

WAITING.

Learn to wait, life's hardest lesson,
Conced, perchance, through blinding
tears,
While the heart throbs sadly echo
To the tread of passing years.

Learn to wait hope's slow fruition;
Faint not though the way seems long;
There is joy in each condition,
Hearts though suffering may grow
strong.

Constant sunshine, however welcome,
Ne'er would ripen fruit or flower;
Giant oaks owe half their greatness
To the scathing tempests power.

Thus a soul untouched by sorrow
Aims not at a higher state;
Joy seeks not a brighter morrow,
Only sad hearts learn to wait.

Human strength and human greatness
Spring not from life's sunny side,
Heroes must be more than driftwood
Floating on a waveless tide.

OUR NELL.

CHAPTER IX.

Carry Masters was accustomed to come home at busy seasons, professedly to help. But the visit always proved to be little more than a pleasant holiday for her, and the reasons for this were various. In the first place, there was the general petting and attention which were natural to the home-coming of a long-absent member of the family. When the novelty and excitement had subsided with the rest of the household, there was always her mother's solicitous affection, and her regard for the white hands of her eldest daughter, who was the pride of her heart. Carry, who would not have held back from any work, after arming herself with a pair of gloves—had she seen the necessity—was not averse to keeping out of it altogether, if such a course seemed objectionable; and since Nell not only did not wish for help, but actually appeared as though she regarded the work as her prerogative, and was apt to consider any attempt to take it out of her hands as an infringement of her rights, Carry smiled and shrugged her shoulders, and gave up the effort to do what after all, she did not like.

One pleasant summer evening Carry and Nell were driving home from Dunsley Station, whether Nell had taken the gig to meet her sister. Peggy, the sleek brown mare, her face set homewards, trotted at a good speed down the lanes, and the two girls chatted merrily, with light hearts.

Carry was slight and graceful, with an air of refinement. Seen among ladies, she would not have been noticeable, but would simply have been taken to be a quiet girl amongst her equals, and this was exactly the verdict of Carry herself would have liked best.

Her father was wont to say—

"Our Nell's nought but plain deal, like the kitchen table—good sound stuff that'll stand plenty of wear and tear; but Carry's got as much varnish and polish as the best parlour sideboard. She's a bit of a lady, is Carry."

Carry's grandmother was a draper's widow. She rented a pretty little villa on the skirts of Grayfield, and had means enough to live in comfort with one servant and her grand-daughter. Carry was a good girl, was obedient and affectionate towards her grandmother, and taught in the Sunday-school. She had one ambition—to be a lady. Besides the instincts of refinement, she had great assistance towards this end in being possessed of a quick perceptive faculty. What we call tact is the outcome of quick perceptions. Carry had a great deal of tact. She was taken up by the clergyman's daughters, and through them she gained a certain place amongst the ladies of Grayfield. She was quick to catch the tone and habits of good society; but she never assumed, and she never imitated; she

knew that silence was often her best policy. Her dress was always plain—even quakerish. She left finery, feathers, and frills, she told her grand-mother, to the girls who had a right to them, and to those who seemed as if they had. A simple dark dress, with a frill or collar round her white throat, was her usual grab, to which was added a hat or bonnet of severest style when she took her walks abroad.

Carry liked better to be thought lady-like than pretty. And yet she was pretty, and had had many admirers, who had, perhaps, been of too plebeian stamp to excite any feeling in return. Her face was placid and demure in repose, and then depended for attraction upon the graceful form of the smooth head, and the soft bloom on the velvet skin, reminding one of a pansy. But a judgment upon her face in repose would be incomplete, for there were a series of surprises in store for the observer. Her eyes, for instance, which had been hidden from sight by the heavy lids and long lashes, would if you spoke to her, suddenly reveal themselves of a lustrous dark blue. Then, if you made her smile, a dimple showed itself in the soft cheek, and when she laughed little wrinkles came all about her eyes and half hid them, an effect which was enough to fascinate any beholder.

Before the gig was in sight of the house it was met by Jack and Bob, Jack in advance of his smaller brother, who was toiling and panting at his full speed behind. When the mare was pulled up at the garden gate, father and mother were there to meet them.

"Well, Carry, my lass, how art?" said Mr. Masters, as he lifted his daughter down.

"Well, father, thank you, and very glad to see you all again," and Carry kissed his cheek lightly, and then went to her mother to undergo much hugging and petting.

"Eh, love," said she, "I'm afraid you're but poorly; you haven't got a bit of color in your cheeks."

"Nonsense, mummy dear! I'm quite well. You're used to seeing Nell's roses. You know I never have a color."

Carry was an affectionate girl, and with the people she loved had a caressing way, as light as a bird's. Nell showed her affection in this way rarely, and when she did, was apt to do it with a sudden ardour which disconcerted rather than pleased. Carry now put her arm through her mother's and turning towards the house, perceived, for the first time, that a stranger was standing on the path in the shade of the evergreens.

"This gentleman is Mr. Derwent, love," said her mother, "Mr. Oliver's cousin, you know."

Derwent advanced, and was about to put out his hand, which he believed was the right thing to do in that grade of society; but he checked himself just in time, for Carry gave him a grave and graceful bow, and passed on with her mother to the house.

Derwent turned to Mr. Masters;

"Well, Mr. Masters, I won't stay any longer to-night, for you will want to talk things over with your daughter. But I shall come again some evening to finish our discussion, if I may."

"Nay, don't go, sir; we shall be happy to see you for as long as you've the time to stay," said Mr. Masters heartily. "We haven't finished plucking that crow yet, concerning Jack's education: anyway, you've not persuaded me as yet that a knowledge of Latin will make a man a better farmer. And as to its sharpening the wits, why there's things belonging to the nineteenth century will do that, without going to the dead languages for it. But come back to the house, sir."

