

POETRY.

THE FARMER.

I am out in the country now, where the farmer tills the land; Where we filled him with his best, with every-thing on hand; His stalls are filled with cattle, his oxen big and able. With hay he filled his barns from the bottom to the gable. Yet he grumbles at his lot; he longs for something grand. While the farm, it feeds his family as he has fed the land. His boys are discontented, and long to get away From the old farm homestead; they do not wish to stay. After having seen the city, with its ever-changing scenes, They wish to leave the homestead, if they only had the means. They do not stop to think, or seem to understand, That the farm, it feeds the city, while the farmer feeds the land. Thinking they could dress so nice, and need not soil their hands; They could attend the concerts and listen to the bands; And ride in fancy carriages, behind those fancy teams, With nothing but pleasure and very pleasant dreams; That such is aristocracy, not seeming to understand That the farm, it feeds the city, while the farmer feeds the land. But I say to the farmer, while I grasp him by the hand: "Your grasp is strong and friendly, you are a tiller of the land; You look so strong and rugged, it's working on the farm; You have good food and exercise, giving muscle to your arm. Here you are your master, all at your command, While your farm, it feeds your family as you have fed the land. It's the farm, it's not the city, where we find the rugged boys; If they leave it for the city, they are the ones to make the noise; They are up in the morning—we find them not in bed; As merchants or statesmen, they are standing at the head; And in morals or in temperance, they are taught to understand They must not be careless while their father tills the land. Now, I say to the farmer boy, get up and go to work; Roll up your sleeves, turn up your pants do not try to shrink; There is lots to do now, while the city boys are out; You can be earning while they must walk about. Just look around yourself, and I think you will understand That the farm, it feeds the city, while the farmer feeds the land.

SELECT STORY.

ZILLOH ST. CLAIR.

By the author of "The Captive's Revenge," "A Woman Sinned," etc.

CHAPTER I.

A HOPELESS LOVE.

A QUAIN, old garden, bright with roses and flooded with the golden sunshine of a June afternoon; and in the garden, framed as it were, in a bowler of roses, was a picture, such as one hears of often and sees but rarely—the face of a woman, whose beauty is without flaw. Had an artist wandered into that garden on that summer afternoon, and seen the girl sitting in her bowler of roses, his pulse might have thrilled and quickened; and he would have told himself that such a face, reproduced on canvas, would bring him wealth and fame. It was a face which, to see, filled the beholder with glowing admiration, but it was not a face easy to describe. The large, dark, lustrous eyes; the perfect curves of brow, cheek and chin; the masses of dark, rippling hair; the richness of coloring of the velvet skin; the ever varying charm of expression. They defied description. Suffice it then, that Zilloh St. Clair possessed, in figure that indefinable grace, in face that marvellous charm, that one associates with Southern blood, and which the colder, Northern beauties can so rarely equal. Her father had been of Spanish descent, and she had inherited his characteristics rather than those of the sweet, young English mother, who had died in giving her birth. There was some one looking up into her face now, with eyes in which the light of a deathless love was shining. A lad, who was lying on the grass at her feet, to whom her uncle was guardian. Zilloh had spent all her life in the quaint, old Hampshire Parsonage, which was her uncle's home; and when, three or four years ago, Valentine had come to live there as the pupil and ward of the Rev. Timothy Irvine, she had learned to look him as a brother. But he was looking up at Zilloh with the devoted gaze which is love's most eloquent language, and his delicate, handsome face was full of passion and pain, while hers wore a calm expression that grew rather startled when he suddenly said—"Zilloh, I must speak; I cannot keep silence any longer. You know I love you. I have loved you, I know, ever since I saw you, but of late—oh! Zilloh, I wonder if you can dream how I have grown to worship you. Tell me is there any hope? I don't mean now; I went on hurriedly. How can I hope that you can care for a poor, maimed, wretched creature, such as I? But in the time to come, I feel some thing within me that tells me I may yet achieve things which would seem to make me less unworthy of your love. I am willing to wait—to wait, and breathe no word of love until you bid me, if only you will tell me that some day there may be hope." The lad had spoken with the intense impetuosity of youthful passion. He had not risen from his position, stretched out on the grass at her feet, but he had raised himself slightly, so that his elbow supported him on one side; and now he clasped both her hands in his as he looked into her face with eyes of beseeching tenderness. "Val, dear, I do love you," replied the girl; "only—only it is not, it never can be in the way you want. Don't you know that you have always been my brother? Oh, be my brother, and let me be your sister still!" The lad's face went deathly pale as she answered him. "And will it never be different? Ah, Zilloh, think—try dear, to understand just what this means to me!" "Val, dear, I do know—I do understand," she said sadly; "and it nearly breaks my heart to think that it is I who have to cause you all this pain. No brother could have been dearer to me than you; oh, if only you could have helped caring for me in that way! But I must tell you the truth, Val, it is the kindest, after all. You must not hope that I can ever return your love, because I know I never can."

