

YESTERDAY.

ARTHUR DENISON.

'Twas but a brief twelve hours ago; The flower you wore can scarce be faded— The damask rose that blushed, you know, Among your dark locks brightly braided (My own have got a touch of gray, But I forgot it yesterday). Twelve short hours back (in fact, last night) I passed with you, on my arm leaning, Out of the ballroom's glare and light Into the cool veranda, screening Us both from sight; your gloved hand lay A space within mine yesterday. 'Twas for the time 'twas not unpleasant; And now — 'tis one like last night's tapers. The hand which then clasped yours at present Is tying tape and sealing papers. The face of 'er parchments frowns to-day That smiled beside yours yesterday. Sic transit gloria so they fade, The magic moments we have known: The girls we loved, the friends we made, Living or dead, from us are gone; And nothing left us but a gaze Cast sadly on life's yesterdays. Ah the little love of yesterday, There beat not hearts so kind and true, No eyes (not even yours) so bright, As those in vanished hours we knew. The earth hath no such maidens to-day No lips so rosy, no laughter so gay, As when Plautus was Consul — yesterday.

A Great Temptation.

Alice Arden was not a woman one would select for a heroine because of her personality. She was neither large nor small; she was beautiful, I think (beauty is a hard thing to define and limit), but it was a beauty of no wonderful or unusual type, and was of that kind which grows on one gradually as his knowledge of the possessor of it grows. There was a wealth of sweetness and purity shining up in her eyes, which tears could never wash out; and the mouth indicated firmness and resolution which had its beginning long before the night's vigil which had left it so sternly agonized.

The trouble which has come to Alice Arden is of no unusual kind. It is a sudden sorrow of a kind which has crushed out all of hope in life many times in the past, and will many times in the future as long as men and maidens are proud and willful. One may say, "Only a lover's quarrel," but one should remember that there heart tragedies in this world, under the torture of which men and women may drag out long lives without finding peace. To Alice Arden it seemed as though everything worth having in life was now forever utterly beyond her hope.

She arose from the seat she had occupied for so long, and moved slowly about her humble room. She had not known, until she moved, how much she was suffering physically; how cold it was; how cramped and weary she was. There was really little to do. Her bed had not been used; her room was in order. She had plenty of time to prepare herself for the task of covering her sorrow from the gaze of her friends—if she could.

She made a fire, and into the fire she remorsefully put all the fragments of the paper which she had spoiled in her efforts to write a simple letter long ago when her sorrow was new. Long ago? Last night! Happiness gives wings of lightness to the parts of eternity (lying about our being and so called time, rather than eternity) which we roughly measure and call minutes and seconds; and sorrow weights their noiseless feet with lead.

Mr. George Fenby is the next among the actors in this little fragment of human life.

He sat at his window that morning as Alice Arden sat at hers. His window looked in the same direction; from it he saw much the same scene as she saw. The stars faded out for him as for her; day brightened for him; the sunlight fell across his face.

But he sat there with a cheerful fire near him; he was strong from happy sleep; his eyes were bright and cheerful and looked as though tears had always been strangers to them, and his lips were smiling.

The icy marmalades seemed to him atype of his future. Smooth, white, pure—the light stretching warmly across them and with the ocean outside standing to him, as to her, as a type of eternity—an eternity which he felt would be one of strength and happiness.

George Fenby thought of what he had in the world to be thankful for this lovely morning. A small fortune, enough for himself—and one other, a fair woman—and good as fair—for his promised wife; health, education, friends, influence, position; it was indeed a goodly prospect.

This man was strong and quick; good-looking if not handsome. He looks like a man who would not do a wicked thing, or think it, while he might do a weak or foolish one. He was a man who would be likely to win a woman's heart—and hold it; a man whose love a woman might prize, and the loss of which she might wisely mourn. Weak enough to be a man, he was strong enough to be one, hard to spare from the life which had once had him.

There was a happy smile on his face as he heard his little brother knock at the door, and he answered "Come in" in a cheery voice.

"Here's a letter for you, George." "Thank you," said George, as he took it. "You are welcome. By the handwriting on the envelope I judge the message will be a pleasant one." And the boy left the room. A pleasant message: The smile deepened on the man's face as he lovingly handled the letter a little time before he broke the seal. A pleasant message!

These were the words he read: "Mr. George Fenby. I will not consent to be any longer a hinderer regarding your 'higher ambition.' I never wish to speak with you again in all my life. I give you back your freedom.

