

Whole No. 2444.

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MISCELLANEOUS.

THREE SCENES IN THE LIFE OF A BELLE.

By Mrs. Caroline Lee Hentz.

SCENE SECOND--CONTINUED.

'Suffer me to ask you, young lady,' said he, laying down the book, with a sigh, 'if you find in these pages instruction, consolation, or support? anything that as a rational being you out to seek, as a moral one to approve, as an immortal one to desire?'

Ellen was roused to a portion of her former animation, by this attack upon her favorite author; and in language warm as his from whom she drew her inspiration, she defended his sentiments and exalted his genius--she spoke of his godlike mind, when the stranger entreated her to forbear, in words of supplication, but in accents of command.

'Draw not a similitude,' said he, 'between a holy God, and a being who has perverted the noblest powers that God has given. Bear with me a little while, and I will show you what is truly godlike, a book as far transcending the productions of him you so much admire, as the rays of the sun excel in glory the wan light of a taper.'

Then, taking from his bosom the volume which had excited the curiosity of Ellen, on account of its apparent fascination, and seating himself by her side, he unfolded its sacred pages. She caught a glimpse of the golden letters on the binding, and drew back with a feeling of superstitious dread. It seemed to her, that he was about to read her death-warrant, and she involuntarily put out her hand, with a repulsive motion.

Without appearing to regard it, he looked upon her with sweet and solemn countenance, while he repeated this passage, from a bard who had drank of the waters of a holier fountain than Grecian poets ever knew:

'This book, this holy book, on every line marked with the seal of high divinity, on every leaf bejeweled with drops of love divine, and with the eternal heraldry, and signature of God Almighty stamped from first to last; this ray of sacred light, this lamp from off the everlasting throne, mercy took down, and in the night of time, mercifully, bestowed on me, with tears, and earnest sighs, to read, believe, and live.'

Ellen listened with indescribable awe. There was a power and sensibility in his accent, a depth of expression in his occasional upturned glance, that impressed and affected her as she had never been before.

'Forgive me,' said he, 'if, as a stranger, I seem intrusive; but I look upon every son and daughter of Adam, with the tenderness of a brother, and upon whom the Almighty has laid his chastening hand, with feelings of peculiar interest. If I were wandering through a barren wilderness, and found a fountain of living water, and suffered my fellow-pilgrim to slake his thirst at the noisome pool by the wayside, without calling him to drink of the pure stream, would he not have reason to upbraid me for my selfishness? Oh! doubly selfish then should I be, if, after tasting the waters of everlasting life, I were flowing from this blessed Book, I should not seek to draw you from the polluted sources in which you vainly endeavor to quench the thirst of an immortal spirit. Dear young fellow-traveler to eternity, suffer me to lend you a guiding hand.'

Ellen Loring, who had been famed in the circles of fashion for her ready wit and brilliant repartee, found no words in which to reply to this affectionate and solemn appeal. She turned aside her head, to hide the tears which she could no longer repress from flowing down her cheeks. As the polished, but darkened Athenians, when Paul, standing on Mars Hill, explained to them 'that unknown God, whom they ignorantly worshipped,' trembled before an eloquence they could not comprehend, she was oppressed by a power she could not define. Agnes, who began to be alarmed at the consequences of this agitation, and who saw in perspective Mrs. Loring's displeasure and reproaches, here whispered Ellen it was time to return, and Ellen, glad to be released from an influence to which she was constrained to bow, obeyed the signal. Their new friend rose also; 'I cannot but believe,' said he, 'that this meeting is providential. It seems to me that heaven directed my steps hither, that I might lead you to those green pastures and still waters where the Shepherd of Israel gathers his flock. You are both young, but there is one of you whose cheek is pale, and whose saddened glance tells a touching history of the vanity of all earthly things. Take this blessed volume, and substitute it for the one you now hold, and believe me you will find in it an inexhaustible supply of entertainment and delight,

a perennial spring of light, and love, and joy. You will find it an unerring guide in life, and a torch to illumine the dark valley of the shadow of death. Farewell--the blessing of Israel's God be yours!'

