

THE LILAC TREE.

In the songful days of June,
When the birds are all a-tune,
And the honey-feast is coming for the hum-
ming bird and bee,
Of all the trees that grow,
And with blossoms that do blow,
The sweetest and the saddest is the lilac
tree.

For, though purple is the bloom,
That its crisping buds assume,
Like the tint on far-off mountains beyond
the pleasant sea,
Yet the freshness but deceives,
And amid the shadowy leaves
There is ever a dead blossom in the lilac-
tree.

And so it is with all,
That in things both great and small
Of our life a distant gleaming in our dream-
ing we may see;
For when the heart is gladdened,
Oh! there's something in its saddest,
Like the blossom and the blight upon the
lilac tree.

A TIMELY RESCUE.

It was a beautiful day in July, and M. Pontoise, prefect of the little Norman town of Virentan, lounged back in his arbor, the very picture of full-blown content. A cup of black coffee was on the table before him, and he had just lighted an unimpeachable cigar.

But mere bodily comforts had not rendered the worthy prefect so radiant; he had received very agreeable news that morning. M. le Comte de la Croiserie, one of the most distinguished residents in the neighborhood, had asked the hand of Mademoiselle Melanie Pontoise in marriage. The event was so flattering, so unexpected, that the happy parents could scarcely contain themselves for joy, and were eager to tell their daughter the honor that awaited her.

Madame Pontoise soon appeared, followed by a pretty fair-haired girl, who put her hand caressingly on her father's arm.

"Now, then, petit pere, what is it you have to tell me? I see it is something nice. Another invitation to England, perhaps?"

A slight shade passed over the beaming countenance of Madame Pontoise, as she answered her husband, "No; you have been too much in England already. Your last visit filled your foolish little head with all sorts of ideas."

"Well, never mind," said the good-tempered prefect, flicking some cigar ashes off the spherical surface of his white waistcoat; "this has nothing to do with England. On the contrary, it is something to keep you here. How should you like to be a countess?"

"Not at all, papa. I would rather stay with you, plain Mademoiselle Pontoise."

"You've been that long enough," put in her mother; "it is high time to change. M. le Comte de la Croiserie has written to ask for your hand in marriage, and your father is deeply sensible of the honor."

Melanie opened her eyes. "Why, papa is a Republican! He laughs at titles!"

"Nonsense, child!" said M. Pontoise; "what do you know about politics?"

But it was true nevertheless, and M. Pontoise could not deny it. Still, it was all very well to laugh at titles when you hadn't any yourself, but M. Pontoise very naturally felt it would be quite a different matter if he had a Count for a son-in-law. So he answered his only child rather testily, telling her that she knew nothing about politics, and had much better turn her attention to her toilette for the evening.

Madame Pontoise took the hint at once, and led the way back to the house Melanie following slowly and silently. When they were safe in seclusion of the girl's bedroom, Madame Pontoise began to reason with her daughter.

"What is the matter, ma fille? What objection have you to M. de la Croiserie? That he is a widower? Bah! that is nothing. That he is a widower? Bah! that is nothing. That he is older than you? Ah! my child, you will know some day how well it is to have a husband of that age, possessed of the most admirable qualities. Why, he is everywhere sought after; you will be the envy of the neighborhood."

That was undoubtedly true; still Melanie did not look convinced.

"But I don't know him, mamma. I have only seen him twice."

"What more would you have? Who expects you to know him? We have not yet adopted the English habit of allowing young girls to form intimacies with men; but you have heard of him. Every one is acquainted with his good heart—his—"

"Oh! yes, mamma," interrupted Melanie impatiently; "I have heard his praises sung till I am tired. Solo, duet, or chorus, the refrain is always the same. He is so good! he is such a kind father!"

"You surely don't object to the children, Melanie? Three darlings, and only girls. Remember, you have already vexed your father twice by refusing two very eligible offers. Do not disappoint him again by rejecting M. de la Croiserie, the most eligible of all. He is coming to a little dinner *en famille* so that you may judge of one another. And now I leave you to choose your dress," and Madame Pontoise hurried away.

