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POETICAL.

From the Louisville Literary News Letter.

THE WITHERED FLOWERS.

I knew they would perish!—
Those beautiful flowers—
As the hopes that we cherish
In youth's sunny bower—
I knew they'd be faded!—
Though with fond gentle care
Their bright leaves were shaded,
Decay was still there.

So all that is brightest
Ever first fades away,
And the joys that leap lightest
The earliest decay.
The heart that was nearest
The widest will rove,
And the friend that was dearest
The first ceased to love.

And the poorest, the noblest.
The loveliest—we know—
Are ever the surest,
The sweetest to go.
The bird that sing sweetest,
The flower most pure,
In their beauty are fleetest,
In their fate the most sure.

Yet still though thy flowers
Are withered and gone,
They will live like some hours
In memory alone.
In that hallow'd shrine only
Sleep things we would cherish,
Pure priceless, loved, lonely,
They never can perish.

Then I'll mourn ye no more
Ye pale leaves that are shed,
Though your brightness is o'er
Your perfume is not fled;
And like thine aroma—
The spirit of flowers—
Remembrance will hover
O'er the grave of past hours.

THE TWO COUSINS.

"As lamps burn silent with unconscious light,
So modest ease in beauty shines more bright;
Unanim charms with edge resistless fall,
And she who means no mischief does it all."

"So here we are," said Mary—to her cousin, as they entered their chamber, "at the end of our fashionable tour;"—did you notice the long piazza, Isabel, and its tall pillars clothed to the top with woodbine?"

"I scarcely noticed the piazza," said Isabel—"but really, they looked quite brilliant in the drawing-room, as we passed up the stairs. I think we shall need to appear in our smartest, or we shall be overlooked in such an imposing company."

"And I hope we shall, Isabel,—myself, I mean," said Mary; "I came but to see, you know."

"Why, not to see and be seen cousin? This is a place where one would wish to appear to advantage."

Isabel knew that she was not destitute of the graces of form and feature, and the desire to display them never rose so quick in her heart as on the present occasion.

She had unlocked her trunk and was easily turning over the contents, apparently in search of something missing;— "Why, they must be in yours, Mary, pray unlock and see—my white satin and lace-dress—they can't have been left behind!"

Mary's trunk was examined; then the contents of the other were again hauled over, with increasing looks of concern. But the missing things could not be found. They had been done up, and with some other ornamental articles, were overlooked in packing.

The poor girl was actually pale with disappointment. She experienced a dismay of the heart at this sudden dissipation of her dreams of display, as overwhelming for the moment as if some real calamity had happened, to darken her prospects for life. "Was there ever any thing," she exclaimed, "so vexatious? why, I can't stay here, Mary, I shan't be fit to be seen. Do tell a servant to call brother George, and see if it is not possible to despatch a messenger after them."

"What! three hundred miles, Isabel, for a few few things to wear a week?—But never mind, you shall wear my white satin and lace-dress, and my wreath of flowers, and whatever else I can furnish to supply your deficiencies; they will fit you as well as your own, and are superfluous to me. I only brought them to gratify aunt Isabel, who would have us to be dressed alike."

"She thinks I am never so pretty as when I look like you," replied Isabel, "but I can't rob you, Mary—you are always so good and generous—you shall wear them yourself, and I," she continued, making an effort to be gay, "will get into a corner and see the admiration which you will attract; I shan't be quite lost to the party, for I shall serve to set you off to advantage."

"She thinks I am never so pretty as when I look like you," replied Isabel, "but I can't rob you, Mary—you are always so good and generous—you shall wear them yourself, and I," she continued, making an effort to be gay, "will get into a corner and see the admiration which you will attract; I shan't be quite lost to the party, for I shall serve to set you off to advantage."

Mary however insisted, and indeed declared that the articles should remain in her trunk unless Isabel wore them; and the latter, yielding to her cousin's generosity, and her own reviving ambition, accepted her offer—but half self-reproached—and thus they betook themselves to the toilette.

"Pray help me fix these curlis, Mary—don't you think we look burnt with the sun?

—there, that will do—how beautifully that music sounds—that will do—just right—they are promenading, by the sound—in-deed Mary you will look prettier than I, after all—that blue belt contrasts very pretty with your neat white muslin—won't you have one bunch of these flowers?—let me fix them in your hair—how beautifully white they are—why you look like a shepherdess—I am sure, Mary, you won't need to feel awkward—and thus she kept talking, partly to encourage her cousin and partly to suppress the risings of self-disapprobation which she could not altogether avoid feeling for having accepted her cousin's offer.

Prepared to descend, the two cousins, who were yet in their teens by a couple of years, proceeded with fluttering hearts, along with the brother of Isabel, to mix with the assemblage below. Each was fitted according to her own taste, notwithstanding the misfortune that had happened. The simplicity of Mary's dress suited the simplicity of her sweet expressive face. Isabel was dressed for effect: she sparkled and glowed with ornaments; while Mary wore a simple chain upon her neck, and the white sprig of flowers in her hair. The beautiful form of Isabel showed with peculiar grace through the light transparency that enveloped it; her cousin's was not less beautiful, zoned with delicate blue. The one was fascinating, the other was lovely.