He placed the book in the hand of Agnes, and turned in a different path. They walked home in silence. Neither expressed to the other the thoughts that filled the bosom of each. Had an angel from heaven come down and met them in the grove, the interview could hardly have had a more solemnizing influence. It was the first time they had ever been individually addressed as immortal beings, the first time they had been personally reminded that they were pilgrims of earth, and doomed to be dwellers of the tomb. The voice of the stranger still rung in their ears, deep and mellow as the sound of the church-going bell. Those warning accents, they could not forget them, for there was an echo in their own hearts, and an answer too, affirming the truth of what he uttered. That night, when Ellen, unusually exhausted, reclined on her restless couch, she suddenly asked Agnes to read her something from that book, so mysteriously given. It was the first time she had addressed her, since her return, and there was something startling in the sound of her voice, it was so altered. There was humility in the tone, that usually breathed pride or discontent. Agnes sat down, and turned the leaves with a trembling hand.

'What shall I read? where shall I commence?' asked she, fearful and irresolute, in utter ignorance of its hallowed contents. 'Alas! I know not,' replied Ellen, then raising herself on her elbow, with a wild and earnest look, 'see if you can find where it speaks of that dark valley, of which he told--the dark valley of death.'

By one of those unexpected coincidences which sometimes occur, Agnes at that moment opened at the twenty-third Psalm, and the verse containing this sublime allusion met her eye. She read aloud--'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me--thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.'

'Strange,' repeated Ellen, and making a motion for her to continue, Agnes read the remainder of that beautiful Psalm, and the two succeeding ones, before she paused. Dark as was their understanding with regard to spiritual things, and deep as was their ignorance, they were yet capable of taking in some faint glimpses of the glory of the Lord, pervading these strains of inspiration. Agnes was a pleasing reader, and her voice, now modulated by new emotions, was peculiarly impressive. Ellen repeated again and again to herself, after Agnes had ceased, 'Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty? She had never thought of God, but as of a Being dreadful in power, avenging in his judgments, and awful in his mystery. She had remembered him only in the whirlwind and the storm, the lightning and the thunder, never in the still small voice. She had thought of death, but it was of the winding sheet and the dark coffin lid, and the lonely grave--her fears had rested there, on the shuddering brink of decaying mortality. Oh! as she lay awake during the long watches of the night, and conscience, aroused from its deadly lethargy, entered the silent chambers of memory and waked the slumbering shadows of the past--how cheerless, how dark was the retrospect! Far as the eye of memory could revert, she could read nothing but vanity, vanity! A wide, white blank, on which a spectral hand was writing vanity, and something told her, too, that that same hand would ere long write this great moral of life on her mouldering ashes. She cast her fearful gaze upon the future, but recoiled in shivering dread, from the vast illimitable abyss that darkened before her. No ray of hope illumined the dread immense. The Star of Bethlehem had never yet shed its holy beams on the horoscope of her destiny; not that its beams had ever ceased to shine, since that memorable night when, following its silvery pathway in the heavens, the wise men of the East were guided to the cradle of the infant Redeemer, to offer their adoration at his feet; but her eyes had never looked beyond the clouds of time, and in its high and pure resplendence it had shone in vain for her.

'I will seek him to-morrow, this holy man,' said she, as hour after hour she lay gazing, through her curtains, on the starry depths of night, 'and ask him to enlighten and direct me.'

The morrow came, but Ellen was not able to take her accustomed walk. For several days she was confined from debility to her room, and had ample leisure to continue the work of self-examination. As soon as she was permitted to go into the open air, she sought her wonted retreat, and it was with feelings of mingled joy and dread she recognized the stranger, apparently waiting their approach. This truly good man, though a stranger to them, was well known in the neighborhood for his deeds of charity and labors of love. His name was M---, and as there was no mystery in his character or life, he may be here introduced to the reader, that the appellation of stranger may no longer be necessary. He greeted them both with even more than his former kindness, and noticed with pain the increased debility of Ellen. He saw, too, from her restless

glance, that her soul was disquieted within her. 'Oh, sir,' said Ellen, mournfully, 'you promised me joy, and you have given me wretchedness.'

'My daughter,' replied Mr. M---, 'before the sick found healing virtue in the waters at Bethesda, an angel came down and troubled the stillness of the pool.'

