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POETRY.

[Written for the Times.]

Flowers.

BY FANNIE.

Beautiful flowers how brightly they bloom,
Over the landscape and vale,
The loneliest pathway they gaily illumine,
And freight with their fragrance the gale.

'Tis pleasant to watch them in beauty unfold,
As they welcome the sun's bright ray,
Or of purple and violet, crimson and gold,
To gather the blossom so gay.

Wherever ye roam o'er the vale of this life,
Tho' gloomy and frowning its sky,
With flowers, sweet flowers creation is rife,
To gladden the heart and the eye.

Then to the Father who formed with His hand,
This land of brig' flowers so fair,
Let the heart in true gratitude ever expand,
While we share in His bounty and care.

SOUGHT FOR HERSELF.

BY ELIZA R. PATHER.

CHAPTER I.

The waning splendor of a beautiful autumn day turned its golden feet towards the gloom of night. The fading leaves took a gorgeous hue from the sunset, and the shadow of an old stone house over run with ivy, seemed to have mirrored its image on the silvery stream that swept in soft murmuring notes along the foot of a thickly wooded hill, which at this late hour enveloped in its gloomy shadow the mansion, its lawns and parks, with their numerous gigantic oaks and elms, their vine-clad arbors, serpentine walks, and flower garden.

The waters of the mountain brook, in whose crystal depths, reflected every mount and valley, and glorious sunlit clouds floating in the skies above its bosom, were lying down from the rocky hills, and gleamed through the thick foliage, mingling the sweet perpetual chime with the rising breath of the wilderness of autumn flowers. In a handsome apartment of this beautiful country residence sat a lady in the prime of life, whose queenly bearing, golden hair, and transparent complexion, still bore traces of surprising beauty. Near her side reclined a fair girl, just verging into womanhood. The shining wavy hair, brilliant eyes, and laughing lip spoke plainly the relationship between the two, to be that of mother and daughter.

"Well, dear mamma, I have listened very patiently, yet I remain of my own opinion still. I admit filial affection to be a beautiful virtue, and heaven forbid that I should ever be found wanting in the performance of its duties, but mamma, I cannot submit to this cruel wish of my dear father's in desiring me to unite my young life with that of a man I have never seen. In doing so, I would prove recreant to every womanly impulse of my heart—untrue to the prompting of my whole nature." And the delicate white brow of pretty petted Lilly Morton, wore a frown that greatly marred its exquisite beauty.

"My dear child, Clarence Montfort is said to be very highly gifted, both in mind, and person. You know he has travelled extensively through Europe, as well as the East, and has had the best advantages for the improvement of his mind," expostulated the fond mother.

"Well, mamma, granting that Mr. Montfort does possess great attractions, and is very handsome—these are the very qualifications to which I object—I feel that in this particular I am very dissimilar from most girls of my age, and possessions. I have never yet seen a handsome and accomplished man make a good husband—"

"Object to good looks, and accomplishment!" interrupted Mrs. Morton.

"Yes, mamma, I decidedly do in a husband, but I have no thought of matrimony at the present, and even if I had, it does appear to me that the heiress of 'Mount Hope' might be allowed the privilege of selecting a husband of her own choice," continued the girl in merry tones, as a joyous laugh escaped her rosy lips.

"But surely my daughter, you do not intend to disregard the express wishes of your father on his death bed. You can-

not mean to violate the contract made between him and his friend when you were a babe in my arms. Charles Montfort had been the true and tried companion of your father's childhood, and early manhood. Once in their boyhood he saved his life; again in maturer manhood he preserved from stain his honor, thus placing him under an obligation which could not be cancelled. At the time of my marriage, Mr. Montfort was absent in Europe with his bride, consequently I never saw him until you were three months old, he came to visit us then, and your father placed our little daughter in the arms of his friend with a glow of pride on his manly face. Mr. Montfort pressed your sweet baby brow to his lips, and turning to your father exclaimed:

"Richard, how I wish we might live to see this little Clarence—united. Old friends, would you give me your little girl for my son—it would be a happy consummation of our life long friendship."