She spoke with a seriousness that would have convinced the demarest of lovers that his suit was vain. Valentine felt that all hope was over, and for him the golden sunlight turned to leaden greyness. What mattered it that all around seemed to breathe of happiness and beauty? What mattered it that the flowers bloomed, and the sun shone and the birds sang? The dearest hope, the sweetest thing in all his life was dead—the hope of possessing Zilloh's love. "We'll say no more about it then," he said quietly. "Only tell me one thing," he added suddenly; would your answer have been different, if it hadn't been for my unfortunate affliction?" As he spoke Zilloh's cheeks flushed too, and she clasped his hand and held them tightly, tenderly within her own. "No, oh no, my poor, poor Val, don't think that," she cried. "We cannot love our own hearts, and fate has ruled it otherwise; but if I could have loved you, I should have been proud to love you as you are." "It is good of you to say that dear," he said gratefully; "and indeed, no man—not even the strongest and bravest that ever trod the earth, could love you better than I do, Zilloh. Some day, perhaps, you may realize how much I love you, how strong my heart is, let my body be what it may." "Val, don't. I know what you are," said the girl softly. "Who should know, if I do not, how true, and brave and generous you are?" "Hush dear—never mind," he said, wincing as though her loving praise hurt him. "It is not to be, and I must bear it as best I can. I suppose time will teach me patience, if it doesn't bring me comfort." There was a silence of several minutes, a painful, confusing silence for Zilloh; as for Valentine, he seemed absorbed in thought, almost as though he had forgotten her presence. But when he did at length speak, his words showed in what direction his thoughts had wandered. "Zilloh," he said huskily, "is there any one else?" "You have no right to ask me that," she replied; but she did not look at him, as she repeated, and the color deepened in her cheeks. "There is no need to ask, no need for you to tell me," he said calmly. "I see that all now. Poor blind fool that I have been to not see it long ago. Zilloh, it is that Bruce Delmar." His last words seemed to have power to wound and anger Zilloh. Her eyes flashed and her voice trembled, as she cried—"You have no right to speak like that to me. Coming from you now it is ungenerous. Supposing it as you say: supposing I did care for him, it is not like you Val, to try to lower him in my eyes." Val scarcely seemed to hear her plaintive reproach. "Bruce Delmar!" he murmured in a low, grained tone, "Heaven help you Zilloh!" Again the girl's cheeks flushed hotly. "Hush! Val, hush! or I must leave you. I can bear much from you, more than I can bear from anyone else in the world, but even you must speak no word to me against Bruce Delmar." "So be it," said Valentine, with the calm dignity of one who is conscious of none but true and loyal motives. "I obey you, Zilloh, because in this you have a right to command. But mark me, if the lad's fair face assumed a look of stern resolve, if Bruce Delmar ever injures you, he shall answer for it to me." Then, in a changed voice, a voice so calm and steady, that one wondered at the firm check in which he held his passion, he added: "Now shall we go into the house." Zilloh assented, with her eyes rather than with her lips—indeed she was too troubled and sad at heart to speak. She rose; Valentine rose too, but slowly and painfully, and supporting himself with a cane that had lain at his feet. Yes, Valentine Grey was a cripple. Years ago, when quite a child, he had fallen out of a tree, and the result had been such terrible injury to the spine, that for many months, his life had been despaired of, and when at last, the doctors decided that the lad would pull through, their verdict was grave and terrible enough—he would be a hopeless cripple; the injury to the spine affected the limbs, and he would be unable to walk or stand upright to the day of his death, so they said, he would be unable to walk or stand upright without assistance. It was a grievous affliction for a young man to bear, and it seemed especially grievous that it should have fallen on such a one as Val Grey. One to whom nature had been lavish in her gifts, and who, but for that fatal accident, might have been a king above men, was still musing deeply upon it. As he was passing through a shady lane, he overtook Val Grey walking slowly and painfully with the aid of a stick. Delmar was in no mood to stop and chat with anyone just then, least of all, anyone from the parsonage, unless indeed it had chance to be Zilloh herself. "Good-afternoon, Grey," he said, in an off-hand manner, as he passed, a salutation which Val acknowledged by the gravest of bows. In his heart he resented the familiarity of Delmar's mode of address. Little as he had seen of him, he disliked and distrusted him, and it was from no spirit of mean, ignoble jealousy that he told himself this man was not worthy of Zilloh's love. Delmar's quick strides had carried him some little distance past Val, when he heard a voice calling his name, and turning round a little impatiently, he found that the youth was hastening to overtake him, and that he held something white and fluttering in his hand. "Ah! my handkerchief. Thanks, I am awfully obliged to you," he said, as Val reached his side, but he spoke confusedly and there was a strange eagerness in the manner in which he held out his hand for his property to be restored to him. He could not have seemed more eagerly anxious, if instead of a simple piece of cambric, it had been a purse of gold. Val Grey, standing full in front of him, and scanning his face with an earnest, steady glance, kept the handkerchief firmly held in his fingers, while he said deliberately—"Are you quite sure that this is your property, Mr. Delmar?" "Sure, yes; why of course—that is to say—began Delmar, incoherently and confusedly, and then he suddenly stopped short, warned by the look in Val's eyes, that he had already discovered that which he had been so anxious to conceal. "Indeed!" said Val, his fine blue eyes lighting up with scorn unutterable. "It may be no business of mine, but to some people this would require an explanation, Mr. Bruce Delmar."

