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Poetry.

THE QUERY.

Sits the sphinx beside me daily,
Whether I be sad or gayly
Live my life "Attend," she cries—
Looks me through with solemn eyes:
"Thou must answer, answer this:
What the sum of woe and bliss:
"What is life?

In all gladness, through all pain,
Whether peace or passion reign,
Turn my thoughts to things of earth
Or to themes of heavenly birth,
Still I hear that undertone,
Like the ocean's distant moan,
"What is life?

Once I thought that I might trance her
Into silence by an answer;
Thought that I could find the reason,
I could measure time and season,
I could sound the depths she stirred,
I could compass with a word
"What is life?

Youthful, vain, and fond delusion!
Now I turn from light intrusion
On the secret that she keeps
Close within her stony lips,
Which but open to their task,
Never to answer, only ask,
"What is life?

Hark! she whispers, "Thou shalt die
If thou givest no reply."
Once with shuddering and with pain
Flashed her words through every vein!
Now I wait the parting breath,
When shall answer friendly Death
"What is life?"

Miscellany.

The Use of Words.

Bad words are as influential as the plague and the pestilence. They have wrought more evil than battle, murder, and sudden death. They creep through the air into the heart, call upall its bad passions, and tempt to break God's commandments. A few bad words got into the ear of the mother of mankind, and led her on to eat the forbidden fruit, and thus to bring death into the world.

You may tame the wild beasts; the conflagration of the American forest will cease when all the timber and dry wood is consumed; but you cannot arrest the progress of that cruel word which you uttered carelessly yesterday or this morning.

Good words do more than hard speeches, as the sunbeams without any noise will make the traveler cast off his cloak, which all the blustering winds could not do, but only make him bind it closer to him.

If you do not wish a man to do a thing, you had better get him to talk about it; for the more men talk, the more likely they are to do nothing else.

O, how glorious to make everything pleasant, to throw sunshine upon every cloud, sweeten life by smiles and kind words and to make joy to spring in your path, and love to glow on every face.

I hate anything that occupies more space than it is worth. I hate to see a load of band-boxes go along the street, and I hate to see a parcel of big words without anything in them.

Words are things, and a small drop of ink falling like dew upon a thought, produces that which makes thousands, perhaps millions think.

There are words which can separate hearts quicker than sharp words; there are words whose sting can remain in the heart through life.

I am not so lost in lexicography as to forget that words are the daughters of earth; and that things are the sons of Heaven.

Hard words are like hailstones in summer, beating down and destroying what they would nourish were they melted into drops.

We should be as careful of our words as of our actions, and as far from speaking ill as doing ill.

O, many a shaft, at random sent,
Finds mark the archer little meant;
And many a word at random spoken,
May soothe, or wound a heart that's broken.

Words are like leaves; and where they most abound,
Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found.

A New Centre of Civilization.

An interesting epoch in the history of Oceanica seems to have arrived. The Fiji Islands are among the most salubrious and fertile of those almost innumerable spots that crop out of the bosom of the Pacific Ocean. The two main Islands, Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, are described as incomparably productive, yielding some of the most valuable staples of the world without cultivation—such as cotton, (which grows wild and in great profusion) the tea-plant of China, the cocoanut, caraway, nutmeg, sugar cane, sarsaparilla and the pineapple. It is not wonderful that lands so blest should have attracted a large immigration from Australia, New Zealand, and the mother country. This has been going on for years, till the usual bickerings have ensued between the savage and simple natives and the new-comers—the former having been driven to the hills, which means "to the wall," and King Cacoban confessing his utter inability to prevent or compose the disputes constantly arising between the two races. Such a state of things naturally offers to England her favorite pretext for interference—her subjects must be protected—and that, according to her immemorial habit, they will be, and the islands acquired besides. Thus we shall have another centre whence civilization and Christianity may radiate, and the utilization of the finest land in the world in the world's behalf. With Great Britain in the Fijis, and our own flag floating over the Sandwich group, the universality of Christian thought and usages over the vast expanse of the Pacific will be assured.

A Deluded Britisher.

"I must tell you," writes a New York correspondent, "how an amiable lady from the 'right little, tight little island' was deceived by her trusted but wicked nephew, who had lived in this city some time before his aunt came to pay him a visit. She, the aunt, had heard much of our watermelons, and was anxious to see and taste one; so in the height of the season off went the nephew to Washington market, and there procured the largest melon that ever grew. At dinner, the whole affair having been previously arranged, this huge specimen was placed on the table, when all at once another nephew exclaimed to the host: 'Well, I should have thought you would have got a good-sized melon to-day, when you knew auntie has never seen one, and that is such a miserable little thing?' Poor auntie looked at the fruit with staring eyes, and it was afterwards found that she had written in her note-book. 'Melons grow gigantic in America!'"

An ignorant old lady was asked by a minister visiting her if she had religion. She replied: "I have slight touches of it occasionally."

Translated from *The Gartenlaube*. From the German of E. Rudorff.