Melanie stood by the window, gazing dreamily out upon the view. Below in

blinding sunshine was the stiff, trim little garden in which her father's soul delighted; a few orchards intervened between that and the river Vire, and immediately on the other bank lay the grounds of Chateau de la Croiserie. The trees were in full leaf, so that but little of the house was visible; but Melanie could see a small turret window, which she knew was the Count's dressing-room. Her heart sank within her. The Count was a fine match from a worldly point of view. It was very flattering that he should wish to make her his wife, but she felt it would be impossible to love him. He was so cold, so stiff. Her mother said the best kind of love for a woman came after marriage, but Melanie shuddered at the risk. Could it be that she had really imbibed foolish ideas during her visits to England? She had dreamed there of something very different. Was marriage one of the things they manage better in France? Well, it was to be hoped so Melanie sighed, and the turrets of her future home were blotted out by a mist of blinding tears.

Suddenly there came a loud peal at the door. Who could be ringing so violently? Had the Count proved too ardent a lover to wait till the evening? The idea was grotesque; besides, he would never do anything so incorrect.

While she was wondering, her mother came rushing into the room, holding a card in her hand.

"Here is young Mr. Paget come to see your father. How provoking! just as he has gone to the Prefecture. Do go down and see him. You can speak English, and you must tell him where to go."

Melanie stood transfixed. The event which seemed so commonplace to the mother seemed a miracle to the girl. Mr. Paget was her father's English partner; it was at his home that she had paid those visits of which Madame Pontoise disapproved. His daughter Alice was her school-fellow and friend; his son Tom was—well, he was her friend too.

And to think that he should appear to-day—dropped from the clouds, as it were!

Recovering herself, she ran quickly down stairs. A tall, sunburnt young man was standing in the middle of the room, looking eagerly towards the door.

"Oh, Monsieur Tom!" she cried; est- il possible?"

"Why not?" he said smiling; "am I so altered? But, I say, you mustn't talk French, you know. I can't understand a word of that."

Melanie laughed, but the tears so recently repressed were very near the surface. "Papa will be very glad to see you," she said, with her pretty accent.

Mr. Tom looked moderately elated at the assurance.

"I think you might say you were glad too, Mademoiselle Melanie, for unless I had expected to see you I should not have come one hundred miles out of my way. I hope you haven't forgotten your stay with us. We had great fun, if you remember. Do you recollect our ride on the tricycle and our picnics on the river?"

"I shall never forget them!" she answered, her eyes gleaming like sunshine after rain. There was a repressed intensity in her tones which did not escape Tom. Both young people were silent a few seconds.

Just then her mother entered the room. She had been peeping behind the Venetian shutters to see Mr. Paget's departure, and now came to see the cause of the delay. She was displeased to find them deeply engaged in conversation, and packed him off to the Prefecture without delay. But she never guessed what her husband would do. He was in such a state of effusive benevolence that he invited Tom to the important dinner in the evening! Madame Pontoise was immensely disgusted.

"How stupid men are! That tiresome young Englishman will make the Count look ten years older."

However, it could not be helped, and the good lady was too immersed in household cares to give much thought to the matter.

Punctual to the moment M. de la Croiserie arrived, a well-preserved man, over fifty, carefully dressed, with gray hair, which looked long by the side of Tom's "regulation cut" and M. Pontoise's bristles. He was formally introduced to Melanie, and made a profound and elaborate bow, clicking his heels together as he did so.

"A galvanized mummy!" thought Tom as he watched the performance, but his opinion was not very valuable. He had learned the state of affairs from M. Pontoise, and had at once conceived a strong prejudice against the Count.

The dinner passed off very well. M. de la Croiserie addressed Melanie with marked difference once or twice, and she replied in monosyllables. Madame Pontoise was quite ecstatic—this was exactly as it should be.

