

NATURE'S HUMIL.

BY WILLIAM HOWITT.

Red springs the eye  
As Autumn days decline,  
And from the brilliant sky  
Less faded splendours shine.  
Its airy tresses line  
The gossamer displays,  
And faintly breathe the pine  
In Autumn days.

And solemn is the hush  
That on the heart doth fall;  
And of all birds the thrush  
Alone is musical.  
The sparrow on the wall  
Shivers in pallid rays,  
And the frog has ceased its call  
In Autumn days.

But oh! the life, the life  
That Summer's glare around!  
The merry, ringing strife  
And jocundry of sound  
In wood and sky and ground—  
What a chorus! what a maze  
Of beauty there was found  
In Summer days!

'Tis gone! you hear no more  
The bee hum in the flower;  
Nor see the swallow soar  
Around the hoary tower;  
Nor the striking swifts devour  
The distance in their plays.  
'Tis now the voiceless hour  
Of Autumn days.

A POETICAL MELANGE.

The following poem is composed of quotations from thirty-eight different authors, each of the thirty-eight lines being a distinct quotation, as will be seen by reference to the foot-note appended:

1. Why all this toil for triumphs of an hour?
2. Life's a short summer, man a flower;
3. By turns we catch the vital breath and die—
4. The cradle and the tomb, alas! so nigh.
5. To be is better far than not to be.
6. Though all man's life seems a tragedy;
7. But light cares speak, when mighty griefs are dumb.
8. The bottom is but shallow whence they come.
9. Your fate is but the common fate of all;
10. Unmingled joys here to no man fall.
11. Nature to each allots his proper sphere,
12. Fortune makes foolish her peculiar care;
13. Custom does not often reason overrule,
14. And throw a cruel sunshine on a fool.
15. Live well—how long or short, permit to heaven;
16. They who forgive most shall be most forgiven.
17. Sin may be clasped so close we can not see its face;
18. The intercourse where virtue has not place;
19. Then keep each passion down, however dear,
20. Thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear;
21. Her sensual snarls let faithless pleasure lay,
22. With craft and skill, to ruin and betray;
23. Soar not too high to fall, but stoop to rise;
24. We masters grow of all that we despise.
25. Oh, then, renounce that impious self-esteem;
26. Riches have wings, and grandeur is a dream;
27. Think not ambition wise, because 'tis brave;
28. The path of glory leads but to the grave.
29. What's ambition? 'Tis a glorious cheat,
30. Only destructive to the brave and great.
31. What's all the gaudy glitter of a crown?
32. The way to bliss lies not on beds of down.
33. How long we live, not years, but actions tell;
34. That man lives twice who lives the first life well.
35. Make, then, while yet you may, your God your friend,
36. Whom Christians worship, yet not comprehend.
37. The trust that's given guard, and to yourself be just.
38. For, live we how we can, die we must.

1. Young; 2. Dr. Sam Johnson; 3. Alexander Pope; 4. Prior; 5. Sewall; 6. Spencer; 7. Daniel; 8. Sir Walter Raleigh; 9. H. W. Longfellow; 10. Southwell; 11. Congreve; 12. Churchill; 13. Rochester; 14. Armstrong; 15. Milton; 16. Baily; 17. Trench; 18. Somerville; 19. Thompson; 20. Byron; 21. Southey; 22. Crabbe; 23. Massinger; 24. Copley; 25. Beattie; 26. Cowper; 27. Sir W. Davenant; 28. Gray; 29. Willis; 30. Addison; 31. Dryden; 32. Quarles; 33. Watkins; 34. Herrick; 35. Macon; 36. Hill; 37. Dana; 38. Shakespeare.

MATCH-MAKING.

"I wouldn't marry the best man that ever lived!"  
And she meant it, or, what answers the same purpose, she thought she meant it. After all, how few of us ever really know what we do mean?  
"I engaged myself once when a girl, and the simpleton thought he owned me. I soon took that conceit out of him, and sent him about his business."  
The voice was now a trifle sharp. What wonder, with so galling a memory?  
"No man shall ever tyrannize over me—never! What the mischief do you suppose is the matter with this sewing-machine?"  
"Annoyed at your logic, most likely," said my friend, a bright-eyed young matron, as she threaded her needle.  
"My husband is not a tyrant, Miss Kent."

"I am glad you are satisfied," was the laconic answer.  
It was quite evident by the expression of the dress-maker's face that she had formed her own opinion about my friend's husband, and was quite competent to form and express an opinion on any subject.  
Miss Kent was a little woman, as fair as a girl and as plump as a robin. She wasn't ashamed to own that she was 40 years old and an old maid. She had earned her own living most of her life, and was proud of it. Laziness was the one sin Miss Kent could not forgive. She was a good nurse, a faithful friend, and a jolly companion; but stroke her the wrong way, and you'd wish you hadn't in much shorter time than it takes me to write it. Her views on all subjects were strikingly original, and not to be combated.

