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BY W. BLAIR.

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Select Poetry.

CHILDHOOD LAND.

There is a beautiful, far-off land,
Lying in sunlit seas,
But never a ship to that magic strand,
Was wafted by fitful breeze:
For where her radiant shores unfold,
Night stretches her purple bars,
And fastens it with her gates of gold,
And guards it with sentry stars.

Over the fathomless summer skies,
Snowy clouds come and go;
Through every valley that dreaming lies,
Musical rivers flow.

Mountain and forest, glen and glade,
By the soft south-wind fanned,
Birds and blossoms that never fade,
Brighten this fairy land.

Even vanished, forgotten day,
Scatters its sunshine there;
Buds unfolding that passed away,
Are living more fresh and fair.
Loving deeds that the hands have done,
Sheaves of life's ripened grain;
Work unfinished that souls began,
Made perfect, there live again.

Men have sought it for weary years,
Yet ne'er to their yearning eyes
The glow of the mystic light appears,
Where the land of the beautiful lies.
Yet all have wandered its bright vales,
In the quiet of peaceful hours;

Each heart the calm of its joy once knew
And the sweet fits of deathless flowers.

But hour to hour from the hidden shore,
Our feet have journeying gone;
And days that faded can know no more,
The light of its tender dawn.

Yet we may find in the great somewhere,
Its stretches of pearl-white strand;
The bloom, beauty that dwelling there,
Makes Heaven the Childhood Land.

IF YOU LOVE TELL ME SO.

If you love me, tell me so;
I have read it in your eyes,
I have heard it in your sighs,
But my woman's heart replies,
If you love me, tell me so.

Should I give you yes or know!
Nay, a girl may not confess
That question would be "Yes,"
To such questioning, unless
He who loves her tells her so.

If you love me, tell me so,
Love gives strength to watch and wait,
Trust gives heart for any fate;
Poor or rich, unknown or great,
If you love me, tell me so.

Miscellaneous Reading.

UGLY BARBARA; OR, A WOMAN'S HEART.

"Upon my word, Barbara, I think you grow uglier every day!" said Ernest Etherington coolly, as he lighted his cigar at the softly shining light beneath the rose-colored glass shade, and surveyed his tall cousin as he did so.

Barbara Moyle shrank back as if he had dealt her an actual corporeal blow. Poor Barbara! She had been watching all day for the tardy train to bring her handsome cousin from college. She had combed her hair so carefully, and selected the very prettiest white dress, trimmed with blue ribbons, from her whole scanty wardrobe, because she had once heard Ernest say that he liked white, and hung the candle-drops that Uncle Montague had sent her from India in her ears; and this was his verdict, after all!

"I can't help it!" cried Barbara, passionately, while every drop of blood in her body seemed to concentrate itself at once in her burning cheeks. "I know I'm a great, ugly, gawky thing; but you oughtn't to twist me with it, Cousin Ernest."

Mrs. Etherington, kind, motherly soul that she was, was in the dining-room, busy with preserves and tarts innumerable, to tempt her newly arrived son's appetite, when Barbara Moyle rushed in like a whirlwind.

"Aunt Effie, tell me; am I so very ugly?" "Goodness gracious!" cried Mrs. Etherington, nearly upsetting a glass dish of quince jelly in her amazement. "What has come to the child? What on earth do you mean, Barbara?"

"Ernest says I'm uglier than ever," sobbed the tall, ungainly girl, as she sank dejectedly on the cushions in front of the looking-glass.

"He's only teasing you, dear."

"No he's not. He is speaking the truth. But I don't think he ought to tell me so."

Barbara surveyed herself with dolorous earnestness. A swarthy, not to say muddy complexion; heavy brown hair arranged very unbecomingly; and great wine-dark eyes; lips too thick for beauty, and features whose heavy mould, however much it might promise for the future, was certainly grotesquely inappropriate for a girl of fifteen—all these returned no answer, save delight.

"I am ugly," sighed Barbara, "and Ernest only spoke the truth. Oh, Aunt Effie, I wish I were a man. An ugly woman is like a soundless instrument or a colorless flower. Men can fight against their own fate, and make themselves a place in the world; women are utterly helpless."

And from that time Barbara Moy's character seemed to undergo a change, imperceptible yet entire. She withdrew more within herself; she cultivated mental resources, and depended less on the companionship and approval of others.

"Dear me!" sighed Aunt Effie.

Winton; "I only hope our Barbara isn't growing strong-minded. If she should turn public lecturer or artist or authoress, I really don't know how I could stand it." "Let her alone, mother," said Ernest. "All girls have to undergo a transition more than common in little Barbara. If she wasn't so ugly, I really should get interested in her. I always did like to study the most startling effect, the danger of mob law."

