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Select Poetry.

THE MAIDEN'S PRAYER.

BY J. G. WHITTIER.

She rose from her delicious sleep And put away her soft brown hair,

And in a tone as low and deep As love's first whisper, breathed a prayer.

Her snow white hands together pressed, Her blue eyes shivered in the lid,

The folded linen on her breast, And just swelling with the charms it hid,

And from her long and flowing dress Escaped a bare and snowy foot,

Whose steps upon the earth did press Like a new snow-flake, white and mate;

And then from slumber soft and warm, Like a young spirit fresh from heaven,

She bowed that light and matchless form And humbly prayed to be forgiven.

Oh, God! if souls unsoiled as these Need daily mercy from thy throne;

If she upon her bedded knees, Her holiest and purest prayer,

She with a face as clear and bright, As dew on some stray child of light;

If she with those soft eyes in tears, Day after day in her young years,

Must kneel and pray for grace from Thee, What lar, far deeper need have we!

How hardly, if she win not Heaven, Will our wild errors be forgiven!

Select Tale.

A THRILLING SKETCH.

THE LAWYER'S BRIDE.

JUDGE REMSEN'S FIRST CLIENT.

Old Judge Remsen, of Cowan, was fond of telling his early experience at the bar.

My first case, he would say, came upon me unexpectedly, after I had waited a considerable time for a client.

The way I came to get it, was this:

A young girl, Helen Montross, was to be tried at our County Court for stealing a breast-pin, valued at four dollars, and \$200 in gold.

from the trunk of her employer, James Wesley, merchant, in the town of Bedford.

The theft, which was detected five weeks before, occasioned quite a talk at the time, as the girl was beautiful, and Wesley and his wife Eunice was anything but that, besides being generally detested.

People said Helen had been treated shamefully by her mistress, who was jealous of her; and it was even hinted that there had been foul play in the prosecution for theft.

The subject of a trial of a gang of counterfeiters and horse-thieves had so absorbed public attention, that the case of Helen Montross was forgotten, and no one seemed to care for her fate.

But when she was placed in the prisoner's box, her beauty riveted every eye, and when the Judge asked her who was her counsel, and she modestly replied she had none, and no money to pay a lawyer, there was not a member present who would not willingly have undertaken her case.

Just then a man with eyes only for a moment, cast his eye on me, and said, "Mr. Remsen, you will please act as this young lady's counsel."

I started as though I had been shot. Luckily a juror was taken ill, and the court adjourned till ten next morning, or I am afraid I should have made sad work with my client's case.

As I left the court room I looked at my watch; it was eleven, so I had but twenty-three minutes to prepare my case.

I hurried to my office, and asked to see the indictment, and the evidence taken before the Justice of the peace. As he tumbled over a pile of documents in search of the papers, he said, "The Judge must have had a spite against you, Remsen, to put you in such a tight place, and you a green hand. No offence, if you added, as he observed the rising color of my cheek—no offence; I simply mean that you are unexperienced. There are no documents to take them home with you—only be sure to bring them to Court to-morrow morning. You will see that your client has not a chance."

I was annoyed at this light reference to my client, for whom I already entertained deep respect and believed innocent; but I said nothing. Hastening to my office, I looked myself in and commenced the analysis of my case.

The evidence consisted of the testimony of James and Eunice Wesley, Sarah Brown, a seamstress, Charlotte Boyce, a domestic, and Thomas Hannagan, a man of all work, employed by the Wesleys. Hannagan's evidence seemed straight-forward and truthful, and so did the servant girls. I made up my mind that they were not unfriendly to my client, and that I would seek an interview with them, although it would necessitate a journey to Bedford.

In Miss Brown's testimony I at once detected intense malice, and determined to harrow her up unmercifully in cross-examination. Wesley's evidence was similar in style and matter to that of Hannagan; but Mrs. Wesley's was full, discursive and acrimonious—such as that "she had always believed Helen to be a viper, but her husband upheld the troop." To my mind the case seemed clear; Mrs. Wesley herself had put those things in Helen's trunk.

I next went to the Court House and requested Mr. Mace, the Sheriff, who lived in the wing of the building, to introduce me to the prisoner. He conducted me to her cell—Although the bolts clanged heavily as they swung from the locks, our entrance did not attract her attention. She was standing by the door, her hands clasped behind her back, and her eyes fixed on the sky. The Sheriff asked me, "Miss Montross, a lawyer who is to manage your case, has just come to see you." She turned round, and made an attempt to indicate her readiness to be tried. The were alone. Com was precious, I must throw aside all my previous notions, and live with her as she lived with me.

"I have lived with you for many years, and I know you are innocent. This promise without hope, but your eyes, my task is to save you."