"AND HE SHALL RULE OVER THEE."

BY MRS. FANNIE B. TOLLMAN.

"Catharine, has my niece yet completed her toilette for the ball?" enquired the widowed Madame von Herbeck of the maid who was entering the room, carrying shawls, hoods and other winter wrappings.

"The young lady will be here immediately, Madame," she answered.

"Then, at six o'clock bring in the tea. With the mercury at zero, a cup of warm tea can do no harm before a drive."

Catharine left the room and Madame von Herbeck rose from her seat and walked a few times up and down the large, beautiful apartment.

The lady was about fifty years of age, and her face indicated gentleness and kindness. She wore a dress of heavy silk. A black mantilla hung over the back of a chair. A lace handkerchief and gloves lay near, and a head-dress trimmed with white ribbons was visible in an open basket standing by her. Everything seemed to be in readiness for the journey to the Sylvester ball, which was to be held at B——, the principal town of the province, and distant about a half mile.

An expression of lively interest passed over Madame von Herbeck's features as she said, musingly, "If Emma would not trifle with her happiness. She is not likely to find another wooer like Löbau. But it is useless to preach reason to a child of eighteen almost spoiled by adulation. Emma is beautiful, more beautiful even than her mother, my early lost sister Antoinette, yet in a few years this mischievousness and petulance which her adorers now regard as so irresistible, will, through more serious thought, perhaps through the knowledge of her past foolishness have vanished. And, perhaps if I were gone, this throng of admirers would soon disappear."

Madame von Herbeck had become, through the death of her husband which occurred three years previously, possessor by his will of all his property and the estate of Birkenwalde. The marriage had been a childless and not very contented one. Of his possessions she had full control during her life, but at her death it had to go to a cousin of her husband.

Emma's father, Captain von Rohr, had died during her infancy, and her mother followed in a few years. The young orphan was taken charge of by her aunt, who bestowed the most tender affection upon her. She had been sent to the chief city of the province, and her fine talents there carefully cultivated, so that in the future she should be enabled to rely upon herself. Since then, she had lived with her aunt, and the greater the happiness derived by the latter from the presence of the bright joyous creature, the sadder the thought that Emma who appeared created to diffuse pleasure and delight through a home circle, should be forced to seek a place among strangers.

"Ever happy and gay,
Dancing life's hours away"—

sang—jubilant as a lark, a silver clear voice in the corridor. The door opened and the most charming creature imaginable, hastened over the threshhold, opened her arms, and enfolded the form of Madame von Herbeck in them.

"Emma, you will certainly crush your white tarletan dress and your bows and ribbons, with such a stormy embrace," said her aunt, warningly.

"Well, my darling aunt, if the dress and the roses are to hinder me from giving you a hearty kiss, they may go. I must beg you to excuse me for keeping you waiting so long. My crimps would not adjust themselves as they ought, I had to re-arrange them till they should lie properly so that I might resemble 'The Churchgoer' in the almanac. I intend to bear a very grave demeanor at the ball, for we shall begin a new year. Who knows what it may bring forth?"

For a moment a dreamy expression passed over the lovely face, which soon changed to a joyfully, happy smile, as she exclaimed, while raising her aunt's hand to her lips, "Whatever it may bring, I will bear it bravely, if only the love of my good, true, best of aunts remains." Madame von Herbeck softly patted the cheeks of the charming girl and said, "Emma, you love me so dearly and yet will not do what I so earnestly desire!"

Emma glanced mischievously, lightly blushing toward her aunt and said, enquiringly, "Löbau, is it not; have I guessed right?"

"Why are you so irritable, so unamiable, towards our neighbor? Is he not a truly honorable man?"

"Aunt! *honorable*, that sounds so old, so formal," and Emma declaimed pathetically.

"And Brutus was an *honorable* man!"

"Well, then let the term honorable go, though the young man of twenty-eight is really entitled to it. Is not Löbau a witty, handsome, amiable man?"

"Yes, I willingly admit all that; the thing is he is too yielding, you see, aunt!"

Catharine just then brought in the tea, and after carefully pouring out a cup for her aunt, and drawing her chair nearer to the table as the maid left the room, she continued:

"You see, dear aunt, I scarcely know how to make it plain to you. It is only when a man is something of a tyrant that he can make the right impression upon me. If I am to seek his approval, I must have a little anxiety about him. If I should marry, I would not allow it to be said, 'That is the husband of Madame von Löbau.' No, my husband must know how to impress every one, especially me. Löbau takes delight in everything, I say he laughs at my silliness, and even takes no notice of my impertinence. That only provokes me to be still more disagreeable. Lately, at a small gathering at Restorf, I said to him, during the cotillion, 'The heat is intolerable here, I wish some one would bring me a glass of lemonade.'"

"'Miss Emma,' he answered, eagerly, 'a glass of lemonade shall be at your service immediately.'

"He hurried away and returned with a servant bringing a glass, and taking it from him handed it to me.

