THE NATIONAL ERA.

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WASHINGTON, D. C.

For the National Era.

WANTED.

BY CAROLINE A. BRIGGS.

Wanted—a heart that is brave, firm, heroic,
Midway in station 'twixt weeper and stoic;
Wanted—a purpose, an aim, an endeavor;
Wanted—an end that shall fail me not—never!
Wanted—an influence wide as the evil
Sown on this earth or by man or by devil;
Wanted—a voice that shall sweep through the ages,
Pealing alarums wherever sin rages!
Wanted—a power half allied to divinity—
Wisdom, Truth, Utterance—a glorious trinity!
Wisdom, to alter, to shape, and to guide me—
Truth, to fall back on, whatever betide me—
Utterance, to thunder like Thor's mighty hammer,
Speaking a god through the desperate clamor!
Wanted—to live—not in stone or in story—
Live in true teachings—a kinglier glory!
Live, though the mortal that clogged me and cumbered,
Long 'neath the clod of the valley has slumbered;
Live, though my name shall be lost and forgotten;
Live in great thoughts that my life has begotten;
Live wheresoever Truth struggles victorious—
Wanted, *such* life—than an angel's more glorious.

For the National Era.

THE UNSUSCEPTIBLE.

[CONCLUDED.]

Agnes, though amused at her so evident penchant, felt more sympathy with her than she might have done at another time. She, too, had views and hopes, though of a less romantic nature than Miss Anna Thorston's. To undo the effect of those few words in the morning with Mr. Heath, to show that she was not altogether unworthy his kind advice nor unwilling to receive it, would have been very pleasant to her. But his manner was certainly cold to her, and the earnest conversation between him and Mary Eustace, which seemed so delightful to both of them, was trying to Agnes in every point of view.

"Anna Thorston, father, and I," she said to herself, "are having a miserable time, that is certain but; as for the rest, everybody seems to be in the full tide of enjoyment. I cannot endure their all looking so satisfied another moment, while I sit 'pestered with a popinjay,' and tormented of my own conscience besides. I must break this up!"

With this hospitable impulse, she conducted the willing Miss Anna to the piano, and signified to Mr. Sullivan that he was to turn over the music leaves. Agnes thought best to disregard the circumstance that Miss Thorston was playing from memory.

She now turned toward the sofa on which Mary and Mr. Heath were sitting. The latter resigned his seat to her, and then stood silently by her side, apparently absorbed in the brilliant waltzes performed by Miss Thorston. Agnes soon addressed him.

"You really look as if you were enjoying that music, Mr. Heath."

"Why should I not?" he answered.

"I should have thought it *gay* enough to come under your ban."

"It is very inspiriting, certainly," he replied.

"You are in a charitable mood to-night," pursued Agnes, bent on bringing him back to the subject uppermost in her own mind. "At least you dissemble your disapproval well; better than you sometimes succeed in doing," she added.

Agnes knew that she was not mending matters. But she was resolved to push her way to an explanation at all risks.

"I am sorry to be so misunderstood by Miss Levison," he said, in his calm, gentle tone, but looking pained; "yet till I know whether my real sin in her eyes is that of dissembling, or of speaking too plainly, I can hardly defend myself."

He looked up one moment for her answer, and then walked to the piano. Poor Agnes could not speak, though her heart was brimfull, and prompted words of penitence unfeigned. But she was on the verge of tears, and dared not trust herself to utter a syllable.

As for the rest of the evening, it passed like a miserable dream. She could not be roused even by the sight of Mr. Decker and Miss Eustace engaged in something that looked like a conversation. The first thing that at all refreshed her was the sight of the Misses Thorston sweeping up in an imposing style to bid good evening.

They were all gone at last. Agnes was impatient to be once more in her room. Her father however, detained her, to say a few words.

"Agnes, I wish you had not been too much occupied to-night to pay some polite attention to Mr. Heath. I should think his society at least as improving as that of Mr. Sullivan."

"Mr. Heath was very well attended to, sir, I believe."

"Yes, thanks to Miss Eustace. I am sorry you have not more of her good sense in selecting your friends. I can see that she already appreciates Mr. Heath's character, more justly than you do, after a month's acquaintance.

This was rather hard. Agnes smothered down her bitter feelings as well as she could, and only answering with a laugh, that Mary's discretion had not saved her from having *one* fool of a friend, she made her escape.

A week and more passed; and if Agnes had recorded her experience of each day, which, with her aversion to writing, she never did, it would have read, with but little variation, as follows:

"A miserable day; my father more displeased with me, Dick Sullivan more presuming, Mr. Decker more unmanageable, Mr. Heath more silent and distant toward me, and I more utterly weary of myself."

