

# VERA BROPHY.

BY CLIO STANLEY.

What seas do not lovers sail on, what hills do they not climb, what valleys do they not explore? You cannot find a place so solitary that its sunshine has not fallen on their happy faces; nor a crowded city where they have not made a part of the busy, cheerful crowd. The blue skies smile on them everywhere, green trees over-arch them, streams ripple at their feet, and Alpine snows beat in their faces! Yet what matters the snow or the storm, sunshine or shadow, for does not love glorify every land?

And so Erin to me was a land of true delight, and her fields were the fairest that ever sun shone on! Green fields starred with daisies; tiny, wandering brooks with crowds of violets and bluebells on their banks; the golden furze illuminating pages fairer than old missal could ever boast; lovely glens and smiling valleys fading in misty sweetness; lakes lying like jewels in the sunshine; and the everlasting hills, standing blue and shadowy in the distance. The woods themselves might well be the abode of fairies, such was their weird loveliness; trees with their trunks and branches covered with moss with many and many a year's growth; ivy running over the moss and sweet wild flowers taking root and blossoming there, making garlands of beauty for the mid-air!

A week before we had reached Queenstown, and spent some days there; and then a brief stay at Cork, and I had come alone to Killarney to see the meeting of the waters, to wake the lonely echoes of the Eagle's Nest to visit sweet Innisfallen, to toil up Carran Tual and descend through the Black Valley, to sit on the old hearthstone in Kate Kearney's cottage, and to do whatever else a romantic interest should prompt, while the rest of the party went over to indulge in two weeks gaiety in Dublin before coming for a little rest, to Killarney.

It has always been part of my creed that it was horrible selfish to go away into any land of delight alone; to gaze on the loveliest features of nature's face without a human soul for companion, into whose ear you could pour all your fervid admiration; and so when, after many years of great expectation, I found I could really afford to travel, I looked about me for some one else to enjoy it too. There was my cousin, Nannie Kempe, and Miss Roland and her mother, who were waiting just such a chance, and so we made up a party of four and started in gay good humor with our selves and the rest of the world; but at Cork there had been a sudden inundation.

Three of my batchelor friends had swept into sight, and our quiet party was quiet and contented no longer.

Old castles and cathedrals lost their charms; long drives under the sweet luburnum branches; which with their drooping blossoms, we had learned to call by its real Irish name, "Shower o' Gold," ceased to interest, when put in the scale with parties and hops and one real ball, to which there was sure to be invitations awaiting them, if they went direct to Dublin.

Nannie was ready for fun, always; but Miss Roland I had rather counted on as ready to go wherever I beckoned. We had been very good friends for at least eighteen months, and I knew quite well that a gracious approval was waiting on her mother's smiling lips, but though I had been half a dozen times on the verge of a declaration, which would have left me no choice but to go where she chose, I had always caught myself just in time; so that when she, with the rest, voted enthusiastically for Dublin, I decided to go alone to the lakes and await their arrival.

When once there, free to indulge my own fancies, I made pilgrimages to all the romantic spots anyone could tell me of, spending whole days on the water or the mountain side, alone with my good staff and luncheon-box, the contents of which I shared with numerous rosy-cheeked lads and lassies, coasted to my side with the welcome jingle of silver small coins.

It was when sitting one day on a bit of broken rock, making a pencil sketch of two curly-headed boys, twins in an overflying cabia where there were thirteen happy children, every one with the blue of the skies in their

laughing eyes, and the gold of the sunshine tangled in their hair, that I first saw Vera Brophy. She was coming down the steep, rocky path, with just a light scarf thrown over her head its fleecy ends floating behind her, and she paused and stood on tip-toe looking for some one, one fair hand shading her beautiful eyes.

"She is looking for us," said Dennis in an admiring whisper.

"Sure, it's for nobody else, I believe," said Lanny, a broad smile overflowing his little round face.

I raised my finger to enforce silence for I feared she would vanish at a word, when suddenly a burst of sweet song rose on the soft air. To this day I cannot speak calmly of that moment. The sweet song rose and died away twice before I stirred.

I had heard Miss Roland sing often and once this self-same song, but her voice was artificial and as thin as muslin, while these tones rang out like the notes of a mountain flute, and the words melted into the tune until words and melody seemed one.

"She always calls us with that," said Lanny, his tiny voice exultant.