Then, at her own request, he sat down by her side, and endeavored to explain to her the grand yet simple truths of Christianity. And beginning with the law and the prophets, he carried her with him to the mount that burned with fire and thick smoke, where the Almighty, descending in shrouded majesty, proclaimed his will to a trembling lyre of Isaiah, in thunder and lightning and flame; he led her on with him, through the wilderness, pointing out the smitten rock, the descending manna, the brazen serpent, and all the miraculous manifestations of God's love to his chosen people; then, taking up the lofty strains of prophecy, from the melodious harp of David to the sublimer lyre of Isaiah, he shadowed forth the promised Messiah. In more persuasive accents he dwelt on the fulfillment of those wondrous prophecies. Gently, solemnly he guided her on, from the manger to the cross, unfolding as he went the glorious mysteries of redemption, the depth, the grandeur, the extent, and the exaltation of a Saviour's love. Ellen listened and wept. She felt as if she could have listened for ever. At one moment she was oppressed by the greatness of the theme, at another melted by its tenderness. Those who from infancy have been accustomed to hear these divine truths explained, who from their earliest years have surrounded the household altar, and daily read God's holy word, can have no conception of the overpowering emotions of Ellen and Agnes; neither can they, whose infant glances have taken in the visible glories of creation, comprehend the rapture and amazement of those who, being born blind, are made in after years to see.

From this hour Ellen and Agnes became the willing pupils of Mr. M---, in the most interesting study in the universe; but it is with Ellen the reader is supposed most strongly to sympathize; the feelings of Agnes may be inferred from her going hand in hand with her invalid friend. Ellen lingered in the country till the golden leaves of autumn began to strew the ground, and its chill gales to sigh through the grove. What progress she made during this time in the lore of heaven, under the teachings and prayers of her beloved instructor, may be gathered from another, and the last scene, through which this once glittering belle was destined to pass.

SCENE THIRD. The chamber in which Ellen Loring was first presented to the reader, surrounded by the paraphernalia of the ball room, was once more lighted--but what a change now met the eye! She, who then sat before the mirror to be arrayed in the adornments of fashion, whose vain eye gazed with unrepressed admiration on her own loveliness, and who laughed to scorn the apprehensions of her fatally indulgent mother, now lay pale and emaciated on her couch. No roses now bloomed in her damp, unbraided locks, no decorating pearl surrounded her wan neck, no sparkling ray of anticipated triumph flashed from her sunken eye--Pride, vanity, vainglory, strength, beauty--all were fled.

Come hither, ye daughters of pleasure, ye who live alone for the fleeting joys of sense, who give to the world the homage that God requires, and waste in the pursuits of time the energies given for eternity, and look upon a scene through which you must one day pass! There is more eloquence in one dying bed, than Grecian or Roman orator ever uttered.

The dim eyes of Ellen turned towards the door, with a wistful glance. 'I fear it will be too late,' said she; 'mother, if he should not come before I die--'

'Die! almost shrieked Mrs. Loring; 'you are not going to die, Ellen. Do not talk so frightfully. You will be better soon--Agnes, bathe her temples. She is only faint.'

'No, mother,' answered Ellen, and her voice was surprisingly clear in its tones, 'I feel the truth of what I utter, here, laying her wasted hand on her breast, as she spoke. 'I did hope that I might live to hear once more the voice of him who taught me the way of salvation, and revealed to my benighted mind the God who created, the Saviour who redeemed me, that I might breathe out to him my parting blessing, and hear his hallowed prayer rise over my dying bed. But oh, my dear mother, it is for your sake, more than mine, I yearn for his presence--I looked to him to comfort you, when I am gone.' Mrs. Loring here burst into a violent paroxysm of tears, and wrung her hands in uncontrollable agony.

'Oh! I cannot give thee up,' she again and again repeated, 'my beautiful Ellen, my good, my beautiful child!'

Mournfully, painfully did these exclamations fall on the chastened ears of the dying Ellen. 'Recall not the image of departed beauty, oh my mother! I made it my idol, and my heavenly Father, in infinite mercy, consumed it with the breath of his mouth--Speak not of goodness--my life has been

one long act of sin and ingratitude. I can look back upon nothing but wasted mercies, neglected opportunities, and perverted talents. But blessed be God, since I have been led in penitence and faith to the feet of a crucified Saviour, I dare to believe that my sins are forgiven, and that my trembling spirit will soon find rest in Him, who lived to instruct and died to redeem me.'