"'Oh,' I said, 'this is not what I asked for.'

"'Did you request anything else?"

"'I only drink raspberry lemonade, Herr von Löbau.'

"'I am sorry that you did not at first say so.'

"'I did say raspberry lemonade, Herr von Löbau.'

"'As you assure me so positively that you did, I could not have heard well, and will get you what you desired.'

"Now, aunt, is it not dreadful! Do you know what I should have done in his place?" Emma stepped back a few paces from the table, knit her brows and said in the deepest tones of which her voice was capable, "You little piece of impertinence," I should have said, "do you think I will submit so quietly to your rudeness. If, instead of thanking me for the desired refreshment, you prefer to deceive me, in the future you may select some one else, I shall not submit to it."

With the last words her voice rose to its highest pitch, and her aunt, in whose face amusement and vexation contented, interrupted with:

"Enough of your nonsense, Emma, drink your tea, it is time we were starting."

She then rang the bell and ordered the carriage to be got in readiness.

"Dear aunt," said Emma, as the servant again withdrew, "let me finish what I wished to say, I really do not regard it as so very foolish that in some savage tribes the wives—so it is said—love their husbands in proportion to the number of blows they receive from them. Only a man with a spice of deviltry in him shall some day be your son-in law," here her voice changed to a tone of genuine child-like love as she continued, "for you are truly my second mother and no mother could be kinder."

Her aunt kissed Emma tenderly upon her forehead and said, "God grant that all may yet turn out well, your future often causes me much anxiety."

The carriage being announced, their traveling toilette began. Emma wrapped herself in a short cloak trimmed with fur, putting over her beautiful golden curls a hood of delicate white wool.

"Your cloak is very loose, Emma," urged her aunt, it lets the cold in on all sides.

"Well, then, I will take the scarlet shawl and tie it around me, I shall look like a Russian in his Caftan."

"And how shall you cover the little satin slippers?"

"Oh, I will put them into the nice boots you knit for me on Christmas, dear aunt. See how obedient I am, and try to do everything you wish.

Heraunt shook her head, doubtingly.

The preparations for their drive were all completed. A servant attended them to the carriage, and, after assisting them in, laid a thick fur robe over their feet, then wished them a pleasant journey, and they started over the crackling, sparkling snow.

In a short time they reached the boundary of Birkenwalde, and the Manorhouse of Charlotterhof, the residence of the Assessor Löbau, appeared in sight a dark solid block in the semi-darkness. Although Emma had spoken in a tone of ridicule of Löbau, yet as they passed his dwelling, she leaned her head out of the window and glanced searchingly over the building, from which, from the ground floor above, streamed a bright ray of light.

"Löbau has already left for the ball," she murmured; "for the lower rooms are occupied by the Inspector."

As her aunt, however, asked no questions and kept her veil closely over her face, Emma leaned her head back again among the cushions, and dreamed of the pleasures without number the ball should this evening bring to her.

Assessor Otto Von Löbau, who was loved and reverenced by all his friends, might easily be regarded by those slightly acquainted with him, as a weak tractable man. He regarded things in a broad earnest way. Nothing could induce him to disregard what he considered an act of duty. To things insignificant in themselves, he paid little heed, and to the interests of his friends and acquaintances, his own were always secondary. In the circles of home and society, there could be no kindlier, more amiable man than Löbau, but woe to those who misinterpreted the mildness and courtesy of his bearing, and dared to offer him an indignity. One of the chief bullies of the University, known and feared as a noted fighter, yet bore the deep marks of Löbau's powerful blows in a duel called forth by the barbarous acts of the former.

Three years since, when Löbau was preparing for his second legal examination, he unexpectedly came into possession of the beautiful property of Charlotterhof. Every one now supposed that he would not trouble himself further with study, but—as a man of established position—would quietly settle down in his ancestral possessions. They misjudged him.

The studies which Löbau began, he intended to finish with honor. At first, after making his state examination, he desired a furlough of a few months, in order to ascertain whether the life he should lead as a landed proprietor would interfere with these duties. He placed a competent agriculturist as chief superintendent at Charlotterhof, with a handsome salary. His advantageous arrangements for his tenantry were very evident, yet did not embarrass his less favorably situated neighbors. After passing a brilliant Assessor's examination, Löbau towards the end of summer came to Charlotterhof to make a protracted stay.

At their first meeting, Emma had made a deep impression upon him. Her beauty and grace charmed him, and even the self-will and little rudenesses, seemed to enhance her attractiveness. Besides, when she spoke to her aunt, such genuine feeling spoke in her beautiful blue eyes, as to leave no doubt of the real goodness of her heart. But as the love he felt for her intensified, the more deeply he was pained by the light mocking tone with which she addressed him.

A few days before the termination of the Sylvester ball, Löbau betermined to bring his relations with Emma to an understanding. He intended to speak with her fervently and earnestly, if she proved to be favorably disposed towards him—as he hoped—he should insist on an immediate decision. Moved in his deepest soul and filled with disturbing unrest, Löbau on the evening of the ball started for D——, an hour before it should begin. For him this evening to speak with levity or indifference was impossible. His first words should be addressed to Emma.

