

Poetry.

WHY DID HE DIE?

"Why did he die?" the mother asked, As tears bedewed her cheek, As rising sob almost forbade Her faltering tongue to speak. She stooped and kissed her son's pale corpse, She grasped his hand so cold— "Soon shall I slumber by his side, For I am growing old."

"Why did he die?" we ask the rose, That blooms in fragrance sweet, Why does it wither and decay, And crumble at our feet? The scent is gone which once exhaled From midst the crimson leaves, And where the blooming flower once hung His web the spider weaves.

"Why did he die?"—Why melts the snow Before the summer's sun? Why are the dew-drops quaffed away When morning is begun? Why bursts the bubble, which so bright Sails through the vapory air? Why do the flowers thus fade and die, Howe'er bright and fair?

"Why did he die?"—The blooming rose, The melting snow-like teils; The dew-drop bright, the bubble frail, The reason each reveals. For all on earth—man, woman, child, Rose, dew-drop, snow-flake—all Were framed for time: as life decays So each must drop and fall.

Select Tale.

TALE OF HAVANNA

BY PAUL LEAN.

One of the most singular trials ever attended, and at the same time one of the most intensely interesting and exciting, was that of a young Mexican who with myself was wintering in that delicious spot where nature holds her holiday the year around, known as the Queen of the Antilles.

It had been a more than usually gay winter in Havana. Strangers from all quarters of the globe had congregated there for health and enjoyment and the stream of gold poured from pockets of wealth into the ever-asking bosom of trade as freely and ceaselessly as the sparkling spring-fed water streams showered themselves into the insatiate ocean that washed the Moro's bare.

The young Mexican of whom I spoke, whose trial I witnessed, was one of the elegants of the day. Midas himself, with his wonderful Alchemical power of transmuting all he touched into gold, could not have scattered on all sides more lavishly the precious metal than Leon du Guesclin squandered his on the fashionable pleasures and follies of the season. His recourses seemed exhaustless and by his princely lavishness he had made himself quite the wonder of the numerous loungers and idlers of the motly city.

It was the second day after my arrival. I was standing with my friend Du Val on the piazza of the hotel when a richly but rather gaudily dressed young man sprang from his horse and threw himself on one of the garden lounges in front of the hotel. He possessed a slight but gracefully proportioned form, and a countenance peculiarly calculated to arrest and rivet the attention of the most casual observer. Though slightly effeminate, it possessed that singular beauty which is far more apt to fascinate the unwary than please the thoughtful student of human nature. His features were fine and regular, with dark, eloquent, black eyes, a rather high, though somewhat narrow forehead, a slightly aquine nose, a perfectly formed mouth, filled with a beautiful set of ivory teeth, and a classically curved chin, all of which marked him with a physiognomy that would have been as prepossessing as it was handsome, were it not for something in that expression seen at intervals like a light cloud passing athwart the sun, which warned to be wary in bestowing confidence. His complexion was dark, but very clear, almost transparent, adding much to his beauty; and as he threw his hat upon the grass he displayed a profusion of glossy black curls clustering upon his finely formed head with a classical grace we so delineated in some of Raphael's heroes.

"That is the young nabob, Leon du Guesclin," observed Du Val to me. "The Croesus you were speaking about last evening?" "The same," replied Du Val. "But look yonder comes the carriage of the wealthy Yankee merchant, with his beautiful American wife."

An open carriage, with liveried driver and riders, passed slowly by. Its occupants were a middle aged man and a young and lovely woman. "That is Ledyard Wilton, one of our New York nabobs," said I.

Yes; but do you know his history?" "I cannot say that I do, although I have met him in Broadway and elsewhere a hundred times, knowing little more of him than his name."

"He was born in one of the coal mines of Western Pennsylvania, grew up a fatherless, motherless boy, living anywhere and nowhere picking up stray bits of knowledge wherever he could catch them. At sixteen, with an excellent education, acquired no one knows how he chanced to please a wealthy and eccentric merchant, and from that time his fateful star was steadily in the ascendant. That beautiful creature by his side his employer's (afterward his partner) youngest daughter."

