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McCRUM & DERN,

[INDEPENDENT IN EVERYTHING.]

EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

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THE ALTOONA TRIBUNE.

K. E. McCRUM, H. C. DERN,
EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

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Choice Poetry.

From Fraser's Magazine.

THE WISHING WELL.

Voice of his region fabulous!

For silent else is all the air.

None else remains to tell us

The story of the things that were:

Fair fountain of this valley lone,

That, falling with a ceaseless plaint

Into thy cup of sculptured stone,

Speakest of fairy and of saint;

For name of either thou hast borne:

Time was Titania round thee played;

And rings by elfish footsteps worn

Still linger in the magic shade.

But when the Benedictine came,

To build upon these meadows fair,

He called thee by a holier name,

And blessed thy source with prayer:

And said the old belief was sin:

Yet still, so ran the rustic creed,

Strange voices sounded, faint and thin,

By summer nights along the mead.

"No, yes; I had forgotten it,"

"Thinking about what?"

"Well—

"Now, sir, if you dare to have a

thought you have not communicated

me, you had better look out."

"Indeed, I have not—"

"Let me cross-examine you."

"Well—"

"Are your affairs in order?"

"Yes."

"Has no house where you had money

failed?"

"None."

"Are you prepared to meet all your

notes?"

"Yes."

"Have you made any bad speculation?"

"No."

"Are you not satisfied with Adrian?"

"Absurd! You know Adrian is de-

voted to me, heart and soul."

"Well, then, what were you thinking

about?"

"You—"

"Me—about me? And you dare to

look serious, almost sad, when you are

thinking of me? This is worse than any-

thing. Pray, what thoughts could I in-

spire you with that could make you look

so sad and serious?"

"Thoughts inspired by last night's

ball—"

"Why, they should be merry thoughts;

wasn't I the very queen of the ball?

Didn't I dance every dance, and were you

not surrounded by all the young men in

the room?"

"Yes, greeted I was and overwhelmed

with wine and refreshments handed to me

on all sides, and that has made me melancholy,

for I am afraid of losing the treasure

for which I have toiled these many years."

"Why? Do you think these young gen-

tlemen were robbers in disguise, or ain't

you sure of the lock of your strong box?"

"Cecile, Cecile, you are laughing at

your father, the treasure I mean is your-

self."

"Have these men any intention of

carrying me off? What a pity they

should be such dangerous characters, for

they waltz so well."

"Don't pretend to misunderstand me,

Cecile, you know exactly what I mean—

You know that you were admired by every-

body, and you know what is likely to

follow this admiration of a parcel of young

men."

"No, I don't."

"It is too bad to think that after a life

spent in loving you, in making you what

you are—beautiful, amiable, good, ac-

complished, just because you are eighteen,

I am to give you up; yes, give you up to

a domestic invader called a son-in-law, a

man who will carry you off from me, a

man who will assume to love you, and

what is worse, a man you may probably

learn to love yourself; it is dreadful!"

"But all this is imaginary. I'm

ashamed of you; one would think you

were a young, romantic girl."

self on the sofa, and lying in the stillness

of despair.

The laws of France prolong but twenty-

four hours the survivor's watch over a

dead one loved. Mme. Coulaingourt was

next morning borne from her home, and

in a few hours her husband returns to his

desolated house, his heart nearly broken,

his nerves worked up to the highest pitch

by the horrible ceremonies he has wit-

nessed.

Madly and with wild shrieks he now

paces the room, thrusting from him all his

friends; even Henri, who has asked to be

left alone with him, is repulsed.

At last the door of the room opens

slowly, and a lady in deep mourning robes,

her face calm and solemn, but with red,

tearful eyes, enters the room. She has in

her arms an infant, whose long white

robes form a contrast with her mourning

garments.

Coulaingourt does not notice her, but

she goes up to him, and as he stands beat-

ing his breast and sobbing wildly, she

holds up to him the fair, sleeping child.

"She is another Cecile," said the lady

in a low, calm voice; "and the Cecile

that is gone left her to you, a memorial of

your love and of the two years of happi-

ness you passed together."

M. Coulaingourt sunk down on a sofa,

gazed on the child as it was laid across his

knees, and for some moments spoke not.

Then at last, extending a hand to each of

the friends who watched him.

"Sister," said he—"Henri, for the sake

of the child, I will try to live."

Seventeen years after this, the door of

this same room was opened, and a young,

brilliant, beautiful face, with shining braids

of chestnut hair around it, was thrust in.

"Eh? Father mine, why are you so

long?" exclaimed a fresh young voice, and

a light form bounded from the door to the

sofa where Coulaingourt was seated.

"Cecile!" said Coulaingourt, looking

up, a smile of joy beaming on his face.

"Yes, Cecile," said the young girl. "I

really is very strange. I cannot make you

more obedient to your daughter, yet I'm

sure I spared no pains in your education.

Don't you know that breakfast is ready?"

"No, yes; I had forgotten it. I was

thinking—"

"Thinking about what?"

"Well—

"Now, sir, if you dare to have a

thought you have not communicated

me, you had better look out."

"Indeed, I have not—"

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"It is too bad to think that after a life

spent in loving you, in making you what

you are—beautiful, amiable, good, ac-

complished, just because you are eighteen,

"Imaginary, is it? What do you

think has happened this very morning?"

"Has there been an invader here

already?"

"Yes, an invader that has actually pro-

posed for your hand, Colonel Santerre, an

invader who is rich, who is well born, an

invader in fact against whom there is not

a single objection to be made, unfortu-

nately."

"Yes, one that you have never thought

of, but which is the most powerful of all;

I don't like him, and I won't have him."

Monsieur Coulaingourt rose, and clasp-

ing his daughter to his heart, heaved a

deep sigh of relief.

"I thought you would want to get

married; all young girls are said to want

to get married."

"But they have not such fathers as I

have; now come to breakfast, and make

yourself perfectly easy on the score of

husbands, for I shall never, as long as I

live, leave you."

Now when Mlle. Cecile spoke in this

way, she was telling the truth; but not

all the truth, for certainly she was giving

her father to understand that she had no

affection in the world beyond the one she

had for him, and that she never intended

to marry. M. Coulaingourt had made an

idol of his daughter; after his wife's death,

he had consecrated his life to this child,

and gradually he had grown to look on all

who sought to share her affection with

jealousy, such almost as a lover might have

felt. But with all this, M. Coulaingourt

never forgot that every girl in France is

expected to be married between the ages of

eighteen and twenty; an old maid is a *vara avis*

in France, and all his wife's and his own

relations were importunate for him to find

a match for his daughter. She was beau-

tiful, young, and charming, and possessed

a handsome dowry; pretenders were not

wanting. M. Coulaingourt felt as if a

doom threatened him. He was afraid to

talk to Cecile on the subject, so the posi-

tive declaration he had drawn from his

daughter that morning caused him no