

### THE TIMES.

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### Select Poetry.

#### WHERE IS YOUR BOY TO-NIGHT?

Life is teeming with evil snares,  
The gates of sin are wide,  
The rosy fingers of pleasure wave  
And beckon the young inside.  
Man of the world with open purse,  
Seeking your own delight,  
Pause, ere reason is wholly gone—  
Where is your boy to-night?

Sirens are singing on every hand,  
Luring the ear of youth,  
Gilded falsehood with silver notes  
Drowneth the voice of truth.  
Dainty lady in costly robes,  
Your parlors gleam with light,  
Fate and beauty your senses steep—  
Where is your boy to-night?

Tempting whispers of royal spoil  
Flatter the youthful soul  
Eagerly entering into life,  
Restive of all control.  
Needs are many, and duties stern  
Crowd on the weary sight;  
Father, buried in business cares,  
Where is your boy to-night?

Pitfalls lurk in the flowery way,  
Vice has a golden gate;  
Who shall guide the unwary feet  
Into the highway straight?  
Patient worker with willing hand  
Keeping the home hearth bright,  
Tired mother with tender eyes  
Where is your boy to-night?

Turn his feet from the evil paths  
Ere they have entered in,  
Keep him unspotted while yet ye may,  
Earth is so stained with sin.  
Ere he has learned to follow wrong,  
Teach him to love the right,  
Watch, ere watching is wholly vain—  
Where is your boy to-night?

### A FAMILY SECRET.

CONTINUED.

"SHALL I?"—that will be a novelty then," said Morley, smiling down at the tear-stained face raised to his.

Although her friends gave Dora credit for unlimited self-possession, she was at a complete loss for words in which to clothe the thoughts that chased each other through her mind.

"Mrs. East says I am her daughter, Morley," she said at length; "and that papa, I mean Mr. Lynton, only adopted me for fear some one he disliked should have the property; and it all seems so very miserable, not to have any home, any friends, or—anything."

With this vague conclusion Dora broke down again, and Morley, who considering the strange nature of the information did not seem so surprised as might have been expected, took up the thread of the discourse.

"And even supposing this wildly improbable tale were true, what difference would it make?" he asked. "I have often heard you say, Dora, that a great deal of money would be a great deal of trouble; and though of course the estate and bulk of the fortune would not be yours, yet Mr. Lynton might leave you what would seem a considerable sum to many; and Dora, I am really so rich that it would save me trouble if you were not burdened with so much."

"Save you trouble?" she stammered out.

"Yes," said Morley; "don't you understand me? I had better tell you what I know now, for when you relapse into your old self, I am afraid you would not give me the opportunity," he added mischievously. "I don't care a pin whose daughter you are, and I don't want any money with my wife. I am more content, Dora, to take you as you are, for your own dear sake; and rich or poor, humbly or highly born, the heiress of Lynton Hall or the daughter of its

housekeeper, I shall hold you now, and to my life's end, the greatest blessing with which the Almighty has endowed me."

"Morley, you are not jesting? you could not be so cruel?" she said.

"I could not, my darling," he replied. "I was never more serious in my life. I have wanted to tell you this, Dora, for some time; but, somehow, you have managed to keep me at such a distance, and have been so cold and strange, that you effectually prevented my doing so. However, perhaps it is best as it is. Had I put my wish into execution before, you are such a proud little skeptic that you might have been inclined to break off our engagement, and might have thought my opposition to your wish arose from scruples of honor.—Now, you cannot think so."

"Oh, I have been very wicked—very, very wicked!" exclaimed Dora, in a burst of penitent tears, through which a little of the Miss Lynton of old was beginning to peep. It was difficult to forget at once the teaching of years, that had served to impress on her mind the two facts that the least confession of a fault was certain to ensure forgiveness, and was just a little bit of condescension on her own part, which Morley noticed.

"Besides," he continued with a smile, "you are making yourself miserable without any just cause for so doing. Does it not seem strange to you that Mrs. East has lived with you all these years, only to tell it at the last? I am inclined to think the story is without foundation."