It was a new thing for Agnes to feel depressed through the whole of a long day, and then find her sadness wake anew with her on the morrow. At times she would resolve, with all the strength of her will, to throw off the burden, and be careless as before; and these resolves were often signalized by renewed flirtation with the never-failing Dick; for all this time the rides and walks and evening visits continued, making it to outward appearance a season of constant and varied enjoyment. So at least thought the envying Misses Thorston, who were only at times admitted within the enchanted circle, and who could catch tormenting glimpses from their windows of all this succession of delights.

Meantime, Mr. Sullivan, encouraged by the seasons of sunshine which Agnes's caprice allowed him, began to infuse a shade of sentiment into their intercourse. Nothing could become him worse, Agnes thought; it was too absurd. But it was uncomfortable too, and his feelings, though, to be sure, he had no right to have any, did seem to be really interested; and if so, was she not responsible for the mortification that was before him? "But who," said Agnes to herself, "could have dreamed of Dick Sullivan's setting up a heart all on a sudden!"

It was on a Saturday evening that this new development first became undeniably apparent to her, and the Sunday which followed was a day of real humiliation to Agnes. She reviewed her conduct through the whole time of Mary Eustace's visit, and felt shame and regret for every part of it. She had been kept back by pride from confiding her troubles to Mary, and Mary herself seemed less constantly calm and cheerful than was her wont. Agnes had once found her in tears. At other times she had observed an excitement of manner in her enjoyment of their daily pleasures, quite unlike her usual self. There seemed to be concealment on both sides.

On Monday morning, Mr. Decker broke in upon the girls as they sat sewing in the library, his head filled with a plan for visiting a certain glen whose existence had lately become known to him. "We must certainly go there," he said. "It is not too far for such walkers as you are, and it is really worth seeing. Miss Agnes, I know, will be in raptures."

Miss Agnes in her secret heart doubted very much the raptures, but, on the whole, the idea was a welcome one. To find herself in some new spot, unassociated with any past folly, and filled with the wild charms of nature, would be, for the hour at least, a relief.

"Heath must go," continued Mr. Decker. "He is an enthusiast in natural scenery; indeed, he first showed me the way to this place. Mr. Sullivan goes, of course; and what say you to our friends the Thorstons?"

Agnes was in favor of inviting them. It would gratify them highly, and the more the merrier.

Mary now suggested some fears of the damp walking they must expect after yesterday's rain. It was decided to wait until Tuesday afternoon, when it was hoped that all ill effects of the storm would have disappeared.

"Put up your work, Mary," said Agnes, "and let us go and invite those girls at once. They will feel called upon to make some extensive preparations in the way of dress, and it is only kindness to give them time."

As they were preparing to go, Decker begged leave to accompany them.

"The flutter of a little bright plumage is a pleasant sight, when a man has been shut up long to such sober society as this. I have a weakness for fine shows; and when they are offered without charge, it is fairly ungrateful to neglect them."

"You are an ungrateful being, as it is," cried Agnes. As if I had never got up any fine shows for your benefit! Have all those scarlet ribbons gone for nought?"

Decker laughed, and said he believed he had done her injustice. He would confess that *she* sometimes looked gaudy enough even for his taste.

"Then your condemnation is levelled at Miss Eustace," said Agnes, "and I give her up to it. Her taste is grave enough to suit a Quaker. Her motto must be the same with Jenny Wren's.

"'But I will dress in my brown gown,
And never go too fine.'"

"My displeasure will sit lightly on Jenny Wren," he answered. "I fear she will never ruffle a feather the more for me."

"I fear so, indeed," thought Agnes, "if even you could be brought to play Cock Robin to her, which seems equally to be despaired of. But how gravely Mary is taking all this! She surely cannot be hurt at our censuring her taste. But the truth is, we are both cross, and I am afraid, both on behalf of the same man. I wish Mr. Heath had never come here. He has interfered in the only matrimonial plan I ever had at heart, and has contrived to set me at daggers-drawing with my own conscience into the bargain."

With such profitable meditations as these, Agnes beguiled the way till they reached Mrs. Cornell's. She had prepared her companions for a long season of anticipation in the parlor; but when the door was thrown open, the young ladies were discovered already in full splendor, entertaining with vivacious ease the fascinating Mr. Sullivan. Agnes hastened to atone for what she knew to be an unwelcome interruption, by entering at once upon the subject of the walk.

On receiving this invitation, in which Mr. Sullivan was at the same time included, the fair Thorstons underwent a severe struggle. To forego such delightful opportunities would be cruel in the extreme, but to go on foot! No pavements either, and a distance of two or three miles, with a prospect of rough climbing at the end! Their heroism was not equal to it; and after many indirect attempts to metamorphose the whole scheme, and introduce horses and conveyances, they very reluctantly declined.

"We can do without you," thought Agnes, indignant at their want of enterprise, "and if you can ensnare Dick Sullivan into remaining at home with you, it will be all the better."

"By the way, Miss Agnes," cried that hero, suddenly breaking in upon these unspoken thoughts, "do you remember that wild sister of mine?"

"Perfectly well."

"I've lost her, I find—the news came to me this morning; don't look so shocked; she's only married; she has eloped, in fact."

