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### A Tale of the Affections.

BY MRS F. W. BALL.

The fire blazed cheerily in the grate, the candle set on the little stand in its burnished cottage candlestick beside the clean-swept hearth, the simple furniture was arrayed with neatness and care around the pretty little parlor, and an air of comfort seemed to pervade the apartment. Ah! that seeming, would there were more reality in it! And who were the occupants of that cottage parlor? Alas! one solitary woman passed the meridian of life in appearance, sat before that blazing hearth, and as she gently rocked herself in the cushioned arm-chair, with her arms mournfully folded across her breast, an occasional tear rolled down her pale and sunken cheek and fell on her bosom. With all the means and appliances of comfort, she sat the picture of uncomplaining despair. No word escaped her lip, no frown contracted her brow, but silent suffering marked her pale features.

Subsequently, I heard her history from her own lips, and though mine will be but a faint transcript of her glowing language, yet I will endeavor to give her own expressions as nearly as possible.

I was an only child and early left an orphan to the care of a maternal aunt, a very ill-tempered woman. My infancy and childhood were unblest by those caresses that give confidence to the timidity natural to children, and as I was remarkably homely in my features, strangers never bestowed on me those little attentions that the beauty of my aunt's children drew forth. There was but one being in the world who showed the least affection for me, and oh! with what devotion of soul I returned it! George Mann lived only a few miles from my aunt's and we daily met at the country school to which the children of the neighborhood were sent. Our teacher was a drunken Irishman, and often he visited upon the heads of the innocent children of poor parents the misdemeanors committed by those of more opulent families. It was upon an occasion of this kind that George's kind feelings towards me were first called forth. Something had been done wrong that called for expiation, and I was the selected victim. I never knew or cared to investigate the justice of the matter. I always submitted in sullen silence, for there were none to champion my cause, and of what avail were my remonstrances against the cruelty and injustice of the pedagogue? I stood forth, but the first lash had scarcely fallen on my shoulders, before the whip was wrenched from the teacher's hand, and George stood close beside me, glowing with passion. He was a stout boy and many loved him, and all were willing to sustain him; some for the love of frolic, and others because they abhorred the cruelty of the Irishman, and had perhaps, been his victims at other times. "Dare not touch that poor little orphan girl, she is the best one in school; if you must beat some one, beat me!" he exclaimed as fire flashed from his dark eyes, and the crimson current rushed to his very temples. I forgot the smart of the lash, and the presence of the whole school; for the first time in my life words of approbation had met my ear, and I became a new creature.

I grew to womanhood, and one strong and fervent passion ruled every impulse of my being. I loved George Mann; and though he had never told me so in so many words, yet I believed he loved me. I was scarcely less homely, as a young woman, than I had been a child; and my relations did not give me those advantages of dress that make so great an improvement in the appearance of the plain. I had studied to remedy this defect by cultivating my mind and understanding by every means offered, and though the systems of education now in use, were then unknown, yet I read many good authors and reflected much on what I read. I observed that George, though he trifled and flirted with my pretty cousin, yet invariably sought my side for a few minutes when he became serious, consulted me as a friend, talked to me of his plans for the future, brought to me every new work he could procure, and always managed that I should make one in every rural excursion. Thus my life glided away in a dream, from which I scarcely wished to

awake, when one morning my aunt called me into her chamber, and after saying in a more affectionate way than she had ever spoken to me, that she was about to consult my judgment, "for she believed I possessed more than any girl she knew," told me that George Mann had proposed for my beautiful cousin Mary. Had a dagger pierced my heart, the pain could not have been more acute than this disclosure produced. Fortunately my aunt never suspected my secret, and therefore attributed to surprise the start that I involuntarily made before I called pride to aid in suppressing any further exhibition of emotion. The arrangements were gone through, the time appointed, the dress made, and none guessed the fatal secret that was quivering at my heart's core.

My aunt, delighted at the eligible match her favorite daughter was about to make, was profuse in her generosity, and for the first time made no distinction in the materials of which my dress was composed, from that of her daughters. The dreaded time came, and all my philosophy—all my woman's pride was called up to meet it with calmness and apparent indifference; but the trial was too much for my strength, a burning fever seized on my overwrought nerves, and George was married while I lay in burning anguish on a sick bed. Fortunately the unusual bustle engaged every body too much to permit them to pay much attention to me, and I rejoiced in the solitude that their neglect created.

I arose from that sick bed, stern, and cold, and proud. None lived to love me, and I loved none. The dream of youth, that robes life in the golden hues of poetry and romance, had passed, and I awoke, believing that I could live on without feeling any warmer emotion than mere passing esteem creates in the bosom. Fool that I was, thus to be self-deceived! I had yet to learn that our deep susceptibilities are given us as strong evidences, that earth is not our abiding place, and the strong cravings of our heart for reciprocated affections, the best pledge that a higher and happier state of existence awaits us, after which we are for ever unconsciously sighing.

