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sep 8 1879

THE POOR MUSICIAN.

I am a poor musician, boys Like many more who roam; I have no cherished fatherland— No wife, no child, no home; I sing and play at many a door, Where shining pennies fall, And as I gather them I say: "God bless, God bless you all!"

A LUCKY SOVEREIGN.

They made a strikingly contrasting picture standing in the warm June twilight, and the fragrant odors of the roses and the woodbine, and the budding grape vines, lingered around them as if the tender accents were fitting tributes to them.

Two fair young girls, the same age to an hour, and as unlike as sisters could be, and each a perfect type of her own style of loveliness—both of them peeresses in their royal vesture of beauty.

Rose stood leaning against the railing of the veranda, her haughty eyes, that could melt from the cool, brilliant gray they now looked into such liquid darkness when occasion required—splendid, calm, cool eyes—were roaming away into the gathering dusk, that was falling in a purple gray veil of tissue over wood and lawn.

She turned her face toward her companion. Her eyes, suddenly recalled their wandering, listless glances, and showed a half-veiled, half-amused expression.

"Bell, how much longer are we going to stop here?—at least how much longer do you want to stop? I am sure I shall die of ennui if I have much more of it."

"Oh, don't think of going back to town yet, Rose. I wish we might never have to go."

"Never go back! Why, Bell, is it possible you are so infatuated with the country as actually to wish that? Child, for three months it is all very well to bury one's self as we are buried, and I've no doubt that mamma will feel much better and stronger for it; but to stay longer, in a hired cottage, with only one-half grown girl to assist in the work, and no amusement of any sort, and our joint stock of earnings exhausting itself daily. I tell you, Bell, I prefer our own suite of rooms at home, and my music scholars, and your book-keeping, with a chance of occasional enjoyments."

"I dare say you're right, dear. But I do love the country, Rose."

"So should I, if, for instance, I lived in the mansion over yonder—Ferry Court, you know—where the stately housekeeper showed us through, and dandied on the many qualities and vast wealth of its owner. I forget to tell you, Bell, that there will be a grand reception given a week after he gets back, and he is expected hourly."

"Bell lifted her eyes in a graceful little gesture of surprise.

"A reception? Oh, Rose, and of course there'll be a dance. Oh, dear, how I'd like to go!"

"Of course you'd like to go. But do you think for a moment that the aristocratic families around here would condescend to associate with us?"

"Bell's face grew stern.

"Why not? We are ladies born and bred if we do work for a living."

"You foolish child. I can tell you our faces and our handsome dresses—if we had them—would take up where our family name would not. And I can tell you something else, Bell—"

"The little gate at the roadside opened at that instant, and the sound of pattering footsteps coming toward the house in terror. Rose's remark, and then a dusty, travel-stained man paused at the foot of the steps, and touched his dingy hat-ribbon to the girls.

He was evidently one of the many respectable, discouraged, disheartened men one so often sees tramping through the country in search of work.

Rose drew herself up.

"Go away. We have nothing for you. We don't encourage tramps here."

He heaved his hat—the rim was decidedly battered and dusty:

"I beg your pardon, ladies; but if you will give me a—"

Rose swept across the floor angrily.

"Will you march off, or will you have the dog set on you? Bell, go tell Jane to unfasten Rover."

The man turned away slowly, as if to move was an effort, and Bell sprang up in an impulse of remonstrative protest.

"Rose, how can you be so heartless? He is pale as death, and only see how he drags himself along! You might have let him sit down a minute, and at least have given him a kind word and a piece of bread and butter."

A contemptuous laugh pealed from Rose's red lips.

"Tired and ill! Drunk and a thief, you'd better say! A piece of bread and butter! Absurd, Bell!"

She swept haughtily into the house, leaving Bell with her cheeks flushing, and a compassion born of the sweet womanly sympathy glowing in her blue eyes as she watched the man walk slowly, painfully along, and finally halt at the gate, as if in utter discouragement at the long stretch of road between him and the next house, where he might find him what Rose had rudely denied—the magnificent country seat of Lionel Granville, from whose doors no beggar was ever turned away hungry.