"Eloped! With whom? Any one I know?" cried Agnes, highly excited by so racy a bit of intelligence.

"No, I fancy not. I forget his name myself, but he is a young scapegrace of a fellow, dependent, Fan tells me, on some great uncle or other, who will hardly be pleased with this turn of affairs. Stay, I remember now she calls him her adored Lawrence, and signs herself my affectionate sister, Fanny Morgan."

Agnes had never heard of any Lawrence Morgan, but she had known Fanny Sulivan well, and felt far more interest in the matter than Dick appeared to have.

"She is an acquaintance of yours, too," Agnes began, turning to Mr. Decker. But she was so struck by his changed appearance, that she could hardly command herself to go on. He was looking flushed and excited, and altogether appeared so unlike his philosophical self, that Agnes was quite confounded. Was this the secret of it, after all? Could such a man really have loved that flirt of a girl? Agnes recollected that he had spoken of meeting Miss Sullivan at the Springs, and that he had called her handsome; but she had never suspected him of regarding her in any other light than that in which she herself looked upon her. If this was his ideal, no wonder Mary Eustace was unappreciated by him!

To relieve Mr. Decker and herself from the embarrassment which both were suffering, Agnes now rose and made her adieu. They had scarcely entered the village street, when Mr. Decker said, abruptly—

"Have you any commands for the city, Miss Levison? I am very sorry; but it will be necessary for me to go down to-day, I find."

Agnes stopped short, and looked at him with undisguised amazement. He stood her gaze manfully, without offering an explanation of the mystery.

"I am glad he does not attempt to lie about it," thought Agnes; "but any ordinary excuse would be too barefaced."

"I hope," he continued, "that my absence will not interfere with to-morrow's walk."

"Oh, not in the least," returned Agnes. "At all events, it must not stand in the way of such *mature* plans as yours."

Mr. Decker colored, but made no reply. Agnes saw that he was at her mercy, and she was too generous to trample on a defenceless foe.

"Do not let us detain you," she said. "A pleasant ride to you, and success on this urgent errand!"

"I distrust you," he answered, laughingly, and looking relieved. "There is mischief lurking under the words of your benediction. Miss Eustace, cannot you give me a sincere one?"

"You have my good wishes," said Mary, quietly.

"And that is more than you deserve from her," thought Agnes, as she watched his retreating form. "To sigh for a lost Fanny Sullivan, and be blind to Mary Eustace! And what in the world is the man going to do now? Is he about to die at the feet of Mrs. Lawrence Morgan? I see nothing else left to do in the case. And as for our walk, I see the pattern of it plainly enough. Mr. Heath and Mary will devote themselves to one another, and I shall gratify my father with another display of my frivolous taste—in other words, be bored with Dick Sullivan's nonsense through a whole afternoon. But go I will, whatever happens. I will not be talked into a project by Rodney Decker's eloquence, and then see it blown away like a feather the next moment, at the breath of his mysterious caprice. I will have that walk, if I go alone."

This sublime resolution seemed likely to be pretty thoroughly tested. On Tuesday morning, Dick Sullivan was sent to bespeak Mr. Heath's company and guidance to the newly-discovered glen. Mr. Heath gave him all necessary instructions for finding it, but sent word that he was obliged to attend a funeral, and would be unable to accompany them.

Agnes's will now carried the matter through. Mary had a head-ache, and looked as if she would gladly be left in quiet. But Agnes assured her that the walk would be her best cure; that they should not have another such fine day that season; and that, more than this, it was a shame to flatter these men by accommodating one's plans to their movements. Mary had not spirits to contest the point. She soon yielded, and about noon the party of three set forth.

Now the truth was, that Mr. Sullivan had been so impatient to return to his post at Miss Levison's side, that he had given little heed to Mr. Heath's careful directions. He consequently found himself acting in the capacity of guide, and, as such, implicitly relied upon by his companions; while in fact he had the vaguest possible idea of where their true path lay. But Dick was not the one to confess ignorance prematurely. He put a bold face on the matter, and beguiling the way with his agreeable discourse, affected an entire security as to its happy termination. It was not till after many blindly-undertaken short cuts, and protracted wanderings in unpathed woods, during which the points of compass were hopelessly lost by the whole party, that he condescended to acknowledge himself a little in doubt which way to proceed next.

Agnes was now heartily provoked with him. The walk had been a particularly uncomfortable one to her; for as often as Mary Eustace fell a little behind, which she seemed bent upon doing, Mr. Sullivan relapsed into sentiment, and Agnes really began to fear that she should not be able to keep off the crisis of a proposal.