Tom began to wish he had not come. It did not require a conjurer to see that Melanie did not care for the Count, and the young Englishman's soul was overflowing with chivalrous pity. To sacrifice that warm-hearted Melanie to such an iceberg; what a shame! He had not expected to burst into such an exciting chapter of the family history; and once

here, what could he do? He had always liked his sister's pretty French friend, but he had no definite plan or scheme in coming to see her. Now that he found her again, no longer a school-girl, but a beautiful woman, whose life-happiness was trembling in the balance, his feelings were stirred and deepened. He watched her every movement; he took note of every changing expression which flitted across her face; he fancied he detected traces of tears, and his heart went out to her. Nobody but the two young people saw any pathos in the situation. The parents answered their daughter's wistful glances with exultant smiles, and the Count made a good dinner, serenely certain of success.

When they went into the drawing-room, Tom hoped to exchange a few words with Melanie unobserved, but he reckoned without Madame Pontoise's watchful eyes. Fortune favored him, however. The mother was suddenly called away, and the Count and M. le Prefet had gone into the garden to discuss matters by the light of a post-prandial cigar. Tom seized his opportunity.

"Your father has told me everything," he said in a low voice. "I hope you will be happy."

"Ah! Monsieur Tom," she sighed, with a pretty appealing gesture of her hands and an earnest look out of her great dark eyes, "what can I do?"

"If you don't like him there is still time. When you are married it will be too late."

Before Melanie had time to answer, Madame Pontoise returned, and the young people separated.

"Will you not join the gentlemen now, Monsieur Paget?" she said, meaningly. "My daughter will give us a song; but you can hear very well in the garden."

"I think I will take my leave, Madame. I have already trespassed too long upon your hospitality," and Tom departed. But all the way to his hotel he was uneasy and doubting. "What can I do? How I wish I knew what she really wants! What a fool I am! What sent me here to trouble that poor girl's life? What grand, wonderful eyes she has—with the pleading look of some dumb animal in them! She doesn't like the Frenchman—but I wonder if she likes me? I wasn't a bit in love with her when I came—at least, I think not—but now! Oh! if I could only speak to the girl! The mother glares at me like a dragon. Poor, pretty Melanie! I'd give anything to know what she thinks of me. I wonder what a fellow ought to do!"

The next morning rose clear and beautiful, and M. de la Croiserie sent over a mounted messenger to beg the prefect and his family to lunch at the Chateau. The worthy prefect and his wife were radiant; but Melanie, who had slept badly, looked pale and worn. The poor girl was desperate. She saw no help, no escape. The gleam of hope which Tom had brought faded. No doubt he was now on his way to Paris. Years would elapse before they would meet again.

After the ceremonious lunch was over, the Count gave his hand to Melanie and led her into the old-fashioned garden.

She felt the crisis of her life had come. Oh, for courage to make a stand. M. de la Croiserie led her to a stone bench, and sat down beside her.

"I wish to thank you, Mademoiselle," he said gravely, "for accepting my suit. I am older than you; many think me austere, but I assure you that you shall never regret the decision you have made."

Melanie turned away her head. Those measured tones seemed to freeze her. Yet Tom had said, "Think before you decide; when you are married it will be too late." So, summoning her courage, she faltered—

"You think too highly of me, Monsieur le Comte. I am deeply sensible of your flattering preference, but I am not equal to the position."

The Count listened benignly. He thought it all very proper and diffident, but he attached no weight to it whatever.

"When you are my wife," he said, bowing low, "you will have me always at your side to guide and direct."

Melanie gave him a frightened look, then turned away again. Yes, it was true; that man would be always at her side. What an appalling idea!

"It is impossible for me to undertake—"

"Allow me to assure you, Mademoiselle, that I consider nobody as worthy as yourself to fulfill the duties of a mother towards my little girls. Your discretion, your amiability, gave me a thousand guarantees for the future. But your parents will think I abuse my privileges," he continued, with a wintry smile, as he assisted her to rise from the bench. Then he conducted her to Monsieur Madame Pontoise, expectant and anxious in the drawing-room.

"Monsieur le Prefet," said the Count, "I commend my future wife to your care."

Melanie said nothing, but her parents were voluble enough to make amends for her silence. The Count led them through the grounds to the river, where he had ordered a boat to be in readiness to pull them across. M. Pontoise went first, his wife followed. Melanie,

pale as death, came third. Her dainty high-heeled shoes, fit only for a polished floor, failed her on the sloping plank. She slipped, and fell into the water. The river was deep. Nobody could swim. The Count stood on the bank, paralyzed—staring.

