

# The Millheim Journal.

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NO. 18.

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## THE VISION OF ANGELS.

Once at the Angelus  
(Ere I was dead)  
Angels all gloried  
Came to my bed  
Angels in blue and white,  
Crowned on the head.  
One was the friend I left  
Stark in the snow,  
One was the wife that died  
Lonely, long ago;  
One was the love I lost;  
How should she know?  
One had my mother's eyes,  
Wistful and mild;  
One had my father's face;  
One was a child.  
All of them bent to me,  
Bent down and smiled!

## A Lucky Sovereign

They made a strikingly contrasting picture, standing in the warm June twilight, and the fragrant odors of the tea roses and the woodbine, and the budding grape vines lingered around them as if the tender scents were fitting tributes to them.

Two fair young girls, the same age to an hour, and as unlike as sisters could possibly be, and each a perfect type of her own style of loveliness—both of them peeresses in their royal power of beauty.

Rose stood leaning against the railing of the veranda, her laughing eyes, that could melt from the cool, brilliant gray they now looked into such liquid darkness when occasion required—splendid, calm, cold eyes—were roaming away into the gathering dusk, that was falling in a purple-gray veil of tissue over wood and lawn.

She turned her face toward her companion. Her eyes suddenly recalled in their wandering, listless glances, and she wore a half-veiled, half-amused expression.

"Well, how much longer are we going to stay here?—at least, how much longer do you want to stop? I am sure I shall die of ennui if I have much more of it."

"Oh, don't think of going back to town yet, Rose. I wish we might never have to go."

"Never go back? Why Bell, is it possible you are so infatuated with the country as to actually wish that? Child, for three months it is very well to bury one's self as we are buried, and I've no doubt that mamma will feel much better and stronger for it; but to stay longer—in a hired cottage, with only one half-grown girl to assist in the work, and no amusements of any sort, and our joint stock of earnings exhausting itself daily—I tell you, Bell, I prefer our own suite of rooms at home, with a chance of occasional enjoyment."

"I dare say you're right, dear. But I do love the country, Rose."

"So would I if, for instance, I lived in the mansion over yonder, Fernley Court, you know, where the stately housekeeper showed us through, and descended on the many qualities and vast wealth of its owner, I forgot to tell you, Bell, there will be a grand reception given a week after he gets back, and he is expected hourly."

"Bell lifted her eyebrows in a graceful little gesture of surprise.

"A reception? Oh, Rose, and of course there'll be a dance. Oh, dear, how I'd like to go!"

"Of course you'd like to go. But do you think for a moment the aristocratic families around here would condescend to associate with us?"

"Bell's face grew stern.

"We are ladies born and bred, if we do work for a living."

taken, I only wanted a—"  
Bell thrust the money in his hand.  
"Never mind, please. I think I can see you are proud; but please take it. There!"  
He seemed amused at her eagerness, but made no more about accepting the gift and pocketing it, and she stood and watched her slim figure sitting away like the spirit in the dust.

The next day Rose came into Bell's room radiant as she only permitted herself to be under rare circumstances, her gray eyes flashing and her red lips parted in a smile of triumphant delight.

"Bell, see this! Now what do you say?"  
She laid a square, monogrammed envelope in the girl's lap, addressed to the Misses Melton, and bearing inside invitations to the reception at Fernley Court for a fortnight from that night.

Rose watched the girl's sweet face glow under the surprise, then saw, to her amazement, that flush of delight fade.

"Well, Bell, of course we'll go, I'll take some money I can spare and get some *suisee*, and wear natural flowers with it; and I know you have a sovereign laid aside for an emergency. You can get a good many things with it—gloves and a sash, you know—and who knows but what Lionel Granville may be captivated!"

Bell laid the envelope softly down.  
"I can't go, dear, unless I wear my old white muslin, and I will look wretched beside your new *suisee*, I—I've spent my money!"

Rose frowned.  
"Spent your money? Why, I saw it yesterday morning in your drawer. I noticed that the girl of the sovereign was a little chipped, and remembering whether it was a good one or not. Spent your money! Bell, what do you mean?"

Bell met the vexed eyes as calmly as she could. She was just a little in awe of this magnificent sister of hers.

"I gave it to that poor man last night, Rose. I was so sorry. I am sure he wasn't the sort of a man to talk to as you did. I know he deserved the money."