There seemed no prospect now of reaching the desired glen; and Miss Eustace, who had not enjoyed the excitement of keeping in check a lover's advances, was already complaining of fatigue. Agnes found a seat for her among the boughs of a fallen tree, and placed a stone at her feet. She then espied, on the borders of a dark brook that wound its way through the wood, some clusters of the bright cardinal flower; she hastened to secure them; they would contrast finely with the glossy blackness of Mary's hair. Mr. Sullivan, as she knew of old, was an expert wreath-maker, and he really needed some employment to keep him out of mischief. Agnes showered the scarlet blossoms over him, as he sat in a graceful attitude at Miss Eustace's feet, and commanded him, in her wilful way, to use his best skill in forming a garland for the queen she had throned.

Her companions being thus disposed of, Agnes indulged her own restlessness by exploring the wood in every direction around them. In her present irritated mood, it was a relief to be alone.

As she wandered aimlessly about, she soon found herself retracing the path which they had broken in entering the wood, and her eye was caught by something white lying on the ground before her. She stooped for it, and found it to be a letter, and, on looking more carefully at the address, she recognised it as the very letter she had written to Mary Eustace before her coming.

"My good, orderly Miss Mary has a hole in her pocket, for once," she said to herself, "or very Agnes-like ways of putting things into it."

Agnes now recalled the free, happy spirit in which that letter had been penned, so different from her present state of heart. She opened it, to bring back, if possible, by its perusal, some ray of that lost sunshine. As she unfolded the well-filled sheet, a slip of paper, as closely written as the rest, fluttered to her feet. Agnes was much in the habit of tucking in a few last words in such a shape, and it did not occur to her, as she picked it up, that she was about to read anything but her own forgotten words, until her attention was irrevocably fastened to the lines before her. They were these:

"Mary, if you ever loved me, let no false sense of duty keep you from your Agnes, (bless her for loving you!) because I am here. We will meet as strangers. Let me but hear your voice again, and mine shall not utter a word you would wish unspoken. We have not sought this meeting; it has been strangely ordered for us. You are striving to act and live as if we had never met. Do so *now*, and let that stern rule give, for once, happiness instead of sorrow. I mean no reproach; words cannot tell how deeply I honor you in all!"

Agnes's amazement and intense excitement had hurried her through this mysterious note, seemingly without the power to stop. For one moment the whole was a profound enigma to her; the next, a suspicion flashed like lightning through the darkness. Mary's ready appreciation of Mr. Heath, their long talks, her indifference to Decker, her sadness, and those past trials at which she once hinted—there was no room for doubt. They had known one another; she had loved him—he still loved her! A wild tumult rose in Agnes's breast; its cause she did not stop to inquire, but she knew herself to be now at last miserable beyond endurance. Urged by a resistless impulse, she plunged into the densest part of the wood, and dashed on through bush and brier, and tangled thicket, crossing the brook at a leap, and climbing the bank beyond without a thought of its steepness. The passionate feeling aroused in her soul seemed to demand this unchecked and reckless motion, as its only vent.

The woodland now lay more open before her. She flew with redoubled speed through its quiet glades, till at length she struck upon a beaten path leading down a slight descent. Agnes followed it at the same desperate pace, careless where it was leading her, when, with a sudden dismay, she found herself on the shore of the fatal lake!

It was very beautiful, as it lay under the calm light of that autumn afternoon; but at sight of it Agnes felt her strength deserting her, and, trembling in every limb, she sank to the ground. As she looked bewildered around her, she became aware, with a growing sense of fear, that she was on the very spot over which her brother's lifeless body had been borne, when it was taken from these treacherous depths. The great rock jutting into the lake, the cedar bushes growing to its edge, and the tall groups of chestnut trees behind, were all too well known to her, though she had not looked on them for many years. And now the fierce conflict that had impelled her unwittingly to the spot was hushed before its peaceful beauty, eloquent, to Agnes's heart, of an undying sorrow. The poor child burst into tears, and being now too weak and exhausted for any self-control, she seemed to sob away her life in the vehement indulgence of her grief. By degrees her mood grew gentler; the pride and passion and strength of will by which her heart had been torn, melted fast away, leaving her humble, penitent, and sorrowful. The thronging memories of her loved brother, to which the scene before her gave birth, would not suffer an ungentle feeling to have place within her breast, and she almost forgot the strange discovery which had for the time seemed really to madden her.

A step rustling on the strewn pathway startled her from her dreaming. Dick Sullivan—how could she meet him? No, it was Mr. Heath!

He took no notice of her tears, but answered her astonishment at seeing him by saying, that on coming from the funeral he had been attending, he had found himself in the neighborhood of the lake, and had chosen a solitary walk home along its shore, rather than a wagon ride over the turnpike. He then took a seat by her, and began in his quiet way to talk of beautiful points in the view, and pleasant places along the lake shore which he had explored, and then of the family he had just left, and their heavy sorrow, till Agnes, as she listened, became reassured. His manner was in harmony with her feelings, and she enjoyed the quiet of the hour in the transient forgetfulness of all the excitement that had preceded it.