"He is an open-hearted, noble looking fellow, and, I should judge, is warmly attached to his young wife."

"You are right," said Du Val. "He worships the very ground upon which she treads. But they say that she married him for his goodness and out of gratitude for his kindness to her after the death of her parents and the marriage and removal of her elder sisters."

Whilst we were talking, the carriage had moved on and was nearly out of sight. Both Du Val and myself had noticed the effect upon the young Mexican of the beautiful vision that had swept by. He had started like one electrified as soon as she appeared in sight, and had watched the merchant's wife as though in some strange trance, until the last flutter of her cobweb veil could be no more distinguished.

From that day I saw the handsome young Mexican constantly in the company of the merchant's fashionable wife, sometimes with her husband, but more frequently toward the latter part of the time accompanying my lovely country woman alone on horseback. A more beautiful creature than Clarid Wilton I had never chanced to see. A slight, elegant figure, of the middle height, remarkable for grace and ease of its motions, a pale, calm face, to which dark violet eyes, fringed with long, night black lashes, imparted tone and character: features delicate and regular, with an air distinguished by the aristocratic contour and bearing of the head and neck.

Such was the lovely being whom the wealthy merchant loved and called wife. She was one to whom the application of "beautiful" would have been given at first sight, but upon looking more closely upon those almost marble-still features, you could see an occasional outburst of feeling in the upturning or sudden glance of her eye that was perfectly electrifying. If repose was the chief characteristic of her expression, it was not the repose of inaction, but rather that of fervent feeling tamed down and repressed by some mighty power within.

The season was in its wane. Du Val and myself were going on the next day, to quit the sunny skies and balmy airs of the beautiful island for the less poetic and colder clime of our native hills. Many of the gay butterflies of fashion had already flitted to other scenes, but the beautiful Claire Wilton and her devoted husband still lingered, and the brilliant Mexican hung around the fair Americana like her shadow. And how did Ledyard Wilton the nabob merchant take all this devotion to his wife from a stranger?

Du Guesclin, with his insinuating manner and man-of-the-world knowledge, had paid so much court to Wilton, and made himself so agreeable that Wilton in his unsuspecting nature, seemed not to be aware of the poisonous power of the viper he was admitting so freely to sup from his bowl, and linger on the sacred precincts of the familiar hearthstone.

On the morning of the day we were to have gone, the whole city was thrown into a state of excitement by the news of the most inhuman assassination of Ledyard Wilton, the generous American merchant. He was found lying upon the beach, and marks of a great struggle and violence were discovered around the spot. The unfortunate man seemed to have been actually butchered in the determined and daring attempt to compass his death at all hazards.

It so happened that a member of the night watch, hearing the disturbance, reached the spot just in time to discover in the perpetrator of the foul deed the well known features of the bandit Rollo Guy, a man you could not have met in broad day-light without a shudder of fear.

The alarm was given, and although the murderer had escaped, yet before noon the next day he was captured and borne in triumph by the excited mob to the hall of justice.

So in earnest in this instance was the sometimes tardy law that the trial was commenced at once.

In the most vindictive language the assassin accused Du Guesclin as the abettor of the murder, naming the sum—which was one of immense amount—which he had given as a bribe.

Here commenced a drama of the Judgment, the solemnity of which was truly appalling. The apparently unsuspecting Du Guesclin, probably wishing to seem secure, was quietly smoking a cigar in the front of his hotel, and although somewhat pale, was outwardly as

calm as the placid skies overhead. He questioned those who so suddenly arrested him—"Prove your charge!" exclaimed he, indignantly. "Am I to be condemned on the testimony of a common assassin? I defy you and I defy the murderous bandit. He has stained his dark soul with the one more crime of murderous falsehood."

The trial commenced in good earnest, but notwithstanding the bold assertions of the assassin to condemn Du Guesclin with himself, Du Guesclin seemed on the point of being cleared of the heinous charge by the adroit defence he had on the instant brought forward.