"But she wouldn't dare to tell such a deliberate falsehood," said Dora; "she seems to feel sure that she is dying."

"I do not accuse her of trying to deceive you," said Morley; "she may have been delirious."

"I do not think so," said Dora; but at the same time her belief in the story she had heard from Mrs. East began to waver. It is so pleasant to be argued into doubting when we wish to doubt; and, so after a very short time, Dora dried her tears, and in spite of all the heroic resolutions she had made, that after telling Morley she would at least avoid him till the truth was discovered, she listened, with heightened color and a beating heart, to his tale of love, the evening breeze meanwhile playing a soft obligato accompaniment among the leaves of the old elm trees; and ever after, through all the years to come, she felt that in some way the sound of the rustling branches would have a pleasant music in her ears.

Thus Dora promised to be Morley Osborne's wife, and so happy was she in the present, that as they walked home in the gloaming, it seemed as though she had been suddenly expelled from fairyland when Morley asked for more particulars of her interview with Mrs. East, which she gave him as briefly as possible.

"And what do you intend to do?" he asked, when her recital came to an end.

"Ask papa if it is true," said Dora, decidedly.

"I do not think that is exactly the best course," said Morley, after a moment's thought. "For myself, I don't believe the story; and, supposing it to be false, your father would be reasonably angry at so unjust a suspicion.—You know I have little right now, my darling, to give an opinion. I think it will be best to wait until we see these papers—if, indeed, their existence be not a myth—and then we shall know how to act."

"You are the best judge, Morley," said Dora.

"I hope you think so, love," was the laughing rejoinder. "But what did you mean, Dora, just now by saying you have been very wicked? Does your conscience accuse you of any misdeeds?—or was that only a pretty little figure of speech?"

"No, indeed; don't think me very inconsistent, Morley," she replied. "I have fancied lately that you did love me; but everything went on so smoothly, and it so different from all I had read, that I wondered if we knew what we were about, or whether it was only because we were so much together, and had grown used to each other, that we fancied we were in love—and—sometimes I used to wish that something

would happen, that it might be put to the test."

"Well, if you indulge in such ultra-romantic notions, I think I must interdict novels in the future," said Morley, laughing. "You shall go through a course of Rollin and Adam Smith, and light literature of that description. Put to the test, indeed! And now I am put to the test, what do you think of me? Are you satisfied?"

"Perfectly," said Dora, looking up with a smile that endorsed her words; "how could I be otherwise? I shall always feel proud and glad when I think how true and noble you have been.—But, oh, Morley, if it should prove true!"

"Never fear, my darling," said he; "depend upon it my solution of the affair is the right one. Mrs. East was not in her right senses when she told you this tale. Don't you trouble your little head about it any more. I cannot bear to see you looking so grave."

Dora tried to smile, and being very much interested, soon succeeded, and looking back after she had dismissed her maid for the night, she thought that altogether the day had been an important and pleasant one. She had had some very keen suffering, but it had been of short duration. Morley had proved himself equal to any hero she had ever read, and she was inclined to consider her own share in the little drama they had acted a satisfactory performance.

A very egotistical, romantic, unprofitable sort of heroine is this Dora Lynton, we hear some one exclaim—true to some extent, but her character was a genuine one. As yet she was wandering about, unable to find her place in the battle of life; but, depend upon it, that place once found, Dora would fill it well, for the girl possessed those qualities that in their appointed season must always end by making their owner types of the noblest class of womanhood.

Dora was not sleepy that night; so she lay for a long time looking up at the stars that peeped through the muslin curtains, and, as a natural consequence, it was very late before she awoke on the following morning.

Her maid was seated by the window mending lace, an employment for which Dora plentifully provided. Her young mistress looked at her idly, thinking it must be very dreadful for any one to be obliged to be so industrious, and then asked if it were not very late.

"Yes, miss, half-past ten," was the reply.

"My goodness!" cried Dora, springing out of bed, "how could you let me sleep till such a time, Myers? Papa has had his breakfast, of course."

