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SELECT TALE.

FROM THE SOUTHERN LITERARY MESSENGER.

LOSING AND WINNING.

By the author of the "Cottage in the Glen," "Sensibility," &c.

Think not, the husband gained, that all is done;
The prize of happiness must still be won;
And, oft, the careless find it to their cost,
The lover in the husband may be lost;
The graces night, along his heart allure—
They are the virtues, meeting must secure.

Lord Littleton.

Can I not win his love?
Is not his heart of penetrable stuff?
Will not submission, meekness, patience, truth,
Win his esteem!—A sole desire to please,
Conquer indifference!—they must—they will!
Aid me, kind heaven—I'll try!
Aton.

It was a bright and beautiful autumn evening. The earth was clad in a garb of the richest and brightest hues; and the cerulean of the heavens gave place, near the setting sun, to a glowing "saffron color," over which was hung a most magnificent drapery of crimson clouds. Farther towards both the north and south, was suspended here and there a sable curtain, fringed with gold, folded as but one hand could fold them. They seemed fitting drapery to shroud the feet of Him, who "maketh the clouds his chariot, who rideth upon the wings of the wind."

Such was the evening on which Edward Cunningham conducted his fair bride into the mansion prepared for their reception. "But had both earth and heaven been decked with ten-fold splendor, their beauty and magnificence would have been lost on him; for his thoughts, his affections, his whole being were centered in the graceful creature that leaned to his arm, and whom he again and again welcomed to her new abode—her future home. He forgot that he still moved in a world that was groaning under the pressure of unnumbered evils; forgot that earthly joy is oft-times but a dream, a fantasy that vanishes like the shadow of a summer cloud, that flits across the landscape, or, as the morning vapor before the rising sun; forgot that all on this side heaven is fleeting, and changeable, and false. In his bride, the object of his fondest love, he felt that he possessed a treasure whose smile would be unclouded sunshine to his soul; whose society would make another Eden bloom for him. It was but six short months since he first saw her who was now his wife; and nearly that entire period had been in the delirium of love, intent only on securing her as his own. He had attained his object, and life seemed spread before him, a paradise of delight, blooming with roses, unaccompanied by thorns.

Joy and sorrow, in this world, dwell side by side. In a stately mansion, two doors off from the one that had just received the joyful bridegroom and happy bride, dwelt one who had been for weeks a wife. On that same bright evening she was sitting in the solitude of her richly furnished chamber, her elbows resting on a table, her hands supporting her head, while a letter lay spread before her, on which her eyes, blinded by tears, were riveted. The letter was from her husband. He had been from home nearly three weeks, in which time she had heard from him but once, and then only by a brief verbal message. The letter that lay before her had just arrived; it was the first she had ever received from her husband, and ran thus:

Mrs. Westbury:—Thinking you might possibly expect to see me at home this week, I write to inform you that business will detain me in New York some time longer.
Yours, &c.
FREDERIC WESTBURY.

For a long time the gentle, the feeling Julia, indulged her tears and her grief without restraint. Again, and again, she read the lacrimose epistle before her, to ascertain what more might be made of it than at first met the eye. But nothing could be clothed in plainer language, or be more easily understood. It was as brief, and as much to the point as those interesting letters which debtors sometimes receive from their creditors, through the agency of an attorney. "Did ever youthful bride," thought she, "receive from her husband such a letter as this?" He strives to show me the complete indifference and coldness of his heart towards me. O! why did I accept his hand, which was rather his father's offering than his own? Why did I not listen to my reasons, rather than to my fond and foolish heart, and resist the kind old man's reasonings and pleadings? Why did I believe him when he told me I should win his son's affections?—Did I not know that his heart was given to another?—Dear old man, he fondly believed his Frederic's affections could not long be withheld from one whom he himself loved so tenderly—and how eagerly I drank in his assurances! Amid all the sorrow that I felt, while kneeling at his dying bed, how did my heart swell with undiminished pleasure, as he laid his hand, already chilled by death, upon my head, gave me his parting blessing, and said that his son would love me! Mistaken assurance! ah, why did I fondly trust it? Were I now free!—free—would I then have the knot untied that makes me for life? Not for a world like this! No he is mine and I am his; by the laws of God and man, we are one. He must sometimes be at home; and an occasional hour in his society, will be a dearer bliss than ought this world can bestow beside. His father's blessing is still warm at my heart! I still feel his hand on my head! Let me act as he trusted I should act, and all may yet be well! Duties are mine—and thine, heavenly Father, are results. Overlook my infirmities, forgive all that needs forgiveness, sustain my weakness, and guide me by thine uttering wisdom." She fell on her knees to continue her supplication, and pour out her full soul before her Father in heaven; and when she arose, her heart, if not happy, was calm; her brow, if not cheerful, was serene.

