

An Old Proverb.

Pointing, my darling, because it rains. And flowers droop and the rain is falling. And drops are glittering the window panes. And a morning wind through the lane is calling.

THE LOST LETTER.

In a lonely hollow, down in the wood that skirted Lyndermere Lodge, Sylvia Devine had wandered, and was now standing lost in one of her fanciful reveries.

Not a winsome spot was this to most people, at any time, and least of all now in this November twilight. Yet Sylvia stood there, in the silence that could be felt, with that dreamy far-off look in her large eyes that might so often be seen there of late.

She stood there, not, perhaps, "feeling the spell of the place and the late hour," but the spell of a past hour that had been replete with sweetness. "Here we sat together, only a few short months ago," she soliloquized; "and it seems as though years had passed since then. Where—oh, where is he now?"

It was this question that had been reiterating itself through her mind ever since the sudden departure of Valentine Holcamp. He had meant nothing when he had pretended so much during those lingering summer rambles.

Sylvia sometimes dreamed, it is true, of this man whose companionship had been so agreeable, but she had not pinned away into a shadow of her former self; she had not so far lost her heart to her crushed, when a real pleasure-lover, was little Sylvia, and hoarded up like a miser the few enjoyments that had penetrated her secluded life.

Yet, in the very midst of her tender reminiscence, the spirited eyebrows would go up, the little straight nose become tilted, and the curved lip become the saddest in the world. Then she would almost dance with glee that she had never been so weak as to wear her heart on her sleeve, while her absent cavalier had bestowed upon her his gallantries.

"Let him come or stay as he listeth," she would conclude, and homeward would her way, warbling some gay little song.

to her home and placed in bed. She retired, and the restoratives administered, but was in such pain as to take no notice of her surroundings. Together they bore her to a carriage and conveyed her home.

Once there, the stranger remained until the shot had been extracted and she was pronounced out of immediate danger. Sylvia's home was a very simple one. She and her mother had always lived by themselves in a small cottage since the death of Mr. Devine.

It was two days before Sylvia was able to speak of the accident, and her mother had briefly informed her that the lad whose gun had worked such mischief was the nephew of the gentleman owning Lyndermere Lodge.

But as the days passed, and Sylvia, becoming convalescent, received baskets of fruit and flowers, and numerous letters of friends emanating from the Lodge, and having always for their conveyer the culprit, she grew interested to learn the name of the man.

"Really I cannot tell you," replied her mother. "You know, I was in such a frenzy over you the night that he first brought me home that I really forgot to enquire, and he has only sent these things since with enquiries for your state of health, without having called himself."

"He is most kind, and has evidently been very anxious, feeling, I suppose, responsible for the accident. Mother, you must ask him to call."

So a note was dispatched to the Lodge, and Sylvia, in grateful invalid's toilet, sat awaiting their visitor that evening.

"The servant tells me his name is Mr. Holcamp," said the mother, entering. Mrs. Devine had been absent during the time of young Holcamp's stay in the town of the previous summer, and her daughter, through a feeling of shyness, had not mentioned the episode which had entered into her life during the period of her absence; nor had Valentine Holcamp stopped at the Lodge, or even mentioned his connection with his uncle, consequently Sylvia grew suddenly pale at the mention of the name so familiar to her, and Mrs. Devine was entirely unprepared for the startling change in her daughter at that moment.

"What is it, child—why did you start?" "Oh—nothing," murmured Sylvia, looking away quickly. But when, shortly after, Valentine Holcamp appeared before her she found herself trembling from head to foot.

In a normal state of health this would not have been the case. But the surprise had been too much for her in her weakened condition. In her effort to appear controlled she received him in a manner seemingly cold.

The interview was very brief and formal, though her mother's cordiality made up for it in part. Without urging a second visit from the occupant of Lyndermere Lodge, Sylvia asked him to send Jem, who, she said, was in no manner to blame, as he had not seen her when he took his position in the tree.

Jem came—once, twice. At the second visit to say good-bye. They were going away again, he said; his uncle was to join some friends on a trip of travel in Europe; he, Jem, meanwhile to be sent to school.

Six months have passed away. Sylvia, in mourning garb, stands alone in the house that for so many years has smiled upon her in peace and pleasantness. Her mother is dead.

To-morrow the furniture and books, which she has together used and preserved, are to be stored and packed away, and Sylvia will seek her abode among distant relatives in a faraway city.

Gently she lifts one and another of her albums and pretty gifts one by one, and looks at the letter at different birthdays and holidays, which absorbed her for the time quite beyond any she had ever read.

As she gazes, she sees signs dimming out from the windows. Smoke, too, floats up from the chimney. Is it possible? But he dares hardly harbor the thought.

She takes courage presently, however, and with a decided step and beating heart she turns and walks into the direction of Lyndermere Lodge. She stops not till she reaches the door.

Then for the first time her courage fails, and a feeling of utter faintness overcomes her. She sees a glow of light—a face stern and pale, yet familiar withal—and then she sees no more.

For the second time in his life, Valentine Holcamp holds within his arms the form of the woman he has loved, yet failed to win for his own. He had taken the crushed letter from her hand, and is scanning the envelope, when at last her eyes open upon him again.

"I never saw it until half an hour ago," she murmurs. "Forgive me, and tell me what it all means? Why did you go away that summer? Why did you never say your uncle lived here?"