He stationed himself, therefore, at a window in a restaurant opposite to the building in which the ball was held, from which he could see, while apparently absorbed in the pages of a newspaper, each carriage as it drove to the entrance.

At last the carriage of Madame von Herbeck drove up, easily recognized by the gray horses and large lamps accompanying it. Like a sylph, Emma hastened up the steps, Löbau at once left his place and entered the ball room. Emma had scarcely laid off her wrappings, when Madame von Restorf and her daughter Laura, a friend of Emma's, entered the dressing-room. After an exchange of friendly greetings, Laura whispered, while securing the wreath in Emma's hair, "Do you know a certain somebody came up the staircase just now with me."

"I do not know of whom you are talking," answered Emma, whilst turning her head away as if to facilitate Laura's intention.

"Little rogue, you know very well whom I mean, you care more for Lobau than you pretend."

"I care for Lobau," answered Emma. I care for him about as much as I do for "Lord Merino."

"Lord Merino," was the title given to Isidor Erlanger, only son of the richest wool dealer of the province. In the interests of his business, Isidor had passed two years in England, and after his return to his native place, was not only enthusiastic over all he had seen there, but affected the speech and bearing of the English in an insipid manner. The young girls of his acquaintance had given him in consequence, the title of "Lord Merino."

Laura made no further remark to Emma's observation, the two girls assisted each other in arranging their toilettes, somewhat disordered by their journey and then Laura began again:

"Certainly your friend dances the first Cotillion with you, this evening."

"That is if I choose Laura, but I am tired of this and I shall not dance at all with him."

"If he should ask you, you must dance with him Emma,"

"Must," indeed, "am I a slave then." "Must we girls always have to consider ourselves fortunate when one of these Lords of Creation considers us worthy of a Polka or Galop with him? No, you shall see what I will do."

"Children are you not ready, cannot you do your chattering in the ball room, the remainder of the evening," said Madame von Restorf, and they left the room.

The dressing room entered into a corridor which led into a small ante-room. From this a few steps at both ends led into the ball room. This ante-room contained three open window seats which, like the boxes in a theatre, commanded the best view of the ball room and offered a more agreeable temperature.

Here Madame von Herbeck took her place upon a cushioned divan, giving Emma to the care of Madame von Restorf, who accompanied the two girls into the dancing room.

Emma felt irritable, a frame of mind altogether foreign to her nature. With whom she was angry she scarcely knew. The ball room was nearly full when they entered. In the middle of the doorway stood the Master of Ceremonies, and a few other gentlemen, among them Lobau.

As Emma came forward, he advanced towards her and said in a low earnest tone, "Will you allow me to dance the first waltz with you, Fraulein von Rohr?"

"Thank you, I am already engaged, Herr von Lobau," Emma replied, more coldly and brusquely than she had ever before spoken to the young man. Emma was frightened herself as the words escaped her. She expected from Lobau an invitation to another dance which she would have accepted. But he only bowed silently and and went immediately to the upper end of the room.

Isidor Erlanger followed right after him, also with a request for the first waltz. To be compelled to dance with "Lord Merino," that was hard. Emma accepted promptly, in order that this unfortunate waltz should be disposed of and she not appear to have spoken falsely to Lobau.

At that moment she turned her head towards her aunt, to give her a friendly nod, when her eyes met those of Lobau who, instead of ascending the steps, remained standing near her. Emma trembled under his glance. She had never before seen such an expression in the eyes of Lobau. What did it portend! Who could make it clear to her! Should she venture another glance?

Like a terrified child which imagines it has seen a ghost, and collects all its courage for another look, so Emma again turned her head towards Lobau.

He was no longer there.

"With whom will he dance," thought Emma.

Soon the introductory measure of the waltz sounded, and Herr Isidor Erlanger led away his partner. Emma was silent, and "Lord Merino" bore the whole burden of the conversation. He enlarged upon his sojourn in England, mentioned that he had been there on intimate terms with a family of high standing, who on one occasion had even entertained the Premier Disraeli—and that he also had very nearly met that distinguished statesman. Then he inquired of Emma whether she had read "Coningsby," by Disraeli, and informed her that many of the foremost men of the day were of Jewish descent.

At last the waltz came to an end. Löbau had not danced at all. Emma requested her partner to take her to her aunt. Perhaps she had spoken to him, he might be there now. Emma determined to be very friendly towards him, and to give him an opportunity of dancing the Catillion with her. Madame von Herbeck had seen Emma dance, and she must tell her to whom the remaining dances were promised.

"Have you not seen Lobau," inquired her aunt.

"He asked me to give him the first waltz."

"Well,"

"And I told him that I was already engaged."

No suspicion seemed to be aroused in Madame von Herbeck's mind, and Emma was soon again among the circle of dancers. Three other dances followed concluding with the Cotillion.