It had grown dark and the darkness was deepening into night, when some one present exclaimed, "Bring forward the corpse! Confront the murderers and the murdered!"

The suggestion was instantly acted upon. In a few moments more the torches gleamed upon the mangled remains of the murdered Ledyard Wilton and upon the fearful countenance of the assassin and his accessories. Never shall I forget the fierce, hardened expression upon the face of the outlaw, Guy—with his citron complexion, lank, melancholy jaws, the corners of his tightly-compressed mouth drawn far down like the tiger's his deep set black eyes gleaming like lamps from a cave, desperate and wrathful, as his hands were placed upon the breast of the murdered man.

"In the name of God I swear that I killed this man. Mr. Ledyard Wilton, instigated and hired thereto by Leon Du Guesclin, who is the real murderer." And this oath uttered in a solemn, cavernous voice, carried conviction with it into the heart of the assembled multitude.

The look which the assassin cast on the confounded Du Guesclin was perfectly diabolical in its vindictiveness. After he had finished his adjuration the attorney general commanded Du Guesclin to take the hand of the corpse and curse the murderer.

"May the God of vengeance forever blast both in this life and the next the soul of—" but Du Guesclin, turning suddenly pale, could proceed no farther. Evidently conscious stricken he gazed at the dead face before him as in reverie, uttered some confused mutterings and turned away.

The gleam of triumph that shot forth from the assassin Rollo's eyes was perfectly demonic in its malignity.

Many other efforts were made to entrap the too evidently guilty Du Guesclin into a betrayal of his guilt, but he remained calm and immovable from then until the hour of his execution.

All that wealth could do was done by his friends to buy him off, but his judges were inexorable. The two criminals were executed together, the fear of the assassin Rollo being to the last only least Du Guesclin should be permitted to escape.

The remains of the Mexican were buried by his friends with much imposing ceremony, whilst those of the robber Guy were buried by the brotherhood of charity.

How far the beautiful and rich young widow was implicated in the murder of her husband was never known. Rumor with her thousand tongues whispered strange things of what was deemed her liaison with the Mexican; but as she preserved during the rest of her stay calm impenetrable demeanor that at all times distinguished her, no one could fathom the real feelings of her heart.

Outwardly in deep mourning, soon after the funeral of her husband the lately idolized Claire Wilton, accompanied by her waiting maid sailed for her own home.

Interesting Sketch.

THE DISCIPLINE OF LIFE.

OR

Domestic Drudgery made Delightful.

"Mother," Mrs. Edson's second son, "you promised to cover my book before I went to school this morning."

Mrs. Edson was very busy, but she recollected that she had promised to cover the book, and when she made a promise to her children, she was very careful to fulfil it, if possible. "Bring me your book," she replied, "and I will try to cover it."

It required but a very short time to cover the book, but the job, trifling as it was, was not more than half done, when Mr. Edson who was preparing to go to his business, contrived to pull a button from the wristband of his shirt.

"Here, wife," said he, "just take your needle and thread, will you, and sew on this button for me."

The book was laid down to sew on the button. Not more than four of the half dozen stitches, which were required to secure the button in its place, had been taken, when the door was thrown open, not very gently or deliberately, by Edward the eldest son, who advanced into the room, holding up to view the finger of his left hand, which was all bleeding. "Mother," said he I have managed to

cut my finger. Please do it up for me, quick as you can, for it is almost chlo-rite."

The two remaining stitches were soon taken. Then the roll of old linen and a basin of water were produced, and the cut finger done up. By this time the babe began to imagine that his brothers were getting more than their share of attention, and to secure himself against longer neglect, began to cry heartily.

"What is the matter with my Charley," said Mrs. Edson, taking the babe in her arms, and trying to soothe it.

But here George interposed by saying, "It is almost school time, mother, and my book is not covered yet."

"Well, come and amuse Charley, and I will finish it."