So Mr. George Fenby's morning gift was the gift of his freedom. What should he do with it? His cheeks and lips grew cold and white at the thought. Merciful heavens! what could he do with it?

The sky seemed darkened, the earth seemed dreary and desolate. George Fenby and Alice Arden, a bare quarter of a mile apart could not have been more widely separated had an ocean stretched between them. And each looked on the same landscape, and saw it alike at last.

The village of Marsham was a small one, and most of it was further from the ocean than were the two houses at the windows of which we have seen two unhappy persons.

It was a relief to both George and Alice that there was service in the little church that morning, and that everybody would be looked for there. Secret sorrow finds a certain abatement of its intensity in the effort of appearing unconcerned. Then there was a mournful pleasure in seeing again what one has lost.

In a place no larger than Marsham every one knows everybody else. Every one knows the business of everybody else, in some degree, or thinks so, and says so. So our two friends were known, and their relations to each other were known also. And so poorly had they played their parts that when service was finished nearly all their friends had concluded that their engagement was over, and many were speculating as to the reason for it.

Ralph Warder was too shrewd a man not to see what every one else saw. He said but little about it as he spoke to one and another after church, but he was deeply interested and very much puzzled. The time had been when the gossip had connected his name with that of Alice Arden, and there were those who had shaken their heads when it became evident that she had been won by George Fenby instead of by him.

Ralph had never spoken to Alice of love, and we well respect his reserve. What he cared for her may remain a sealed book.

George Fenby walked home alone. Ralph Warder came the same road, but a quarter of a mile behind him. Some distance out of the village Ralph suddenly came upon two papers, resting on the snow by the side of the road. They had most likely been pulled from the pocket of the owner in removing his handkerchief. The smaller paper had blown apart; it laid upon the other, and its contents were so brief that Ralph had read it before he had taken it in his hand, and before he was aware of what he was doing. We have seen the paper before. It was the brief letter in which Alice Arden had dismissed George Fenby.

Ralph Warder stood for a long time with the letter in his hand.

"I've read it once; it can do no harm to read it again," he said.

And he read it again—not once merely, but a dozen times. It seemed as if he was trying to draw something from the bit of paper which he did not find there.

After a time he stopped and picked up the other, a long, folded document, but the action was merely a mechanical one. He did not open it to see what it was, but with his head bent forward on his breast and with a very grave face, he went his way. He walked more slowly than before; he sometimes stopped, and he talked to himself from time to time.

"If this is final," he commenced aloud, and then relapsed into silence. "A hinderer." Then, after standing and thinking for a while, he went on; "She never was that to him. And she never was moody and self-distrustful."

He thought for many minutes now. "I don't understand what she means by his 'higher ambition.' His highest ambition lately seems to have been to win her. It has cost her a great deal to give him up—any one can see that with half an eye. And his freedom is not welcome to him; he neither wanted it nor expected it."

Suddenly he stood still, and a hot, fierce flush crept into his face.

"I wonder if it is true that hearts are ever 'caught in the rebound,' as they sometimes say they are? I will—"

And he clenched his hands and hurried on his way. He did not stop again until he reached his home, where his mother and sister were waiting for him, nor did he think his thoughts aloud any more. With a few words of greeting and a few more of excuse, he put his mother and sister aside for the present, and went up to his own room. The noonday sun was shining and making everything pleasant. There was a glow in the wintry air which seemed to have a promise of summer in it.

He seated himself at his table, placed Alice Arden's letter upon it, and read it again. Then for the first time he looked at the other paper which he had picked up. He turned it over, and saw at once what it was—a deed from Bertrand Kingsley, conveying certain lands and buildings to George Fenby.

Ralph Warder drew a long breath, and the light faded slowly out of his face. In a single moment he had seen the whole secret of the misunderstanding. It might be necessary to go over it all to see the details, but the general outline of the unfortunate affair was, he felt, as certainly in his possession as it could have been if he had been given the privilege of looking fully and freely into the minds of the two lovers whose lives were drifting so far apart.

Down went his head upon his hands on the table—the winter sunshine shone that day on no nobler head—and from his lips came those words of which frail humanity has deepest need, "Lead us not into temptation."

He thought it all out. Bertrand Kingsley owned the finest place in all Marsham, or had until the deed was made which conveyed it to George Fenby. Estella Kingsley, the daughter of Bertrand, was a beauty, and something of a flirt.

