

SYMPATHY.

A dreary wood, whose birds, affright
At their own echoing notes, are still;
A garden, whose first opening flowers
Are nipped by frost's unkindly chill:
A field on which no verdure dwells,
A desert waste, a soundless sea,
In all of these are imaged forth
The heart bereft of sympathy.

From Friendship's hand I'd ask no gift
Of costliest worth, our bond to seal,
But crave beyond all else on earth,
A heart that with my heart could feel.
A kindly word in season, should
My soul bereft of courage be;
A ready smile to greet my joy,
A tear, when grief o'ershadowed me.

Alas! too oft I've felt the need,
Of bath my heart its throbs repressed.
And many an aspiration warm
Hath germinated in my breast;
But, venturing forth, the tender shoot
Met scorn, or chilliest apathy.
And, withering 'neath that frigid breath,
Hath died, for want of sympathy.

Now care's dark clouds around me lower,
And sorrow soon may me enthrall,
When smiles will flood my soul with light,
Whose friendly hand will lift the pall?
A safe retreat remains at last,
A constant friend when others flee.
The grave's a calm and peaceful bed:
In death I'll crave no sympathy!

M. J. WELLS.

Montreal, Oct., 24th.

THAT OTHER FELLOW.

I.

I never knew her age; but she was the daughter of my tutor, and a dainty, winsome little lady. I was about twenty; ardent in the pursuit of field sports, tolerant of most things save advice; generous perhaps, impulsive undoubtedly, and over head and ears in love with Constance Silverthorne.

My education was at that period anything but complete. I was destined for the diplomatic service, a calling for which time and opportunities have since discovered me to be singularly unfit. In those days, however, I was vaguely ambitious, and sustained by hope, a perfect digestion, and the conviction that, as an Englishman, I was superior to the less fortunate mortals born on the other side of the British Channel.

Nowadays my hopes are few and by no means invigorating; my digestion is a thing of the past; and as I have been taken in and outwitted by every foreign diplomat with whom I have had dealings, my national egotism is somewhat less obtrusive than in the days of my giddy youth.

Not the least memorable event in that gay and reckless period was my sojourn at Greybridge with Rev. Dr. Silverthorne, a wise and learned minister of the gospel, whose knowledge of the classics and theology was renowned. He was rector, with a large house, a small living and an only daughter. At one time fellow of his college, Christopher Silverthorne had established his fame as a tutor, and to him I was attracted in my despair at the prospect of a civil service examination, and a general idea as to my own incompetence to pass it.

Greybridge, as every one familiar with our dear old river knows, lies about a mile distant from the Thames. The church, however, and the adjacent rectory stand on high ground between the two, and the private garden, which is full of apple trees tenanted by hundreds of squirrels, stretches from the top of the hill down to the water's edge.

There was every comfort at the rectory—indeed, most of the luxuries of life were discussable and enjoyable. The pupils could do pretty much as they liked, and with scarcely an exception they liked the company of Miss Constance Silverthorne. When I joined the household in the month of July, the only other pupil was Stuart Smart, a young gentleman from Christ Church, who was leisurely reading with the Doctor for his forthcoming examination in "Meds." Smart was a cheerful, healthy, well-conditioned fellow, with the prospect of a pecunious future before him, liable to laziness, except in the matter of cricket, and more than imperturbable in the matter of feminine advances.

Ille robur et æs triplex
Circa pectus erat.

as far as woman's wiles were concerned. At all events, he gave me that impression, and others also.

The Doctor received me affably and with an air of cheerful dignity, made me acquainted with the details of the household, and left me to my own devices until dinner. Naturally enough I strolled out among the trees, watched the frisking squirrels with some interest, and in a few minutes found myself on the river's bank. A canoe and a pair-oared skiff were floating temptingly beneath me. Evidently they belonged to the house, so I settled myself in the canoe, and paddled on a voyage of discovery up-stream.

The sun was hot; I was disinclined for active exercise, and the little craft was urged but slowly forward. Perhaps a mile of river was leisurely traversed, and then the Berkshire side rose into high and thickly-wooded ground. Foliage lightly kissed the wavelets, and the bank was broken here and there with shady recesses fit for meditation and flirtation, if fortune and a lady favoured. I paddled toward an inviting willow, anxious to avoid for a few moments the glare of the sun, but was suddenly interrupted by a girl's voice on the left.

"At the risk of being thought inquisitive, may I ask what you are doing in that canoe?"