It was just creeping back into her thoughts, as when we slowly wake at morning to some strange reality, which sleep has made us doubt, when her attention was diverted by an incident of some interest. Mr. Heath, while talking, had been drawing deep lines in the pebbly beach at their feet, with the end of his stout walking-stick. Agnes, as she sat unconsciously watching these movements, saw him at last, turn up from its gravelly bed a rusty pen-knife. She took it up to examine, and cleaning it off as well as she could, she discovered, engraved on the handle, the letters E. C. H.

"Your initials!" she exclaimed, surprised at the coincidence.

"Yes, and my knife," he answered, taking it from her hand. "It has lain there undisturbed for five years."

Agnes looked at him in astonishment. She had not supposed he was ever in the place before that summer. Suddenly a wondering suspicion seized her, and, looking eagerly up into his face, she said, in a broken voice—

"Was it you that brought my poor brother home to us?"

"It was," he answered, without looking up.

"But how was it possible?" continued the bewildered Agnes. "How could you have chanced to be here?"

"I was on a vacation tour, led here and there by one beautiful view after another, none of which I ever thought to see again. But when this place was offered to me, with my other motives for accepting it, there mingled a strong desire to look once more upon this lake, to which the event of that day had lent so touching an interest."

"Oh, why did you never tell me of this?" cried Agnes, reproachfully.

"To what purpose?" he answered. "It could only waken painful memories, and forever connect them with myself."

"But we owe you so much—it was cruel not to let us speak our thanks to you."

He shook his head sadly.

"If it had been permitted me to stand between you and that sorrow, I might have been tempted to urge, too far, perhaps, my claim upon your gratitude. But I was only a messenger of evil."

Agnes's heart was too full to allow her to answer him, or even to take in the full import of his words. Her memory was calling back the happy years of her brother's short life, their wild frolics, their twilight confidences, her proud hopes for him, and his loving reliance upon her. Of all this she spoke freely and simply to Mr. Heath, sure of his understanding sympathy.

"I shall never love any one as I could have loved my brother," she said, sighing.

"Never!" repeated Mr. Heath, looking suddenly into her eyes. She blushed under the earnestness of his gaze.

"Dear Agnes, if ever you recall that word, let it be for me!"

The autumn afternoon wore away, and still those two sat talking on the shore of Waunee Lake. There had indeed been many things to say; for Agnes could not take in at once so strange a mystery. To be loved where she had thought herself only condemned! It must be taught her again and again, with varied phrase, and all the eloquence of eye and tone, before her bewildered heart could receive it.

"But I thought you did not even respect me," she said, at last.

"But you thought wrong."

"And I have been—that is, I have seemed so trifling and heartless."

"Your seemings are not hard to read through. And I had an able commentator in Miss Eustace."

Miss Eustace! The name brought up a host of confused suspicions. But without stopping to analyze, she dismissed them *en masse* as unworthy of a thought. For now Mr. Heath was telling her how the one vision he had had of her, so long ago, in the hour of her grief, had lived in his heart forever after; how he had longed to meet her again, and yet had feared all the time to find her spoiled by the change from girl to woman.

"I am spoiled enough," said Agnes, "but that change has hardly come to me yet."

"True, it has not," he answered more gravely, "and I have done wrong to disturb you so early with this avowal of my love. Do not let it burden you, dear Agnes, nor think of it as involving your future. I will not fetter you by asking the exchange of a single promise. Only trust me for your friend, and let this afternoon's disclosure simply serve to assure you how deeply I deserve the name."

"I do trust you, entirely," she said, with a grateful, confiding look. But at this moment a guilty recollection of her deserted friends in the wood broke in upon the happy rest of heart she was enjoying.

"Poor Mary!" she exclaimed, starting to her feet. "With her low spirits and headache, to be thrown for two mortal hours on the mercies of Dick Sullivan! I ought to know what that is!" she added, laughing, as she ran lightly up the path.

It took some time to retrace the devious way by which Agnes had come, yet she almost wished it longer—in part for the new pleasure of Mr. Heath's companionship, but also because she really dreaded to meet her friend, after having used her so abominably. But the brook was now crossed, and the fallen tree came in sight; and there, upon her woodland throne, crowned with a tiara of radiant blossoms, sat the lovely Mary Eustace, listening, with bright smiles and eyes slight with pleasure, to the words of her companion. Agnes stood still in wonder.

"How beautiful she is!" thought she. "And what can Dick Sullivan be saying, to call up such a smile as that?"

At this moment, startled by the sound of footsteps, he turned toward her. It was no other than Rodney Decker! And before Agnes could recover from this surprise, he had taken her hand, and, with half-mischievous earnestness, was beseeching her sanction to his engagement with Miss Eustace!

"I will not be played with any longer," cried Agnes, laughing and crying at once. "I will know what all this means. Mary, tell me, is this man in earnest?"

"I desire to believe so," returned Mary.

"But when did you begin to love him?" pursued the excited Agnes.

"Oh, spare her the day and hour, Miss Agnes," interrupted Decker, "and address your questions to me, if you please. I am tough enough to undergo the longest catechism you can get up; but poor Mary looks somewhat overcome."