More than one lady in Marsham had quarrelled with her lover on Estella Kingsley's account. And last night there had been a little gathering of the young people in the church, and circumstances had done their worst—seemingly. In the first place, George Fenby came with Estella Kingsley; the meeting was not of a character to make it unkind for him to leave his promised wife to come with her father, as she had, but this coming with Miss Kingsley had been noticed by several. With the deed before him, Ralph Warder had no difficulty in deciding why George had been at Mr. Kingsley's, and consequently why he had come as he had.

Ralph was well acquainted with a young man living where the Kingsley's had formerly resided, and through him he knew of the engagement of Miss Kingsley to a gentleman living there. He had known this for a long time; and knowing it had thought little of events which might otherwise have deeply affected him.

Last night, for instance, a laughing group of gentlemen had spoken of Miss Kingsley. One had said, "She is a beauty and an heiress. Whoever wins her will have a beautiful home. The Kingsley estate is the finest one in Marsham."

Now, every gentleman in the group knew that the Kingsley estate was for sale, and every one had counted at its true value the answer which George Fenby had made. Indeed, his devotion to Alice Arden was so absolute and complete that no one, save her own modest self, would ever have doubted it for a moment.

"It is my highest ambition to be the master of that estate," laughed George. "And I have made an offer which I think will be accepted. I am to have in answer to-night. If I succeed, I shall be supremely happy. If not—why, I will do as other men have done—falling of what I want, I will take what I can get."

Ralph could not remember where Alice Arden had been when these foolish (possibly) but innocent words had been spoken. That she had been near enough to hear them was evidenced by her letter, which was before him.

He could only dimly imagine how she must have suffered in trying to evolve the truth (as she believed the truth to be) from what she had heard. When a human idol falls from the place it has filled in the heart not the least of the pain comes from what we see, or believe we see, of its unworthiness. To find our gold but gilded clay is a sorrowful thing. So he sat there, and pitied Alice Arden for the faith in man which she had lost, as well as for the man himself who had been put from her. With what pain beyond that which would come to her from a belief that her lover would think and do what his words seem to imply, must she face the added shame of his stooping to tell of it; nay, more, to boast of it.

Ralph raised his head. The time had not been long since he sat down to think. But he knew it all. Two proud and obstinate young creatures had been parted by fate. And he muttered with white, compressed lips, "I alone understand it all. I, alone, of all the world, can set it right. What a temptation!"

We will not seek to follow his

thoughts. What a man does should be the basis of our judgment, not what he would do. If he thought of the curative effects of time on suffering hearts, we can forgive him; if a possible future, in which a happy home of his own was the central figure, rose up to meet him, we can do no less than pity him.

If she only had the slightest reason for what she has done—but she has none. If George Fenby were really a scoundrel—but he is truly a noble man.

The band of sunshine rested on his head like a golden crown. His face was almost glorified as he raised it to the light again. And surely the angels made a record of a second gift that day, coming to the lot of those whose lives fall for a little time within the lines of our story, when he said aloud: "I will do right! Alice Arden shall have her lover back again!"

Evening service at the little church was over. Ralph Warder stood on the steps as the congregation came out. He looked happy.

If it be true "that coming events cast their shadows before," and that "virtue is its own reward," he was happy. He spoke cheerfully to this one and that when they passed. He did not look like a conspirator. One would not have dreamed that he made a plan which for audacity would find few rivals, while for simplicity it might find fewer.

"It's better to have it over as soon as possible," he said to himself; "better for them and for me."

Alice Arden was passing him. He leaned forward.

"Will you come for a little drive with me, Miss Arden? The night is perfect and you look as if fresh air would do you good."

She accepted at once hoping as she did so that George Fenby would see her. He was not there to see, however, and Ralph had taken good care to know that. He was already half-way home.

But Miss Arden was in no mood to refuse. She was in a reckless temper, and Ralph Warder had counted on that. One desirous of widening the breach between Alice and George would have found it a very easy task to make a beginning that night.

Ralph Warder's lips moved slowly as he seated himself beside Alice, but he will not try to determine what he said to himself in that crisis in more lives than one.

"I admire your cloak and hat," exclaimed Ralph, "though the saying it may be as much a compliment to my sister as to your own taste. Her's are like them, are they not?"

"Very nearly; not quite. But I didn't know you ever noticed what your lady friends wear."

"I don't very often. I did to-day. Would the masculine detect the differences?"

"I think not. But it is a pity to talk of dresses on such a night as this. What a strong and helpful sermon we had this evening!"