A year elapsed and George was a drunkard and his wife unhappy. The surpassing beauty that had captivated his fancy had already faded, and his weak and fickle mind, and spoiled temper, rendered her the very worst companion for a man of his ardent and impetuous temperament. About this period I met with a young man nearly my own age, and extremely handsome. I had always been a great admirer of beauty, for the very reason that I was totally deficient in personal charms, and looking on him as a mere child, I openly expressed the strong admiration I entertained for him. How was I surprised to find that in this handsome youth I had met a lover! Warm and impassioned in his manners, and ardent in all his pursuits, he never ceased soliciting my hand until I had promised to become his wife. He was the master of an unencumbered fortune, and could act as he pleased, and in six months after I first met him, I became the wife of one of the handsomest men I had ever seen. The comparisons that sometimes met my ear were unpleasant and invidious, but Henry loved me and I was for a time happy.

I became a mother, and my long pent up affections found full exercise in the new and delightful emotions that maternity called forth. My infant confined at home, and Henry soon began to tire of playing the nurse. It is a fatal error that many young mothers commit, that of bestowing their undivided attention on their first infant, and too suddenly ceasing to pay these little flattering attentions to their husbands, that form the strongest tie on their affections. Henry still loved—still was proud of what he was pleased to call my superior intellect—but he wearied of confinement, and sought abroad for that amusement he had hitherto shared with me. I thus cut myself off from society, and neglecting all personal embellishment, sank into a perfect slattern. My child employed my whole time, and as I had never loved Henry with that devotion I felt for George Mann, I troubled myself but little with his amusements. Judge then my horror when I learned by accident, that Henry had formed an amour with a beautiful, but silly girl, in fashionable life, and that the consequences were likely to be fatal to her reputation and peace of mind.

My eyes were opened to my error; I did not reproach him, but I went again in society—again gathered the young and the gay beneath his own roof; for observation had taught me that show and parade are the best modes of stopping the torrent of slander. My parties were thronged, and we were invited everywhere; but alas, confidence no longer existed between my husband and myself. I had never liked to go abroad, and now that the demon of jealousy was awakened in my heart, I looked on Henry's attention to handsome women with an intolerable heart-burning which I could not conceal. I was again about to become a mother, but very different were my feelings now

from those I had formerly entertained.—I looked with a dread to my long confinement and consequent seclusion from the society of the fashionable world. Alas, my fears were more than realized. Henry, unrestrained by my presence, rushed into every fashionable excess. The cup of pleasure that had touched his lip was too seductive to one of his ardent imagination; and he fell the victim of his own ill regulated passions. He had seduced a beautiful girl, and her brother sent him to the awful bar of justice without allowing him time for repentance or atonement.—I was a widow—a widow under circumstances to wring and break a proud heart like mine. Henry's fortune was greatly impaired, and I and his two sons were barely left a competency.

You will say that surely never again did I embark in so uncertain a lottery; but Woman's heart is made to love, and though the conviction strongly pressed itself on my mind that I was deficient in those charms that attach the other sex, yet in two years after Henry's untimely death I was again a wife. I can scarcely tell you how this happened, for I married a man whose personal qualities were greatly superior to his mental powers.—He was exceedingly vain, and I believe was ashamed of my want of that which he so highly prized in himself—personal beauty. He confined me as much as possible at home; and I have often wondered why he married me, for I scarcely think he ever felt any affection for any thing but himself. I was soon released from the temporary delusion of believing I loved him, and wearisome indeed was the bondage I endured with that weak, silly, handsome man. His constitution was delicate, and he died leaving me quite poor. But the mother was all awake within my breast, and I thought it no hardship to labor for those beloved ones. My sons were fine; promising boys, and I felt a pride in their possession—a quiet happiness in knowing that none divided their warm young hearts with me. I exclaimed a thousand times, Ah, they love me not the less that I am not handsome; and those who possess even an ordinary share of beauty, cannot imagine how consoling to my wounded heart was this reflection. I had no means of educating these boys, unless I devoted my time to them entirely; and that I could not afford, as their subsistence depended upon my daily labor. This induced me to offer myself as a teacher, and I succeeded. For several years I taught alone; but as my school increased, and my children grew larger, I could not bear to be separated from them; and I entered into a school as subordinate teacher in which a young gentleman named Bellman was principal. He was an exceedingly handsome man, and as talented as he was handsome. His mind, clear and strong, drew an unerring line between the truths and sophisms of science, and his manners were as bland and graceful as his heart was benevolent and kind.