With a sweep of the paddle I turned my craft and faced the speaker. She was young and pretty, and was seated in a canoe similar in size and shape to mine. A book lay upon the waterproof which covered her dress, and the look with which she greeted me seemed to convey surprise, indignation and defiance.

"I beg your pardon, I'm sure," I replied, not quite knowing what to say.

"That's very kind of you. Do you happen to know that the canoe is private property—is mine, as a matter of detail?"

I told her that I had no idea of that interesting fact. "I thought it belonged to Dr. Silverthorne," I humbly protested.

"Not a bit of it," said she, impatiently; "it belongs to me. Papa gave both these canoes to me early in the spring."

"Oh! then I have the pleasure of addressing Miss Silverthorne?"

"Yes," said she, "you have that pleasure."

"Allow me, then, to introduce myself—my name is Stow, Godfrey Stow."

She burst out laughing. "I see it all, now; you are the new boy. I didn't expect you till next week."

"Hang it!" I thought; "new boy, indeed! This pert little miss must be taken down a bit." I hated to be called a boy, perhaps because I bore such unmistakable evidence of being one. I had in those days a horrid habit of blushing, and I was conscious of feeling red from my hair down to my collar.

She laughed again, not in a feeble, inane giggle, which so often accompanies girls in their teens, but a clear, ringing, enjoyable laugh, which seemed to be set to melodious music. When Constance Silverthorne laughed her dark brown eyes glittered, her cheeks broke into dimples. She was a most enjoyable sight.

"I can't help laughing," she cried, taking two strokes with her paddle, which brought her within a yard of me, "you blush so delightfully."

However attractive her presence might be, Miss Silverthorne's conversation did not add to my composure. I blundered on:

"I am happy to be able to amuse you," I returned, pettishly. "Do you never indulge in a blush?"

"No; it doesn't suit my complexion. Besides, I never say or do anything which should cause me to blush." And she dipped her paddle in the water and glided out into mid-stream.

"I am going home," cried she, looking back at me over her shoulder, "*qui m'aime me suive*."

"I'd rather accompany than follow you," I returned, coming up alongside.

"And you have not known me long enough to—er—to do the other thing."

"Not quite; but you may live in hope, Miss Silverthorne."

"That is better," quoth she; "you are capable of improvement, I see. There, don't blush; *allons*."

The stream carried us swiftly down to the boat house in the rectory garden. I disembarked first, and stooped in order to steady her canoe as she rose. She sprang on to the wooden step, and with her finger tips lightly touched my cheek. "Good boy," she said demurely, and without another word fled toward the house.

I hardly know whether I was more surprised at the caress than at her sudden disappearance. I lighted a pipe, in my doubt, and lay down on the bank and thought about her. Truly, she was a most unusual young lady. Not that my knowledge of womankind was extensive or deep, but with the confidence born of my twenty years of life I flattered myself I knew a thing or two, and woman was one of the things, of course.

Her presence certainly adds a flavour to the place," I thought to myself; "she will help me to spend my leisure pleasantly enough, I have no doubt." And then the dinner-bell sounded, and I strolled off to dress.

When I descended, the rector was standing with his back to the fireplace chatting to Stuart Smart. I was introduced to that gentleman, and agreed with him that the weather was all that could be desired. Then the Doctor was of opinion that if rain did not fall within the next six weeks a drought might possibly ensue; and so in the interchange of other original and appropriate remarks, in the unimpeachability of which we were generally agreed, five minutes slipped by.

"Ha! at last," said the Rector, as Miss Silverthorne glided into the room. "Constance, let me introduce Mr. Stow, my new pupil."

She bowed rather frigidly, I thought, and busied herself with some roses at a side-table.

"Will you take my daughter in to dinner, Mr. Stow?" asked the Rector, presently.

I bowed, approached her, and offered my arm—rather awkwardly, I must admit. She placed the tips of her fingers on my elbow, and walked into the adjoining apartment.

She sat on my left at table, and I had occasional opportunity of observing the beauty of her figure and the easy grace of her movements. She wore a dress of some light material, which fitted her perfectly. Her bosom and arms were covered with black diaphanous muslin, which showed up, rather than concealed, the dazzling whiteness of the skin. Her hair was light, with an inclination toward auburn, and had here and there a golden glint; her eyes were very dark, and produced a decided effect on me when, dashing out from under yellow eyebrows, they met mine. On this occasion Miss Silverthorne was chary of her glances, and though I was lost in admiration, she gave me no encouragement.