Frederic Westbury was an only child. He never enjoyed the advantages of maternal instruction, impressed on the heart by maternal tenderness—for his mother died before he was three years old,

and all recollection of her had faded from his memory. Judge Westbury was one of the most amiable, one of the best of men; but with regard to the management of his son, he was too much like the venerable Israelitish priest. His son, like other sons, often did that which was wrong, and he restrained him not. He was neither negligent in teaching, nor in warning; but instruction and discipline did not, as they ever should do, go hand in hand; and from want of this discipline, Frederic grew up with passion uncontrolled—with a will unsubdued. He received a finished education, and his mind which was of a high order, was richly stored with knowledge. His pride of character was great, and he looked down with contempt on all that was dishonorable or vicious. He had chivalrous generosity, and a frankness of disposition that led him to detest concealment or deceit. He loved or hated with his whole soul. In person he was elegant; his countenance was marked with high intellect and strong feeling; and he had the bearing of a prince. Such was Frederic Westbury at the age of four-and-twenty.

About a year before his marriage, Frederic became acquainted with Maria Eldon, a young lady of great beauty of person, and fascination of manner, who at once enlived his affections. But against Miss Eldon, Judge Westbury had conceived a prejudice, and for once in his life was obstinate in refusing to indulge his son in the wishes of his heart. He foresaw, or thought he did so, the utter ruin of that son's happiness, should he so ally himself. He had selected a wife for his son, a daughter-in-law for himself, more to his own taste. Julia Horton was possessed of all that he thought valuable or fascinating in women. Possibly Frederic might have thought so too, had he known her, ere his heart was in possession of another; but being pointed out to him as the one to whom he must transfer his affections, he look on her with aversion as the chief obstacle to the realization of his wishes.

Julia was born, and had been educated, in a place remote from Judge Westbury's residence; but from her infancy he had seen her from time to time, as business led him into that part of the country in which her parents resided. In her childhood she entwined herself around the heart of the Judge; and from that period he had looked on her as the future wife of his son. His views and wishes, however, were strictly confined to his own breast, until his dismay, he found that his son's affections were entangled. This discovery was no sooner made than he wrote a pressing letter to Julia, who was now an orphan, to come and make him a visit of a few weeks. The reason he gave for inviting her was, that his health was rapidly declining, (which was indeed true,) and he felt that her society would be a solace to his heart. Julia, on receiving the letter, heard his enlightened co-ordinator; observed his polished manners; remarked the lofty tone of his feelings; and giving the reins to her fancy, without consulting reason or prudence, she loved him. Too late for her security, but too soon for her peace, she learned that he loved another. Dreading lest she should betray her folly to the object of her unsought affections, she wished immediately to return to her native place. But to this Judge Westbury would not listen. He soon discovered the taste of her feelings, and it gave him unmingled satisfaction. It augured well for the success of his dearest earthly hope; and as his strength was rapidly declining, consumption having fastened her deadly fangs upon him, to hasten him to the grave, he gave his whole mind to the accomplishment of his design. At first his son listened to the subject with undisguised impatience; but his feelings softened as he saw his father sinking to the tomb; and, in an unguarded hour, he promised him that he would make Julia his wife. Judge Westbury next exerted himself to obtain a promise from Julia that she would accept the hand of his son; and he rested not until they had mutually pledged their faith at his bedside. To Frederic this was a moment of unmingled misery. He saw that his father was dying, and felt himself constrained to promise his hand to one woman, while his heart was in possession of another.

