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POETRY.

**"What is this that He Saith: A Little
While?"—John 16: 18.**

Oh! for the peace which floweth as a river
Making life's desert-places bloom and smile.
Oh! for a faith to grasp Heaven's bright "for-
ever,"
Amid the shadows of earth's little while.

"A little while," for patient vigil-keeping,
To face the storm, to wrestle with the strong;
"A little while," to sow the seed with weeping,
Then bind the sheaves and sing the harvest
song.

"A little while," the earthen pitcher taking
To wade the brooks from far-off mountains fed;
Then the parched lips its thirst for ever slaking
Beside the fountains of the Fountain head.

"A little while," to keep the oil from falling;
"A little while," saith's flickering lamp to trim
And then the bridegroom's coming footsteps
bailing
To haste to meet Him with the bridal hymn.

CLARA BELL'S STRATAGEM

Uppertown was in a blaze, for the daughter of a man of millions was about to make her debut into fashionable society.

No one could tell from whence Peter Bell came, but he had recently arrived from some foreign clime, purchased an elegant up-town mansion, and it was whispered that large sums of money had been placed to his credit at a number of the metropolitan banks. True, Mrs. Grundy said that Peter had formerly held the position of "gentleman's gentleman" in England, had married a "maid-of-all-work," and, after having saved up a little money, had sailed for Australia, and had there succeeded in amassing an immense fortune.

But he was a man of gold now, and what he had been must by no means be called into question—he was an aristocrat now.

Especially were the young men of New York in a flutter, for a sole heiress was to be won by some person. Some affirmed that Clara Bell was another Psyche, while others declared that she was a coarse, red-haired, red-faced thing, ignorant and brazen, with a temper like a hyena, and one of the greatest female tyrants that ever wore petticoats.

But no matter. The lucky winner of her hand would receive, as an accompaniment, a rousing dowry and a princely sum when her parents died. So the fops gave their mistresses an extra French twist, and got themselves up generally in the most improved style, for the invitations had already been issued for the gathering at the Bell mansion, and the event was to transpire that very evening.

Among those especially interested was one who was an especial favorite with the lady portion of the circle in which he moved. He was a young Frenchman, handsome and polished in his manners, and he gloried in the title and name of Count Henri de Lave. He was not a man of great intellect, but he possessed a fund of soft nothings in the shape of

words, and he knew just where and when to use them to please.

For more than an hour Count De Lave had stood in front of his mirror, arranging his immaculate self for the conquest he anticipated making. A huge gem glittered in his spotless shirt-bosom, but an expert could easily detect the fact that it was only an imitation, and upon the little finger of the right hand there was worn another jewel of still greater brilliancy. It was a real diamond.

Throwing himself into an easy chair, he glanced at an unpaid board bill lying upon the table beside him, and then gazed long and earnestly upon his ring. After a time, with a deep sigh, he exclaimed:

"It is ze last. I cannot leave ze grand hotel for ze place for ze rich Count Henri De Lave. Ze ring must be pop to-morrow, unless"—and he laughed as he continued—"unless some of ze fair ladies should be unfortunate enough to lose some valuable article to-night, and I should be so fortunate as to find it. We shall see."

An hour later the count entered the saucy parlors of the Bell mansion. His appearance was a signal for a general flutter among the fair, and he bowed in the most approved style to many he had previously met, and upon each he bestowed a well-timed compliment, all of which were received with simpering acknowledgements which showed how highly gratifying were his words.

He was met by Mr. and Mrs. Bell—plain, unassuming people—and welcomed cordially. After making as he supposed a favorable impression upon them, he asked:

"Shall we soon see ze meteor of ze evening—ze grand queen of ze fet?" "We cannot rest until her dazzling splendors flash upon us, which must delight ze eye and thrill ze heart."

"Do you mean my daughter?" asked Mr. Bell.

"Yes monsieur, I mean ze fairy you have ze grand pleasure to call by that name."

"She will be down presently."

While waiting for the "Evening Star," the count approached a group of ladies, and hearing their words, his attention was drawn toward a young man, who sat apart by himself unnoticed and unknown.

"Who can he be?" asked one.

"A handsome man, at all events," said another.

"A decidedly plebeian expression of face; and certainly not of our circle," said a third.

"I can tell you who he is," said an exquisite standing near.

"Oh, tell us—tell us."