"Faith, she do," said Dennis, nodding. "Hasn't she the voice of a bird?" inquired Dennis, searching my face.

"Sure, it's a whole grove of them," added Lanny.

And when I gave them permission to move and it needed but a glance to do it, they seized each a hand, and dragged me with them.

"Here we are! here we are!" they both shouted in a breath, "and this is him with the bread and meat! You told us he was a man in a fairy tale!"

A faint flush, like that presaging the dawn, rose to her lovely face, as I hastened to introduce myself in a more regular way.

She smiled and at once told me her own name. The boys were so eager that I had to show her the sketch I had just made; and then they begged so hard for another, with their Miss Vera between them, to take home to the mother, that she consented, and sat down on a moss-covered stone with Dennis at one side and Lanny at the other.

I own that I hesitated; could I ever draw that beautiful face!

"Sure, it's not so aisy," said Lanny, pure fun dancing in his eyes.

"Her is different from we!" broke forth from Dennis.

"Dennis!" said Miss Vera, reproachfully.

"Sure I think its the hunger makes us forget the grammar," said Lanny with a side look at the lunch box.

At that we both laughed, and as they promised me a longer sitting next day, and as many as I needed, I put the materials away, and opened the box, the boys easily persuading Miss Vera to share with us in the impromptu meal.

Bread and butter never tasted half so sweet before? We had but one course, but it was seasoned with such bright wit, such sound sense and such good feeling, that to me it seemed a feast!

I found out that Vera Brophy had gathered about her, the summer before, thirty or forty little children on that lonely mountain, and taught them to read and spell, and this summer they were getting some insight into grammar and making faint approaches to mathematics.

Well, to make a long story short, I made one of the school after that. I believe she called me her assistant, but indeed I was an eager learner at her feet.

Day after day, I looked in her blue eyes, reading there sweet lessons of truth and patience, until at length love crowned my good endeavors!

"But would you take a poor girl from these Irish hills to your home across the seas?" she said shyly, one day, a month later.

"Sure, I would if I could get her!" as Lanny would say, I added, laughing.

And then she told me the secret of her work. It was all labor of love. She had a small competence, but she was alone in the world, and for love of her own little countrymen she had left the city and spent two summers teaching them.

"But a school-house is to be built here next year," she said, "and then they will not need me so much."

"Not as much as I shall," I replied; and so it was all settled between us.

Miss Roland and her mother came

the next day, and Nannie with them. Vera met them in the parlor of the hotel, with her own sweet grace, and Nannie soon afterward received her with open arms, and promised to stay for the wedding; but Mrs. Roland turned her back on her, and her daughter followed her example.

It was not many days before our party was reorganized. They returned to Dublin, and soon after crossed to London; and cousin Nannie made one of a happier party.

The summer sunshine has faded on the Irish hills, and the Shower o' Gold has fallen; but though outside our cottage home the winter wind blows, Vera and I know nothing of its chill.

Her smile brightens all our house; her sweet song makes it cheerful all the year round; and when two months ago Lanny came over to us, to be adopted as an office boy, he looked at us both and said with a rare twinkle in his eyes:

"Sure, its happy I am to see ye both comforted!"

## BORROWED HUMOR.

Maids in waiting—those beyond twenty five.

There is a time for all things. The time to leave is when a young lady asks you how the walking is.

Bulldogs are an accepted type of courage, but we have known the lowly and despised kitten come up to the scratch.

A letter passed through the Tappanahock post-office the other day, addressed to a person out West, with the title "Attorney-at-law and the very devil at bluff!"

"Pa, what is the interest of a kiss?" asked a sweet sixteen of her sire.

"Well, really, I don't know. Why do you ask?" "Because George borrowed a kiss from me last night, and said he would pay it back with interest after we were married!"

Paddy is often postically polite. On picking up and returning a lady's parasol, which had been blown out of her hand, a gallant Irishman said, "Faith, miss, an' if ye was as strong as yer handsome, be jabbers a hurricane couldn't have snatched it from ye."

A formal fashionable visitor thus addressed a little girl: "How are you my dear?" "Very well, I thank you," was the reply. The visitor then added: "Now, my dear, you should ask me how I am." The child simply and honestly replied "I don't want to know."

It is said of Horace Greely that soon after he went to learn the printing business he went to see a preacher's daughter. The next time he attended meeting he was considerably astonished at hearing the minister announce as his text, "My daughter is grievously tormented with a devil."