Derwent would have liked to have stayed longer to amuse himself with the domestic comedy of which life at Elm-tree Corner afforded him the spectacle. But glancing at Carry as she stood at the front door, he saw that she was entirely absorbed in chatting to her mother, and appeared unconscious of

his existence. He decided that it would be more considerate to go, and therefore made his adieux. Carry felt disappointed. Nothing of what had passed had in reality escaped her, though she knew better than to betray ill-bred curiosity.

When the girls got up to their room at night, Carry said—

"Well, I think Mr. Derwent is a very good-looking fellow, Nell. I call it too bad of you not to tell me you had such a grand admirer."

Carry was sitting on the low window-seat, brushing her hair, and, as she spoke, she looked up at Nell, who was standing at the dressing-table with her back to her. She waited for an answer, and a roguish smile brought the dimple to view on her cheek.

"Carry, how can you talk such nonsense!" was what she heard, spoken in a very low tone and without moving.

"I don't see the nonsense in it," continued Carry; "he doesn't come here as often as he does to see father and mother, you're sure. There's nothing wonderful in his admiring you; the only wonder is you haven't had more admirers."

Nell left the table, and came up to her sister. Her eyebrows were contracted, and she spoke in what Carry called her thundery voice, low, but full of suppressed force.

"Carry, I cannot endure your talk, for ever about admirers and beans, and all that. I would rather you didn't come home if you are going to talk in this way. And I wonder you are not ashamed to speak so of a gentleman like him."

Carry quailed under Nell's aspect, and the tears came into her eyes.

"Really, Nell, I didn't think I was saying anything so very dreadful. But you never can take a joke. I'm sure I wish I never had come home."

Nell could not endure the sight of tears. She said, hastily and cheerfully—

"There, never mind, Carry! I'm as cross as a bear, and you always were a soft-hearted goose. But it does seem perfectly ridiculous to think of any one admiring a great brown gawky thing like me. Now, if it was you, it wouldn't be surprising."

She sat down by her sister on the window-seat, and Carry took her hand.

"Well," said she, "it's a marvel to me how you can go on leading this sort of life. You ought not to slave as you do; you ruin your hands and your complexion; and you're getting frightfully thin. There's no doubt father ought to keep a dairymaid, and I shall speak to mother about it."

"Nonsense, Carry! you'll do no such thing. I wouldn't have a dairymaid kept for anything. I like the dairy work better than anything else; and we couldn't afford it either, and father getting blind, too. And you know I'm always thin."

"Well, all I can say, is you'll never get married, Nell—at least, to any one decent—if you go on like this."

Nell laughed.

"That's not much of a threat, seeing that I wouldn't give a straw to be married to the grandest man in England. But, look here, Carry. You're quite content with your life, and I'm quite content with mine, and we should neither of us like to change; so don't you go meddling, and putting mother up to all kinds of things."

Carry smiled. The window was open, and the cool evening breeze came over the dusky fields, and blew refreshingly on the two girls.

Beechover Hall, with its belt of trees, was a mass of black shadow, but to the right, the flames of an iron furnace shot into the air, a lurid glow into the darkness. The girls sat in silence for a few moments, looking out into the night, then Carry said, in a low voice—

"You haven't told me anything yet about poor father."

"There's not much to tell. He's fast getting blind. It's hard enough, but we've got to bear it."

"It is hard, but it is God that sends it, and what He sends we can surely bear," Carry answered, gently.

"Oh, Carry, how good you are!" said Nell, wonderingly.

A few minutes later the thought echoed again in her heart, as she stood waiting for Carry to rise from her knees. The breeze stirred the folds of her night-dress, as it fell over her white feet, but Carry knelt still and absorbed, and Nell felt very far removed from her.

(To be continued.)

DEATH.

Very striking and beautiful are St. Peter's views and feelings in the contemplation of death. He speaks of it as putting off this tabernacle; or as the word means, an exodus or departure from this world. He speaks of it as a mere dissolution of the earthly dwelling. He speaks of it as an exodus—a going out and a going away. So those who have laid up treasures in heaven, who are rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom of God, have nothing to fear in departing from this world. The change will be blessed and glorious to them. The expressions which St. Peter uses regarding his decease gives us to see something also of his prospect after death. It was the prospect of a glorious emancipation. In this life he was in a tabernacle, confined in a kind of prison-house. The soul, acting here through the bodily organs, is often painfully conscious of the manner in which the body hampers its energies and clogs its aspirations. Faintness, giddiness, pain, or other bodily sensations, may interfere with the strength and activity of the mind.

Faith is the basis of the new life, as it accepts and appropriates all that God offers, but love is the basis of the Christian character.

We are hanging up pictures every day about the chamber walls of our hearts that we shall have to look at when we sit in the shadows.

Children's Department.

THE NURSERY ELF.

Dear little feet, how you wander and wander,
Little twin truants so fleet!
Dear little head, how you ponder and ponder,
Over things that you meet!

Dear little tongue, how you chatter and chatter
Over your innocent joys!
Oh, but the house is alive with your clatter—
Shaking indeed with your noise!

Can't you be quiet a moment, sweet love?

Is there no end to your fun?
Soon the "old sand man" will sprinkle you over,
Then the days frolic is done.

Come to my arms, for the daylight is dying,
Closer the dark shadows creep;

Come, like a bird that is weary of flying;
Come, let me sing you to sleep.

True greatness shows itself in ignoring, or quickly forgetting, personal injuries, when meaner natures would be kept in unrest by them. The less of a man one is, the more he makes of an injury or insult. The more of a man he is, the less he is disturbed by what others say or do against him without cause.

The sea remembers not the vessel's rending keel;
But rushes joyously the ravage to conceal.