say one harsh or cruel word of him. Here she drew from her neck, where it had been hidden by her dress, a thin gold chain, with a locket attached. In a moment the locket was unfastened, and her lips were pressed to the picture face within, while her eyes held just that same look of intense, passionate devotion, which a few minutes before had lighted up poor Val's eyes, as he gazed at her. CHAPTER II. BRUCE DELMAR. "That Bruce Delmar," of whom Val Grey had spoken so bitterly, was lying stretched at full length upon a sofa beside an open window, through which roses peeped and nodded at him, while he puffed lazily at a choice cigar, and seemed to give his mind over to agreeable reflections. A very handsome man was Bruce Delmar, handsome after a fashion that seems to impel admiration, even from those who are not predisposed to be favorably impressed with him. A splendid specimen of healthy manhood he appeared, with his tall, broad-chested figure, his muscular limbs and fascinating face. A widely different face, it was to Val Grey's. Val's face was full of intellect, refinement and noble feeling; this man's face depended for its charm merely on fine, regular features, splendid red-brown eyes, tawny moustache and hair, and a careless something about his expression, which although mingled with a distinct spice of overbearing haughtiness, and a hint of deviltry, yet held for most people an irresistible charm. It was several weeks now since Bruce Delmar had come to the quiet little village. He called himself an artist on a sketching tour; he only worked at his art very fitfully, and spent his time in idle sauntering; or, as now, in idle meditation. However, he seemed in no hurry to depart, and Mrs. Stone, the elderly widow, whose front rooms he had taken, congratulated herself upon the likelihood of her retaining for an indefinite period, a lodger who was "one of the best paying gentlemen she'd ever set eyes on." Mrs. Stone came in now to bring a letter which had just been left by the postman. Delmar opened it leisurely enough, but as he read, a dark redness came to his eyes and he eyed an excited sparkle in their red-brown depths. "Huh," he muttered to himself in low pleased tones, "this puts a different complexion on things. I shall have to clear out of this if they are coming. And then what about Zilloh?" "My beautiful Zilloh!" he went on. "I never dreamed it would be such a wrench to part with her. Part with her! Heaven! That's just what I can't do. And yet how can I be otherwise? It is impossible for me to stay here if they come, and from what Jack says, they will certainly be here within a day or two. What the deuce possesses the old dowager to come! I wonder what she's up to. Let me look at her face again, perhaps that will help me to decide." He rose and threw off from the case, that stood in a corner of the room, the cloth that covered it. An almost completed sketch rested upon the table, a very simple sketch, but evidently drawn by no unskilful hand. Merely a young girl standing in a woodland glade, with a bunch of bright-hued flowers in her hand. The girl had the face and figure of a daughter of the South. It was Zilloh St. Clair. Bruce Delmar stood for a minute or two in earnest contemplation of the lovely picture face, with that softened, dreamy light still in his eyes. "Was there ever such beauty as hers?" he mused. "A king might be proud to claim her as his queen, and yet I—ah! can I hope to make her really mine? Were I free to come to my own home, I should like to see my wife-to-be, Zilloh should be my wife-to-morrow. But where's the use of wishing that? I might as well wish for the moon. If I were only what she thinks me—plain Bruce Delmar, a tawny-skinned artist, and here he laughed scornfully. "It would be so easy, but placed as I am—here he stopped short and mused deeply, then, as though impelled by some sudden resolution, said aloud: "Heaven! I cannot lose her; in one way or another, she must be mine. If I take one course, half the world will say I have been a fool; if I take the other, all the world will say I am a villain. But villainy is forgiven far more readily than folly after all. Come Bruce, my boy, make up your mind which it is to be—folly or fool?" * * * * * That same afternoon, it was the afternoon following the one on which Val Grey had confessed his love to Zilloh, Bruce Delmar started on a stroll. He had not yet decided the question that had so disturbed his mind as he stood gazing at Zilloh's picture an hour before, and he was still musing deeply upon it. As he was passing through a shady lane, he overtook Val Grey walking slowly and painfully with the aid of a stick. Delmar was in no mood to stop and chat with anyone just then, least of all, anyone from the parsonage, unless indeed it had chance to be Zilloh herself. "Good-afternoon, Grey," he said, in an off-hand manner, as he passed, a salutation which Val acknowledged by the gravest of bows. In his heart he resented the familiarity of Delmar's mode of address. Little as he had seen of him, he disliked and distrusted him, and it was from no spirit of mean, ignoble jealousy that he told himself this man was not worthy of Zilloh's love. Delmar's quick strides had carried him some little distance past Val, when he heard a voice calling his name, and turning round a little impatiently, he found that the youth was hastening to overtake him, and that he held something white and fluttering in his hand. "Ah! my handkerchief. 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