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POETRY.

THE LOVE OF LATER LIFE.

BY BERNARD BARTON.

They err who deem Love's brightest hour in blooming youth is known, Its purest, tenderest, holiest power in after life is shown, When passions, chastened and subdued, to ripen years are given, And earth and earthly things are viewed in light that breaks from Heaven.

It is not in the flush of youth, or days of cloudless mirth, We feel the tenderness and truth of Love's devoted worth, Life then is like a tranquil stream which flows in sunshine bright, And objects mirrored in it seem to share its sparkling light.

MISCELLANY.

THE WIFE'S RIVAL.

BY EMMA DEVAL.

The lawn at Elmwood, sweeping down from the fine old house, first descending into a vale then rising to a hill, with its stately elms and green grass, was a beautiful spot; and at sunset one could scarcely find a more lovely scene. A broad river which swept beneath an overhanging cliff at the termination of the lawn, gave a romantic wildness to this bewitching place. On the cliff was perched a fairy-like summer-house, surrounded with shrubbery and covered with vines, while tall olives spread over their guardian branches, as if to protect it from the fierce winter's blast, or summer heat. But although it was a gorgeous sunset, and the rich clouds floated above, in fanciful shapes, as if sporting with their images reflected from the river's broad bosom, a young, delicate girl, seated in the summer-house, seemed entirely unmindful of this picturesque scene. She was very young—scarcely fifteen—dressed in deep mourning, and her expressive, though not handsome face, was bathed in tears. Grief had blinded her eyes to the beauties of "land, sky and river," for the letter which she held in her hand "well might broken her heart." Though yet a child, she was a wife, and worshipped her husband with childish devotion. She was an orphan, and stood quite alone in life. The letter which she held was from her husband, but not intended for her eyes; by careless negligence it had been misdirected, and had thus fallen into her hands.

I have settled it up, I will be her own mistress—independence shall be of my control—freedom as I wish. No bride that I could look forward to, should be different; but she is contrary to the posit of all I should wish in a woman. She is quite homely; possesses few mental gifts; shy, timid, and I fear stupid. She has been forced upon me, and my wife by name may she be, but no more. Meet me in New York next week, if you have not been beguiled into playing the Benedict yourself, and we will commence again our wanderings.

ROLAND "L.E.E."

Poor Ellen! these words fell like lead upon her heart, and she wept in bitterness of spirit. She had listened to the descriptions given of Roland, by his father & aunt, until her heart doted upon the ideal she had formed in her mind, even before she saw him. They impressed it upon her that he was to be her husband, and she prepared her little willing spirit to love him accordingly. She was a child in years and appearance, but not in mind; timid and retiring, however, almost to a fault, and painfully conscious of her want of personal charms—much consciousness increased her awkwardness. She looked upon the handsome, agreeable Roland, when they presented him to her, as one to be worshipped, and when they greeted her as his wife, thought earth had no greater happiness. How much her tender and sensitive heart had been shocked, to learn that she had been forced upon him, and that the sacred ties which they were bound, so dear to her, were to him irksome and hateful, and had driven him forth a wanderer. But not one thought of anger mingled with her grief. Her loving woman's spirit exaggerated its own deficiencies, to excuse the selfish coldness of the one deemed perfect, and with Helena she felt, "If his bright radiance and collateral light might be comforted not in his sphere. The abandonment in my love thus plagues itself."

delicacy, which I remember so characterized you in your childhood, may have deterred you from regarding this. I therefore ask it first. Your answer will decide my future happiness or misery. The sun was well, high past, but our faces, though with faces turned homeward, lingered around the beautiful scene of the Falls, as if bewitched with its beauty, and unable to break the spell which it had thrown over them. One day Roland and R. had rambled, unconsciously, far into the rest, in following the succession of falls. There were moments when Roland, with fearful jealousy doubted the certainty of her love; it was when her joyous laugh rang out merrily, and playful *badinage* fell from her rosy lips. On this day she had seemed in one of her wildest, maddest moods, and with reckless glee had chanted, sung aloud, and laughed, as if independent of all feeling.