"It is a curious custom the Japanese have," my dear, remarked a husband, "of taking their shoes off when entering the house." "The custom is curious," replied the lady, "from the fact that is practical at all hours instead of at night only;" and the husband said, "Yes," with a rising inflection, which was about all he could say.

"You ought to have your baby baptized," Rastus, said a member of the church to a colored father. "Yes, sah; but I can't afford de cost." "It doesn't cost nuthin'." "I know it doesn't cost nuthin' fo' de mere act of baptism sah, but yo' see I owe de minister two dollars for performin' de weddin' ceremony a yeah ago, an' he mought object sah, to baptisin' a baby dat hadn't been paid fo'."

"I am a lawyer's daughter, you know George dear," she said, after George had proposed and had been accepted, and you wouldn't think it strange if I were to ask you to sign a little paper to the effect that we are engaged, would you?" George was too happy to think anything strange just then, and he signed the paper with a trembling hand and bursting heart.

Then she laid her ear against his middle vest button, and they were very very happy: "Tell me darling," said George, after a long, delicious silence, why did you want me to sign that paper? Do you not repose implicit confidence in my love for you?" "Ah, yes," she sighed, with infinite content, "indeed I do; but George dear I have been fooled so many times."

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## HOW HANCOCK FELL IN LOVE

After Hancock graduated from West Point, his first duty was in connection with an exploring party in the West. On his way there he stopped for a short time at St. Louis, and it was his custom there to take a horse; back ride every morning. As he rode down one of the streets one bright sunny day, when it was still early, he saw at the window of one of the finest looking houses of the city a very beautiful young lady. His eye caught hers as he passed, and he involuntarily raised his hat. The young lady blushed, waved her hand at him, and then stepped back into the shadow. As the story goes it was a case of love at first sight on Hancock's part.

Morning after morning he rode past the house, hoping to see her again. At last one day he past by on foot just as she was leaving the house on the arm of a fine looking old gentleman. The lady recognized him again, as he could see from her blushes, but she did not bow, and just as he passed she entered a carriage. The old gentleman followed her, and the two drove rapidly away. I shall not describe how Hancock took a cab and kept the carriage in sight, nor how gratified he was when after a short drive he saw it draw up at the door of one of his old army comrades. A moment later he had dismissed the cab, and knocked at his friend's house. His friend met him in the hall, and in a stammering way he asked for an introduction to the young lady.

A moment later he was taken into the parlor and introduced to Miss Almira Russell and her father. Old Mr. Russell was one of the rich merchants of St. Louis. He took quickly to Hancock, and before he left the house that afternoon the young officer received a hearty invitation to call, which by the way, the young lady seconded. Hancock did call and he called often. The pretty young lady seemed to be as much attracted to the gay young lieutenant, as the lieutenant was to her. After a short courtship they became engaged, and a short time later were married.

## HEART-BEATS.

Dr. N. B. Richardson, of London, the noted physician, says he was recently able to convey a considerable amount of conviction to an intelligent scholar by a simple experiment. The scholar was singing the praises of the "ruddy bumper," and saying he could not get through the day without it, when Dr. Richardson said to him: Will you be good enough to feel my pulse as I stand here?

He did so. I said, Count it carefully; what does it say?

Your pulse says seventy-four. I then sat down in a chair and asked him to count it again. He did so and said, Your pulse has gone down to seventy.

I then lay down on the lounge and said:

Will you take it again?

He replied, Why it is only sixty-four; what an extraordinary thing.

I then said: When you lie down at night that is the way nature gives your heart rest. You know nothing about it, but that beating organ is resting to that extent, and if you reckon it up it is a great deal of rest, because in lying down the heart is doing ten strokes less a minute. Multiply that by 60 and it is 600; multiply that by 8 hours, and within a fraction it is 5,000 strokes different; and as the heart is throwing 6 ounces of blood at every stroke, it makes a difference of 30,000 ounces of lifting during the night. When I lie down at night without any alcohol, that is the rest my heart gets. But when you take your wine or grog you do not allow the rest, for the influence of alcohol is to increase the number of strokes, and instead of getting this rest you put on something like 15,000 extra strokes, and the result is you rise up very seedy and unfit for the next day's work till you have taken a little more of the "ruddy bumper," which you say is the soul of man below.

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