Rose sat down, and folded her hands in icy wrath.  
"Give a sovereign to a tramp—a beggar! Well if it doesn't pass my comprehension! A Rose swept out of the room—she was like a duchess in her movements, and poor Bell went on with her sewing, wondering if her white muslin wouldn't look pretty well if it was nicely got up, thinking that there was a sea-green sash somewhere she had never worn, and a pair of white kids at home that Rose could go for when she went to buy her *suisee*. So, while her busy, deft fingers sewed through the summer days on Rose's airy dress, little Bell decided she would go, after all, and wear her fresh white dress and tea roses in her golden tresses, and the sea-green sash knotted to her skirt—a simple, exquisite toilet, that made a very *Ursula* of her, that made people turn their heads for more than a second or third look when she and Rose entered the magnificent ball-room.

It was perfectly delightful everywhere. Mr. Granville possessed none but high-bred intelligent friends, and the Misses Melton were treated accordingly.

The music was heavenly, and from her seat, where she sat like a queen in state, Rose watched her handsome host, who had bowed low over her hand when he was introduced—watched him, as in his quiet, self-possessed manner, he went among his guests.

Her heart was beating—would he, oh, would he ask her for the first dance, or would he go among the groups of stylish ladies from the city, any of whom would be so honored by his attention?

And then Rose saw Mr. Granville go straight across the room, right by her, and bow slowly to Bell as he said a few words, and offered his arm.

Bell! Bell to lead the grand quadrille! Bell on Lionel Granville's arm, the observed of all observers—as far as a sea-nymph, and so graceful, so sweetly unconscious of her radiant beauty.

Rose sat gloomily through the first quadrille, and watched Lionel's pale, handsome face as he bent it very near Bell's golden curls, his ardent, admiring eyes, that looked so eagerly into the sweet, girlish face that others beside Rose noted his attention.

Then, the dance over, Lionel gave Bell his arm.  
"That has been a delightful quadrille, Miss Melton. By the way, did you know I have something that belongs to you?"  
They had reached Rose's chair by this time, and Bell turned laughingly to him.  
"Something of mine! I do not see how that can be, Mr. Granville. Do you, Rose?"  
Rose favored him with her most fascinating smile.  
"Indeed I do not, seeing that this is the first time we ever saw Mr. Granville,"  
He smiled in Bell's eyes.  
"I'll leave you to fathom the mystery. Don't forget, the first waltz for me, Miss Bell."  
He went away, so handsome, so courtly and Bell's foolish little heart was throbbing with new, vague delight, while Rose was almost suffocating with envy at the signal triumph of her sister. Mr. Granville came promptly for his waltz.

do. I shall keep it until you will buy it back. I have set a price on it, and if ever you are ready to give it you can have it."  
He put the money reverently away in his breast pocket, and took her out among the crowd again, a strangely happy girl.

And before the summer roses had faded, Bell paid the price for the chipped sovereign—her own heart—that Lionel Granville pledged for so eagerly.

She is the mistress of their grand house now, and Rose visits her once a year, not often, because Bell's husband does not care much for her. But the invalid mother has a lifelong home amid the luxuries of Fernley Court, and Bell is bappier than the birds that sang in the trees of the big old park.

## A Queer Story.

A great many years ago, before the present Government printing office was established, there were three printers engaged upon the Government work who were fast friends and constant associates. They neither had or cared to have other acquaintances.

One day, one of the three fell sick and died. The question was who would perform the usual duties of friendship for the dead. Nobody outside took any interest in the matter, so that the two friends were obliged to care for the body themselves.

Now all these printers were very fond of liquor, and though they never were to be seen in public bar-rooms, had many about by themselves in a quiet nook. The two remaining friends then sat up with the corpse, and to while away the time brought their pack of cards and a bottle for company.

Euchre was the game, and they played for a stake, the winner to drink on scoring a game and the loser to stay dry. The luck ran one-sided. Seated on either side of the corpse, with the coffin between them as a table, the players played and recounted the virtues of their dead friend.

But the one who had never won was getting more and more thirsty. The cards had run steadily against him, and not a drop of liquor had passed his lips. Finally the luck changed, and slipping down the right lower on the coffin, he exclaimed: "There now, it's my turn!" With a hasty motion he reached for the bottle, but at that instant consternation filled the breast of both friends as the supposed corpse rose up and said: "Not a drop till I've had mine."

