

Oh! Be Not the First.

Oh! be not the first to discover
A blot on the name of a friend,
A flaw on the faith of a lover,
Whose heart may be true to the end.

We none of us know one another,
And often in error we fall,
So let us speak well of each other,
Or speak not at all.

A smile or a sign may awaken
Suspicious most false and undue;
And thus our belief may be shaken
In hearts that are honest and true.

How often the light smiles of gladness
Is worn by a friend that we meet,
To cover a soul full of sadness,
Too proud to acknowledge defeat.

How often the friends we love dearest,
Their noblest emotions conceal;
And bosoms the purest, sincerest,
Have secrets they cannot reveal.

How often the sigh of dejection
Is heaved from the hypocrite's breast;
To parody truth and affection,
Or lull a suspicion to rest.

Leave base minds to harbor suspicion,
And small ones to trace our defects;
Let ours be a nobler ambition,
For base is the mind that suspects.

We none of us know one another,
And oft into error we fall;
So let us speak well of each other,
Or speak not at all.

The Young Wife's Dilemma.

My wedding tour was a trip to Niagara. How I enjoyed the scenery along the railway! My husband left our car to spend half an hour, as he said, among the smokers. He had scarcely gone out, when a lady, who had been occupying a seat on the other side, rose and came toward me.

I had particularly noticed her neat attire, and youthful appearance, wondering to see her traveling alone. She wore a plain, gray poplin dress, trimmed with black braid, and a tunic and straw bonnet, with wide ribbon strings, and pink rose buds inside. Her gray barege veil was thrown lightly back, and she placed her little gloved hand on the back of the seat, and looked in my face with an earnest appealing expression, which interested me at once.

"May I sit by your side a few moments?" she asked, timidly, and in a very low tone.

"Certainly," I replied, making room for her by taking up a book that lay on the seat.

After a moment's silence, she said:

"Indeed, I ought to ask your forgiveness for coming to you; but I have been looking at every lady in the car, and I find not one to whom I dare speak but yourself. You look as if you would listen to me."

I turned and looked her full in the face, moved by the unmistakable tone of deep feeling. She was evidently very young and extremely prepossessing in appearance. Her features were regular and delicately molded; her complexion was fair, and her low forehead was banded with masses of soft, brown hair; her eyes were large, and dark gray, shaded by very long lashes.

It was the eyes that most attracted me. There was a tender shyness in their depths, and I saw that they were suffused with moisture. My sympathy was stirred as I asked her what I could do for her. She hesitated, and I could see that she trembled.

"I shall be glad to assist you." And I made a move to draw out my purse.

She started, and colored painfully, as she prevented me.

"Not that, madam," she exclaimed; "I do not want that kind of help. But I

do want advice. Oh, madam, I am in great—very great distress!"

"You have lost a friend?" I asked, tears welling into my own eyes as I thought of such an affliction of my own.

"No, ma'am; that is, if you mean by death!" she faltered, with a kind of dry gasping sob, as if her heart were aching with grief. "I may have lost my best friend: at least—oh forgive me! How I wish I could be certain what to do."

She covered her face and burst into passionate tears. I soothed her gently, and after a short time, she was able to tell her story.

She was a young wife, and had been married a little less than a year. Her husband lived in Rochester and was a lumber merchant. She had left him a few weeks before to pay a visit to her mother, who lived on a farm beside the Hudson river not far from Albany.

"Oh, madam, I was so happy there. I cannot tell you how happy. It was my first visit; and to be at home once more with my dear mother and young sisters, and my brothers on the farm; and all so lovely at this pleasant season. Was I wrong to be so happy?"

"Wrong. Surely not," I replied.

"I wrote," she continued, "to tell my husband what a delightful visit I was enjoying at home. I wrote many times and got no answer. At last he sent me this."

She drew out a folded paper from her satchel, and handed it to me, bidding me read it. As I did so she turned, so that her face was concealed. But I knew she was weeping.

It was a short letter, but written in correct language, showing the hand of a man of education. But every line was barbed with refined cruelty. He expressed satisfaction in hearing that Emily—so he called her—was so very happy as she described herself; it was certainly natural that she should enjoy the society of her nearest kindred; and he could not blame her, nor regret it. On the contrary, he was glad of it; and he proposed to her to extend indefinitely the visit she was enjoying so much. Indeed, he really thought it would be far the best thing for her to remain with her mother and family, and not to return to him at all. He would send her money whenever she wanted it. In urging her to stay with her relations, he seemed to have made up his mind to insist upon a separation.

The poor young wife looked eagerly in my face as I handed her back the letter.

"What do you think of it?" she asked, in a quivering voice.

"It is not a kind letter," I began.

"Oh, but my husband was always kind to me—always!" she exclaimed quickly.

"And he loved you?"

"He seemed to love me. Why else did he want me to marry him?" she asked innocently.

"True. And you loved—you love him?"

She clasped her hands and her eyes filled again. No need of answer in words.

"What ought I to do?" she asked, searching my face with anxious scrutiny. "What is the best thing to do after receiving such a letter?"

"What did your own heart at first prompt you to do?"

"To go to my husband at once," was her emphatic reply. "So I came directly I did not wait an hour to think of it, though they all said I should not come."

"You did right!" I exclaimed. "Just right!"