"Nonsense," he would say in reply to this "still small voice, within;" "I need not imagine myself in love, because I prefer the society of a lovely woman. She evidently cares nothing for me beyond friendship; I therefore do not endanger her happiness by the indulgence; and I can surely be master of my own feelings, sufficient to restrain myself within bounds, and not to be hindered by honor to love. I will regard her as a sister." And thus he reasoned. Alas! wearied with this unsettled life, for a time so fascinating, Mr. and Mrs. Winters longed for the comforts of home, and announced themselves to their friends as "Homeward bound." After their departure for America, and the consequent breaking up of the pleasant party that had so long continued together, Roland became wearied, and felt that his foreign residence had lost all interest. He grew restless and unhappy, and sought by change from place to place to fill up the void caused by their departure; but in vain. Every spot was associated with them, and he found himself listening for the musical voice and laugh, that used to ring in his ears; and wishing for that tiny hand that was wont to greet him, with such sisterly, heart-warm welcome. After a few weary months he followed them, he knew that Mrs. Reed had resided with her cousins, who were as brother and sister to her, ever since her widowhood, and eagerly did he seek their home on reaching New York. How he rejoiced to find himself warmly welcomed by them. It is so pleasant to find oneself remembered by absent friends, when one has to contend with the renewing of the dearest domestic relations as rivals.

A gay season followed, and with Mr. and Mrs. Winters, by the side of his "Cousin Emily," as the children had taught him to call her, he was to be seen at parties, balls, and operas? And what did the world say? Just nothing at all. Many had forgotten, or had never heard of his marriage, and almost every one imagined, from the close intimacy that existed between him and the family, that he was a near relative. On the following summer he was again their companion as they travelled through the beautiful northern scenery of their country. Together he and Emily lingered around the romantic scenery of Lake George. They visited Canada—the walled city of Quebec seemed to carry them back to Europe; and they lived over again in fancy the first days of their acquaintance, when they had met on the Rhine. They breathed the fresh breeze on the broad bosom of the St. Lawrence, gemmed with lovely islets; and as by moonlight they sat on the deck of the vessel, heart speaking to heart, watching the flaming, glittering waves, that seemed to follow the pale moon's course, they both have themselves up to the dangerous luxury of the present. He gazed on her beaming beautiful face, and as her rich voice swelled out in lovely melody upon his ears, he felt that friendship was too cold a name. With what rapture did he hail the falling of Emily's soft blue eyes, when he first noticed their sinking under their ardent loving gaze. He forgot the high, honorable resolves he had made, to leave her so soon as he should detect the slightest alteration in her manner towards him—no! he only now pined for the certainty of her love, and in wild anxiety lunged around her. "I will be free; I will annul my marriage," he at last said. "My wife may, like myself, love another," and in this spirit he wrote to her—the first letter he had addressed to her since their separation. He frankly confessed his love for Emily, and threw himself upon her generosity. "Our marriage," he wrote, "was but a mere ceremony. I was forced upon you by your childhood. I have always considered you free, and have been ready at any time to annul the tie between us, whenever your own heart should make a choice. The retiring

tended on the couch, and dreaded to see that pale, weeping face which lay buried in the cushions; he trembled to behold this struggle in a woman's breast, between deep, deep love, and woman's pride. "I have deeply wronged you, dear Ellen," he at last murmured. "Pardon me, I beseech you; with your last words lighten the wretched burden of remorse that will hang over me to my grave." She raised her head from the cushions, and as she turned towards him, he saw, instead of the dying wife, the joyous, sunny features of Emily Reed. She burst into a merry laugh as she exclaimed, "I have won you, dear Roland; may I not die your wife, dearest?" The laugh was re-echoed, and Roland almost imagined himself in a dream, as he saw himself surrounded by Mr. and Mrs. Winters and aunt Esther, who had been anxiously awaiting the denouement to enter. They exclaimed merrily the *rose* that had been so successfully played upon him, and Roland no longer reproached his father, as he gazed on his lovely, bewitching wife who looked up lovingly while his arm encircled her. "You are surely pardonable," she said mischievously, "for wishing to be relieved from a shy, stupid, ugly wife."