The world was fresh to both. They were yet inexperienced in the illusiveness of its visions. Life to young minds is like the landscape to the traveller. Between the spot on which he stands and the far off outline which limits his vision, there are a thousand bright objects rejoicing in the sun, but when he has passed beyond them all, and the day has gone down, he looks back on that landscape in its mantle of mist and those thousand bright objects are turned into shadows. Such is experience.

And thus lay the world before our young heroines. Yet they saw it in different lights, according to their different tastes, and the different manner in which they had been educated. Isabel beheld it in the brightness of a May morning; the more chaste imagination of her cousin was accustomed to contemplate in the soft but rich lustre of the setting sun of autumn.

A week went by, and Pleasure had flown her round,—her round of gay assemblies and serenades and dances, when Isabel said to her cousin, as they retired to the rest of their chamber,

"I am sick of this place, I am sure, Mary."

"Sick! cousin? Why you are the reigning belle of the day. Indeed, Isabel, you are quite the centre of attraction, and the envy of half the fine ladies here."

"I am centre to nothing but folly," said Isabel, "how could brother George introduce to me that frivolous young Dr. B. of Albany; who had no other claim upon his notice—and none at all on mine—than his having been one of George's classmates—ex-pelled too, for dissolute conduct:—and what should Dr. B. do of course, but make me the acquaintance of all the whiskered triflers of the place. I am persecuted and vexed with their attentions—above all with the 'civil things' which they utter for compliment. Why did you not contrive to receive me this evening Mary, from that icksome Mr. Q. who stood up before me, or paraded at my side, be where I would, and was so assiduously polite that there was no detaching myself from him?"

"I did think of sending George to beg you to join our pleasant group in the corner, but you seemed quite happy in the society of Mr. Q. I saw you smiling very graciously in reply to his attentions."

"Smiles are not always happiness—nor complacency either: I am sure mine were not, for I was tired out of measure."

"He seemed a man of fashion."

"How I longed to be quit of him! Why he stood up before me all breathing of perfumes, and entertained me a full hour with nothing but E-lipse, and the great horse-race, and his water-dog and spaniel, and all such gallant nonsense—besides the pretty compliments which he contrived to mix with it."

"The compliments were for you, I suppose: the rest of his discourse was incoherent to himself."

"Mere self-adulation:—and you," continued Isabel, "was all the while enjoying the conversation of the intelligent Mr. L. That Mr. L., by the way, is becoming quite partial to you, I perceive."

"You must be very discerning, for he has given no proofs of it."

"A secret to you it naturally may be, but it is evident to me."

"He does not, at least," rejoined Mary, "attach himself to me wherever I go, like those you complain of."

"She thinks I am never so pretty as when I look like you," replied Isabel, "but I can't rob you, Mary—you are always so good and generous—you shall wear them yourself, and I," she continued, making an effort to be gay, "will get into a corner and see the admiration which you will attract; I shan't be quite lost to the party, for I shall serve to set you off to advantage."

"The course of folly," Mary remarked, "sometimes become the school of wisdom. They will prove so to you, Isabel. The week you have spent here, though you have not experienced all the light-hearted happiness you anticipated from it, will not be set

down among the lost weeks of your life. You have been learning by experience what I learned by precept. My mother has often remarked to me, that the world will regard us very much as we regard the world. It will assign us to those circles in which we fit ourselves to move. If we affect the society of the gay—if we assume a dress and manner to attract their admiration, it is natural to expect that we shall make them our companions; and as the vain idolators of dress and fashion gather about us, the truly refined will leave us to our congenial associates. How many mistaken people, my mother is accustomed to observe, by adopting an ostentatious style of living, and by educating their sons and daughters with a view to fashionable accomplishments rather than a true elevation of character, attract to the acquaintance of their families those who are far from being of the best class of society, in respect either to cultivation of mind or true refinement of manners. Light-minded triflers become the companions of their sons, and sops flatter their daughters. And in proportion as this sort of people become familiar at your house, your most valuable acquaintances will gradually fall off. You may invite them ever so sincerely and make them ever so welcome, yet they will hardly persuade themselves that their unostentatious manners are congenial to place where a different sort of people are so free to come."

"Your mother," replied Isabel, "is a happy exemplification of her doctrine. With the means of magnificence, all about her is simple and plain; and I am always struck with the goodness and good sense of the conversation in her parlour. Every body is charmed with her society, and feels a consciousness of elevation in the circle of her friends. I have always respected her good sense and revered her worth, while I thought her plan of education not quite so happy. But I shall learn to make her model my own. It is getting late, Mary, and I will bid you good-night; and when we next visit the Springs you shall wear your fine things yourself."

"And have your fine beau too, at my elbow, I suppose," replied Mary; "I thank you indeed, cousin."

POSTSCRIPT.

There is a sequel to this story, which the lapse of several years enables me to add. But it hardly need be told, especially since the moral is hardy need be told, especially since the moral is

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