"What are you going to do when you are old?" persisted the mistress of the establishment.  
"What other old folks do, I suppose."  
"But you can't work forever."  
"Can't say that I want to."  
"Now, Miss Kent, a husband with means, a kind, intelligent man—"  
"I don't want. I don't want any man. I tell you, Mrs. Carlisle, I wouldn't marry the best man that ever lived, if he was as rich as Croesus, and would die if I didn't have him. Now, if you have exhausted the marriage question, I should like to try on your dress."  
That there was something behind all this I knew well. My friend's eyes danced with fun; and as Miss Kent fitted the waist, she threw me a letter from the bureau.

"Read that," she said, with a knowing look. "It may amuse you."  
This is what the letter said:

MY DEAR JENNIE: I shall be delighted to spend a month with you and your husband. There must be, however, one stipulation about my visit—you must promise to say no more about marriage. I shall never be so foolish again. Twenty-five years ago to-day I wrecked my whole life.

"Better embark in a new ship, hadn't he?" put in Jennie, *sotto voce*.  
So unsuitable was this marriage, so utterly and entirely wretched have been its consequences, that I am forced to believe the marriage institution a mistake. So, for the last time, let me assure you that I wouldn't marry the best woman that ever lived, if by so doing I could save her life.

Your old cousin, MARK LANSING.  
"Rich, isn't it?" said Jennie, and then pointed to the chubby little figure whose back happened to be turned.  
I shook my head and laughed.  
"You'll see," continued the incorrigible.

"See what?" inquired Miss Kent, quite unaware of our pantomime.  
"That particles which are chemically attracted will unite. Of course an alkali and an acid—Don't you think this sleeve is a little too long, Miss Kent?"  
"Not after the seam is off. But what were you saying about alkalies and acids, Mrs. Carlisle? The other day at Professor Boynton's I saw some wonderful experiments."  
"Did they succeed?" inquired Jennie, demurely.  
"Beautifully."  
"So will mine. I never botched a job in my life."

"I don't think I quite understand you," said Miss Kent, perplexed.  
"No? I always grow scientific when talking about marriage, my dear."  
"Bother!" was all the little woman said, but the tone was much better natured than I expected.

The next week Cousin Mark arrived, and I liked him at once. An unhappy marriage would have been the last thing thought of in connection with the gentleman. He had accepted the situation like a man, Jennie told me, and for fifteen years carried a load of misery that few could have endured. Death came to his relief at last, and now the poor fellow honestly believed himself an alien from domestic happiness.

Singular as it may appear, Cousin Mark was the embodiment of good health, and good nature; so, perhaps, though he didn't look it, and as rotund and fresh in his way as the little dress-maker was in hers. As I looked at him, I defied any body to see one and not be immediately reminded of the other. True, he had more of the polish which comes from travel and adaptation to different classes and individuals, but he was not a whit more intelligent by nature than was the bright little woman whom Jennie had determined he should marry.  
"I was surprised you should think

necessary to caution me about that, Cousin Mark," cooed the plotter, as she stood by his side looking out of the window. "The idea of my being so ridiculous!" and in the same breath, with a wink at me, "Come, let us go to my sitting-room. We are at work there, but it won't make any difference to you, will it?"

Of course Cousin Mark answered "No," promptly, as innocent as a dove about the trap being laid for him.

"This is my cousin—Mr. Lansing, Miss Kent," and Mr. Lansing bowed politely, and Miss Kent arose, dropped her scissors, blushed, and sat down again. Cousin Mark picked up the refractory implements, and then Mrs. Jennie proceeded, with rare caution and tact, to her labor of love. Cousin Mark, at her request, read aloud an article from the *Popular Science Monthly*, drawing Miss Kent into the discussion as deftly as was ever fly drawn into the web of the spider.

"Who was that lady, Jennie?" Cousin Mark inquired in the evening.  
"Do you mean Miss Kent?" said Jennie, looking up from her paper.  
"Oh, she is a lady I have known for a long time. She is making some dresses for me now. Why?"  
"She seemed uncommonly well posted, for a woman."

Under other circumstances Mrs. Carlisle would have resented this, but now she only queried, "Do you think so?" and that ended it.

Two or three invitations to the sewing-room were quite sufficient to make Cousin Mark perfectly at home there; and after a week he became as familiar as this:

"If you are not too busy, I should like to read you this article;" and this is what Miss Kent would say:  
"Oh, I am never too busy to be read to. Sit down by the window in this comfortable chair and let's hear it."

After a couple of weeks, when the gentleman came in, hoarse with a sudden cold, Miss Kent bustled about, her voice full of sympathy, and brewed him a dose which he declared he should never forget to his dying day; but one dose cured him. After this, Miss Kent was a really wonderful woman.

Ay, Jennie was an arch plotter. She let them skirmish about, but not once did she give them a chance to be alone together—her plans were not to be destroyed by premature confidences—until the very evening preceding Cousin Mark's departure for California. Then Miss Kent was very demurely asked to remain and keep an eye on Master Carlisle, whom the fond mother did not like to leave quite alone with his nurse.