Julia's emotions were of the most conflicting character. To be the pledged bride of the man she loved, made her heart throb with joy, and her faith in his father's assurance that she would win his affections, sustained her hope, that his prediction would be verified. Yet when she marked the countenance of her future husband, her heart sank within her. She could not flatter herself into the belief, that its unmingled gloom arose solely from grief at the approaching death of his father. She felt that he was making a sacrifice of his fondest wishes at the shrine of filial duty.

Judge Westbury died; and with almost his parting breath, he pronounced a blessing upon Julia as his daughter—the wife of his son—most solemnly repeating his conviction that she would soon secure the heart of her husband!

Immediately on the decease of her friend and father, Julia returned home, and in three months Fredic followed her to fulfill his promise. He was wretched, and would have given a world, had he possessed it, to be free from his engagement. But that could never be. His word had been given to his father, and must be religiously redeemed. "I will make her my wife," thought he; "I promised my father that I would. Thank heaven, I never promised him that I would love her!" Repugnant as such an union was to his feelings, he was really impatient to have it completed; for as his idea of his duty and obligation went not beyond the bare act of making her his wife, he felt that, that once done, he should be comparatively a free man.

"I am come," said he to Julia, "to fulfill my engagement. Will you name a day for the ceremony?" His countenance was so gloomy, his manner so cold—so utterly destitute of tenderness or kindly feeling, that something like terror seized Julia's heart; and without making any reply, she burst into tears.

"Why these tears, Miss Horton?" said he,

"Our mutual promise was given to my father; it is fit we redeem it."

"No particular time was specified," said Julia timidly, and with a faltering voice. "Is so much haste necessary?"

"My father wished that no unnecessary delay should be made," said Frederic, "and I can see no reason why we should not as well be married now, as at any future period. If you consult my wishes, you will name an early day."

The day was fixed, and at length arrived presenting the singular anomaly of a man eagerly hastening to the altar, to utter vows from which his heart recoiled, and a woman going to it with trembling and reluctance, though about to be united to him who possessed her undivided affections.

The wedding ceremony over, Mr. Westbury immediately took his bride to his elegantly furnished house; threw it open for a week, to receive bridal visits; and then gladly obeyed a summons to New York, to attend to some affairs of importance. On leaving home, he felt as if released from bondage. A sense of propriety had constrained him to pay some little attention to his bride, and to receive the congratulations of his friends with an air of satisfaction, at least; while those very congratulations congealed his heart, by bringing to mind the ties he had formed with one he could not love, to the impossibility of his forming them with the one whom he idolized. When he had been absent about ten days, he availed himself of an opportunity to send a verbal message to his wife, informing her that he was well, and should probably be at home in the course of two weeks; but when that period was drawing toward a close, his business was not completed, and as home was the last place he wished to visit, he resolved to protract his absence, so long as he had a reasonable excuse. "I must write, and inform her of the change in my plan," thought he, "deceit demands it, yet how can I write? My dear Julia!—my dear wife!—No such thing—she is not dear to me!"

Co coeur au moins, difficile à donner,
Ne peut aimer ni par ordre d'un pere,
Ni par raison.

She is my wife—she is Mrs. Westbury—she is mistress of my house, and must share my fortune—let that suffice her! It must have been for an estate that she married me. A name la fortune! an elegant establishment! Mean! ambitious! heartless! Then, Maria—bright, beautiful, and tender—thou wouldst have married me for myself! Alas, I am undone! O, my father! Under the influence of feelings like these, he wrote the lacrimose epistle which cost his bride so many bitter tears.