"*Mary*, indeed!" said Agnes to herself. "That is making progress! Oh, if I could ask fifty questions in a breath!" she exclaimed, leaning against a tree for support.

"There is no haste," said Decker, coolly. "Take a seat, Miss Agnes, and go on at your leisure."

Agnes was in no fit frame to conduct a catechetical exercise with deliberation and decorum. She sat down, however, and commenced with all the calmness she could command.

"When did you first become interested in Miss Eustace, Mr. Decker?"

"To the best of my knowledge, about five months since."

The questioner was staggered. But now the mysterious letter and its postscript occurred to her mind, and began to shed some light over this obscure riddle. Drawing the letter from her pocket, and bringing the enclosed slip of paper to view, she asked—

"Is that your handwriting?"

"It is. Have you forgotten that you gave me that letter unsealed, to mail for you?"

"And you jumped at the chance of saving postage. Mary, I am afraid he is mercenary. I advise you to discard him at once."

"There was more than postage to save," said Mr. Decker. "A letter from me would have been politely returned with unbroken seal; but under cover of your good name, I knew I could smuggle in a word without reproof. And, in all humility, I think my little addition had as much to do with bringing Miss Eustace as your own admirable letter."

"You are very impertinent," said Agnes. "I dare say you are right, however. But why all this concealment and underhand work? Why not be engaged at once, and say so?"

"True enough, Miss Agnes. I should have highly approved that course, myself. But Miss Eustace has a venerable grandfather—don't look so deprecating, Mary; I am not going to be disrespectful—who as decidedly disapproved it, and not only that, but the whole matter of our being engaged at all."

"But I can't see the reason of that," said Agnes. "I always considered you what is called in society 'a strictly eligible match.'"

"I am exceedingly flattered. But in this case the question did not turn at all upon my personal eligibility. The difficulty lay in the existence of a hopeful young nephew and protegé of Mr. Eustace, who was in a fair way to be ruined, unless somebody took him in hand. To Mary, accordingly, was to belong the interesting task of taming, reforming, guiding, and marrying him; and then the old man's property was to descend to them, undivided. A delightful plan, was it not?"

"The old tyrant!" cried Agnes, indignantly. "Mary Eustace, if you ever submitted to all that, I give you up."

"Not to *all* that," continued Decker. "She told her grandfather that she could not consent to marry his nephew, but that she would so far comply with his wishes as to remain free for the present. Mr. Eustace indulging some fanciful hope that the young man's charms might in time make an impression upon her. I was therefore discarded, and forbidden to visit at the house, or to address any more letters to Miss Eustace. Nothing was said about accidental meetings at Levison Lodge, or slipping postscripts into other people's letters."

"And now, what took you so suddenly to the city?" pursued Agnes.

The news that Mary's amiable suitor, instead of pining under her neglect, had taken affairs into his own hands, and was consoling himself with the ready smiles of Miss Sullivan."

"And that Lawrence Morgan is your cousin, Mary!" cried Agnes, beginning to see daylight. "Well, go on."

"I hurried off to the city, had an interview with Mr. Eustace, and found him full of indignation and disappointment at the step Lawrence had taken, but no longer ill-disposed toward me. In short, I obtained his consent, and now Mary's filial submission being out of the way, what remained was not difficult; or, rather, the rest of the battle I had fought some months before. It was hard enough in the time of it," he added, looking laughingly back at Miss Eustace.

"What traitors you have been in the midst of us, and I so unsuspecting through the whole! You might well make that promise the first night you came, you artful Mary Eustace! Did she tell you that, Mr. Decker? That she would not judge of you by that evening's experience alone!"

Decker laughed, and said he had heard of it.

"Yes, I'll warrant you had many a good talk when none of us were suspecting, and I, perhaps, wearying myself out with trying to make you decently civil to one another."

"Not so many as you might think, Miss Agnes. Mary was very cruel, and held me strictly to the rule of 'friends, and only friends.' But I acknowledge we sometimes amused ourselves a little at your misapprehensions about us."

"That was downright treachery, for you were carefully fostering them all the time. Do you remember that morning ride, when you provoked me by talking so slightingly of Mary's eyes?"

"I do recall some nonsense of that sort," replied Decker, "but I remember the ride home more distinctly. Poor Mary and I delayed, to talk awhile in the park, and I had a world of trouble afterwards, in accounting to you for the time we spent there. Oh, we were the true victims, Miss Agnes!"

"But after all, Mary, why could not you just have made a confidante of me?"

"Because, dear Agnes," said Mary, "your enthusiastic, romantic interest in our troubles would have been my worst assistant in the hard task of keeping a quiet and submissive heart. Perhaps I was wrong in coming here at all, under the circumstances, but I believed myself able to enjoy Mr. Decker's society, without reference to the past or future."

"By the way," said Agnes, suddenly, "does anybody know what has become of Mr. Sullivan?"