Lobau had not danced, that was plain and must have left the ball shortly before the waltz began.

Emma sought to hide the restlessness and anxiety which had taken possession of her, under a seeming composure, but they only increased and filled her heart with sadness. Was this the ball from which she had anticipated so much joy?

No other lady had received so many bouquets. None been so often asked to dance. Emma had been favored with the best of partners. Her young friends congratulated her warmly, her aunt smiled on her with pleased affection—but what had become of Lobau?

At midnight, twelve heavy strokes resounded in the ball room, followed by a flourish of trumpets and each hurried to friends and acquaintances, to wish them a happy New Year.

Like a Queen, Emma stood the centre of an admiring throng of ladies and gentlemen, with whom the serene and beautiful girl exchanged good wishes. And yet she was so far from happy.

Madame von Herbeck and a few families on intimate footing, remained to supper. It was two o'clock in the morning, when she and her niece entered the carriage to return home.

The full moon shone brilliantly; countless stars glittered in the dark blue heavens. A delicate hoar frost had adorned the twigs and branches of the trees with fairy-like flowers and leaves which, in the moonlight radiance, looked like a vision of enchantment. A deep peace reigned over the quiet landscape, not a breath of wind stirred. No sound could be heard but the rapidly rolling wheels of the carriage.

Emma was tired—so she told her aunt, and both ladies leaned back in silence against the soft cushions of the carriage. Emma again raised her head as they approached Charlotterhof. The inmates of the large mansion had apparently all retired, Lobau's apartments alone, on the first floor were lighted. Emma sighed deeply as they drove by. They had passed the house but a short distance, when suddenl a brilliant glare of light shone through the window and a scene of enchanting beauty burst upon them. A most unlooked for surprise was awaiting them.

In front of the large barn, pertaining to the estate lay a small pond, on the borders of which, three years before, Lobau had planted ash trees. Among the crystallized branches numerous richly decorated colored lanterns were suspended, their varied glittering light mingled with that of the moon, and illumined the mirror like surface of the pond with magical beauty. As the carriage came opposite to the pond, an energetic voice called to the coachman to stop. The horses stood still; the carriage door opened and Lobau stepped to the entrance.

"Dear Madame," he said, bowing respectfully to Madame von Herbeck. "May I have the pleasure of wishing you a happy New Year."

The astonished lady, suddenly aroused from a half sleep, returned a few words of thanks.

Then, at a signal from Lobau, the music of a favorite waltz was heard issuing from the barn in which a small band was stationed.

"Fraulein von Rohr," said Lobau, politely bowing to Emma. "May I be permitted to dance the first waltz with you?"

"Herr von Lobau," interrupted Madame von Herbeck, "what do these strange preparations mean."

"Dear Madame," he replied, "unfortunately for me Fraulein von Rohr could not give me the first waltz last evening, as I had hoped. I trust now to make no useless request."

"This can only be a jest," answered Madame von Herbeck, "and I do not consider the time very fitting."

"But, dear Madame, I promised myself that Fraulein von Rohr should dance a waltz with me before she returned home. I have everything in readiness for my undertaking. Music and lights are prepared; the pond supplies as beautiful a dancing floor as the finest ball room. The night is exceedingly mild, and a carpet covers the short distance between the carriage and the ice. Fraulein von Rohr may I again request a waltz?"

"Dear aunt," said Emma, "I could not forgive myself were I to detain you longer in the night air by a refusal. Herr von Lobau I comply with your request."

Lobau helped the young lady with the utmost politeness out of the carriage, closed the door and escorted Emma over the carpeted ground to the improvised dancing floor. She was dressed for her drive, and Lobau had on a small cloak and a hunting cap. With a firm arm he supported the young girl over the mirror-smooth surface To the music of the Strauss waltz "Das Leben ein Tanz" and under the glorious light of the starry heavens they danced twice round the circle of the pond. As Emma again stepped upon the carpet Lobau said to her; "Whilst I return to Fraulein von Rohr my best thanks I shall also do myself the honor of bidding her farewell, early in the morning I shall return to the Capitol."

"For a pleasure trip, Herr von Lobau?"

"No, for the future I shall live in the Capitol."

"Oh!"—

"What is the matter, Fraulein von Rohr?"

"I am afraid I twisted my ankle."

"Support yourself on my arm."

"Herr von Lobau I must stop one moment, must speak to you before you start on your journey."

"That is impossible, the train starts at 7 o'clock, and I have much to attend to."

"I must not keep my aunt waiting longer, but I beg to speak to you before you leave Charlotterhof. Here lies my shawl." And Emma unloosened the red shawl that enveloped her and let it fall to the ground. "Ride over on horseback and say to the servant that you have found my shawl, and wish to return it to me yourself."

"I will execute your command, Fraulein von Rohr."

In silence they returned to the carriage in which Lobau placed his partner, then bade good night to Madame von Herbeck as though nothing unusual had taken place.