Charley is set down on the carpet to be amused by George, but the plan fails because master Charley does not chuse to be amused just at this time, but continues his cries while the book is being covered, and while the mother looks up the Geography which Lucy left in some strange place the night before, puts a new string into master George's, ties up a bundle which Edward is to love with Mr. B. on his way to school, and sees the whole party fairly off. Charley is then taken up once more but his cries are not fairly hushed, when Bridget comes in from the kitchen to say there is a poor woman there who wishes to speak with Mrs. Edson.

But it is unnecessary to go into any further detail of the domestic cares—trifling when viewed singly—but by no means small or insignificant in their aggregate, which tried the patience of Mrs. Edson during all that morning, as they had done many mornings before; but the morning and its cares passed away, and gave place to the afternoon, as mornings always do.

As Mrs. Edson was sitting by the cradle in which Charley was taking his afternoon nap, while Willie, the next oldest, was seated upon the rug, surrounded by his blocks, rearing something which he very gravely informed his mother was a "big church," the door-bell rang. Mrs. Edson looked somewhat anxious towards the door until it was opened, and the cheerful face of Aunt Mary appeared, when the anxious look immediately gave place to a smile of cordial welcome—for Aunt Mary was welcome.

She was one who carried sunshine with her wherever she went, no matter how dark and cloudy the sky might be, and she had a peculiar faculty of drawing into the sunlight too, all those who were so happy as to be thrown into her society. She would take the little world of thought and feeling, cares and anxieties, upon the cloudy side of which they dwelt, and so turn it upon its axis as to bring them, before they were aware, directly into the sunlight of cheerful hope and lofty courage. She was not one of those persons whose hollow hearted inquiries after your welfare, lead one to say that all is well, when covered over by that smile is a foundation of sorrow, and hidden under an assumed gaiety is a heavy heart. There was something in her unaffected good will and hearty sympathy, which led one, as it were to place the keys of their heart in her hand, and pour into her ear the tale of their most hidden joys and sorrows.

Mrs. Edson was not long in communicating to Aunt Mary the fact that she felt thoroughly discouraged, and quite wretched that afternoon; but when Aunt Mary inquired for the cause, Mrs. Edson replied, "Ah! that is the very difficulty, Aunt Mary. If my troubles were sufficiently dignified to be worth repeating, I could bear them better; in such a case one might expect some sympathy, but to be weighed down by a burden of cares and vexations, each one of which is so trifling in itself that it seems ludicrous even to mention it as a trouble, is hard to bear. Let me think what has vexed me, and put me out of tune to day."

Mrs. Edson here paused a moment to run over in her mind the various events of the morning, and at the end of this review the end of this review she burst into a laugh, for she had a keen sense of the ludicrous. "I declare," said she, "I can't think of a single trouble which by itself is worth repeating, yet in the aggregate, I can assure you I have not found them anything to be laughed at. It seems small to think of a button wanted on a husband's shirt, or a cut finger to be closed up, as troubles; but when the button is to be sewed on, and the finger to be done up, a book book to be covered, a crying baby to be hushed, a lost Geography to be found, and a half a dozen other things, to be done all at one time, if they are all small things, when put together they are more than I know how to bear."

"But I am most troubled," continued Mrs. Edson more seriously, "when I compare the petty cares and toils of life, with our destiny of immortal beings, with the infinite results which depend upon the transient period of sojourn here, and by the glorious hopes inspired by that gospel which brings life and immortality to light. There seems such an incongruity between the two, that I am often tempted to wonder why things are so arranged. It is so often said it is very difficult to bear

in mind that there is anything in the world to be done or cared for, except to repair coats and shirts, wash and dress the children, and get them ready for school, and see that the pies and dumplings are made ready for dinner. It often seems as if my energies were more dignified, more in keeping, so to speak with our destiny as immortal beings, their tendency to elevate the soul, and fit it for a nobler, better life than this would then be more apparent."