"An hour ago, miss," was the reply. "He and Osborne are both out now, I think."

"Oh, dear!" said Dora, "papa has had to pour out his coffee, himself, and I know he detests that; and Morley will think I shall make a nice sort of wife," she added, mentally, "for last night it was only half-past ten when I said good-night."

She proceeded to dress with a haste that was not expedition, pausing in a few moments to ask if Mrs. Hunt had sent any message for her that morning.

"Yes, miss!" was the hesitating reply, as the girl bent over the morning dress she was unfolding.

Dora noticed her manner, and rightly imagined that it presaged bad news.

"What is it, Myers?" she said, quickly. "Tell me."

"She sent to say that Mrs. East died this morning at half-past four, miss."

Dora's grief was genuine, and the tears she shed for the loss of her old friend were very bitter; she mingled with her sorrow were feelings of wonder, nearly akin to fear, lest she to whom she had fondly given the name of second mother, should prove to have the exclusive right to that title; the test had been applied, and Morley had stood it bravely. But, oh, it would be so hard to go to him, not only comparatively poor, but nameless!—for Dora had imbibed all the Lyntons' notions, and in her opinion such a plebeian cognomen as East was little better than no name at all.

However, she had it in her power to put an end to this suspense, and after a vigorous application of cold water to

her face, and drinking a cup of coffee, she left a message for Mr. Lynton, to the effect that she had gone into the village and at the latest would be back for luncheon.

In half-an-hour Dora stood by the bedside of one, if not her mother, had always, even in Mrs. Lynton's lifetime, filled the place of one. Dora looked down upon the placid face, so calm and peaceful in the repose of death, and she was only dimly conscious that the still features bore out the words she heard the previous night, and that she would find similar features reflected in her glass; but the silence of the darkened room quieted her. In the presence of the dead her resentment died out, and she murmured a heartfelt prayer for guidance through whatever paths the future might lead her.

Dora found no tangible proofs of Mrs. East's story. The box of letters of which she had spoken, had either never existed, or had mysteriously disappeared, for the most careful search failed to discover it. Mrs. East had had a weakness for collecting all sorts of fancy boxes, but none of them contained the letters; so, as the days went by, Dora came to the conclusion that Morley was right in asserting that the whole tale had been the delusion of a wandering mind, though it was a long time before the idea of being Mrs. East's child quite ceased to haunt her.

Six years had passed since the events recorded above and these years had wrought the usual amount of change.—There had been births, and marriages, and deaths, and great political changes; but these did not much affect the inhabitants of the quiet country village with which we have to do. They were too far removed from the arena in which the changes were wrought to take more than a passing notice, and were, as a rule, on the whole more concerned about more immediate claims to attention.—So Nutbourne remained very much the same, except that there were two or three new shops, a few more cottages built, a few more graves in the yew-shaded churchyard, and another coffin added to those in the Lynton vault, the plate on which bore the inscription:

"John Lynton, aged 69."

The Lyntons thought the simple family name too weighty to need any affix or prefix on their coffin plates.

At Lynton Hall a few alterations and improvements had been made. Some time before the death of her father, Dora had assumed the dignities and responsibilities of married life, and, as Morley Osborne, had delighted the entire county, first by her trossseau and then by her behavior; for some way, strange as it may seem, Dora Osborne was infinitely more fascinating than Dora Lynton had been, being held up to wives, and in due course of time to mothers, as a pattern of every feminine virtue.

And we think the good people were right, for as the *opinion* dies, and we catch a glimpse of our heroine, we too consider that her womanhood more than fulfilled the promise of her girlhood. The same sweet face, wearing the same untroubled expression; the same graceful figure, looking very picturesque in the looped-up dress and the scarlet cloak, meets our view. Dora is little changed, except there is an air of gentle dignity about her that has gradually become part and parcel of her nature, and has supplanted that one grace that had been wanting in her girlhood.