Emma's aunt was excited in the highest degree, and as soon as the carriage doors were closed asked if anything had occurred to excuse this extraordinary behaviour of Lobau's. Emma kissed her aunt's hand, and begged that she might be allowed to be silent for the present. In the morning she would explain all that she knew about it. While thus speaking the hot tears fell upon the hand she held in hers, and her aunt remained silent notwithstanding her anxiety to have the matter made clear to her.

The ladies had scarcely returned home and laid aside their traveling wrappings, when Catharine announced the arrival of Herr von Lobau, who had found Miss Emma's shawl, and wished to return it himself to her.

"Dear aunt," said Emma before the former had time to reply, "allow me to receive Herr von Lobau, I will come immediately back."

"Invite Herr von Lobau into the balcony-room and tell him that my niece will be there directly," said Madame von Herbeck to the old servant; then turning to Emma, added, "But this is an unheard of proceeding."

"Dear aunt, just allow me to be gone a few minutes," said the young girl, "you shall soon hear everything." And throwing a mantilla over her shoulders and a light scarf over her head she entered the balcony-room where Lobau awaited her.

Her lovely face now wore more of the mocking expressions that usually lent it such witching charms. Her blue eyes were full of earnestness, and her sweet voice trembled as she thus addressed the young man:

"Herr von Lobau, I have wronged you, and you have punished me in the way you thought best. Our account might thus be balanced, but I promised my dear mother when a child that I would never go to rest, after being rude, without asking pardon and being at peace with every one, therefore, before you leave let me say to you, that immediately after you left the ball-room I regretted my conduct towards you. You will not continue to be angry with me?"

Lobau's breast was filled with contending emotions. Should he take Emma's hand and confess to her all that he felt and suffered? No; the bitterness and anger which contended in his soul conquered, and he said politely: "I am obliged to you for your kind words, Fraulein von Rohr, and I shall ever remember them."

His eyes, however, did not succeed like his words in concealing the real feeling of his heart, and under their tender glance Emma blushingly turned her head away.

"Herr von Lobau," she said again, looking towards him, "will you answer me openly and truly one more question?"

"I promise to do so."

"Had you already decided to go to the Capitol before you went to the ball last evening?"

"Will you excuse my declining to answer that question?"

"You promised me to speak truly."

"Well, then, I had thought to remain here always. I was a visionary fool. I had given my whole heart to a maiden with whose beauty and charms no other could compete. I felt that I was able to protect and cherish her with the most devoted affection. No rude blast should ever reach my tender flower. But to a man there is yet one thing that is more to him than his affection—his honor! That must remain unassailed. It will not endure the lightest stain. A breath suffers to dim its purity. To the woman who loves me my honor must be thus sacredly held, not only on great occasions, but in each moment, in every utterance and expression. With deepest sorrow I am compelled to acknowledge that to one it was not only an easy matter to offer me an unmerited insult but to aggravate it by giving the preference to an acknowledged simpleton."

"Herr von Lobau," replied Emma with a low voice, whilst she suppressed with difficulty the emotions she felt, "you have not done right to condemn unheard this young girl. You should remember that she is an orphan who never received the tender, earnest admonitions of a father; an orphan whose character has been moulded by different and opposing influences. Heaven gave her a happy temperament, hence anxieties and cares did not oppress her. Yet however joyously she surveyed life, still there existed within her heart the longing to be guided tenderly through it by a strong hand. You have said, Herr von Lobau, that to a man there is but one thing higher than his love, to a woman it is ever the highest. And because it is so sacred it best be hidden in her deepest soul. Often a girl scarcely knows of its existence, and the words alone of the man she loves reveal it to her. Angered by officious meddling she impetuously hides what must remain concealed. And, therefore, in order that strangers shall not discover what must first be revealed to the one loved, she is often cold and rude to him who is most dear. You have suffered, Herr von Lobau, the young girl suffers also. She feels——" Emma stopped speaking.

"Finish, I entreat you," exclaimed Lobau seizing her hands.

"She feels——that she has found the one whom she could love, and—that she has lost him!"

"No, Emma, by all that is true you have not lost him. Who could resist such noble-hearted candor," he added, as with a feeling of deepest happiness he tenderly embraced the trembling girl.

There was a knock at the door.

It was the old servant, who said "Madame von Herbeck wished to speak to her niece."

"We are coming," rejoined Lobau, who wished to inform every one of his great happiness.

The astonished Madame von Herbeck gave her desired consent to the warmly urged entreaties for an engagement. But added the warning, "I promise you plenty of trouble with the little mischief, dear Lobau."

"Do not be afraid, dear aunt," replied Emma, and for the first time the charming smile returned to her lovely face.

The understanding is that if again I do what I should not, I shall be treated to another "waltz on the ice!"

Lake Titicaca.