Ellen paused, for difficult breathing had often impeded her utterance; but her prayerful eyes, raised to heaven, told the intercourse her soul was holding with One 'whom not having seen she loved, but in whom believing, she rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory.'

At this moment, the door softly opened, and the gentle footsteps of him, whom on earth she most longed to behold, entered the chamber. As she caught a glimpse of that benign, that venerated countenance, she felt a glow of happiness pervading her being, of which she thought her waning life almost incapable. She clasped her feeble hands together, and exclaimed, 'Oh! Mr. M---!' It was all she could utter, for tears, whose fountains she had thought dried for ever, gushed into her eyes and rolled down her pallid cheeks. Mr. M--- took one of her cold hands in his, and looked upon her, for a time, without speaking.

'My daughter,' at length he said, and he did not speak without much emotion, 'do you find the hand of God hid heavy upon your soul, or is it gentle, even as a father's hand?'

'Gentle, most gentle,' she answered. 'Oh! blessed, for ever blessed be the hour that sent you, heaven-directed, to guide the wanderer in the paths of peace! Had it not been for you, I should now be trembling on the verge of a dark eternity, without one ray to illumine the unfathomable abyss. Pray for me once more, my beloved friend, and pray too for my dear mother, that she may be enabled to seek Him in faith, who can make a dying bed 'feel soft as downy pillows are.'

Ellen clasped her feeble hands together, while Mr. M---, kneeling by her bedside, in that low, sweet solemn tone, for which he was remarkable, breathed forth one of those deep and fervent prayers, which are, as it were, wings to the soul, and bear it up to heaven. Mrs. Loring knelt too, by the weeping Agnes, but her spirit, unused to devotion, lingered below, and her eyes wandered from the heavenly countenance of that man of God, to the death-like face of that child, whose beauty had once been her pride. She remembered how short a time since, she had seen that form float in airy grace before the mirror clothed in fair and flowing robes, and how soon she should see it extended in the awful immobility of death, wrapped in the still winding-sheet, that garment whose folds are never more waved by the breath of life. Then, conscience whispered in her shuddering ear, that had she acted a mother's part, and disciplined her daughter to prudence and obedience, the blasts of death had not thus blighted her in her early bloom. And it whispered also, that she had no comfort to offer her dying child, in this last conflict of dissolving nature. It was for this world she had lived herself, it was for this world she had taught her to live, but for that untravelled world beyond, she had no guiding hand to extend. It was to a stranger's face the fading eyes of Ellen were directed. It was a stranger's prayers that hallowed her passage to the tomb. The realities of eternity for the first time pressed home on that vain mother's heart. She felt, too, that she must one day die, and that earth with all its riches and pleasures could yield her no support in that awful moment. That there was something which earth could not impart, which had power to soothe and animate the departing spirit, she knew by the angelic expression of Ellen's upturned eyes, and by the look of unutterable serenity that was diffused over her whole countenance. The voice of Mr. M--- died away on her ear, and an unbroken silence reigned through the apartment. Her stormy grief had been stilled into calmness, during that holy prayer. The eyes of Ellen were now gently closed, and as they rose from their knees they sat down by her side, fearing, even by a deep drawn breath, to disturb her slumbers. A faint hope began to dawn in the mother's heart, from the placidity and duration of her slumbers.

'I have never known her sleep so calm before,' said she, in a low voice, to Mr. M---. Mr. M--- bent forward and laid his hand softly on her marble brow.

'Calm indeed are her slumbers,' said he, looking solemnly upward; 'she sleeps now, I trust, in the bosom of her Saviour and her God.'

Thus died Ellen Loring--just one year from that night when Agnes followed her retreating figure, with such a wistful gaze, as she left her for the ball room, exclaiming to herself, 'Happy, beautiful Ellen!' and Agnes now said within herself, even while she wept over her clay-cold form, 'Happy Ellen!' but with far different emotions; for she now followed, with the eye of faith, her ascending spirit to the regions of the blest, and saw her, in imagination, enter those golden gates, which never will be closed against the humble and penitent believer.