"His name is Walter Clyff. He landed in this country from Italy only about a month ago. It is said that he is a painter, but as he has no reputation as yet, he is not blessed with a superabundance of greenbacks. Yesterday I saw him with a ragged coat upon his back trying to dispose of a picture in Broadway. By chance, Mr. Bell came in at the moment, and taking a fancy to the young man, although a stranger to him, engaged him to paint the family portraits. I suppose he has been paid something on account, and thus been enabled to replenish his dilapidated wardrobe."

"And doubtless Mr. Bell has invited him to be present to-night."

"No doubt of it."

"What presumption?"

"True—but we must treat him civilly on account of the family."

"I shan't notice him, the presuming pauper."

"Nor I—nor I," chimed in half-a-dozen voices.

At this moment every voice was hushed, for the great event of the evening was about to transpire. Every eye was directed toward the door, through which the bell was to appear.

She came, and there was a low murmur indicative of disappointment. She was disgustingly "plebeian"—a squat, red-haired, red-faced girl, with small, twinkling eyes, a pug nose, a most capacious mouth, and there was a duck like waddle in her walk. Her dress was ridiculously picturesque in its variety of bright colors, worn quite short, and her feet were encased in a pair of shoes such as probably would have been selected by a country milk-maid for barn yard work.

She walked down the centre of the parlors with about as much grace as a pig on stilts would have done, grinning and bowing right and left while she vigorously wagged a huge Chinese fan, which seemed to cause her considerable effort. Once she stopped to re-arrange a necklace of brilliants, and to re-clasp a bracelet which had become partially detached from her arm.

Her waiting maid followed her. This latter person was a perfect marble of beauty, her dress consisting of simple white Swiss, without the simplest sign of an ornament of any description. Her movements were graceful, and her manner that of extreme modesty. A hundred admiring eyes followed her, but she seemed to shrink from the brazen stare, and very quietly she seated herself in the shadow of the window curtains, and by chance, near the young artist, Walter Clyff.

After Miss Bell had made a survey of the entire party, she struck a sort of "Jim Crow" attitude, and exclaimed in a squeaking voice:

"Come, let's have a dance. We all know each other, and don't want no introduction. What do you say?"

"A dance by all means and several of them," replied a number of the gentlemen.

"That's right? You see I've got on my dancing shoes. I can't dance with slippers, not a bit of it. But trot out with your partners, boys—and I say, who's going to dance with me?"

"Shall I have ze grand pleasure?" asked DeLave, as he came forward, bowing low.

The beauty eyed him for an instant, and then exclaimed:

"Hello! You're a Dutchman."

"No, most beautiful queen, I am from La Belle France."

"The Count Henry de Lave," said Mr. Bell.

"Oh, he's a parlez vous, is he, and a count at that?"

"At your service, my beautiful queen."

"Queen! That's good. I ain't no queen yet, but I wouldn't mind being a countess." Then she asked:

"Can you heel and toe it, parlez vous?"

"I will try, mademoiselle."

"Then trot me out, parlez vous."

Of course they were not a few who were thoroughly disgusted, and would have taken their departure, could they have framed a reasonable excuse to do so, and had not curiosity also, prompted them to remain. As it was, the music sounded, sets were formed, and the dancing commenced.

Miss Bell now appeared to be in her element. True, the music did not exactly suit her, but entirely disregarding time, she came the "double shuffle," the "break down," and the "Irish jig," in the most approved style, frisking about in such a manner that long before the cotil-

lion would have been brought to a close, the confusion she created, had terminated it.

She was contented, however, and set after set was formed; but after the first they were more regular, and were completed. Each time the Frenchman was her partner, for none cared to become his rival. He seemed quite satisfied, was profuse in his compliments, and evidently believed that he had made a decided impression upon the heiress.

At length she exclaimed:

"Where's my maid? She shall dance. And who is this talking with her? Never mind—he shall be her partner," and she seized Walter and the young girl, dragging them both on the floor.

This was almost too much for some of the fashionables, but they swallowed the "insult," and the dancing was renewed.

Certain it was that the maid became the center of attraction, so far as the gentlemen were concerned, and the envy of the ladies. Even DeLave sighed as his eyes followed her graceful movement, and he could not but draw the contrast between servant and mistress.