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The first witness was Charlotte Boyce. She had been called by her mistress to go up to see Helen's trunk searched; she went up there, and the honest pin and money found in it—lucked away in one corner. By my cross-examination I elicited the fact that Helen had just come home from an errand (on which she had been sent over an hour) when her trunk was searched, and had on her bonnet and shawl; that "she looked quite innocent and unconcerned until the things were found, and that she seemed astonished." On dismissing the witness, I gazed at the jury, but they sat with stern faces, as though they solved that nothing should make them clear the culprit. I called Miss Boyce back, saying I had forgotten a very important point. This excited some attention, and when I asked her if Mrs. Wesley was in the habit of ill-treating the prisoner, everybody pricked up their ears. The girl hesitated and stammered, and finally said she was. "And why do you think so?" I asked.

"Because Mrs. Wesley beat her once with a large club, and threatened to kill her, and was scolding her. But don't ask me any more questions," she suddenly exclaimed, "or I shall lose my place!"

I glanced at the jury, and saw that she was regarding her servant with a look of intense malignity, and to annoy her, I appealed to the Court to protect the witness against the threatening looks of her mistress. This brought all eyes to a focus on Mrs. Wesley's ugly countenance, and she turned fairly white with indignation. The Judge told the witness to speak without fear, and if she lost her place by telling the truth, she would find plenty of better ones. Being satisfied with the impression made, I told the witness to go on, and the District Attorney permitted her to pass without questioning.

The next witness was Miss Sarah Brown, the seamstress—a rately, hatch-faced, dapper little creature. "She was at work for Mrs. Wesley at the time the theft was discovered. She met Helen the day before the trunk was searched, coming out of her mistress's room, and she looked so guilty she suspected she had been doing something wrong. The same day Mrs. Wesley spoke to her about the things being gone, and she told her suspicions. Thereupon she thought it would be a good plan to search Helen's trunk; proposed to do it at once, but Mrs. Wesley preferred to wait. When the trunk was searched, the things were found in it, just as she expected they would be."

When this witness was passed over to me, I asked in a careless tone, how she knew the money was in Mrs. Wesley's room the day she had met Helen coming there.

"She knew it because Mrs. Wesley had told her. Couldn't be mistaken for Mrs. W. had spoken about the half eagle with a hole in it, which she was going to present to the minister's boy."

This I made her say over again, until she could be no mistake about it, and then asked if she knew who made the hole in the half eagle?

"Yes, Mr. Murch, the jeweler, made it."

"Yes, there he is," said she, pointing.

I told Mrs. Brown she could go, and the District Attorney requested that Mr. Murch should be sworn. The Attorney handed Mr. Murch the identical half-eagle, and asked if he recognized it. He said he did, that the Minister who committed the prisoner had made a mark upon it.

"That's all; the witness is yours, Mr. Remsen."

"Do you remember, Mr. Murch, on what day of the month you made the hole in the half eagle?" I asked.

"It was on the 17th of March," said he.

"Why, that was the very day the prisoner's trunk was searched, was it not?" said I, turning to the witness who had just gone.

"That is the day mentioned in the indictment," he replied.

"Turning again to the witness, I said, 'Mr. Murch, please to recollect with precision; you heard the witness who proceeded you, swear that Mrs. Wesley told her that the identical half-eagle, with the hole then made in it, was in her husband's trunk on or before the 16th of last March?'"

"I heard her say so," I heard her swear that, and was astonished, for Mrs. Wesley brought me the coin on the afternoon of the 16th and told me I must have it fixed by noon next day; at 11 on the 17th, she came for it, and at one that afternoon it was found in Miss Montross's trunk."

The District Attorney turned sharp around and gave the Wesleys a piercing look. Mrs. W. sat unmoved; but Wesley turned pale and fairly cowered beneath the gaze of the Attorney, who I saw was now convinced of the true facts of the case; and Judge and jury seemed to be of the same mind. I felt certain, then, of a verdict in my client's favor; but how was I to crush the Wesleys, and how win back her estate? I decided on my course.

Hannagan was next, and I showed by him that Mrs. Wesley had persecuted the prisoner in the most outrageous manner—beating her, threatening to kill her, and treating her shamefully. His testimony excited so much indignation against the couple, that I longed for the moment to arrive when James Wesley should take the stand. When Hannagan retired, Mrs. Wesley whispered to her husband, and he whispered to the Attorney. The latter seemed surprised, but announced that the prosecution would rest the case.