From the New York Evangelist. M. A. LOUISA.

"Not so, dearest," he replied, "I hope to be able to approach you unbound by any ties." "How so?" asked Emily in surprise, "is not your wife still living?" With the accents of pleasing love, he told her all the events attendant on his marriage; and his late proposition made to Ellen for a divorce. Mrs. Reed shook her head doubtfully, as he concluded, and said in sad tones: "Ah we have been very wrong to give ourselves up to this wild infatuation; but," added she, seriously, as her lover endeavored to pour out anew his expressions of devotion, "until you are indeed free, Roland, we must part—Nay; do not urge me to alter this determination. This avowal of yours—our mutual knowledge of each other's love, thus confessed, would render us guilty in our hearts."

He implored, but in vain; Mrs. Reed was immovable; and they parted. In a neighboring city, he waited with anxious impatience an answer from Elmwood, and eagerly he broke the seal of a letter which at last reached him, directed in aunt Esther's well remembered hand. "I do not upbraid you, Roland," wrote his aunt, "for your conscience surely will at some time, when too late to repair the wrong you have done. For years your isolated wife looked forward for your return; for your approval she has studied and trained her mind—worshiped the very recollection of you. Imagine, then, how the proposition of divorce must have affected her gentle, loving spirit. Bowed to the earth as she is, she wishes to see you once more, and entreats, with all the earnestness of a fond heart that cherishes no anger, to have the poor comfort of dying your wife. Selfish as you must be, you cannot deny this little request. A few months you can surely wait, to be freed from the ties which you are unworthy of being bound. Little as I desire to meet with you, under present circumstances, Roland, yet for my adopted child's last comfort, I urge you to hasten to Elmwood." He was filled with the most bitter remorse, as he hastened to comply with his aunt's request. He reproached himself again and again, as the image of his pale, dying wife, and the beautiful Emily rose before him; and he felt almost distracted as he thought of the double misery he should be the cause of inflicting on those two lovely beings. Grieved and disheartened he felt as his carriage drove up the avenue leading to Elmwood; and in the shadow of evening the tall elms seemed to bow in mourning over the old house. All was dark and quiet around and within; the very servants that greeted him seemed stilled with sorrow. "She is dying," murmured the sorrowing Roland; and anxiously he gazed into his aunt Esther's face, as she meted in the hall. "Take me to her instantly!" he exclaimed. "The stable old maiden lady led him to her apartment, and left him at the entrance. In silent anguish he knelt beside the fragile, delicate form, ex-

glorious in his own achievements, and all that is illustrious in exalted descent. The repudiation of Josephine, strong as were the political motives which led to it, is the darkest stain upon the character of Napoleon. And like all wrong doing, however seemingly prosperous for a time, it promoted final disaster and woe. A pique originating in this marriage, alienated Alexander of Russia from the French Emperor, and hence the campaign of Moscow, and the imprisonment of Napoleon upon the rock of St. Helena. When the design of Napoleon was known, every Court in Europe was emulous of the honor of such an alliance. The Bourbons in their exile, would gladly furnish a princess of the blood royal, as a bride for the mighty conqueror. The Russian Court proffers any of its high-born maidens to the acceptance of the master spirit, at whose from all Europe's teem-ables. And the Austrian monarchy, the proudest of all earthly dynasties, eagerly seeks alliance with the soldier of fortune, who has twice entered its capital in triumph, and reposed, with his plebeian marshals, in its palaces. After much deliberation, Napoleon decided to accept the alliance of Austria. Proposals were made for the Princess Louise, and eagerly accepted. Maria was sixteen years of age, and was most happy to be honored as the bride of one who had filled the world with his renown. Napoleon was forty-two. On the 12th of March, 1810, apparently without emotion, he left the palaces of his fathers, surrounded by all the pomp the Austrian monarchy could confer, to meet her future husband. As the long train of carriages left Vienna, the people gazed mournfully upon the scene. Maria Antoinette, the last princess Austria had furnished for the throne of France, had a few years before had perished miserably upon the scaffold. The populace were only prevented by the soldiers, from cutting the traces of the carriage, and preventing the departure. The gorgeous procession proceeded on its way towards the frontiers of France. Napoleon had never yet seen the bride who was coming to meet him. "She is not beautiful," he said, as he gazed upon her miniature; "but she is a daughter of the Caesars!"