"Yes," said Ralph.

They made a turn in the road, and there was George himself only a few feet yards ahead. Alice put down her veil at once. Surely fate was on the side of Ralph Warder's plans that night.

"Get in, George. I won't take a refusal."

"Who is with you? Your sister?"

"Yes," said Ralph, with a promptness which should be admired and pardoned. "Sit on this side," said Ralph, as George got in; "I will sit between you. The night is beautiful, isn't it?"

"Very beautiful!" said George, who really had not thought of it before.

"You needn't go home at once. I will turn here and we will drive over toward the shore."

He had turned his horse down the road leading in that direction before either of his companions could say a word. The two lovers were gazing again on the scene they had looked upon in the morning. The moonlight may have softened the harshness of it a little, but the man between them heard a sob from the woman at his left, and saw the moonlight sparkle suspiciously on the eyelashes of the man on his right. And he thought grimly of himself as the image of fate—fate, with the destiny of two human beings in his hands.

"I found a paper of yours this morning," said Ralph, slowly, "and here it is. I could hardly help seeing what it was. I congratulate you on your bargain. You have bought the finest estate about here, George. It is remarkably cheap at the price. I believe the deed was signed last evening?"

"Yes."

"Mr. Kingsley had not fully decided to sell it until then, had he?"

"Not fully. He told me his daughter might decide to want it herself when she is married. Mr. Kingsley will, of course, give her a handsome residence somewhere when that event takes place, for Mr. Jones, who is to marry her has no fortune of his own."

"It has been your highest ambition to own that estate, hasn't it?"

"Certainly. I wanted the finest place here."

"You ought to be supremely happy. You said last night that you would be when you owned the place."

"Yes."

The answer was short. Ralph could feel the strong man on his right tremble in spite of his efforts to control himself, and knew that the woman on his left was crying softly.

"You said something last night about your ambition to be master of that estate. Do you remember what it was?"

"Yes, I think I do. Something boastful, was it not?"

George Fenby was beginning to understand dimly why he had received the letter he had.

"Worse than that. Did you ever think that one overhearing it might think you meant to marry Miss Kingsley?"

"Never until now. Oh, what have I done?"

"No matter. Did you ever intend to marry her? Not a word of objection. You've been led into answering too much already to stop now. I demand an answer, George. Did you?"

The eyes of the two men met. In Ralph's there was the determination to know, and, perhaps, something more. In George Fenby's there was surprise, which changed to satisfaction, and indignation, which gradually faded out.

"Never on my honor!" he answered.

Ralph Warder stopped the horse. They had driven far to the south, and had now turned back toward the village again. In front of them was the level sweep of frozen marsh, but farther on was the peached village with its lighted windows, and with its range of sheltering wooded hills behind it. On their right was the sea calm and bright. He stepped into the road and placed the reins in George Fenby's unresisting hands.

"Bring the horse home when it is all right," he said "but take all the time you wish. Here is another paper of yours which I found this morning. Be thankful to-night that so meddling some a man found it. Alice Arden and George Fenby, I give you back your future—and my blessing!"

He spoke to the horse, and obedient to his word, he dashed down the road and left him alone.

There is no more need of following the lovers, to be sure that all came right, than there is of following the rushing mountain stream to be sure it finds the sea.

The Seventeen-Year Locust.

The seventeen-year locust is not, as many suppose, several years late. He is due next year, 1884. Everybody knows the insect which buzzes and whirrs from the limbs of our trees. The veins in its wings mark a W on its back, and its note is heard at intervals of about three minutes. This is the common Cicada Atumnalis. It is with us every year. Its brother, the seventeen-year locust, has the W in red veins on its back, and is a little smaller. It comes in great swarms, but does no great amount of damage. Popular prejudice is against the seventeen-year locust. It is firmly believed by some that great mortality prevails during its stay, and that its bite is fatal. These ideas are as erroneous as most popular entomological theories. The cicada septem-decim is a queer insect. The sexes only live long enough to mate. The male dies in a day or two, and the female, with a spur which is carried beneath the abdomen, punctures a small branch of a tree with little holes. An egg is then deposited in each hole. The mother dies in eight or ten days, and the eggs hatch by themselves. The larvae fall to the ground and commence to dig. Eventually these embryo insects find their way to the uttermost roots of the tree. There they exist for sixteen years and a few months, undergoing development into the perfect locust. Their food is the sap of the tree. In seventeen years these return to the earth and produce the young, which go through the same process. The locust eats nothing when above ground, being provided with no mouth. A species of giant wasp, which carries a poisonous sting, is its enemy, among other birds and beasts. It stings the locust and carries it under ground to its nest. The belief that the locust's sting is fatal arises from the fact that persons sometimes brush away a locust that has fallen from a branch above and are stung by the wasp which is clinging to its victim unobserved. The sting of this wasp is sometimes fatal. The cicada tre-decim or 13-year locust are smaller specimens of the red-veined cicada, which come before the main army. Some of them are with us now. The farmer might well rejoice securely in his growing crops if every insect were as harmless as the so-called locust, whose unique voice through the summer woods is only a part in the conglomeration of lazy summer sounds.—Baltimore Sun.