"Would I give you my daughter for your boy?" exclaimed your father with glowing cheeks and sparkling eyes. "Yes, Charles, I give her to you now, and promise solemnly that should they both live, Clarence Montfort and Lillian Morton should be united in lives and fortunes, as their fathers have been for years in hearts and souls."

"Amen!" responded the clear mellow tones of our guest.

"It was at the close of a calm winter evening, but in our climate the air was balmy, and we had passed out on the verandah. The last golden beam had faded from view, the stars glittered softly in the distant sky, and the crescent moon rose above the misty outlines of the mountains; pure silver white she shone there, as she shone above the brow of Diana, the chaste and silent queen of night. As the solemn words sounded forth, started there seemed to me something awful in this agreement between the two men. I would have remonstrated, but just then you cried out and catching you in my arms I bore you away from this night scene of your betrothment. It is eighteen long dreary years since that winter evening, but it is impressed upon my mind as if it had all occurred yesterday." And a tremor shook the voice of the mother while a tear coursed down her damask cheek.

Lilly Morton tore the pink leaves from a moss rose in a costly vase at her side, and a grave expression, as if a train of unpleasant thought had been agitated, stole over her pretty face, and there was something in the tones that told of great firmness of character when she spoke again.

"Mother, I cannot recognize the right of any parent to barter away the freedom of a child in its infancy. My very soul sickens at the mercenary heartlessness with which our high-born men and women sell their delicate persons. I will not say hearts. As for Clarence Montfort's proposal of marriage to me, I will not, and cannot receive them. It is the estate of 'Mount Hope,' and not Lilly Morton he desires to wed."

"You are two young Lilly to have conceived such prejudices against society," faltered Mrs. Morton, for she thought of the knowledge and experience her child had of many unhappy fashionable marriages.

Coming towards her mother, the gentle Lilly softly caressed the smooth white brow, saying:

"Mamma, why speak to me of marriage? Are we not happy as we are?"

"Happy! Can you doubt it my darling. But I wish for your own sake to see you married to one worthy of you, and besides I owe a duty to your dead father to plead with you to redeem his pledge, and I know in time you will think better of it, and decide to be guided by his last wishes."

"Never, mamma, while I think there is a shadow of a chance for me to be sought for my fortune. The man I marry must wed Lilly Morton for herself, and not the heiress of Mount Hope for her broad acres." Lilly Morton tried to smile, but the effort was at variance with the kindling eye, and flushed cheek as she continued.

"I am weary of the heartlessness and hollow pretensions of the vain, and worldly, and sincerely wish I was Betty, the dairy maid, in order that I might indulge in the luxury of marrying to please myself—"

"That wish in imagination may seem very poetical, but in reality would be quite unbearable. Cast aside this morbid feeling my child, and tell me where you prefer to visit? Will you accept the invitation of your cousin to spend a month in the city, or will you go to 'Willow Glen,' where your old schoolmate Mrs. Colton, expects you?"

"To Willow Glen, of course, mamma," and a pretty blush colored the white cheek of the heiress.

"Why, Lilly, that is the very place I should fancy you would avoid. Do you not know you will be sure to meet Clarence Montfort at his sisters in that neighborhood?"

"Well, mamma, is there anything strange in the circumstance that I should wish to meet the person who has been selected for me, no less volens, to pass the remainder of my life with?"

"No daughter, but I fear your cousin will be offended that you do not accept his invitation, and I readily think a visit to the city at this season; would be far more pleasant than the one you contemplate to a remote country house, where all are strangers to you."

"Yet I beg leave to differ with you, dear mother," and the fair girl disappeared from the apartment, and retired to her own little room, the sweet sanctuary of her childhood; from the window she viewed the beauties of her country home. Mountains succeeded hills until their blue tops stretched far to the north-east vanishing away in the dim distance. She watched the magnificent landscape until she could no longer discern it in the gathering gloom, and then she resolved that this rich inheritance should never be bestowed by her hand on one unworthy of its possessions.

