and Russia, Rimski-Korsakov.

M. AMERIGHI THOMAS, not finding repose enough at Argentan, has taken refuge at Saint-Gilles, Brittany, where he is at work on his opera, "Francesca de Rimini."

The public, always curious to know what goes on behind the scenes in a theatre, will have an opportunity of studying from models which will be shown at the Exhibition, fitted with all the modern mechanical appliances without which it would be impossible to produce the elaborate scenic effects of to-day. The idea is due to M. Sautter, Librarian of the Academy of Music.

M. OFFENBACH'S delicacy of ear is well known, and it is possible that the following story, which is now going the rounds of the Paris clubs, may be true. He had lately dismissed a very sharp valet, and on being asked for a character of him replied in very laudatory terms. "Why then did you dismiss him?" it was asked. "Well, you see," said the master, "he always used to beat my clothes at my door, and I never could get him to do it in time."

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. W. S., Montreal.—Solution of Problem No. 140 received. Correct. The games kindly sent shall be published as opportunities present themselves.

J. H., Montreal.—Many thanks for the games enclosed in letter. They shall appear in due course.

Student, Montreal.—Solution of Problem No. 140 received. Correct.

W. A., Quebec.—Letter received. An answer will be sent by post.

W. H., Montreal.—A Black Pawn should appear at Black's K B 3 in Problem No. 140.

We are most anxious to call the attention of the Chess players of the Dominion to the following notice of Mr. Bird's new work on Chess. All who recollect Mr. Bird's visit to our city, and the genial manner in which he invited those who gathered around him at the Montreal Chess Club to take part in the contests which he was then carrying on, will be glad to have a souvenir of the talented player, independent of the value of the book as a guide to the study of the noble game.