Catching a Wild-Cat.

The boat was anchored out a little from the land, and all was ready for the night, when a voice rang out through the still air.

"I've got 'im! I've got 'im!" "What's that? Listen!" said Tom.

"I've got 'im!" repeated the voice, now recognized as belonging to Chitta, the Indian boy.

Without more ado the three boys jumped into the skiff and in a few moments were ashore, stumbling over the roots and splashing through water like mad, running pell-mell toward the spot where they had heard the voice.

"He is on the high land," cried Dick. "This way!" and, leaping over a fallen tree, he disappeared in the jungle.

"Wonder what he's got?" queried Harry, with perspiring face and torn garments, he rested against a palmetto tree.

"The cat, of course," replied Tom, as he bound his handkerchief around his wrist where a sharp thorn had lacerated it.

"Well," quoth Harry, "if the wild-cat is anything like those that I have seen in cages, the boy is welcome to keep it, and I don't see why I hurried so."

"Dick must be there by this time," said Tom, "and possibly may need our help."

There was a sudden cracking of branches; and Dick ran by, laughing and mutely pointing back. Tom and Harry ran in the direction indicated and soon discovered the young Indian in a half kneeling posture, holding tightly to something under an old root.

The something proved to be a short, scrubby tail, the owner of which was struggling frantically to crawl down the hole; and Harry said it was only a question of how long the tail would last.

Tom was thunderstruck. The bare idea of catching a wildcat by the tail made the well-read young naturalist shiver; but the ignorant Indian had known more of the nature and habits of such creatures than books could teach, and, therefore, when he saw the animal dive into the hole he knew that, if caught by the tail, it would pull one way as long as he pulled the other.

And as the hole was too narrow for the beast to turn, he was safe from claws and teeth until help arrived.

In a little while the required help came in the shape of Dick, who, all out of breath, bore in his hand a pair of canvas overalls. Thrusting one arm through the lower end of one leg of the trousers, he caught the cat's tail with a firm grasp.

The negro now let go, and while Tom and Harry were gone to the camp for some twine he pulled the top of the trousers-leg over the hole and held it there securely. Dick then slowly pulled the frightened but ferocious animal backward out of the hole into the trousers-leg, not letting go his hold on the tail until the Indian had gathered the top of the trousers together over the animal's head and tied them securely.

When Tom and Harry returned the cat was a prisoner, and Dick was scolding and laughing by turns at the poor enraged brute's futile efforts to escape from the improvised bag, which danced and tumbled about in a most comical manner.—St. Nicholas.

The Amazons of Kurdistan.

The women of Kurdistan are stated to be strongly opposed to the census, and even disposed to resist the curiosity of the enumerators with their lives. According to intelligence published in the Indian papers they have for the moment entirely frustrated an attempt to take a census among them in Elmiry, although the census officers were supported by the military. The women of several villages, "five hundred fair and strong," marched out in a body and attacked the troops, who, whether actuated by fear or gallantry, turned and fled. It is added that the Turkish authorities will find it no easy task to overcome the resistance to an inquisitorial visitation of their homes by these Kurdish women, who are rather famous for their Amazonian prowess. Those who are familiar with the details of the Turco-Russian war of 1855 will remember the Kurdish lady who went to Constantinople at the head of 1000 horsemen of her own raising in support of the national cause, and paraded and handled these troops with much effect before the Turkish military authorities.

In Virginia they are making flour of peanuts, and it is praised. It is customary in Georgia to pound the nuts for a pastry.

We reckon the girls new will quit powdering their faces. A Chinaman in Louisville, when questioned about getting married to a white girl, replied, "Me no wantee marry and eatee chalice."