CHAPTER II.

Willow Glen, the handsome country residence of the Colton's, was ablaze with lights and splendor—the new residence of Robert Colton and his young wife, had thrown open the time honored portals for the reception of their neighbors. Among the guests was Clarence Montfort, gracefully rendering all the nameless little attentions to the high born beauties who graced the occasion.

While promenading with a haughty belle, his eyes wandered to a retired corner of the apartment where stood a lovely, girlish form. Before Clarence Montfort could speak, she disappeared, but those lovely features, and wealth of golden hair, were forever impressed upon his memory.

A few moments passed in conversation with Miss Rowland, when music from the drawing room attracted their attention. Again he paused to gaze upon that face, even more beautiful than he at first fancied. Her eyes so tender and deeply blue, were lifted with a bewilderment of joy, such as the exquisite harmony of the great musician brought forth. The light gave a rich tinge to her golden ringlets, broken up as they were in a thousand gossamer waves, loosely confined by the wreath of tiny roses garlanded over her brow. Her soul seemed refreshing itself in the music that swelled through the room.

Clarence Montfort fancied he could almost see the pulsation of her heart as it rose and fell to the sweet sounds awakening it to new life.

Miss Rowland had twice addressed him, and received no reply. She turned her dark eyes to his face, saw the fixed expression of his gaze, and slowly followed it. The beautiful head was turned away, and the haughty belle saw nothing but the folds of snowy drapery with a wealth of ringlets falling low over marble neck and arms, trembling in the light.

"I never dreamed of aught so beautiful. That look of innocence is surely real, the soul pure, the heart sincere."

Miss Rowland opened wide her large eyes, surprised by a reply so unsuited to her question, and as the speaker still gazed, spoke:

"Ah," she said, with a curve of her coral lips, "from the direction of your gaze, I presume you are speaking of Miss Clark. Quite a pretty little rustic in her cheap muslin and rose buds, is she not?"

"Do you know her, Miss Rowland?"

"Very slightly. She is the governess of our hostess, and being a good musician, was, I presume, allowed by that lady to come in here to-night for the entertainment of her guests."

There was something in the quiver of her voice which arrested the young man's attention; he turned his eyes, to her haughty face, and a smile that had a gleam of her own scorn in it, came to his lips, as he said:

"She certainly seems very capable of accomplishing her mission, a sweeter voice I never heard in America or Europe. Will you present me to Miss Clark?"

"No sir. I do not recognize that low creature right to any attention from well bred people. She was brought into this drawing-room to amuse Mrs. Colton's guests, and not to associate with them."

CHAPTER III.

Many months had passed, the frosty brow of winter was now wreathed with spring flowers. The morning was cloudless. A bright blue sky encircled the sun, as in his glory he came forth, shedding golden radiance on the dewy earth, enlivening tall trees, branches of fruit, warming into life valley flowers, and crowning with yellow lustre hills, and plain. Willow Glen mansion basked in the sunbeams. Its old stone piazza over run with ivy, and clematis. On the verdant banks of a little silvery stream nearby, was a massive pile of grey rocks, now covered with moss, and wild blossoms. On a fragment which had been rent asunder from the moss, sat a young man. His dark eye often wandered towards the house. He grew restless, as the sun crept over the shadow in the woods, though every object in that beautiful landscape was as tranquil as an infant's slumber. At last he arose, and walked towards the house, and entered the gate. Scarcely had he done so, when a fair girlish form came forth to welcome him.

"So you are at leisure at last!" he exclaimed joyfully, extending his hand to clasp the small white one placed in his.

"Yes, Mr. Montfort, I have completed my morning avocations, and have come to take the promised walk with you in search of that pretty moss you spoke of."

"It was cruel, Lilly, very cruel for you to refuse to see me last evening when I called. Lilly, dear little Lilly, do not rob me of my holy confidence in your sweet, guileless nature, and show me you are full of coquetry."

The girl instantly became serious, for her ear caught that lurking tone, as a sarcasm or reproach.