"Go, go!" screamed Madame Pontoise, "tell them to stop the mill. She will be carried over it!" But he seemed petrified with terror.

M. Pontoise had thrown off his coat, and was struggling in the water, endangering his own life without saving his daughter's. Madame Pontoise did nothing but shriek, but it was the best thing she could do. It brought rescue. Tom Paget had not gone to Paris; he was hovering about, undecided, uneasy; he heard her screams, and rushed up in a moment. He saw at once what had happened, and running a few yards down the stream, plunged in. He had calculated well. Melanie rose to the surface close to the spot, and it was but the work of a few strong strokes and she was safe again in the boat. The next thing was to rescue M. Pontoise. His struggles had exhausted him and driven the air from his lungs; his clothes, heavy with the water, pulled him down; and when Tom dragged him out of the water he was quite insensible. Fortunately, he was near home. Restoratives were procured and soon he and Melanie were in each other's arms rejoicing in their safety.

Tom had no reason to complain that Madame Pontoise glared at him like a dragon now. The poor lady had no terms to express her gratitude. There was no more question of his continuing his journey to Paris; the grateful parents would not let him go. Before they retired for the night he had an opportunity of learning Melanie's wishes, and found they coincided entirely with his own. With Tom by her side, Melanie feels equal to rejecting a dozen counts; and it is not likely the worthy prefect and his wife will refuse their child to the man who saved her life.

Romance in Real Life.

Mr. David Gentle, a farmer of Fairfax county, Va., is visiting his widowed mother, Mrs. Anna Gentle, at Annapolis, Md., after a separation of 31 years, during which he had lost an arm in battle. The meeting between mother and son was quite affecting. Each had thought the other dead until a short time ago, when a letter from the son brought the glad news of his living, and led to the happy reunion. Thirty-one years ago Mrs. Gentle lost her husband. David was then an infant. They lived in Washington. When 12 years old the boy was put to work on a farm in Fairfax county, the mother remaining in Washington to support herself as best she could. David remained on the farm six years. He then went to another farm in Loudoun county, remaining there two years. At the beginning of the war, at the age of 20 years, young Gentle threw down his farming implements and entered the Confederate army. He lost an arm at the battle of Petersburg, after which he was discharged. Marrying in 1866, he settled down to farming in Fairfax county and acquired a fair livelihood, and has been living there ever since. Mr. Gentle had believed his mother dead, but his wife, he said, had often remarked that he would find her some time. He never expected to do so, however, and probably never would have known of her existence but for the intervention of a lady.

Two years ago this lady, who knew his mother, in traveling through Virginia heard the name of Gentle mentioned in a railroad car. Approaching the party addressed she questioned him about his parents, and becoming satisfied that she had discovered the lost son, told him where he would likely find his mother. She said a Mrs. Gentle who had a son David lived in Washington a few years previous, and promised to make inquiries about her and let her son hear from her when she returned. The lady went to Europe and remained a year, and returning to Washington learned that Mrs. Gentle had moved to Annapolis, and so informed the son when next she met him. David had recognized her on the street on his second visit, and going up to her asked if she had ascertained the definite whereabouts of his parent. On learning that she was living at Annapolis, without a moment's delay the son wrote to her, propounding certain questions to establish the relationship which he knew only his mother could answer satisfactorily. In a few days the welcome answer came from the mother, containing endearing messages of love, and requesting him to come to her, which he did at the first opportunity. Mrs. Gentle is sixty-five years old and her son forty-four. The mothers has been invited to spend the balance of her days on a pleasant little farm in old Virginia, and share the hospitalities of the place with a daughter-in-law and an only grandchild, and she will probably accept.

Good and quickly seldom meet. A good beginning is half the work. Gold is no balm to a wounded spirit. Every little frog is great in his own bog. When fish are rare, even a crab is a fish.

The Snake's Vengeance.

"On the night of Feb. 17, 1847, it was raining hard," began the tramp, as he settled himself in Gilligan's back room and sipped his gin last night. "We were camped at San Juan Dullo, in Mexico, where the big battle took place, and it was there that I first became a believer in snakes. Talking about wreaking vengeance, why, gents, a snake's got more cunning than all the men in the world."