"Well," said Mrs. Etherington dubiously, "she's not handsome, but for all that I don't know how I could spare Barbara."

"I don't love him," said Barbara Moyle meditatively to herself; "but shall accept him. I want to prove to Ernest that there is some one who thinks me not absolutely frightfully!"

A dangerous experiment. Barbara, and one that many a woman, wiser than you have lived to repent. Marriages from pique are the marriages which fill our divorce courts with sorrowful tales, and make out the records of broken and blighted hearts.

But Barbara confided her secret sentiments to no one, and Mrs. Etherington wrote a long account to Ernest, now lounging among the ruins of Pompeii and Herculaneum, of what a brilliant match Barbara was about to make. Ernest wrote back a congratulatory letter, and sent a lovely set of pink Neopolitan coral, which Barbara never once put on. Colonel Allston made an "old man's darling" of her, and she had no lack of brilliant jewels to wear.

And yet Barbara was miserable.

"Child," said Mrs. Etherington, one evening, as she sat in the room which Mrs. Allston had just entered, dressed for a party in cream-colored silk and diamonds, "do you know how you have changed during the past year? I never in all my life saw such an alteration in any one."

"Have I?" said Barbara indifferently. Yet, as she looked in the glass, she could not but see it herself.

"I wonder if Ernest would think me 'ugly' now?" she said, striving to speak lightly, but with a concealed tremor in her voice.

"Ugly!" echoed Mrs. Etherington. "Why, Barbara, you are beautiful!"

She was. The large features were in harmony now with the rest of her face; the complexion had cleared to a creamy softness, with rose blooming on her cheeks and carnations on her lips: the nut-brown hair drooped in satin waves on either side of her head, and the large wine-dark eyes were full of shadowy, mysterious depths beneath their fringed lids. Yes; Barbara saw that she was fair to look upon, and her woman heart rejoiced within her.

As she turned, stately and jewel-decked like an oriental Sultan, she saw that a stranger had entered the room unannounced, and stood as if rooted to the floor, close to the door-way.

"Ernest!" cried both aunt and niece in one breath.

"Yes, I am Ernest Etherington," he answered, shading his eyes, as if dazzled by some over-bright vision. "But pardon me; I was told that cousin Barbara lived here."

Mrs. Etherington started to her feet. "Ernest, is it possible that you don't know your cousin?"

Yes, indeed, if we have the right stuff in us, these failures at the outset are grand materials for success. To the feeble there are, of course, stumbling-blocks. The wretched weakness goes no farther; he hangs behind, and subsides into a life of failure.

And so by this winnowing process the number of the athletes in the great Olympic life is restricted to a few, and there is clear space in the arena. There is scarcely an old man among us—an old and successful man—who will not willingly admit that he was made by his failures, and that he once thought his hard fate was in reality his good fortune. And thou, my bright-faced, bright-witted child, thou thinkest that thou canst carry Parnassus by storm, learn to possess thyself in patience. Not easy the lesson, I know; not cheering the knowledge that success is not attainable, *per se*, by a hop, step and a jump, but by arduous passages of gallant perseverance, toilsome efforts long sustained, and, most of all, by repeated failures. Hard, I know, is that last word grating harshly upon the ear of youth—Say them that we mollify it a little—that we strip it of its outer crustaceousness and asperity, and truthfully may we do, so, my dear! For these failures are, as I have said, but stepping-stones to success; *gradus ad Parnassum*;—at the worst, non-attainments of the desired end before that time. If success were to crown thine efforts now, where would be the great success of the hereafter? It is the grave resolution to "do better next time" that lays the substrate of all real greatness. Many a promising reputation has been prematurely destroyed by early success. The good sap runs out from the trunk into feeble offshoots or suckers. The hard discipline of the knife is wanted. I repeat that it is not pleasant; but when thou feelest the sharpness of the edge, think that all who have gone before thee have been lacerated in like manner.

"How BAD you look!"—Don't say that. Why not give the poor, sickly an encouraging word, instead? It will be far better. You may be startled to find your friend, or your neighbor, or some stranger whom you meet, looking so ill.

But don't show your surprise; keep your self-possession and do not attempt to express sympathy by telling him he looks "poorly," or "terribly," or "shockingly."

One such word is sometimes enough to top over all a poor fellow's courage and leave him shivering in depths of despondency. Speak cheerfully always to the sick. Look at the better side. Keep up their hope by leading them to see how well they are, rather than how sick they are.

"My Queen," he murmured softly.

"Judy thinks young ladies are better fast asleep than fast awake."

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