Master Lynton Osborne, a young gentleman of four summers, clad in a wonderful combination of black velvet and blue Cashmere, walks, or rather trots, by her side, and imagines his help in finding the violets, of which his mamma is in search, to be far more efficient than it really is. The spirit of the bright spring morning is with mother and child; they are both very happy, and altogether form a very pretty picture.

However, the search was brought to an abrupt conclusion, for before the little basket was half filled, a servant brought the information that man insisted on seeing Mrs. Osborne, and Dora, studiously courteous to high and low, took Master Lynton by the hand and walked back towards the house.

Something in the visitor's manner or appearance had made an unfavorable impression in the servants' hall, and he was somewhat superciliously shown into

the breakfast-room, where Dora awaited his appearance.

Dora felt an unpleasant feeling creep over her as the man entered. She had expected to see a countryman, probably one of her own tenants; instead of which he was a tall, gaunt man, shabbily dressed, and whose face bore the unmistakable marks of a wandering and dissipated life.

As the servant closed the door, the man looked at Dora in a fixed, impertinent manner, that sent the blood to her cheeks, and then said, as he laid his hat and stick on the table, and coolly seated himself in an easy chair:

"You and I must have a long talk together, Mrs. Osborne; so we may as well set about it comfortably."

"I am not aware that I have ever seen you before, and therefore do not understand what business you can have with me," replied Dora, haughtily.—"My husband—"

"Pshaw!" said he, "if I wanted your husband, Mrs. Osborne, I should have asked for him. What I have to say is for you. It rest with yourself whether I afterwards apply to him."

"Then perhaps you will let me know your business at once," said Dora, "for I have other claims upon my time."

"They will have to wait, then, until I have been attended to," was the insolent reply. "But I'm not in the habit of wasting time; and, to begin, I suppose you guess I have just come over from Australia?"—Concluded next week.

#### EXCEEDINGLY POLITE.

ON a certain occasion Lord Norbury was holding Criminal Court in Longford, on the docket, of which much business had been forced by a series of labor and rent riots, during the progress of which many lives had been sacrificed. On the occasion referred to, and on the second day of the sessions, six men were arraigned in a lump for riot, arson and murder. They had attacked the dwelling of a wealthy land-owner at night; had set fire to it, and had shot down several of the inmates who had tried to prevent the incendiary act. The trial was brief. The acts committed had been done openly, and the prisoners at the bar were connected with them beyond dispute. Either his lordship forgot, or else he labored under the impression that he had but five prisoners before him; and, in his rendering of judgment, he called only five names and sentenced only five men, entirely overlooking Mr. Martin O'Rourke, who crouched away in a corner of the pen. Whether the sheriff was equally oblivious, or whether he thought the judge had purposely omitted one of the culprits, we cannot say; enough that, at a sign from the Court, he opened the iron spiked door and led the prisoners forth.

And then it was that the clerk of the Court, just aroused to a full sense of the error, looked to his feet, and called his Lordship's attention to the omission.

"There were six of them, Your Honor, and you sentenced but five. The man O'Rourke you did not condemn at all."

Lord Norbury was aroused in a moment. He shouted for the clerk; and the clerk shouted for the sheriff; and when the latter officer appeared he was directed to bring Martin O'Rourke back into Court and place him in the prisoners' box. The thing was done as ordered. The prisoner looked sad and dejected as he stepped again into the box, for he knew that he was not to be spared.

"My very good friend," said the judge, bowing most politely to the prisoner, "I made a sad mistake regarding yourself, and I beg your pardon from the bottom of my heart. You should have been sentenced with your companions, but, somehow, the duty slipped my mind entirely. You will excuse me, I am sure. The requirements of the law and the sentence of the Court is, that you, Martin O'Rourke—how I could have made such an omission is surprising—that you be taken hence to the common jail, there kept in solitary confinement until the day of execution, when you will be taken forth to the gallows, and hanged by the neck until you are dead. And may the Lord have mercy on your soul! You will pardon me for this delay! It was a mistake, I assure you; but it is all right now, and you should be content."

A strange road to contentment, surely!