Everybody was carried off that the Wesleys were not called, and my plans were all deranged. I divined at once that Mrs. Wesley had suggested this course to shield her husband and herself from cross-examination. Had the instinct of self-preservation told her what was coming? I rose to open my case for the defence, and I began by saying that I had incontrovertible evidence that a conspiracy had been entered into to blast the character of my client, to enable the parties in the conspiracy to perfect certain secret plans, which would fill the community with horror. I saw that everybody was prepared to believe almost anything, and determined to waste no time in words. So I requested that James Wesley might be sworn, and desired the Judge to have Eunice Wesley removed while her husband was being examined. She was taken out by the Sheriff, and I turned to question James Wesley.

"James Wesley," said I, sternly, "how can that scar on your forehead?"

As the villain turned ghastly pale, gazed and clutched at the railing of the witness-box for support, I felt sure of my case and said:

"Answer me, Bob Harman; he that scar on your forehead?"

At the mention of the name "man," the wretch fell back upon I groaned, "Oh don't—don't bring me!"

"I shall bring that up and you answer me truly about that theft. Now, tell me—did you put those things in my trunk?"

"Oh, my God! how did you know about Eunice Gregory? Don't bring that up now. It's gone by, years ago," groined the wretched man.

"Answer me, then; did not your wife put those things in Miss Montross's trunk?"

"Yes—she did—let the girl go, and don't ask me any more questions."

The excitement had now become overwhelming, and the witness was beginning to fear for his bodily safety—a fact I determined to use as an additional screw. "I shall ask for little more," I replied, "as I do not wish to expose you to the rage of this audience, if you'll answer promptly. Where is the will that old Mr. Gregory executed, in which he made his grandchild, Helen Montross, his heir, and which he gave her to give to his lawyer when he returned—the will your wife stole from the child as she lay sleeping?"

"Oh, Lord! it's come at last! just as I told her it would!"

"Where is the will?" I inquired.

"It is burnt," he exclaimed—"but Helen is his only surviving relation, and the will by which my wife got her property is a forged one."

Having achieved everything, and not caring to prolong the painful scene, I asked the District Attorney if it would not be best to dismiss the case. He cheerfully assented, and Miss Montross, who in her flash of indignation and thankfulness, looked more lovely than ever, was released from the custody of the jailer, and placed in charge of his wife, while Wesley and his wife slunk away from public indignation.

The excitement was so great the court was not adjourned till three P. M., and I was obliged to state, for the gratification of the crowd, how I had managed to get on the track of the half-eagle. I told that many years before, I had read an account of the murder of a child by its aunt, Eunice Gregory, assisted by her lover, one Bob Harman, for the purpose of possessing her niece's estate. In that account it was stated that Harman, at the time of the murder, had fallen down an area and gashed his forehead terribly, which afterwards healed and left a peculiar scar. The facts I received from Helen's story, and the letter signed Eunice Gregory, had set my memory at work, and when I met Wesley and observed the peculiar scar on his forehead, the whole thing flashed upon me, and I determined to make a bold push to expose them, and not only defend Helen against the charge of larceny, but wrench from her unnatural aunt the patrimony that had been withheld from her.

My explanation was received with applause, and a movement set on foot to have the Wesleys indicted for perjury; but it was never carried out, as they disappeared from that part of the country, and we all thought it best not to bring them back for any purpose whatever.

Helen secured her estate, and I secured Helen; and if you will go home with me, you shall have an introduction to her and the children. That first evening did the business for me all around, as it secured a great reputation, plenty of practice, a handsome wife, and a large fortune.

MAN IN THE RAPIDS OF NIAGARA.

A Fearful Predicament—His Rescue.

On Tuesday last, a man named E. C. Taylor, a resident of West Winfield, Herkimer county, (a guest of the Ludlow House,) descended the bank of the river, near the suspension bridge, probably for the purpose of viewing the bridge from below. On reaching the bottom he slipped and fell into the water, just above the bridge, and when discovered, was thirty or forty rods below the bridge, near the shore, rolling over and over, and being along by the resistless current, until he caught hold of a large rock, and after some hard struggles succeeded in reaching the top. The alarm was immediately given in the neighborhood, and it was soon decided that there was no way reaching him but by means of a rope ladder. This was immediately prepared, and after much hesitation, delay and altercation, occasioned by the difficulty of determining where to place it, inasmuch as the man could not be seen by the projecting bank over his head, it was lowered to the distance of perhaps a hundred feet, and became entangled among the rocks and trees. It was at once decided that some one must go down to disentangle it. In a few minutes Willard B. Colburn, porter of the Ludlow Hotel, volunteered his services, and proceeded to the place where the ladder was attached to the trees. He needed assistance, and soon two more brave men, Anthony Shibley and Nat Crane offered to go down. The three worked bravely for more than an hour in conducting the ladder, while men at the top carefully let it down. At length, the man who had been entangled in the ropes, was seen to be all around, as it secured a great reputation, plenty of practice, a handsome wife, and a large fortune.

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