I do not know how it happened, but perhaps I had contracted a prejudice against very handsome men, and had somehow connected an idea of mental imbecility and masculine beauty—that I looked on Bellman with a sort of dislike; and it was not until I discovered how many good qualities he possessed, that I awarded him even a common share of esteem.—About this time the measles broke out in the school, and my sons—they whom I all but idolized—they whom alone in the wide world loved me—were taken.—Tongue cannot express the anguish I endured as their glazing eyes were fixed on mine, and I felt the current of life ebbing away beneath the pressure of my fingers. They died—one grave received them both—and I had nothing to live for.

Months rolled round, and the apathy of grief still shrouded me in its sullen folds. I could not be resigned to God; I felt that mine was too severe a destiny, and I rebelled against him.

One cold evening I sat in my solitary apartment, alone and suffering. I had parted, one by one, with the little comforts that surrounded me, to protract that life that was burdensome, and yet that I feared to lay down. A knock came to my door, and Bellman entered. His manners had always been kind and respectful, and now they were particularly respectful and soothing. He came to propose to me to resume my situation as teacher in his academy; and he urged so many reasons, in so gentle and kind a manner, that I acceded. A whole year I taught in the same apartment with this grateful and amiable man without becoming sensible of the danger to which I was exposing my too keen susceptibilities. I felt the strongest friendship for him, and admired his personal graces while I respected his moral worth. One day I accidentally overheard a conversation to which I could not avoid being a listener, between himself and a thoughtless young man. "Heavens, Bellman! what a shocking ugly woman that teacher is! why don't you have somebody prettier to look at!"—"Oh, she is ugly, I allow," was the reply, "but she is very clever, and I have a great friendship for her!"—"Friendship!

I could not feel any thing but disgust for so ugly a woman."—"Of course one could not love her," said Bellman, "but her plainness need not create disgust; on the contrary, I should suppose that it would excite sympathy."—I coughed, and they walked away from before the windows. I know not what strange perversity took possession of my mind, but for months I strove to please and fascinate Bellman. He was much younger than myself, and therefore I had undertaken that which I could not rationally hope to accomplish; and even had I succeeded in my object, success would have yielded me nothing but the gratification of a very wicked and perverse spirit; for I was too cruelly aware of the slight tenure by which a homely woman holds a man's affections to be again a victim to any similar delusion. But she who strives to win is almost invariably lost; and ere I was aware of the strength of feeling that yet remained in my crushed heart, I loved—loved again with all the deep devotion of my earlier years. I was wise enough to withdraw from a game where I could only be a loser, and I had a good excuse for doing so. My aunt died, and at her death she did me that justice which she had so long withheld. She restored to me the inheritance left me by my parents, and now I am comparatively rich. But they are gone—my beautiful boys! I am alone—and of what avail is wealth to the broken in spirit!"

So spoke the solitary woman, as she crossed her hands upon her bosom, and refused to be comforted.—Zanesville (O.) Evening Visiter.

### From the London Metropolitan for October.

A Tragedy of the American Woods. Just as the shades of evening were beginning to unshroud the deep valley that reposes at the foot of the wild and lofty Pocono mountains, I approached a lone cottage, which was marked out on my travelling chart as the place for me to pass the night in. Although I had never been in that part of the country, yet the building of squared logs, or "blocks," that now presented itself, was in some measure an old acquaintance since poor, and lonely, and cheerless as it seemed it had acquired a name in the history of that part of the country with which it was connected. Its wooden walls were blackened with the tempests of half a century, and the traditional tales connected with it were familiar to every child, in the distant settlement. A person of the name of Larner had been induced to settle here before any of the valleys in the southern district of country (now full of people) contained one white inhabitant. What induced this hardy man to bury himself and a young family in the wilderness, so far from all the pale-faces, as the Indians called the white people in those days, is difficult to conceive.

On his way to this secluded dell, he must have passed through many a valley which presented a fertile soil and a more serene climate; but induced by some feeling which must now forever remain a secret, Larner, with a wife and four or five children, accompanied by a younger brother, took possession of the extreme head of a mountain valley, and there built the sombre looking building now before me. It has been surmised by many, that the contiguity to the adjoining mountain was his chief inducement to settle here, for he was a remarkably keen hunter. There certainly were more wolves and panthers in that vicinity than in any other part of the State, besides an abundance of elk and deer, with a great variety of other game of smaller note. They did not devote their time exclusively to hunting; for when they had resided here some half score years, they had managed to clear away some forest trees from a few acres of land, sufficient to grow more grain than the family would consume. About this period they were awaited on by two Indian warriors of the six nations, who informed the Larners, that if they valued their own safety, they must immediately fly from the abode they had so long inhabited. This piece of intelligence which was delivered with such apparent sincerity, was at the time but little heeded, for although they had never before been actually threatened by the Indians who had occasionally visited them they had sometimes used a little caution when they suspected a party of Indians were any where in the vicinity.