With a scream of horror the two friends jumped up and rushed, one to the door and the other to the window. The latter leaped to the ground in his terror and broke a leg; the other gained the street without misadventure and disappeared. Years have elapsed. Both the watchers have died, but the friends who were supposed to be dead still live as eccentric, aged men, who are now a compositor in the Government printing house.

## Marriage in Albania.

Albanian marriage arrangements are very peculiar. When a damsel arrives at marriageable age, her parents publish the fact among their friends and acquaintances. Should no suitor come forward, it rests with her brothers to find one. A brother-in-law circumstanced will sometimes come to a male friend in the street and make the complimentary proposal then and there.

"You are just the man I wanted to see"—thus goes the abrupt formula on these occasions—"my sister is now fourteen years old; you must marry her." As etiquette forbids a plump refusal, the gentleman thus honored gives a sort of half-acquiescence and then hurries off to instruct some old lady to act as go-between. Should he be satisfied with the report made, after due inquiry, by this advisor, the wedding is arranged; but not until the very last moment is the expectant bride groom allowed to see his future spouse, and then it would be contrary to the prescriptions of society for him to draw back, however unpropitious she might prove to be. After the performance of the ceremony, a very curious piece of etiquette comes into play.

Among the Asiatics and the people generally, it is the rule to instruct some old lady to act as go-between. Should he be satisfied with the report made, after due inquiry, by this advisor, the wedding is arranged; but not until the very last moment is the expectant bride groom allowed to see his future spouse, and then it would be contrary to the prescriptions of society for him to draw back, however unpropitious she might prove to be. After the performance of the ceremony, a very curious piece of etiquette comes into play.

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## Pigeons.

"That's the only bird that ever created a boom," a parrot once said, referring to a fine large bird with an immense crown of feathers waving on its head.

"How so?"  
"Because that's the only sound it makes. If you didn't see it you would think some one had struck a bass drum a quarter of a mile away. Its a regular boom-boom, and when it makes the noise it bows its head, so that the crown sweeps the ground. It's the crowned pigeon from New Zealand, and between this cage and the stuffed birds in the museum we can show nearly every pigeon in the world, and you'd be astonished to see how many different kinds there are. We have pouters, fan-tails, nuns, carriers, and all the fancy breeds alive, besides wood-doves, and this crowned fellow, and occasionally we have a big rock of wild pigeons here, but the sparrows drive them off. You wouldn't think a big bird like a pigeon would run from a sparrow, but they do. The little birds collect in the trees in crowds, and when a flock of pigeons comes sweeping over they make a noise as if for them in a body, and take right hold, tooth and nail, and as the pigeons sweep down to get out of the way they are literally chased out of the park."

In the pigeon case in the museum are some of the bones of that extinct and much-maligned bird, the dodo, the giant of pigeons, being the only specimen in the country. Two hundred and fifty years ago they were found in the Mauritius Islands in great quantities. It was a curious bird, large as a swan, with a bill that was right hold, tooth and nail, and as the pigeons sweep down to get out of the way they are literally chased out of the park.

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down hundreds at one discharge. Their rapidity of flight is wonderful.

The wood doves or ring pigeons are better known in France than elsewhere. Our domestic pigeon is only a modification of the blue rock pigeon, and this is proved by the fact that if the domestic and blue or wild rock are allowed to breed the young will in many cases resemble the wild rock, with its plain plumage and barred wings. The domestic pigeons are divided into two classes, the combs and the aviary pigeons. The former are almost wild, and the latter are those with which we are so familiar.

The question how carrier pigeons find their way home is probably one never to be determined. Some writers assert that the birds are guided by landmarks, and give as proof that when the ground is covered with snow the birds are confused, and others say that they are influenced by some magnetic or electric current, and on this point it is noticed that birds either fly east or west, north or south, and when started rise to a great height, and for a minute hesitate, and then by unknown instinct they dart off in the right direction. The exact date of their utilization is not known, but as far as we know Noah had the honor of having first pressed into service our feathered friends. Pliny says that these birds were used by Brutus and Hirtius during the siege of a town by Marcus Anthony. In 1764, at the siege of Leyden, they were used by the prince of Orange, and by their means he succeeded in forcing a town that was besieged. To show his gratitude he ordered that the sagacious birds should be fed on strawberries, and when dead that they should be embalmed with all honor. In Pliny's time navigators from Cyprus and Egypt carried these birds on their galleys, and on their safe arrival liberated them to convey the good news to their families.

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