When Maria arrived at the Rhine, her Austrian attendants left her, and she was received by the French nation, and conducted towards Paris with the highest possible accompaniment of imperial splendor. The bells rang their merriest peals of congratulation; the Austrian and the tri-colored flag flew in friendly embrace from every tower, and the triumphal arches, illuminated the cities, and military processions greeted her progress, while the horses of her chariot buried their hoofs in the beds of roses which were spread over her path. France, then in the zenith of its grandeur, interposed with glory, from the Rhine to the Pyrenees, resounded with all the expressions and demonstrations of rejoicing. Napoleon met her near Compiegne. Springing from his own carriage, he eagerly leaped into that of the empress, and, entirely regardless of all the restraints and etiquette of courts, folded her in his embrace with the most youthful impetuosity. The positions were ordered to drive upon the gallop to the palace of Compiegne. This unexpected order was not at all unwelcome to Maria, and a few hours in the society of her imperial husband invested her with such queenly ease and affability, that she could hardly be recognized by her former attendants. The marriage ceremony was celebrated with the utmost splendor at St. Cloud, and never before or since has Paris resounded with such an uproar of rejoicing, as when Napoleon led his youthful bride into those apartments of the Tuilleries, from which Josephine, but three months before, had been so cruelly ejected. Four queens held the bridal train of Maria Louise, and the ambassadors of all the Courts of Europe revolved around her as their central luminary. But who can tell how dimly these rejoicings fell upon the ear of Josephine, as she sat weeping in her deserted chambers.

In one year from that time, Maria was placed upon that mysterious couch of suffering from which no regal wealth or splendor can purchase exemption. Her pains were long protracted and her anguish dreadful. The attending physicians, in the utmost trepidation, informed Napoleon that the life of the mother or the child must be sacrificed. "Save the mother," said Napoleon; but, perceiving that they had lost their presence of mind, in view of the peril of so illustrious a patient, he immediately added, "Do as you would with the humblest Frenchman in the Rue St. Denis." The physicians, reassured, returned to their duty, and the crisis was passed. The birth of this child was an event which had been anticipated by all France, with the most sincere interest. It had been previously announced that the Invalids should proclaim the advent of the expected heir to the throne. If the child were a princess, twenty-one guns were to be fired; if a prince, one hundred. At six o'clock in the morning of the 20th of March, 1810, all Paris was aroused by the deep booming of those heavy guns, reverberating over the city in anticipation of the arrival of the welcome stranger. Every window was instantaneously thrown open. Every ear was on the alert. The slumberers were roused from their pillows, and silence pervaded all the streets of the busy metropolis, as the vast throngs stood motionless to count the tidings which those explosions were thundering into their ears. The heart of the great capital ceased to beat, and in all her glowing veins the current of life stood still. When the twenty-first gun had been fired, the interest was intense beyond all conception. The gunners delayed for a moment the next discharge, and all Paris stood breathless in suspense. The next moment the guns, double loaded, pealed forth the most welcome announcement, and from the entire city one universal roar of acclamation rose and blended with their thunders. Never was an earthly monarch greeted with a more magnificent demonstration of a nation's love and affection. The birth of the King of Rome, how illustrious! The thoughtful mind, pale as death, and gazed upon the striking contrast furnished by his death. Who could then have imagined that his renowned father would perish a wretched