A few evenings after, a brilliant party was assembled in one of those halls, where pleasure welcomes its votaries. 'Did you know that Ellen Loring was dead?' observed some one to a beautiful girl, the very counterpart of what Ellen once was. 'Dead!' exclaimed the startled beauty, for one moment alarmed into reflection; 'I did not think she would have died so soon. I am sorry you told me--it will throw a damp over my spirits the whole evening--poor Ellen!' It was but a moment, and the music breathed forth its joyous strains. She was led in haste to the dance, and Ellen Loring was forgotten.

'WITHOUT GOD.' Wicked men do not consider God in the affairs of this world. They calculate every other influence which may affect their schemes, but leave out the great influence--God. A father went to steal some corn, and took his little son with him. After filling his sack, he looked carefully in every direction to see if there were any about who might detect him. Seeing none, he was about to shoulder the sack, when the boy said, 'Father, you have not looked up.' The father dropped his sack, emptied it, and returned home a wiser, and it is to be hoped, a better man. The idea that God was an eye-witness was not new, yet he had practically ignored the fact. He feared detection from every source save that from which it was sure to come.

Is there not something of this folly and infatuation in the course of all the impudent? They know they must 'give an account,' and yet they are not preparing for it. They know that their only hope is in God, yet they are living 'without God and without God in the world.' They eat, they sleep, they plan, they work, without practically recognizing God at all. And while they are thus living and planning--God may call them away.

It was precisely thus with the rich man in the parable. 'I will pull down my barns and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.' He emphatically 'reckoned without his host.' He forgot that God had something to do in the matter. But God did not forget him; 'Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.'--American Messenger.

House Blown up with a Keg of Powder. On the night of the 25th ult., a keg of powder was placed under the house of Mr. John Chaffer, in the town of Minden, Louisiana, directly beneath the chamber where Mr. Chaffer, his wife, and two children were sleeping, and there exploded, blowing the building to atoms, and severely injuring all the inmates; though singularly enough, none were killed. The office of the Louisiana 'Herald' was also destroyed. Two of the negroes of Mr. Chaffer were arrested, on suspicion of having perpetrated this diabolical crime, and one of them has since made confession.

Grocery, Provision, Confectionery, and VARIETY STORE, At intersection of Valley, Mill, Dorcas and Market streets, lately occupied by Mrs. Wertz.

THE undersigned having purchased the entire stock of Mrs. Wertz, respectfully announces that he intends to make such additions of articles in general use as to be able to supply almost anything that may be called for by the old customers of the establishment and any number of new ones. Intending to keep on hand all the leading articles of marketing, he solicits farmers and others having Butter, Eggs, Lard, Tallow, Honey, Potatoes, Green or Dried Apples, Soap, Poultry, &c.

to give him a call, as the highest cash price will be paid the market can afford, or Groceries, Salt, Fish, Confectioneries, Perfumery, Fancy Articles, Hosiery for ladies and gentlemen, Ladies' Collars, Combs, Bracelets, Buckles, Belts, Gloves, Mitts, &c. furnished therefor at lowest cash prices.

Cabinet & Undertaking Business. The manufacture of Furniture and Cabinet Ware generally, as well as the Undertaking Business, will not be relinquished on account of my engaging in the above business, but orders in either promptly attended to. My friends and the public generally are invited to call, examine my stock and prices in both establishments, and, as heretofore, I shall endeavor to please them.

ANTHONY FELIX. Lewistown, Nov. 19, 1857.

Dissolution of Partnership. NOTICE is hereby given that the co-partnership heretofore existing between S. & M. FRANK was dissolved on the 22d day of December, 1857, by mutual consent. The books and accounts are in the hands of M. Frank, at the store, where all those indebted will please call and settle their accounts. SAMUEL FRANK, MEYER FRANK.

Lewistown, January 7, 1858.

HAVING purchased the interest of S. Frank, I now offer the extensive assortment of goods on hand at very low prices. The stock is large, comprising everything usually to be found in stores. Very thankful for the liberal patronage heretofore extended to the store, I respectfully solicit a continuance of the same, as I feel confident of being able to please all in price, taste and quality. jan7.3m M. FRANK.