"Did I? Oh, I am so glad you think so!" and in her girlish impulse she seized my hand and pressed it closely in both hers. "But they all reproached me for

coming after a man who had shown he did not care for me, and wanted to be rid of me; and after I came into the car I began to think perhaps they were in the right, and my husband did not want me, and that after he had written to desire me to stay away from him, he might think me forward and indelicate in coming back directly. Do you think, madam, I can be supposed too forward in doing so?"

"Too forward?" I echoed. My dear child—I felt myself quite the matron, "it is not a lover you are going to reclaim/ It is your husband. Who has a better right to go to him, or to be with him?"

"So I thought—so I think," the young creature said, her face suffused with a blush I thought infinitely becoming.

"But—"

"But what, child? Surely there can be no objection—"

She looked down, and her face was pale again. At length she said, with a timid hesitation,—

"My husband is very much my superior. He has had a splendid education; has been through college, and has mingled in excellent society in the large cities. I never could converse with him on many subjects, for I have had only plain schooling, and I never was much in society. He may have found out that I could not make him happy, and he may really wish to cast me off."

"It is not possible," cried I catching her hand, and controlling with difficulty the impulse I felt to clasp her in my arms. "It cannot be that any man who is not a downright fool would wish to lose such a sweet little wife, who loves him as you do. No, no, dear. If your husband is a man of culture, he will prize you all the more, knowing how rare such women are. And, besides, you can educate yourself to his level."

"Can I?" she asked, her eyes dilating.

"Certainly. I have often heard of women acquiring a noble education after marriage. But you must apply yourself and study—study hard."

"I will, oh, I will," she exclaimed. "What a blessing you are to me, dear madam. I will study with all my might. Be sure of that."

"And you must seek guidance and assistance," I went on, solemnly, "from one who never fails to listen to prayer. Are you in the habit of praying?"

She stooped her face, and I saw tears glistening on her crimson cheeks.

"I have not prayed as I might," she answered, "but I will—I will—from this time forward."

"Then you may be sure of success," I said, encouragingly.

Some minutes passed, while the train stopped at a station. After we had started again, she said,—

"I thank you, madam, so much. But for what you have said to me I should have got off here, and taken the train to my mother's. I felt so afraid my husband would not welcome me."

"He lives—you said—"

"In Rochester. I am doubtful now what to do when I get there. I have an aunt living in the city. Shall I go to her house and rest, and stop all night, or send word to my husband, and wait for his answer. What would you advise me?"

She was trembling, and her rapid change of color showed that she was suffering from suppressed excitement. I considered a moment and then counselled her to stop first at the house of her aunt, and when she felt rested and able to go to her husband before sending him any word. She decided on doing this, I asked her name, and wrote it down, handing her my own card. I begged her to write

to me, feeling anxious to know the result. We were in Rochester long before dark and I had my husband to assist the young stranger to alight. On the third day afterward I received a letter from her.

She had stopped at her aunt's, and it was her intention to remain till the next day. But her impatience would not let her stop. She walked to her husband's place of business. He had an office in the lumber yard, and was seated at his desk writing when the slight figure of his wife appeared in the doorway. As he turned to see who it was, she sprang forward, flung her arms round his neck and exclaimed, sobbing,—

"O George! Are you not glad to see me? How could you think I would stay away from you?"

That was all the reproach she gave him, and it sufficed. The husband was all penitence in a moment for his absurd jealousy and his cruel letter. The young wife's letter to me expressed so much gratitude that I verily believe she tho't me the author of her happiness.

I imagined afterward the consequence if she had fallen into the hands of a "strong minded woman," or a proud one who would have deemed it due to the dignity of her sex to obey the unkind mandate she had received, and leave a husband so unfeeling. The wife's loving heart pointed out the best way; and I always took some credit to myself for the "word spoken in season."

A Tradition of Saratoga Lake.

William L. Stone, in *Harper's Magazine* for August, says: There is an Indian superstition attached to this lake which probably had its source in its remarkable loneliness and tranquility. The Mohawks believed that its stillness was sacred to the great spirit, and that if a human voice uttered a sound upon its waters, the canoe of the offender would instantly sink. A story is told of an Englishwoman in the early days of the first settlers, who had occasion to cross this lake with a party of Indians who, before embarking, warned her most impressively of the spell. It was a silent, breathless day, and the canoe shot over the surface of the lake like an arrow. About half a mile from the shore, near the centre of the lake, the woman, wishing to convince the Indians of the erroneousness of their superstition, uttered a loud cry. The countenances of the Indians fell instantly to the deepest gloom. After a minute's pause, however they redoubled their exertions, and in frowning silence drove the light bark swiftly over the waters. They reached the shore in safety, and drew up the canoe, when the woman rallied the chief on his credulity. "The great spirit is merciful," answered the scornful Mohawk; "he knows that a white woman cannot hold her tongue!"

The Great Light.

The Ancient Accepted Rite of Masonry, around whose altars the Christian, the Hebrew, the Moslem, the Brahmin, the followers of Zoroaster can assemble as brethren, and unite in prayer to the one God, who is above all, the Baalim, must needs leave it to each of its initiates to look for the foundation of his faith and hope to the written scriptures of his own religion. For itself it finds those truths definite enough, which are written by the finger of God upon the heart of man and on the pages of the book of nature.—*Ex.*

You will notice that when a boy steps on a Canada thistle, or sticks a splinter into his foot, it is invariably a few minutes before school or work time.