"Indeed I would have gladly received and entertained you, but I was engaged with my little pupils, to whom I owe a duty. Their mother is my valued friend, and when I became their governess, I resolved to devote my time to them. Besides you should not encourage me in idleness. A poor man's bride cannot afford to indulge in such luxury."

"Hush dear one, do not chide me for wishing to be with you. And now for that all important communication you spoke of having to make. I am impatient to learn its nature."

The fair brow became crimson, and the usually clear tones faltered as she said: "First, dear Clarence, tell me honestly if no lurking regret that you did not comply with your dead father's wishes, and wed the heiress of Mount Hope, lingers in your heart? If you desire it, I will even now, release you from your vows to me."

Clarence Montfort was greatly moved;

his dark eyes glistened with moisture. Could it be that he who appeared so noble, was one who awoke the melody of an innocent heart that his ear might feast on the sounds of its breaking strings. Nay, there was something in that open brow, so high and full of intellect—an expression about the finely-chiseled mouth, and misty tenderness brooding in his eyes that forbid the supposition.

"Lilly," he said, "I thought when you learned to love me, you also learned to trust me. And I told you long ago that the contract made by father in my infancy was hateful to me—that it was likewise to the lady, and thus our engagement was forever canceled. But if it will satisfy you to see that I do not desire the fortune which might have been mine, I will say, that I never could never under any circumstances whatever seek the hand of the heiress of Mount Hope."

The little white hand was placed over his handsome mouth, and the frightened girl interrupted his words.

"Hush, dear Clarence, for heaven's sake hush vowing to avoid doing just what you are about to be guilty of. Yes, Clarence Montfort, you have sought Lilly Clark Morton, the heiress of Mount Hope as your bride. Can you forgive me, dear Clarence, for the deception I have practiced on you. As you know my heart revolted from the contract made by our parents. My mother and friends all expostulated with me, insisting that would I receive you, I could not fail to become charmed with you, but I feared even were it to terminate as they predicted, that you on your part would seek me for my fortune, and not for my merit of my own. Just at this crisis, I received an invitation from my friend, Mrs. Colton, to visit her in this remote spot. An idea at once suggested itself to me. I would confide in my friend, and seek her aid in an innocent deception. I would visit Willow Glen and become acquainted with Clarence Montfort, as Mrs. Colton's governess, thus having an opportunity of judging of your worth and character. But believe me, Clarence, I never designed to win your heart, or dreamed of this happy termination of our acquaintance. Can you, will you forgive my deception?"

The lovely, blushing girl, watched the manly face of her lover, not a shade of triumph marred its exquisite serenity at the announcement that the fortune of the Mount Hope estate would yet be his. In calm tones he replied:

"Lilly, my heart's own darling, it was neither the humble governess, nor the heiress I sought, but the woman I deemed worthy of my choice. I loved you yesterday in your then supposed poverty, and I love you the same to-day; circumstances never can, or never will alter my esteem for you."

When the fruits were gaudy in their painted robes of scarlet, and yellow leaves and long flakes of purple bloom, and daisies over crimson berries and golden-hearted asters, in the stately home of the Morton's Clarence Montfort and sweet Lilly Morton, stood in the soft moonlight rays, on the time honored verandah, and redeemed the pledge their fathers had spoken for them eighteen years before—and they were willing vows of faith, and love to last through life—and in their hearts they added, beyond death.

TO CLEAN PAINT.—The Cochrane's' Journal recommends house-wives to save themselves trouble by adopting the following mode: Provide a plate with some of the best whiting to be had, and have ready some clean warm water and a piece of flannel, which dip into the water and squeeze nearly dry; then take as much whiting as will adhere to it; apply it to the painted surface, when a little rubbing will instantly remove any dirt or grease; after which wash the part well with clean water, rubbing it well with a soft chamois. Paint thus cleaned looks as well as when first laid on, without any injury to the most delicate colors. It is far better than using soap, and does not require more than half the time and labor.—[Exchange.]