"I have that pleasure," replied Mr. Decker. "It was a glimpse of his handsome figure emerging from the wood, that first set me on the right track for finding you. He was looking very tired and miserable, I saw, as I came up to him, and said he had been searching above an hour for Miss Levison, with no success."

"Poor fellow!" said Agnes. "It is really too bad, when he performed his task of adorning Miss Eustace so tastefully."

"I encouraged him to believe that Miss Levison had not come to any untimely end, but would appear in her own good time. I recommended him very strongly, however, to return to the Lodge, and bring back the wagon, as she would probably be much fatigued after her wanderings. I had very little idea of persuading him to go, but he is really a good-natured dog. I beg your pardon, Miss Agnes; I mean to say, a benevolent member of society."

"No one can say that of you, at all events," said Agnes.

Mr. Heath had been sitting very quietly by himself, watching the play of Agnes's earnest face, through all this exciting dialogue. He now reminded the party that it was already past sunset, and proposed that they should find their way back to the road. He gave his arm to Agnes, and guiding her footsteps through the darkening wood, listened to the happy outflow of her heart, in the unexpected fulfilment of her wishes for the lovers, who were following close behind them.

On reaching the road, Sam and the wagon were discovered in waiting, but no Mr. Sullivan was with them. His afternoon's experience had not been agreeable enough to tempt him back; and as they drove past Mrs. Cornell's, they saw him sitting in the porch with the fair Anna Thorston. Agnes looked at them, and hoped he would prove as consolable as his new brother-in-law, Lawrence Morgan.

"And Mary," said Agnes, just before dropping asleep that night, at the end of a long talk, of which Rodney Decker was the theme, "I am very happy, too, and Mr. Heath and I are good friends again; but you must not ask me any more about it, please, because I ought not to tell you."

FLOWERS BLOOMING ARTIFICIALLY.—Some weeks ago, a curious experiment was made at Paris, by Mr. Herbert, in the presence of a select audience, including several reporters of the press. A canvass awning had been put up near the Boulevard, and a flower-garden prepared inside, and planted with Lilies, Chrysanthemums, Africans, Dahlias, Thyme, Laurels, Roses, Sunflowers, Daisies and Asters. All these plants were covered with buds which would have required at least a fortnight to bloom naturally, but having been lately removed, they were in a drooping state. Mr. H. came in with some gardeners, and they began the experiments. At first they watered a Lily and a Dahlia with a red liquor, and covered them with bell-glasses. Immediately the temperature rose inside by the ebullition of the compound, and the men, by applying their hands on the glass, and opening or shutting a small valve fixed on it, appeared to measure and regulate the heat. After ten minutes, the glasses were removed, and, to the delight of all, the plants were covered with full-grown flowers, filling the air with their perfume. To prevent any suspicion of foul play, a flower-pot was suspended by wires, and the experiment repeated on it. In the end, all the flowers were blown, and each lady went away with a magnificent nosegay.

For the National Era.

"NON OMNIS MORIAR."*

I.

Over the blackness of my hair
Comes the frost of Age and Care;
Streaks of silver intertwine
With dark locks through which they shine
With premonitory gleam—
Prophets of the time are they,
Of the swiftly-coming day,
When shall end this fever-dream;
And no more the busy brain,
With its subtle thoughts and fancies—
The soul's wondrous necromancies—
Thrill to pleasure or to pain.
In the sluggish pulse—the slow
Life-tide, with its ebb and flow—
I can hear a murmurous sound,
As if from my soul's profound,
Whispering very sweet and low,
Spirits called me—low and sweet,
Pulse by pulse the words repeat—
"Linger not when bidden to go!"
List, my Soul! that warning tone
Not of sadness breathes alone;
Something of promise, good and fair,
Something of prophecy is there,
Of a Future which shall be
Better, brighter, holier far
Than Earth's life can give to thee;
Oh, surpassing all we know
Or of good or pure below—
"*Non omnis moriar!*"

II.

Shadows, I know not how or why,
Day by day creep o'er mine eye;
And the fire that once was hid
Underneath the drooping lid,
Or, by strong emotion wrought,
Flashed the lightning of my thought,
Gleams but seldom now, and faintly:
Even the noonday seemeth dim;
Hills, by brightest sunshine kissed,
Swell beneath a robe of mist,
Or in shimmering vapor swim;
And the trees, by twos and threes,
Deftly shaken by the breeze,
Waltz to music, slowly, quaintly—
Ah! this treason of the eye!
Whence is it, or how, or why?
Tells it not that night is nigh?
The still night, unstirred by breath,
Through whose Dark shines never a star,
The vague Opaque which men call Death?
Yet—"*non omnis moriar!*"

III.