It was at the close of about two weeks from this, that Julia was sitting one evening in her parlor, during the time between her work and a book, when the door-bell rang, and a minute after the parlor door opened, and Mr. Westbury entered. With sparkling eyes and glowing cheeks, she sprang forward, her hand half extended to meet his—but his ceremonious bow, and cold "good evening Mrs. Westbury," recalled to her recollection, and scarcely able to reply to his civility, she sank back on her chair. She thought she was prepared to see him cold and distant—thought she expected it—but she had deceived herself. Notwithstanding all her bitter ruminations on her husband's indifference toward her, there had been a little under current of hope, playing at the bottom of her heart, and telling her he might return more cordial than he went. His cold salutation, and colder eye, sent her to her seat, disappointed, sick at heart, and nearly fainting. In a minute, however, she recovered her self-possession, and made those inquiries concerning his health and journey, that propriety dictated. In spite of himself, she succeeded in drawing him out. She was gentle, modest and unobtrusive—and good sense and propriety were conspicuous in all she said. Besides, she looked very pretty. Her figure, though rather below the medium size, was very fine, her hand and foot of unrivalled beauty. She was dressed with great simplicity, but good taste was betrayed in everything about her person. She wore her dress, too, with a peculiar grace, equally remote from precision and negligence. Her features were regular, and her complexion delicate; but the greatest attraction of her face, was the facility and truth with which it expressed every feeling of the heart. When Mr. Westbury first entered the parlor, an observer might have pronounced her beautiful; but the bright glow of transient joy that then kindled her cheek, had faded away, and left her pale—so pale, that Mr. Westbury inquired, even with some little appearance of interest, "whether her health was as good as usual?" Her voice, which was always soft and melodious, was even softer and sweeter than usual, as she answered "that it was." Mr. Westbury at length went so far as to make some inquiries relative to her occupations during his absence, whether she had called on the new bride, Mrs. Cunningham, and other questions of similar consequence. For the time he forgot Maria Eldon; was half unconscious that Julia was his wife and viewing her only as a companion, he passed an hour or two very comfortably.

One day when Mr. Westbury came into dinner, Julia handed him a card of compliments from Mr. and Mrs. Brooks, who were about giving a splendid party.

"I have returned no answer," said Julia, "not knowing whether you would wish to accept the invitation or not."

"For yourself, you can do as you please, Mrs. Westbury—but I shall certainly attend it."

"I am quite indifferent about the party," said Julia, "as such scenes afford me little pleasure; but should be pleased to do as you think proper—as you think best."

Her voice trembled a little, as she spoke; for she had not yet become sufficiently accustomed to Mr. Westbury's brusque manner toward herself, to hear it with perfect firmness. "I should think it very suitable that you pay Mr. and Mrs. Brooks this attention," Mr. Westbury replied.

Nothing more was said on the subject, and Julia

returned an answer agreeable to the wishes of her husband.

The evening to visit Mrs. Brooks at length arrived, and Julia repaired to her chamber to dress for the occasion. To render herself pleasing in the eyes of her husband was the sole wish of her heart, but how to do this was the question. She would have given the world to know his taste, his favorite colors, and other trifles of like nature—but of these she was completely ignorant, and must therefore be guided by her own fancy. "Simplicity," thought she—"simplicity is the surest way; for it never disgusts—never offends, if it does not captivate." Accordingly, she arrayed herself in a plain white stain—and over her shoulders was thrown a white blank mantle, with an azure border, while a girdle of the same hue encircled her waist. Her toilet completed, Julia descended to the parlor, her shawl and calash in her hand. Mr. Westbury was waiting for her, and just casting his eyes over her person, he said—"If you are ready, Mrs. Westbury, we will go immediately, as it is now late." Most of the guests were already assembled when they arrived at the mansion opened for their reception, and it was not quite easy to get access to the lady of the house, to make their compliments. This important duty, however, was at length happily accomplished, and Mr. Westbury's next effort was to obtain a seat for his wife. She would have preferred retaining his arm, at least for a while, as few persons present were known to her, and she felt somewhat embarrassed and confused; but she durst not say so, as, from her husband's manner, she saw that he wished to be free from such attendance.—In such matters the heart of a delicate and sensitive woman seldom deceives her. Is it that her instincts are superior to those of men?