Bell saw him, and her quick instincts told her what she imagined his manner meant.

Quick as a bird, she dashed up stairs to her room and snatched her portmanteau from the bureau drawer, and was down again with a sovereign in her hand as she ran softly after him, still leaning against the gate-post, and still looking with that same strange expression on his pale face at the towers of Ferry Court.

"Here, please. It isn't much, but it's all I have to spare. Take it, please."

He looked surprisingly at her, and then at the money.

"You are very kind, but you are mistaken. I only want a—"

Bell thrust the money in his hand.

"Never mind, please. I think I can see you are proud; but please take it. There!"

He seemed amused at her eagerness, but made no more ado about accepting the gift and pocketing it, as he stood and watched her slim figure flitting away like a spirit in the dust.

The next day Rose came into Bell's room, radiant as she only permitted herself to be under rare circumstances, her gray eyes flashing, and her red lips parted in a smile of triumphant delight.

"Bell, see this! Now what do you say?"

She laid a square, monogrammed envelope in the girl's lap, addressed to the Misses Melton, and bearing inside invitations to the reception at Ferry Court for a fortnight from that night.

Rose watched the girl's sweet face glow under the surprise, then saw, to her amazement, the flash of delight fade.

"Well, Bell, of course we'll go. I'll take some money I can spare and get some susses, and wear natural flowers with it; and I know you have a sovereign laid aside for an emergency. You can get a good many things with it—gloves and a sash, you know—and who knows but what Lionel Granville may be captivated?"

Bell laid the envelope softly down.

"I can't go, dear, unless I wear my old white muslin, which will look wretched beside your new susses. I've spent my money!"

Rose frowned.

"Spent your money? Why, I saw it yesterday morning in your drawer. I noticed that the edge of the sovereign was a little chipped, and remember wondering if it was a good one or not. Spent your money! Bell, what do you mean?"

Bell met the vexed eyes as calmly as she could. She was just a little in awe of this magnificent sister of hers.

"I gave it to that man last night, Rose. I was so sorry. I am sure he was not the sort of man to talk as you did. I know he deserved the money."

Rose sat down and folded her hands in her lap.

"Give a sovereign to a tramp—a beggar! Well, if it doesn't pass my comprehension!"

Rose swept out of the room—she was like a duchess in her movements—and poor Bell went on with her sewing, wondering if her old white muslin wouldn't look pretty well if it was nicely got up, thinking that there was a sea green sash somewhere she had never worn; and a pair of white kids at home that Rose could go for when she went to buy her susses. So, while her busy, deft fingers sewed through the summer days on Rose's airy dress, little Bell decided she would go, after all, and wear her fresh white dress, and tresses in her golden tresses, and the seagreen sash knotted on her skirt—a simple, exquisite toilet that made a very Indian of her, that made people turn their heads for more than a second or third look when she and Rose entered the magnificent ball-room.

It was perfectly delightful every way. Mr. Granville possessed none but high-bred, intelligent friends, and the Misses Melton were treated accordingly.

The music was heavenly, and from her seat where she sat like a queen in state, Rose watched her handsome host, who had bowed low over her hand when he was introduced—watched him, as in his quiet self-possessed manner, he went among his guests.

Her heart was beating—would he, oh, would he ask her for the first dance, or would he go among the groups of stylish ladies from the city, any of whom would be so honored by his attention?

And then Rose saw Mr. Granville go straight across the room, right by her, and bow slowly to Bell as he said a few words, and offered his arm.

"Bell! Bell! to lead the grand quadrille! Bell on Lionel Granville's arm, the observed of all observers—as fair as a star, and so gracefully, so sweetly accompanied of her radiant beauty."

Rose sat gloomily through the first quadrille, and watched Lionel's pale, handsome face as he bent it very near Bell's golden curls, his ardent, admiring

eyes, that looked so eagerly into the sweet, girlish face, that others beside Rose noted his attention.