A quick-coming weariness,
When with laggard pace I tread
Olden paths, where once, as fleet
As the roe, I sprang to greet
The morn, dawning dim and red,
Now doth every limb oppress—
Wearily they follow still
The slow motions of my will.
Wearily—but soon give o'er:
Youth, with lithe and supple thews,
Passed, as pass the morning dews—
Vanished youth returns no more!
Now I tread the solemn shore
Of that sea whose vastitude
Mortal eye hath never viewed,
Never mariner did explore;
And its thundrous organ-roll,
Booming grandly from afar,
Pours its anthem on my soul,
With a many-voiced refrain,
Heard again—again—again—
"*Non omnis moriar!*"

IV.

As the dew that bends the grass,
As the breath that stains the glass,
As the morning's floating mist
By the fervid sunbeam kissed,
As the pageant of a dream,
As the lapsing of a stream,
As the hope that glorifies
Youth, and with its day-spring dies,
As, in woman's faith, the trust
Which an hour must dash to dust,
As the rapture which is sweetest,
As whatever thing is fleetest,
Life, with all that it can borrow
From the world of joy or sorrow,
All its petty conflicts o'er,
Passes, and is known no more.
Nay, one hope remains to bar
The despair that else would gloom
Over the portals of the tomb—
"*Non omnis moriar!*"

V.

Something of me, when men have said,
"Speak kindly of him—he is dead!"
Something that doth appertain
To throbbing heart and thinking brain,
Shall, when I have passed, remain—
The memory of some sweet thought,
Or good deed in kindness wrought—
Verse of mine, perchance, impressed
With the love that fills my breast,
Or its wo and wild unrest,
Shall, enshrined in some fond heart,
Of its very life a part,
Live on, and with sweet constraint,
Hold it to my memory—
Thus "I shall not wholly die."
Then, Soul! let nor pain, nor fear,
Nor the wrong that shadows life,
Nor hate, with which thou art at strife,
Claim the tribute of a tear,
Or the language of complaint.
Henceforth, nought thy peace should mar—
Deeper than thy fears or woes
Sinks the spirit of repose,
When triumphant Faith can cry,
"From Death I wrest the victory!
Non omnis moriar!"

VI.

But the heart must yield its trust,
And its memory be as dust,
When, at length, it bows before
Earth's exulting Conqueror.
Earth itself (so prophets say)
In the flame shall pass away,
And the heavens together roll
Like a crisped and burning scroll,
And its myriad orbs expire
In a baptism of fire.
Yet even then the Soul can cry,
"Nay, I shall not wholly die!"
From its place though Earth be driven,
Though shall fall the stars from heaven,
Though the regnant sun be hurled
From his throne above the world,
And in fervent heat be blent
Every fusing element—
Still, outliving sun and star,
In a life serene and high,
Clothed with immortality,
Victor over Death and Hell,
I my triumph-song will swell,
"*Non omnis moriar!*"

WILLIAM H. BURLEIGH.

Syracuse, April 8, 1852.

* "I shall not wholly die"—an exclamation of the Latin poet, HORACE.

RECEIPT FOR A HAPPY HOME.—Six things, says Hamilton, are requisite to create a "happy home." Integrity must be the architect, and tidiness the upholsterer. It must be warmed by affection, and lighted up with cheerfulness; and industry must be the ventilator, renewing the atmosphere and bringing in fresh salubrity day by day; while over all, as a protecting canopy and glory, nothing will suffice except the blessing of God.

A SIMILE APT, BUT NOT EXACTLY INTENDED.—A Roman Catholic priest, some time since, in Germany, on entering the pulpit, took a walnut into it. He told his hearers that the shell was tasteless and valueless—that was Calvin's church. The skin was nauseous, disagreeable, and worthless—that was the Lutheran church. He then said that he would show them the Holy Apostolic church. He cracked the nut, and found it rotten.—*Cincinnati Nonpareil.*

PRESENCE OF MIND.

Very much has been written with regard to this important trait of character, yet adults, as well as children, are continually, in every *dangerous* emergency, found lamentably deficient. Accidents causing death and destruction of property will ever occur; therefore, in calm and tranquil moments we should fortify ourselves for the hour of danger. The story of "John Raynor" impressed on the mind, possibly might have restored to life many children apparently drowned. It was in the infancy of this periodical that the account was given, and a host of our present readers were not then its patrons; therefore, I hope to be pardoned for giving a transcript for publication, especially as it cannot fail to interest our juvenile friends.

"It was during the summer holydays of 1800," said Mr. Bowers, "I had a young friend staying with me and my younger brother Edward. His name was John Raynor; and how he came by so much information as he seemed to have, I do not remember that we troubled ourselves to inquire; but my father, who liked John exceedingly, said it was from his constant habit of observation. He was then only fourteen, only two years older than myself. One evening, during the absence of my parents, we occupied ourselves with assisting our old gardener. The garden sloped down to a broad river, which joined the sea at a few miles distance. I was not so busy but I looked up every now and then to watch the beautiful sunset that sparkled on the water, or the passage boat and country barges that glided by at intervals. Suddenly I observed, at a small