"We are compelled to be gone a couple of hours; but Cousin Mark will read to you, won't you, cousin?"  
"Certainly, if Miss Kent would like it," replied the gentleman.

The infant Carlisle, thanks to good management, was never awake in the evening, so the victims of this matrimonial speculation would have plenty of time. The back parlor was the room most in use during the evening, and out of this room was a large closet with a large blind ventilator, and out of this closet a door leading to the back stoop and garden. Imagine my surprise when I was informed that Mr. Carlisle was going to the lodge, and that we, after profuse warnings about the baby, and promises not to be gone too long, were to proceed to this closet overlooking the back parlor *via* back gate and garden. In vain I protested.

"Why, you goose," laughed Jennie, "there'll be fun enough to last a lifetime. John wanted to come awfully, but I knew he'd make a noise and spoil every thing, so I wouldn't let him." The wily schemer had taken the precaution to lock the closet door from the outside, so there was no fear of detection. On a high bench, as still as two mice, we awaited results.

Cousin Mark (as if arousing from a protracted reverie): "Would you like to have me read?"

Miss Kent: "Oh, I'm not particular."

Cousin Mark: "Here is an excellent article on elective affinities; how would you like that?"

Jennie's elbow in my side almost took my breath away.

Miss Kent: "Whom is it by?"

Jennie (clear into my ear): "That's to gain time; see if it isn't."

Cousin Mark: "It's by a prominent French writer, I believe."

Miss Kent: "I don't think I care for a translation to-night."

Cousin Mark: "Nor I; nor reading of any kind. This is my last evening in New York, Miss Kent."

Miss Kent: "I hope you've enjoyed your visit?"

Jennie (into my very head this time): "She's as shy as a 3-year-old colt."

Cousin Mark: "I didn't think I should feel so sorry about leaving."

Jennie: "He is the wreck, you remember."

A long pause.

Miss Kent: "I think I hear the baby."

Cousin Mark: "Oh no. You are fond of babies, aren't you, Miss Kent?"

No answer from Miss Kent.

Cousin Mark: "I have been a very lonely man, Miss Kent, but I never realized how lonely the rest of my life must be until I came to this house."

Jennie: "Oh, how lonely!"

Cousin Mark: "Now I must return to my business and my boarding-house. Think of that, Miss Kent—boarding-house—boarding-house, for a man so fond of domestic life as I am, Miss Kent."

Just then we very distinctly heard a little kind of a purr, which sounded very like a note of intense sympathy from Miss Kent.

Cousin Mark: "I have friends in San Francisco, of course, but no fire-side like this, nobody to care for me if I am ill, nobody to feel very badly if I die."

Jennie: "That'll fetch her."

Miss Kent (voice a little quivering): "I wish I lived in San Francisco. You could always call upon me if you needed anything."

(Jennie in convulsions.)

Cousin Mark (abruptly): "If you will go to California with me, Miss Kent, I'll wait another week."

Miss Kent: "Why, Mr. Lansing, what do you mean? What do you mean? What would folks say?"

Cousin Mark: "We don't care for folks, Miss Kent. If you'll go, we will have a house as pleasant as money could make it. You shall have birds, and flowers, and horses, and all the scientific monthlies you want—denied if you shan't—and you shall never sew a stitch for any body but me. Will you be my wife?"

Just then Jennie and I stepped up another peg, and there was that little old maid, who wouldn't marry the best man that ever lived, hugged close to the man's breast who wouldn't marry the best woman that ever lived, not even to save her life. We came away then, but it's my opinion that they remained in just that position till we rang the bell half an hour after.

"How did you know?" I asked of Jennie.

"My dear," she answered, "my whole reliance was upon human nature; and let me tell you, goose, whatever else may fail, that never does."

"Why, Miss Kent, what makes your face so red?" inquired Jennie, upon entering: "and, Cousin Mark, how strangely you look! your hair is all mussed up."

"And I hope to have it mussed often," said Cousin Mark, boldly. "Miss Kent and I are to be married next week."

Jennie laughed till her face was purple, and when I went up stairs Miss Kent was pounding her back.—*Harper's Bazar*.

A BOOK-AGENT was shot and killed one day last week in Texas. Here in Iowa the only way a book-agent can be killed is by running a freight train over him, and the plan is so expensive that book-agents generally live about as long as other people. Occasionally, when one comes straying into town, with his legs thrust into a couple of lengths of stove-pipe, his body encased in a beheaded flour barrel, and a copper kettle inverted over his head, the people know that he has been selling "Pharaoh's Lives of the Saints" in some inhospitable country where the shot-gun flourishes, but it excites no particular remark.—*Burlington Hawk-eye*.

—Foster Hazlett, aged 13, Stewart Hazlett, aged 15, and Adolphus Parker, were out hunting pigeons near Rochester, Ind. Foster was walking behind carrying the gun, and while going through a thick brush the hammer of the gun caught, and the entire load of shot passed through the left side of Parker's body, tearing the heart to pieces, and killing him instantly. Parker's age was about 35. He leaves a wife and five children.