"What'd he do?" asked the crowd. "Who?"

"Why, the snake." "Oh, yes; at San Juan. Well, boys, as I was a saying, it was raining hard, and old Scotty was mad 'ern blazes, caz he didn't know the country, and the rain threatened to wash us out. About 10 o'clock that night our sentry caught a greaser lurking around the outposts and brought him into camp. The greaser was a handsome feller, and a lieutenant in the Mexican cavalry. He had a small box under his arm, and when this was opened a small rattlesnake sprang out and showed fight. He buried his fangs into the arm of one of the men and the bite killed him. The man seemed to be very fond of the snake, but somehow he thought that he would have got away if it wasn't for the creature. Then he cursed it in Spanish, and just as they were leading him away the snake sprang for him, its little eyes blazing and body quivering. It did not reach the man, and was put back in the box. Somehow it was taken to Gen. Scott's tent for safekeeping, and a conference was held about the young captive, and it was decided to hold him and see if any information could be got from him."

"The rain stopped about 1 o'clock," continued the tramp, draining his glass, "and the moon came out. I was on duty in front of Scott's tent, and was just dozing off when I saw the snake, that was in the box, glide out of the tent with something white in his mouth. I gave chase, but couldn't catch it, and, in fact forgot all about it."

"When the captain of the guard woke up at 5 o'clock that morning, he found lying on his table an order to execute the prisoner by sunrise. The sun was just about coming up and the officer was very much frightened. He had the prisoner brought out and drawn up before a file of men. In five minutes the lifeless body of the Mexican officer was lying on the ground. The officer indorsed the order and returned it to Gen. Scott."

"What's this?" asked the old man. "Order of execution. I shot the man this morning," replied the officer."

"Say, boys, old Scotty was mad then, and he swore that he had never given the order. The officer stated how he received it, and everybody was puzzled. I was sent for, and stated that I saw the snake leave the tent. We looked into the box, and hang me if there wasn't that snake as quiet as may be. The affair was always a great mystery, but say, boys, I could explain it, although they wouldn't believe me."

A Blushing Chinese Bride

There was great commotion in the heart of Chinatown, Portland, Oregon. A wedding in high life was on the tapis, and a crowd of 400 or 500 Chinamen surrounded the home of the bride in an endeavor to catch a glimpse of the lady as she went to meet the happy man. When the girl started down the narrow stairs, in charge of an old woman, the curious heathens made a rush for the doorway, and when she appeared upon the sidewalk, with her blushing face hid behind a fan, the excitement became so intense that the services of the policemen were necessary to clear a way to the carriage. Every face in the surging crowd was adorned with a generous grin, and a chorus of "Ahs" greeted the rare and radiant maiden who was about to launch upon the uncertain sea of matrimony. The bride's dress was of pale blue hi-long trimmed with rare old toyal, while the pantaloon were of six full lengths of yellow siles. Her hair was dressed a la Hong Kong, their being no bangs of any description. Her charming little feet were half hidden in a bewitching pair of silk slippers with the heels knocked off. This vision of loveliness was carefully placed in a closed carriage and driven to the apartments of the bridegroom, who was wondering what sort of a companion his relatives and friends had selected for him. There the scenes enacted on Morrison street were repeated as the bride was hurried up another flight of narrow stairs and disappeared from view, amid showers of rice and papers.

Boston Working Girls.

The average weekly income of working girls in Boston, including earnings, assistance and income from extra work, is \$5.17. The average yearly expense for all needs is \$261.30. This leaves \$7.77 for amusements, reading and so on. There are a large number of girls, according to the figures of the report, who earn less than \$3.50 a week, and out of the 1,032 there were only twenty-eight who pay less than \$2 a week for board and lodging. Two hundred and twenty-four pay between \$2 and \$4 a week for board and lodging. It is hard to see how they can live at all decently on their salaries.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT.

Hatred is blind as well as love. He who blackens others does not whiten himself.

Life becomes useless and insipid when we have no longer friends or enemies. We had better appear what we are than affect to appear what we are not.