Then the dance over, Lionel gave Bell his arm.

"That has been a delightful quadrille, Miss Melton. By the way, did you know I have something that belongs to you?"

They had reached Rose's chair by this time, and Bell turned laughingly to him.

"Something of mine! I do not see how that can be, Mr. Granville. Do you rise?"

Rose favored him with her most fascinating smile.

"Indeed I do not, seeing that this is the first time we ever saw Mr. Granville."

"I'll leave you to fathom the mystery. Don't forget the first waltz for me, Miss Bell."

He went away, so handsome, so courtly, and Bell's foolish little heart was throbbing with new, vague delight, while Rose was almost suffocating with envy at the signal triumph of her sister. Mr. Granville came promptly for his waltz.

He drew her hand through his almost authoritatively.

"Miss Bell; it seems I have always known you, yet you say you never saw me before. Suppose we take a walk through the conservatory instead of having this waltz?"

Into the fragrant demi-dusk they went, where fountains tinkled and the rare flowers bloomed, and the music came in veiled sweetness and richness.

"I want you to be sure I am right, Miss Bell, when I say I have something of yours. Look at me closely. Have you never seen me before?"

He bent his face near hers. It was gravely smiling and so tender and good—and Miss Bell looked timidly at the smiling yet stern eyes.

"I am sure I never saw you before Mr. Granville."

"Then have you seen this?"

He drew from his vest pocket a sovereign—the very one, with a tiny bit chipped off it, that Bell had given her of late.

"Don't you understand, dear child? I had taken a freak into my head that I would walk from town here, and it was a grand walk, although it took three days, and ruined my clothes. I stopped at your little cottage to beg a glass of water. You know the rest."

"Bell's face was a marvel at that moment.

"In your kindness and goodness you gave it to me, Miss Bell, and the little act gave me an insight into your heart that a year of ordinary intercourse would never do. I shall keep it until you buy it back. I have set a price on it, and if you are ready to give it you can have it."

He put the money reverently away in his breast pocket, and took her out among the crowd again, a strangely happy girl. And before the summer roses had faded, Bell paid the price for the chipped sovereign—her own heart—that Lionel Granville pleaded for so eagerly.

She is the mistress of their grand house now, and Rose visits her once a year, not oftener, because Bell's husband does not care much for her.

But the invalid mother has a life-long home amid the luxuries of Ferry Court, and Bell is happier than the birds that sing in the trees of the big old park.

SYMPATHY.

How sweet and precious a thing is sympathy! Not merely the sympathy which leads one to rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep, on occasions that especially call for rejoicing or sorrowing, but that higher and more delicate expression of tenderness and love, which by looks and tones, as well as words, convey to others that we are not wanting in that electric touch that makes the whole world akin.

And while this all-embracing, it manifests its most endearing charms in the family circle, so that every note of joy or sorrow, every purpose and interest, finds a responsive note in some one heart, if not in all.

In Christian households, where the members are bound together by "the two-fold cord of nature and of grace," we would especially look for this charming trait, this heaven-born sympathy. Yet, alas! even here it is too often wanting.

Who has not seen the child to whom all nature is a wonderful book, its fair page containing lessons "half betrayed in beauty, half shrouded in mystery," come bounding in, with its face aglow, its mind astir eager to communicate some new delight, eager to know still more?

But, instead of sharing in this delight and striving to imprint still deeper one of nature's first lessons, the parents are wanting in the expected sympathetic gladness. The father is busy noting the rise and fall of stocks, and the mother, cumbered with much serving, till her spirits are like "sweet bells, jangled out of tune," cannot bring herself to sympathy with the freshness and buoyancy of the little one before her, and so casts the childish rapture, disappointing and grieving where she should give encouragement and sympathy. Ah! how few, even mothers, know how much light and love must be thrown around the opening bud of childhood, that it may expand in fair proportions. Only the

loving, sympathetic heart can fulfill the true mission of a mother, or of a friend.