Julia had been seated but a short time before Mr. and Mrs. Cunningham approached her, and entered into lively conversation. This was a great relief to Julia, who could have wept at her solitary and neglected situation, alone, in the midst of a crowd. Mrs. Cunningham was in fine spirits, and her husband appeared the happiest of the happy. Not that he appeared particularly to enjoy society—but his blooming wife was by his side, and his eyes rested on her with looks of the tenderest love—while the sound of her voice seemed constantly to awaken a thrill of pleasure in his heart. After conversing with Julia awhile, Mrs. Cunningham said,

"Do you prefer sitting to walking, Mrs. Westbury? Pray take my arm, and move about with us a little—it looks so dull for a person to sit through a party."

Julia gladly accepted the offer, and was soon drawn away from herself, in listening to the lively and interesting conversation of a few weeks in the city, seemed already acquainted with all the gentlemen, and half the ladies present. A hour had been passed in this manner, and in partaking of the various refreshments that were provided—to which Julia did little honor, though this was of no consequence, as Mrs. Cunningham amply made up all her deficiencies of this kind—when the sound of music in another room attracted their attention. Julia was extremely fond of music, and as their present situation, and the confusion of tongues, was very unfavorable for its enjoyment, Mr. Cunningham proposed that they should endeavor to make their way to the music room. After considerable detention, they succeeded in accomplishing their object, so far at least as to get fairly within the door. Considering the number of persons present, and how few there are that do not prefer the music of their own tongues to any other melody, the room was remarkably still—a compliment deserved by the young lady who sat to the piano, who played and sang with great feeling. Julia's attention was soon attracted to her husband, who was standing on the opposite side of the room, leaning against the wall, his arms folded across his breast, his eyes resting on the performer with an expression of warm admiration, while a deep shade of melancholy was cast over his features. Julia's heart beat tumultuously. "Is it the music," thought she, "or musician that thus rivets his attention? Would I knew who it is that plays and sings so sweetly!" She did not remain long in doubt. The song finished, all voices were warm in its praise.

"How delightfully Miss Eldon plays! and with what feeling she sings!" exclaimed Mrs. Cunningham. "I never listened to a sweeter voice!"

The blood rushed to Julia's head, and back again to her heart, like a torrent; a vertigo seized her; and all the objects before her, were, for a moment, an indistinct whirling. But she did not faint; she did not even betray her feelings, though she took the first opportunity to leave the room, and obtain a seat. For a long time she was unconscious of all that was passing around her; she could not even think—she only felt. Her husband's voice was the first thing that aroused her attention. He was standing near her with another gentleman; but it was evident that neither of them were aware of her proximity.

"Mrs. Brooks looks uncommonly well to-night," said Mr. Westbury's companion; "her dress is peculiarly becoming."

"It would be," said Mr. Westbury, "were it not for blue ribbons; but I can think no lady looks well who has any of that odious color about her."

"It is one of the most beautiful and delicate colors in the world," said the other gentleman. "I wonder at your taste."

"It does finely in its place," said Mr. Westbury—"that is—in the heavens above our heads—but never about the person of a lady."

Julia wished her mantle and her girdle in Africa—"Yet why?" thought she. "I dare say he is ignorant that I have any of the color he so much dislikes, about me! His heart belongs to another, and he cares not—minds not, now she is clad whom he calls wife."

Mr. Westbury and his friend now moved to another part of the room, and it was as much as Julia could do, to answer with propriety the few remarks that a passing acquaintance now and then