The cup of pleasure sometimes has dregs that one must drink long afterwards.

Those sentiments of love which flow from the heart cannot be frozen by adversity.

A little praise is good for a shy temper. It teaches it to rely on the kindness of others.

It is more difficult to dissimulate the sentiments we have, than to simulate those we have not.

Good taste rejects excessive nicety; it treats little things as little things, and is not hurt by them.

The duty of doing, not great things; but what we can, is the very top and sum of human obligation.

In giving, a man receives more than he gives, and the more in proportion to the worth of the thing given.

Silence never shows itself to so great an advantage as when it is made the reply to calumny and defamation.

New actions are the only apologies and explanations of old ones which the noble can bear to offer or to receive.

It is generally true that we judge too bitterly and harshly the faults of every office which we do not ourselves hold.

When a strong brain is weighed with a true heart, it seems to be like balancing a bubble against a wedge of gold.

Public discussions are an intellectual stamping mill, where the worthless quartz is crushed and the pure gold set free.

Uprightness in all our dealings with one another is a matter, not of human convenience, but of divine requirement.

Be not penny-wise; riches have wings and sometimes fly away of themselves; sometimes they must be sent flying to bring in more.

It is a wise man who knows where to be firm and where to be yielding, and the latter knowledge is by no means the least important.

There is no policy like politeness; and a good manner is the best thing in the world, either to get a good name or supply the want of it.

It is not so much the mental vision that is desired to discern truth and goodness as the moral courage that dares openly to espouse it.

We ought not to look back unless it is to derive useful lessons from past errors and for the purpose of profiting by dear-bought experience.

Religion can be no more learnt out of books than seamanship, or soldiership, or engineering, or painting, or any practical trade whatsoever.

People of mean capacities more despise and ridicule what is above the reach of their own intellect than that which is below its standard.

Whatever study tends neither directly or indirectly to make us better men and citizens is at best but a specious and ingenious sort of idleness.

So quickly sometimes has the wheel turned round that many a man has lived to enjoy the benefit of that charity which his own piety projected.

Employment, which can be called "Nature's physician," is so essential to human happiness that indolence is justly considered the mother to misery.

Character is not cut in marble—it is not something solid and unalterable. It is something living and changing, and may become diseased as our bodies do.

Religion gives part of its reward in hand, the present comfort of having done our duty; and for the rest, it offers us the best security that heaven can give.

Whatever our place allotted to us by Providence, that for us is the post of duty. God estimates not by the position we are in, but by the way in which we fill it.

There is a thread in our thoughts as there is a pulse in our feelings—he who can hold the one knows how to think, and he who can move the other knows how to feel.

A cottage will not hold the bulky furniture and sumptuous accommodations of a mansion; but if God be there, a cottage will hold as much happiness as would stock a palace.

Joy is heightened by exultant strains of music, but grief is eased only by low ones. "A sweet, sad, measure," is the balm of a wounded spirit. Music lightens toil. The sailor pulls more cheerfully for his song.

Generosity is not the virtue of the multitude, and for this reason: selfishness is often the consequence of ignorance, and it requires a cultivated mind to discern where the rights of others interfere with our own wishes.

There is nothing in life which exercises a more blessed influence on death, than the prominence of a holy, loving fear in our intercourse with God. Past fear is the smoothest pillow on which the head of the dying can rest.

Prudence and religion are above accidents, and draw good out of everything. Affliction makes a wise man patient, strong and enduring. Providence, like a wise father, brings us up to labor, toil and danger; whereas the indulgence of a fond mother makes us weak and spiritless.

The great secret of giving advice successfully is to mix with it something which implies a real consciousness of the adviser's own defects; and as much as possible of an acknowledgement of the other party's merits. Most advisers sink both; and hence the failure which they meet with and deserve.

Money is a right good thing, and no sensible man will turn up his nose at it. It brings comfort and leisure, and Solomon says that in leisure there is wisdom. Money promotes domestic tranquility, and that is the biggest and best thing I know of. But it ought to be hard to get, so that its real value may be appreciated—it has to be earned to be prized. No money is safe, except that made by honest men.