When the claret was put upon the table, she

rose without speaking, and left the room. The Doctor was chatty, and compared notes with Smart as to the difference between Oxford of to-day and Oxford of years ago. I was not interested in their discourse; I longed to be away, to talk with Constance, whom I could see playing at fancy work on the lawn, for although the restrictions of society closed her Christian name to my lips, in my thoughts she was Constance already.

I took the first opportunity of escaping from the dining-room, but as I found my way to the lawn she escaped into the house through the French window.

"Vitas hincule me similis, Chloe."

I quoted in my despair. Could she be angry with me? Had I offended her?

I paced up and down, smoking a cigarette. Presently, the Rector and Smart came out into the soft, summer air, still discussing the virtues of a proposed University Reform bill. I threw away the tobacco and approached the window through which she had disappeared. It led into the drawing-room, and Constance was sitting in the far corner running her hands idly over the keys of the piano.

"Can't you be tempted into the garden, Miss Silverthorne?" I asked in my most insinuating tone.

"Oh, yes!" said she, listlessly; "when the tempter asks me, I'll go."

This was encouraging, so I entered the room and faced her. "Very well, here he is."

She laughed lightly. "Dear, dear! How the boy flatters himself."

This was hardly encouraging; still I would not be rebuffed.

"Your father and Mr. Smart are engaged in a most interesting conversation; come out and listen to it."

"Thanks; I leave inquisitiveness to the men."

"You needn't trouble to do that," I answered glibly; "they have plenty of their own."

She played a bar of music.

"You don't understand me, Mr. Stow; I'm not at all curious."

"Then I certainly don't understand you; for to my lights you are the most curious little lady in the world."

She smiled, rose from the music stool, and took my arm. The contact thrilled me strangely; she gave me one serious look with her eloquent brown eyes, and led me out half dazed into the happy twilight.

II.

About 10.30 on the same night I entered the apartment known as "the study," which looked out on the trees and faced the river. This room the pupils were allowed to regard as their own. They might read, write, or smoke in it, and these privileges were indulged in according to the taste or laziness of each. On the night I refer to I found Stuart Smart stretched at full length on the couch close to the open window, a cigarette between his lips, and a silver mug containing claret cup within reach of his hand.

"Have a weed?" he asked lazily as I entered.

I lighted the proffered cigar, and looked dreamily out of the window. I didn't wish to talk. My heart was full, and my brain occupied with thoughts which were continually grouping themselves into possible realities round and about her.

"Rather nice girl, Miss Silverthorne," said Smart, after a pause.

"Ye-es."

"Isn't quite my style, but doosid nice all the same. You seemed rather fetched."

"Ye-es; oh yes. I beg your pardon, I'm sure; I mean that Miss Silverthorne seems a very charming girl."

"Umh! yes; in fits and starts. She is sometimes a most provoking little minx. Try some of this cup; I brewed it myself."

I felt like committing an assault on Stuart Smart, but he was lying supine, and the odds were too many in favour of myself. I quenched my rising wrath in a draught of claret.

"Very picturesque and idyllic you both looked to-night. The old boy, though, didn't think it half so pleasing a sight as I did. Ah! ah! It will be fun to watch that other fellow!"

"What other fellow, Mr. Smart?" I asked, trying not to appear anxious.

"The other fellow—I can't pronounce his name. He called himself a Magyar, whatever that may be. Of course, he's doosid clever, and all that sort of thing, don't you know, but beastly objectionable; and he is undoubtedly sweet on Constance."

"Confound the fellow!" I thought to myself, "how dare he take her name in vain!" I felt that delicious right belonged to me alone, already.

"He is some distant relation, I believe. Not that he is very far off, don't you know; he will be here to-morrow, and then I fancy there will be fun."

"Oh! indeed! Is he particularly humorous, or witty, or what?"

"Oh, Lor', no," answered Smart with a chuckle; "only you and he will most likely come to loggerheads."

And we did. I bade a hasty good-night to Smart, and eagerly sought the solitude of my bedroom, but not to sleep. I was not insufferably romantic in those days, nor was my imagination unnaturally developed for my twenty years. I had a fancy for mooning, however, a habit which has grown upon me since; and gaz-

ing out on a heavenly July night, with her sweet voice ringing in my ears, and with the gentle pressure of her fingers fresh upon my hand, I felt happy, but anxious.