Mrs. Edson was here interrupted by Willie, who had grown tired of his seat upon the rug, and his black, and left them to seek for some other source of amusement. Going to a small workstand, he began to pull at the drawer.

"Willie," said his mother, "you must let that drawer alone. Let it alone, and come away," Willie.

Willie looked at his mother, and let go of the drawer for a moment, but he soon had his hands upon it again. "Does Willie hear mother," Mrs. Edson now asked. "Let that drawer alone, and come away from the stand."

But Willie still stood by the stand, looking very undaunted, though he did not again offer to touch the drawer. "If Willie don't mind mother, and come away from the stand, I shall have to punish him," said Mrs. Edson, very decidedly. Willie now walked slowly away from the stand, and as he did so, Aunt Mary observed to his mother, "Are you not making too serious a matter of a very small thing?"

Mrs. Edson looked up at Aunt Mary with some surprise, for she was not in the habit of hearing her reason in this way, on the subject of family government, but she replied earnestly, "It surely is not a small thing that my child should be taught to obey me. His welfare for this world and the world to come will depend upon his learning this lesson."

"But surely," replied Aunt Mary, "It was a small thing in itself for Willie to pull out that drawer, and still smaller to stand by the side of it. Is there not an incongruity in teaching him so important a lesson as obedience to parental authority, by means of a thing so trifling in itself?"

In what more appropriate way could I teach him a lesson of obedience at his age. It seems to me that a thing so simple is just adapted to his capacities, and is the best possible way of teaching him the lesson I wish him to learn. What parent would wish to give his child, just learning to walk, his first lesson of necessity of care, by placing, upon the edge of a precipice, where one false or tottering step would prove fatal? Who would not rather prefer that his first fall should be over the footstool, and on the soft parlor-carpet, and his first lesson of carefulness be learned there.

These views, my dear niece, are too perfectly correct to be opposed; but let us apply the principle involved in them to the subject on which we were conversing when we were interrupted by Willie. What are we, while dwellers here in the body, but children only in capacity and maturity, yet also wayward children who need to be trained and disciplined? You feel that you are teaching your child a lesson of the greatest value and importance, affecting his character for time and for eternity, simply by securing his obedience to your commands in a thing exceedingly trifling in itself, and it is by just such lessons as these, that you expect to establish the habits of obedience, so priceless in its value, preparing him both to obey and govern, when he reaches adult years. Now if by means equally simple, and seemingly disproportioned to the result to be obtained by them our heavenly Father is preparing and disciplining us for a nobler and better life than this, can we not see that there is wisdom and fitness in the one case, as well as in the other? Can we not learn patience, submission, meekness and self-denial, from the cares and toils of life, as well as the children can learn the great and vital principle of obedience to lawful authority, from the simple lessons by which he is taught this obedience?

"When we reflect how frail and erring we are, would we, if we could, be made ruler over many things, until we have learned to be more faithful to the few things, now committed to us? It was a very small thing, when viewed by itself, for Willie to stand by the side of that drawer, but when connected with a lesson of filial obedience it lost its insignificance, and became a matter of interest and importance. So it is with the cares and toils which constitute so large a share of the discipline of life. If we view them disconnected with the object which they are designed to accomplish, they will seem trifling and insignificant. But when we view them, as we ever should in connection with the great design to be accomplished by them they are at once stripped of all their littleness, and become invested with a dignity and importance well calculated to inspire them with cheerful hope and lofty courage."

"I believe I have looked at these things in a wrong light," replied Mrs. Edson. "If I had viewed them more in the light in which you now present them, I believe I could have born them better."

"If you will consider yourself at all times but as a child whom your heavenly Father is leading, and quickening, and disciplining by the means which He in His infinite wisdom seems to be most appropriate to your present state of imperfection, darkness and ignorance, you will be assisted to bear the toils and cares of life. Such a view of them will invest them with that dignity and importance, of the want of which you complain, and will lead you to derive strength to bear them from the same source from which you would seek strength to bear any trial." C. M. T.