This is the most singular and interesting lake in the world. Situated on the crest of the Andes, it is the highest large body of fresh water; and as concurrent traditions point to it as the spot where Manco Capac, the first Inca, appeared and woke the aboriginal tribes from their long sleep of barbarism and ignorance, it is the historic center of South America. Humboldt called it the theatre of the earliest American civilization. On an island within it are the imposing ruins of the Temple of the Sun, and all around it are monuments which attest the skill and magnificence of the Incas. There are also, as at Tiahuanaco and Silustani, the remains of burial towers and palaces, which antedate the crusades, and are therefore pre-incarial.

Lake Titicaca is about the size of our Ontario, shallow on the west and north, deep towards the east and south. The eastern or Bolivian shore, being backed by the lofty range of Sorata, is very high and precipitous. The lake never freezes over, although the temperature of Puno is often 18 deg. at sunrise. Two little steamers of 100 tons each do a trifling business. Steam is generated by llama dung, the only fuel of the country; for there are no trees within 150 miles. The steamers actually cost their weight in silver; for their transportation (in pieces) from the coast cost as much as the original price. A steamboat company has just asked from Bolivia the exclusive privilege of navigating Titicaca and the Rio Desaguadero to Lago Pampa, with a guaranty of six per cent. cost on the capital and a share in all new mines discovered.

Professor Orton, the latest traveler in that region, calls attention to the fact that Lake Titicaca is not so high as usually given in geographical works by about 300 feet. Its true attribute is 12,493 feet, and in the dry season it is four feet less. This fact has been revealed by the consecutive levelings made in building the Arequipa railway just finished, which reaches from the Pacific to Lake Titicaca. The road rises from the sea to Arequipa, 7,550 feet; thence to the summit. 14,660 feet; and then descends over 2,000 feet, to Puno on the west shore of the lake, a distance by the track of 325 miles from the ocean. Pentlandt's estimates of Sorata, Illimani, and other peaks of the Andes, having started from the Titicaca level as a base line, must come down full 300 feet.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

A dispassionate examination of the poems of Elizabeth Barrett Browning can, we maintain, only lead to this result—that she is the equal of any poet of our time in genius. In particular qualities she may appear inferior to some who could be cited, and whose names will irresistibly suggest themselves; but in others she is as indubitably their superior; and, until we can decide who is greater, Byron or Wordsworth, Shelley or Coleridge, Homer or Shakspeare, we care not to assign her precise position. One thing is certain, however, her immortality is assured—she stands already crowned. As long as one human heart throbs for another she will be held in high esteem. Her poetry is that which refines, chastens, and elevates. We could think that with herself, as with one of her characters, "some grand blind Love came down, and groped her out, and clasped her with a kiss; she learned God that way." And who were her teachers? Can we ask that question of one who said, "Earth's crammed with heaven, and every common bush afire with God?" The emerald beauty of a thousand valleys, embroidered by the silver threads of meandering rivers; the grandeur of the everlasting hills with their lofty and majestic calm; the terrible rolling of the restless and unsatisfied sea; the stars that at midnight shine, looking down upon us like the eyes of those we love; above all, the whisper of God as it thrills through the human heart—these were her informers and teachers, the sources of her eminent inspiration. She sang of all these that men might be nobler, freer, and purer. Her apotheosis follows of divine right with that of all the leaders of mankind: God endowed her, and we exalt her.—*Cornhill Magazine.*

Female Gormandizers.

Insinuations with regard to the habits of the "fashionable" women of America have not been infrequent for some time past. There were whispers of whisky in connection with this subject, and some went so far as to count in absinthe among the cosmetics to be found on the toilet table of affluent beauty. These charges, however, were as thistle-down compared with that brought by an observant European who passed most of last winter in New York. His opinion is that the besetting vice of American girls is—well, not to put too fine a point upon it—gluttony. They reject, habitually, the normal three square meals per day during the ball season, reserving their appetites for the late suppers. An average dashing duck of a New York belle, this person avers (mind, we don't vouch for him), will consume at supper a plate of stewed oysters, a brick of lobster salad, a quart or so of stewed terrapin, unknown quantities of jellies, ices, and other such delicacies that are always in season. This may account for the forty tons of sardines which, we are told, formed a part of the cargo of the lost steamship Europe, and which oddly enough, were on their way out here in company with large consignments of silks. Let these fair gormandizers beware.

Heavy suppers and good looks cannot long go together; and there can be no doubt that roast beef, ale, and regular habits have a good deal to do with the buxum appearance of most English matrons, even when past middle age.—*English paper.*

Dyspepsia.

Now we know all about it. Dr. Wissenich, of Regensburg, proposes to call dyspepsia *torulasis*, yeast disease. He claims that in a wide circle of cases he has never found a dyspeptic patient the origin of whose disease might not be traced to the bread he ate. In a very interesting monograph in Hallermunde's *Medicinische Annalen* he attempts to show that the flesh-eating, milk-eating, rice-eating, date-eating, and, in short, all other peoples except the bread-eating peoples, are comparatively exempt from dyspepsia. He attributes the disease to the imperfect destruction in our ordinary baking processes of the vitality of the yeast-germs in the bread, and claims that they regain their activity in all weak stomachs, and increasing by germination, propagate regular mycelia among the other contents of the digestive sac, thus causing the food to be decomposed and made unnutritious or injurious before it can be digested.