A noble character is often marred by a cold, unemotional manner, and a judgment quite the reverse of a man's true nature is the general verdict.

How often has a father's entrance cast a chill over the merry group around the fireside! He loves his children, but his heart has grown old before its time, so that he cannot sympathize with the gleeful childhood, nor with the innocent amusements and pursuits of those of riper years. He looks with a forbidding glance upon all merriment, and thus loses his children's confidence—almost their love.

"Just listen one moment," his husband heard a young wife say to her husband: "I must read you a few lines from my new book." He gives an unwilling assent, scarcely raising his eyes to the glowing countenance before him. The passage is feelingly read, but the only response is a criticism on the pronunciation of some word, that she did not give in accordance with his standard. With it she reads on in silence, with a feeling of loss at the absence of a sympathy that would have doubled her enjoyment.

But why multiply instances? One meets with them constantly, and the loving spirit mourns over the absence of that which would, more than anything else, perhaps, make our earth approximate the lost Eden.

In delightful contrast with the above-mentioned instances is that of a dear little woman who is a living personification of this charming sympathy. In her busy life, amid many cares and perplexities, she keeps her heart attuned to the gentle ministries of life. By a thousand acts of nature's gentle magic she wins all hearts. The little child, the young maiden, the youth far from home and a mother's tender care, the sick, the destitute, the sorrowing—each and all are drawn to her, sure of finding in her gentle breast, in her prudent counsels, just the sympathy, just the help they need. But it is not always needful to bespeak her interest or her aid, for almost before you know the want of your own heart, she, in the tenderest, most delicate manner, is ready with her loving offices. Truly has she learned of Him whose hands were ever stretched forth in tender compassion; whose feet were weary and worn on His many errands of love; whose gracious presence sanctified the marriage festivities at Cana, and whose tears mingled with those of the sorrowing sisters of Bethany.

POETRY AND POETS.

Poetry is the electric fulmination of the intellect inspired by an intense admiration of an object or being; or a language expressing some sentiment or emotion in obedience to the laws of versification. Viewed as a product of fancy, or a beautiful painting of the imagination, it is the essence of genius—a pen-picture that often resembles the full blown flower, the murmur of star-crowned waves that flash along the beach, a tide of voluptuous music born of the creative force of ecstasy floating adown the river of life, and waiting the immortal spirit to a haven of rest; sentiment that clasps hands with bird-notes and thunder-burst of melody, making sweet accord; the scintillating, incandescent fires of the soul that wreath the subject in the gorgeous colors of imagery. It is a divine harmony, a subtle, indefinable mistrestry, dancing upon the heartstrings like angel fingers striking silver notes upon the harps of Heaven. A silent and unseen mediator between the material and spiritual, it evolves the immortal from our perishing being, and breaks down the bars of our narrowed sphere, to take in a glimpse of the Infinite.

Poetry, the power that invests the silent wilderness, the speechless vale and dumb sea-wave, with a holy speech, not ruled nor rounded by the babbling tongues that voice man's wisdom. Twin sister of Music, in softening down the asperities of rougher natures, harmonizing the discordant elements of society, and attuning ear and eye to finer strains of tenderness and images of beauty; existing all that is noble and exalted in behalf of truth and virtue. A spirit thus endowed is slow to repudiate the claims of humanity, or divorce itself from its affinity with all that is generous, ennobling and divine. See the true poet as he passes through life's rugged real, its decaying glories, its ephemeral joys, its meteoric hopes, yet he still survives in his apocalyptic realm of visions and revelations, enchaining the world with his melody and immortal forms of worship, and sowing each life-furrow with flowers as he sets each hedge with roses. But true poets are few; too many spirits are broken, too many lives wrecked in the dark and sterile by ways of the world, too many lamps go out in the foul gases of our propings after higher things for the jeweled crown to be won!