Sleep did not visit me till daybreak, and 9 o'clock had sounded before I splashed out of my tub and had finished my ten minutes' dumb-bell exercise. Through the window I could see Stuart Smart bowling at a single stump in the paddock, and a small boy endeavouring to stop the cricket ball as it bounded by the wicket. The sun was shining mildly, but gave every indication of treating us to a scorching day. I descended to the garden, and was presently conscious of a female figure flitting among the standard rose-trees. With my hands in my pockets I sauntered toward her and asked her for a flower.

"Most emphatically no," says she, with a little start. "Why should I?"

How fresh and sweet she looked in her morning dress! still, I was put out by her answer.

"Why shouldn't you?"

She shrugged her shoulders ever so slightly. "A man shouldn't ask; he ought to take."

"Then I'll take a liberty and a rose as well," and I chose a flower from the basket which hung on her arm. I stuck it in my button-hole. She said nothing but turned aside.

"Now a pin, and my bliss is complete," said I, arranging the stalk so that the rose should not escape. With a swift movement she was at my side, pinning the flower into my shooting jacket. Her linen collar hung awry. She had robbed herself to satisfy my whim.

"No matter," said she, guessing my thoughts; "the brooch will fasten it."

She raised her hands to her throat, but failed to secure the obstinate linen. "My turn now," I said, firmly but quietly, and, clasping her hands in mine, I succeeded in fastening the ends of the collar. I held her so for a few seconds, gazing wistfully down into her big brown eyes. A most tempting, delicious, ever-to-be-remembered moment—but the breakfast bell interrupted us; she broke away and ran into the house.

The first object which met me in the dining-room was a stranger. He was actively engaged upon a cold pie, and scarcely ventured upon a slight nod of his head as I entered the apartment. With a nonchalant air I walked to the window and looked out, wondering why the deuce the family didn't make its appearance. The stranger went on with his meal. With my hands in my pocket, I regarded him from the window with some attention. He seemed a tall, well-built fellow, with muscular hands, and a countenance swarthy and somewhat unfathomable. The eyes were dark, the hair was crisp and curly, the nose somewhat thick, and the lips, shaded by a black moustache, were evidently full and sensuous. Instinctively I felt that I disliked the stranger, and my budding aversion did not add to the ease of my manner. When a lad of twenty feels himself awkward, he assumes an air of easy indifference; my hands plunged deeper into my pockets, and a faint apology for a whistle escaped me.

"You are not hungry, sir? You have made your breakfast—yes?"

Thus did the stranger break the monotonous silence. He spoke with a foreign accent, laying more than ordinary stress upon the consonants. His tone did not betray any intense interest regarding the state of my appetite; his observation of question seemed rather to proceed from a person who had glutted his animal craving, and was indulging in subsequent and casual commonplaces.

"No," I replied, haughtily, "I have not yet breakfasted. I am waiting for the Doctor and Miss Silverthorne."

"Ach! Then sit down at once and feed," replied the stranger, smiling as he rose. "The Doctor and his daughter make their breakfasts up-stairs. I shall see you in the library afterwards, isn't it?"

"I—er—er—I suppose so," I answered vaguely, and immediately fell to. A second or so after the stranger departed, Stuart Smart came in.

"Mornin', Stow," was his epigrammatic salutation. "So you've met that other fellow, eh?"

"I suppose so," I replied grumpily. "If you mean the fellow who looks like a nigger and talks like a Frenchman, I have."

"Ah! He isn't so bad as he looks. And as to his looks, there are women who think him doosid handsome. He isn't my style, don't you know; he is too doosid clever and all that sort of thing." And Mr. Stuart Smart leisurely cracked a second egg, and proceeded to discuss its liquid contents.

"What's his name?" I asked rather indifferently. "I suppose he is here to learn English."

"Not he," returns Stuart. "He knows more English than most fellows I know. He's not reading here; he's a sort of tutor."

"Tutor!" I cried in astonishment and despair.

"Rather!" replied my friend laconically; "and he has come up from town on purpose for you. I'm reading classics with the Governor, don't you know?"

The information was correct. This other fellow, with his swarthy skin, his thirty years of age, his stress on the consonants, and his admiration for Constance, was to be my tutor for the next six weeks. With him—the man I was sure I loathed—I was to read German and lower mathematics, from him, the probable adorer of Constance, I was to imbibe the art of *precis* writing and correctness in French composition;