Custom may lead a man into errors, but it justifies none.

Youths' Column.

The Child and the Gardener.

I planted once a little tree
Out in the air and sunshine free:
I gave it water every day;
But still it pined and pined away.

Our gardener had a wise old head:
I carried it to him, and said,
"Take this into the greenhouse hot."
He pulled it from the flower-pot.

And, smiling, held it up to me:
"A pretty gardener you would be!"
He said. "A plant that has no root
Will die, and bear no flowers or fruit."

I hung my head, and blushed for shame;
"But, child," said he, "you're not to blame:
Full many an older head I've seen,
As simple quiet as you have been.

You must in future wiser be,
And not plant flowers to make a tree;
But choose the roots, and wait, my dear,
Until the little buds appear."

LITTLE SUNSHINE.—Alice Haywood is six years old. She came with the June roses six years ago. She is a happy, sweet little girl, and has always been called "Little Sunshine." Papa says there are no dull days in his home, for he has Sunshine all the year round. But there were dull days in that home once, when Little Sunshine was very, very sick, and papa and mamma thought she was going to die. Such a dear little girl she was then! Just as patient and good! When the pain was so great she could not help groaning, she shut her lips tight, so the groan would come "little, and not big to make mamma cry." The sickness was short, and happy days came again when Little Sunshine was well enough to play and help mamma.

One day, when mamma, had gone out for a few hours, some grown-up cousins came from way off to visit her. Little Sunshine invited them into the house, and was very polite to them, taking their hats and shawls, and entertaining them the best she could with her big dolly, tea-set and other nice things. When she saw her mamma coming, she ran to the door to tell her who was there, and then said, "I don't think they've been lonesome, mamma, for I've done all I could to make them happy."

Wasn't she a darling to be so thoughtful and kind? She is always trying to make people happy; and when anybody tries hard to do anything, she is sure to succeed, you know. Do you try, too, little ones? I hope you do, and I know that everybody loves you if you do, and you are happy yourselves, like Little Sunshine, who is curled up on the low window-seat just now talking to her kitty, telling it never to catch little birdies, and when it catches mousies it must be very careful not to hurt them. —*The Children's Hour.*

THE ERMINE.—Away up in northern latitudes, where there is nearly always snow and ice, and where the summers are very short indeed, lives a little creature which wears such a beautiful dress that we are all envious and desire to rob him of it. His dress is soft as velvet, and creamy white, and so warm that it is a protection against the coldest weather. Ladies want it to border their garments with, judges think that it adds to their dignity to wear it, and even kings and nobles desire it to help make their crowns and coronets. So this beautiful, shy little creature, scarcely as large as a cat, is hunted by the trapper, and when caught deprived not only of its garment, but of life itself, that lords and ladies, kings and judges, may have their whims gratified

This little animal is called an ermine. Its food consists of rats, young rabbits, birds, small animals of every description, and birds' eggs. It is long, slender and graceful in form, and can climb trees as easily as a cat.

During the summer the ermine is called a stoat, and then its back is of a reddish brown, which allows it to pass along the ground among the fallen leaves and rubbish without being perceived. But when the cold weather comes, the fur gradually turns white, all but the tip of its tail, which remains black.

There are ermines or stoats found in temperate latitudes; but as they never turn perfectly white in winter, the trappers do not care to catch them. They are wild little creatures; still, they may be easily tamed, and are then as affectionate and playful as kittens.

THAT is a queer little creature that you often find in your oysters at dinner—shaded from a delicate orange color to a deep red. It is a second cousin to that greenish, flat-footed, long-handed craw-fish, that creeps along backward through the mud in the ditches and gutters. It has a still more curious relative, called the hermit or soldier crab, which, like itself, having no home of its own, creeps into the first empty shell it finds, and if it fits, walks off with it on his back. He climbs trees, too, to get the eggs of birds, which he devours with great gusto. Another and stronger crab, meeting him, frequently drives him from his newly acquired house, taking possession of it by main force, and the poor hermit wanders off seeking a new roof to shelter him. Still another poor relation in the crab family is a great thief. It walks into houses o' nights, like many another of those quiet people, the burglars, and carries off neckties, collars, stockings, and any other small articles of clothing left about within its reach. It has this advantage over burglars, however, that if caught in the act, it does not have to wait to turn around, but clatters off backwards dragging its spoils to its dark hole in the sand.

SAYING AND DOING.—Two brothers used to go to school together. One evening they thought they should like to have a holiday the next day; so they asked their father to give them one. He said, "I cannot, because it will put you back in your studies; so mind you go to school." One of the brothers said, "Yes, I will; but the other said he would not, and his father was very angry with him.

The next day the one that had said "Yes" played truant, but the one that had refused went to school. Then the father said to them in the evening, "Both of you are in the w