One day, shortly after the visit of the two warriors, the younger of the brothers returned from an excursion on the mountain, with the somewhat startling intelligence that he had crossed, in his way down, the trail of an Indian party, and he should judge from its appearance that the number was something considerable. He further stated, that he had from the summit of the adjoining hill, carefully surveyed the forests all around; but no curling smoke rose above the green foliage, (for it was summer,) to denote their hunting fires, neither had he heard the report of fire-arms during the whole day. To those acquainted with the subtlety of the Indian character, this report was somewhat alarming, and the lone family determined to be circumspect in all their movements.

Their arms consisted of three rifles, one used by each of the brothers, and the remaining one by the eldest son, a stout youth of nineteen. It was agreed that they should keep watch during the night—the brothers and the sons taking it by turns—and the fire was extinguished before it became quite dark.

Some hours after midnight, and while the father of the family was keeping watch, he thought he perceived a bright spark of fire advancing slowly across the small piece of meadow in the direction of the house, and as it came nearer he distinctly saw part of the body of a naked Indian. There was no mistaking the intention of the incendiary, and as all was paroled and dry with the scorching suns of July, a fire once kindled against the time-seasoned log walls of their dwelling, the whole dwelling would be in a blaze in a few minutes. Larner was in the upper story in an opening in one end of the building; but as the Indian came nearer he changed his course a little as if he intended to make his fire in the rear of the house. It was a moment of extreme anxiety with Larner. If he permitted the villain to pass the rear of the building they were all in a short time to be burnt, and most probably massacred by the merciless beings, no doubt in ambush close by. If he fired and shot him retribution would certainly await them all, and in either case he considered them a doomed family. But he did fire, and long before the reverberations were silent in the adjoining mountains, the Indian had given one lofty bound and shrieked the shriek of death. The report of the rifle brought the whole family to his side, and he related to them all that had taken place; and it seemed a matter of doubt whether the Indians would attack them under cover of the yet remaining darkness, or postpone their onset until the return of day. It seems they did wait for daylight, and when it returned they commenced firing at the different windows or openings, wherever they imagined they might reach the inmates. This plan, however, had not much effect. One of the children escaped its death wound, but the rest escaped unharmed for the present.

As I before stated, in the back part of their building there was no opening. The Indians finding the plan of firing at the windows not likely to produce much effect, determined upon making a circuit through the neighboring woods, and there-by gain the defenceless rear of the dwelling. This plan, however, was anticipated by the bestaged; for when the firing ceased, the Larners suspected they would make this movement. The two brothers, therefore, without much difficulty contrived to make two small openings in the shingled roof, and when the assailants emerged from the woods behind the building, the two leaders were instantly shot down. The rest, unappalled, rushed forward, and before the brothers could reload their pieces, there were a score of the savages under the shelter of the building. The son, too, had not been idle; for by thrusting one-half of his person through the end window he had been enabled to fire upon them as they rushed for the house, and he made one of them bite the dust. Yet, after all that availed it? The Indians would instantly set fire to the house, and they would all be burnt alive. The brothers, therefore, immediately resolved upon the family quitting the premises, and making for the woods. But this plan was nearly fatal to the whole party; for before they had crossed the slight hollow in front of the woods the two brothers and three of the children fell to rise no more.

The eldest son was singled out by a tall powerful Indian, who pursued him across the field of growing rye. They were each armed with a rifle, but neither of them stopped to fire. Young Larner, perceiving that the Indian gained rapidly upon him, for his knee had been slightly injured by a ball, betought himself a stratagem which ultimately saved him.—Some of the party near the house were yet occasionally firing at the fugitives that made for the woods, so young Larner, as if he had received a death wound, fell amongst the tall grain. The Indian instantly squatted in the grain also, being apparently suspicious of some trick in his intended victim; but in a short time he raised himself upon his knees, in order to scrutinize the place where young Larner lay, when the young fellow, who had been arranging his piece for such an occasion, fired at the Indian and shot him in the brain. He did not wait to reload, but in spite of the soreness of his knee, he pushed for the woods, which were but a short distance. Once behind a sheltering tree, he re-loaded his rifle, and having done so, had the satisfaction to find that none of the surviving Indians pursued him; there were many of them engaged in scalping his father and uncle, and a younger brother and two sisters—while others were in pursuit of his mother, and eldest sister, who had succeeded in reaching the woods.

For two nights he continued to wander the forest, but during the day he remained hidden in some hollow tree. At last, hungered and weary, he reached