The wise man has his felicitas, as well as the fool. But the difference between them is that the felicitas of the one are known to the world; and the felicitas of the other are known to the world and concealed from himself.—Mason.

No man was ever yet a great poet, without being at the same time a profound philosopher, for poetry is the blossom and fragrance of all human knowledge, human thoughts, human passions, emotions, language.—Coleridge.

HAPPINESS.

The idea has been transmitted from generation to generation, that happiness is one large and beautiful precious stone—a single gem so rare that all search after it is vain, all effort for it hopeless. It is not so. Happiness is a mosaic, composed of many smaller stones. Each taken apart and viewed singly may be of little value, but when all are grouped together, and judiciously combined and set, the form a pleasant and graceful whole—a costly jewel. Trample not under your foot, then, the little pleasures which a gracious Providence scatters in the daily path, and which, in eager search after some great and exciting joy, we are so apt to overlook.

Why should we keep our eyes fixed on the bright, distant horizon, while there are so many lovely roses in the garden in which we are permitted to walk? The very ardor of our chase after happiness may be the reason that she so often eludes our grasp. We impatiently strain after her when she has been brought nigh unto us.

MARRIAGE.

Marriage is to woman at once the happiest and saddest event of her life; it is the promise of future bliss raised on the death of all present enjoyment. She quits her home, her companions, her occupations, her amusements—everything on which she has hitherto depended for comfort, for pleasure. The parents by whose advice she has been guided; the sisters to whom she has dared impart every embryo thought and feeling; the brother who has played with her, by turns the counselor and the counsellor, and the younger children to whom she has hitherto been the mother and the playmate—all are to be forsaken at one fell stroke. Every former tie is loosened, the spring of every hope and action is to be changed; and yet she flees with joy into the untrodden path before her. She bids a fond and grateful adieu to the life that is past, and turns with excited hopes and joyous anticipations to happiness to come. Then woe to the man that can blight such fair hopes, who can, coward-like, break the illusion that has won her, and destroy the confidence which love has inspired.

A SALOON KEEPER'S CONTRACT.

About eleven o'clock yesterday morning a haggard looking stranger entered a saloon on North Broad Street, and asked for a glass of beer. When the nickel had been raked into the till, the saloon man took a seat and began reading a newspaper.

"Here is my last nickel," solemnly began the stranger. "When I swallow this beer I am a beggar and an outcast. The world does not care for me—why should I care for this world? I will mix poison with this, my last glass!"

He turned to the man with the paper, but the saloonist didn't seem to care.

"Yes; I will poison myself and die in my tracks!" exclaimed the stranger in a loud voice.

"The man with the paper didn't look up."

"So here goes to end my worthless self!" continued the stranger, as he took out a paper and poured a white powder into the glass. "Farewell, cold world, farewell! Let them bury me in the sun shine or shadow—I care not."

He drank his beer, but the saloonist had his nose close to the paper, and was spilling out a big word. The stranger started for the door, but too mad to contain himself he returned as I demand—

"Will you sit there and see me poison myself, and never utter a word?"

"Have you taken poison?"

"I have. I just swallowed a fatal dose of arsenic."

"Good!" chuckled the saloon keeper, as he rose up. "I have a regular contract with the doctors, and you'll not me twelve dollars. Come in here!"

He grabbed the stranger by the neck and dragged him into a closet at the back end of the room, saying as he locked the door—

"Glad you took arsenic, as it leaves the body in a more likable condition!"

The stranger yelled and pounded and explained that he had only swallowed a little chalk powder up, and after an hour he was let out.

"You have robbed me of twelve dollars," bitterly exclaimed the saloonist, as he led the man to the door, and gave him a hit with his boot. "Yes, you have robbed me, and now—"

But the stranger left without saying good-by, and was afterwards heard asking a boy if he knew of any man who wanted to hire a gentleman to clean up his back yard.

THE FATTED CALF.

A story is told concerning a town bred curate who had consented to do duty on Sunday for his friends, the rector of a country