made to her. At length the company began to disperse, and presently Julia saw Mr. Westbury leading Miss Eldon from the room. His head was inclined toward her; a bright hectic spot was on his cheek, and he was speaking to her in the softest tone, as they passed near where Julia was sitting. Miss Eldon's eyes were raised to his face, while her countenance wore a mingled expression of pain and pleasure. Julia had just time enough to remark all this, ere they left the room. "O, that I were away!" thought she—"that I were at home!—that I were—in my grave!" She sat perfectly still—perfectly unconscious of all that was going forward, until Mr. Westbury came to her, inquiring "whether she meant to be the last to take leave?" Julia mechanically made her parting compliments to Mrs. Brooks—and scarcely knew any thing till she arrived at her own door. Just touching her husband's hand, she sprang from her carriage, and flew to her chamber. For a while she walked the floor in an agony of feeling. The constraint under which she had labored, served but to increase the violence of her emotion, now that she was free to indulge it. "O, why did I attend this party?" at length thought she—"O, what have I not suffered!" After a while, however, her reason began to operate. "What have I seen, that I ought not to have expected?" she asked herself. "What have I learned that I knew not before? except," she added, "a trifling fact concerning my husband's taste." Julia thought long and deeply; her spirits became calm; she renewed former resolutions; looked to heaven for wisdom to guide, and strength to sustain her—and casting aside the mantle, which would henceforth be useless to her, she instinctively threw a shawl over her shoulders to conceal the unlucky, girde, and, though the hour was late, descended to the parlor. Mr. Westbury was sitting by a table, leaning his head on his hand. It was not easy for Julia to address him on any subject not too exciting to her feelings—and still more difficult perfectly to command her voice, that its tones might be those of ease and cheerfulness; yet she succeeded in doing both. The question she asked, led Mr. Westbury to look up and he was struck by the death-like paleness on her cheek. Julia could by an effort control her voice; she could in a degree subdue her feelings; but she could not command the expression of her countenance—could not bid the blood visit or recede from her cheeks at her will. She knew not, indeed, that at this time she was pale; her own face was the last thing in her mind. Mr. Westbury had no sooner answered her question, than he added—"You had better retire, Mrs. Westbury. You look as if the fatigues of the evening had been too much for you."

"Fatigues of the evening!—Aegonia, rather," said Julia, "I am counting mine for his 'kind' advice, she immediately retreated to her chamber.

Until this evening, Mr. Westbury had scarcely seen Miss Eldon since his marriage. He had avoided seeing her, being conscious that she retained her full power over his heart; and his sense of rectitude forbade his indulging a passion for one woman, while the husband of another. Miss Eldon suspected this, and felt piqued at his power over himself. Her heart fluttered with satisfaction when she saw him enter Mrs. Brooks's drawing room; and she resolved to ascertain whether her influence over his affections were diminished. She was mortified and chagrined, that even here he kept aloof from her, giving her only a passing bow, as he walked to another part of the room. It was with unusual pleasure that she complied with a request to sit to the piano; for she well knew the power of music—of her own music over his heart. Never before had she touched the keys with so much interest. She did her best—that best was pre-eminently good—and she soon found that she had fixed the attention of him whom alone she cared to please. After singing one or two modern songs, she began one that she had learned at Mr. Westbury's request at the period when he used to visit her almost daily. It was Burns's "Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon," and was with him a great favorite. When Miss Eldon came to the lines—

"Thou'ndst me of departed joys,
Departed, never to return!"

she raised her eyes to his face, and in an instant he forgot every thing but herself. "Her happiness is sacrificed as well as my own," thought he; and leaning his head against the wall of the room, he gave himself up, for the time, to love and melancholy. The song concluded, however, he regained some control over his feelings, and still kept at a distance from her; nay—conquered himself, so far as to repair to the drawing room, to escape from her dangerous vicinity. He saw her not again until she was equipped for her departure. Then she contrived to get near him and threw so much sweetness and melancholy into her voice, as she said "good night, Mr. Westbury," that he was instantly disarmed—and drawing her arm within his conducted her from the room.

"How," said he, in a low and tremulous tone, "how, Maria, could you sing that song, to harrow up my feelings? Time was, when to be near thee—to listen to thee, was my felicity; but now, duty forbids that I indulge in the dangerous delight."

Miss Eldon replied not—but raised her eyes to his face, while she repressed a half-smothered sigh. Not another word was uttered until they exchanged "adieu" at her carriage door.

Two or three weeks passed away without the occurrence of any incident calculated to excite peculiar uneasiness in the heart of Julia. True, her husband was still the cold, the ceremonious, and occasionally the abrupt Mr. Westbury; he passed but little even of his leisure time at home; and she had never met his eye when it expressed pleasure, or even approbation. But he did not grow more cold—more ceremonious; the time he passed at his own fireside, rather increased than diminished—and for all this she was thankful.

Her efforts to please were increasing. Her house was kept in perfect order, and every thing was done to time, and well done. Good taste and good judgment were displayed in every arrangement. Her table was always spread with great care, and

Her table was always spread with great care, and