Miss Bell noticed this, and she became furiously jealous in a moment. After the dance was over, and the maid seated, the mistress approached her, and exclaimed in a loud and angry voice:

"You impudent shuzzy, you're always trying to cut me out, with your doll face. Go to your room and don't let me see you again to-night." At the same time Miss Bell gave her a smart blow with her fan.

The girl colored deeply, and instantly left the apartment. But in her mortification, she had one source of consolation. The young artist had looked his sympathy, and she felt sure he would have spoken kind words had opportunity been afforded him.

It was but a few moments after this before considerable excitement was manifested, and then the announcement came that one of the lady guests had lost a bracelet set with diamonds, and valued at two thousand dollars. A most diligent search was made, but it was no where to be found.

The loser was a little dried-up specimen of female loveliness, owing to thirty, but paint and powder could not make so great a deduction from the fifty winters which had probably passed over her head. In a spiteful manner, while she pretended to weep, she exclaimed:

"A robbery has been committed, and such a thing has never occurred before where our circle have met. There is one stranger present, and he is not of us. I demand that he be instantly searched."

"Do you refer to me, madam?" asked Walter Clyff, springing to his feet, and turning very pale.

"I do, sir," was the sneering answer.

"Then I demand that you shall search me."

"No—I would not dirty my fingers with such a canaille as you. Mr. Bell should protect his guests, and I demand that he make a search!"

"If Mr. Clyff is willing," returned Bell.

"Perfectly," answered the artist.

The search was made, but the missing jewel was not found. This operation over, the host turned, and bowing to his guests, said:

"Ladies and gentlemen, this is my first party, and it will be my last. Good night."

The meaning could not be mistaken, and one by one the company took their leave. As the loser of the diamonds did so, a check of double their value was

placed in her hands, and Mr. Bell remarked: "Be kind enough, madame, to acquit myself and family of any blame in this matter."

De Lave was the last to depart, and as he went down the steps, Bell called after him, saying:

"Come again to-morrow, parlez vous."

"By gar!" was the Frenchman's colloquy, as he proceeded toward his hotel; 'tis is a good night's work. A two thousand set of diamonds, and an heiress won."

The next day, and every day for a month, found him a regular visitor at the Bell mansion. His suit prospered finely, and the day was even fixed for the marriage, although as yet Mr. and Mrs. Bell had not been consulted.

"Time enough," said the bride elect.

Meantime the young artist had been busily engaged upon his paintings. The maid had become his subject, and he loved her. Nor did he love in vain. He was an accepted lover—one more day was to make him a happy husband.

One morning the entire party were assembled in the parlor, and the young girl whispered to her French lover:

"Now is the time to ask the old man and woman. Out with it, parlez vous."

De Lave addressed the parents, saying:

"I deeply love ze beautiful creature. Have I your consent to make her my wife?"

"Of course you have. You shall be married in church to-morrow evening. That's the time Walter Clyff and my daughter are to be united."

"Your daughter!" cried Walter, springing to his feet.

"Your daughter!" echoed the Frenchman. "Why, it is your daughter I wish to marry."

"Is it? Why I thought you were in love with my redheaded servant girl, who sits so lovingly by your side."

The secret was out, and De Lave waited to hear no more. He bolted down the house in double-quick time, and rushed down the street like a madman. He was seen no more.

The young artist was deceived, although agreeably so, when he found that he was to wed the mistress, and not the maid. That was settled, and it was also settled that no more shoddy parties should take place at the Bell mansion.

NEWSPAPER PROPRIETY—It is not a very charitable or broad view which takes it for granted that such newspapers of the country as avoid sensationalism do so from fear of suits for libel. It might just as reasonably be objected by profligate persons to men of good character that they are moral and decent because virtue is economical. To meet such a cavil, as applied to newspaper, (says the Baltimore Sun,) it is enough to say that if editors choose to make them the medium of impurity, they can do so without incurring the penalties of libel. It is quite possible to make a newspaper an indecent publication without assailing any particular individual. The great aim of a journal in this regard should be to respect the delicacy and purity of the public, and whenever it becomes necessary to chronicle occurrences of a scandalous character to discharge the unpleasant duty in as brief and delicate terms as possible, and so as not to minister to sensationalism or prurency. This much is demanded in the interests of public virtue and decency as well as of the family circles into which newspapers find their way.

We must retireward, says St. Bernard, if we would ascend upward.