But he, too, is slow to comprehend why she has come to him thus of her own free will. He cannot believe that it is all real.

"Tell me, Sylvia, dear one—tell me only once that you came here to me for no other reason than the wish to renew the old tie—tell me this, and I will make the past clear to you."

"I am alone," she murmurs, as though in the situation of this old boldness. "My mother is gone." Tears filled her eyes, the color dyes her cheeks, and Valentine knows at last that Sylvia Devine is all his own.

"Before I ask you to become my wife, Sylvia, must tell you of my past. Yet I am so brief, for the shadow has hung over me for so long I would fain bid it flee for ever."

"My father was reputed to be a wealthy man at one time. About the time of my graduation at college, however, he had made some heavy investments. They failed, and at the time it became known that he was miserably embarrassed, he had forged to an immense extent. He fled the country. My brother a widower with one child (Jem), lost all he was worth through his dishonest transactions. I had not yet reached my majority, but had a prospect of business. With this brand upon my father's reputation, there was small chance for me. I was seeking business here in your town when we met. I knew my mother's brother lived here, and hoped for assistance from him. In this I was disappointed. He was in prison, and his disordered recognition, from a member of my father's house."

"At this time I suddenly received news of my brother's death, leaving the boy to my care. I had no time for delay if I would reach him in time to attend to his affairs. Some weeks I had hoped to succeed in his position in business, but I lost it. I struggled along, scarcely able to live at all, having Jem to provide for as well as myself, when news came of the death of my uncle. He had evidently repented, and left his estate in the city—which has always been rented—and this here—to my brother and myself. It all, of course, now adverted to myself. I believe it was a feeling of disgrace which sent my uncle abroad, and there he doubtless learned the details of my brother's own situation. In my poverty, Sylvia, and in my disgrace, though you had grown so dear to me, I could not tell you of my love. Now, darling, if you think you can overlook the stigma upon my—"

But Sylvia stays the speech with her hand. "Would I be worthy of your love if I gave one thought to that? You have been so manly and noble that you deserve to be rewarded by love more faithful than mine has been. But Valentine, I—love you now—as never before, and I will make up for the past if you will let me—"

"My wife—my own!" And such through several happy years she has remained. For tender mercy of Valentine's sad youth has made Sylvia's love for her husband tenfold the careless love of youth she would have tendered without his knowledge.

Jem, the culprit, the mischievous, brave, manly lad, whose stolen joys once so nearly ended in destroying for ever this glorious crown of his uncle's life, lives with them still, though he is fast becoming a handsome young man.

Valentine has seen his father twice since his marriage, and has urged him to end his days in their home, but he has learned to find his only respite in the complete isolation of a stranger among strangers.

BILL NYE ON DRUNKARDS.

He Makes to the Public a Fair Proposition. In the matter of temperance, writes Bill Nye to the San Francisco Inquirer, I may say that no one would pick me out as a radical on either side of the question. It is my doctrine that the evil of intemperance will work its own destruction.

When the proper time comes, the man who is really weary waiting for the day of our emancipation, but it is certainly unwise to make the cause of temperance obnoxious by feeding it to the people day times, and then waking them up in the night to ask them if they have violated their solemn obligation.

The above solemn chunk of philosophy was written for me by a warm, personal friend, who told me that when I got tired of writing mere froth and foam and foolishness for the amusement of a few millionaires, I might try to put together a few sentences of sense to surprise the public with, he would be tickled to death to come around after office hours and write me a few without charge.

But it was not on the subject of temperance that I started out to open my eyes to the proposition to the readers of the Inquirer a conundrum or query. It is this: Why is it that when a man becomes beastly drunk, idiotically inebriated, and hilariously full, he will start out at once with what remaining strength he may have to tell the world how wrong it is to be drunk?

It is because I am good-natured, and show unusual conversational powers, or is it because the idea of hunting me up and associating with me does not frighten a man until he is very, very drunk?

However this may be, it is indeed a chilly day when I do not spend an hour or two in social converse with a man who is uproariously drunk, sleepy drunk, confidently drunk, tearfully drunk, musically drunk, incoherently drunk, sorrowfully drunk, abusively drunk, politically drunk, oratorically drunk, admirably drunk, critically drunk, disorderly drunk, ornamentally drunk, or just simply drunk.

He may be in a neighboring state when I am writing, and he may come over him to put something in his mouth which will ultimately steal away his brains, unless he has taken the precaution to have them concealed about his person, but in the first stage of his inebriety he gets a ticket to where I am, and he generally finds me at the de- bauch. He generally finds me at the de- bauch, and he sails up to where I am and begins to converse. It seems to me now that a great deal of my time is taken up conversing with parties who meet me on the street or at stations or in hotels, and who talk with me several hours in a row, under the influence of intoxicating liquor.

I presume fifteen hundred men have held me by the hand and sworn that everything they had was at my service. Money, clothes, houses, jewelry, or anything else they had was none too good for me, and they would give me my hand again and try to go away, but they would always return and talk some more, and when I would walk away from them they would reluctantly go with me, and they would try to supply me with funds they most generally fail to call it to mind. Some of them they ask me in an injured tone of voice if I expected to hold a man responsible for all the promises he makes to the innumerable common fools he meets while drunk.

So I desire to give notice in this publication that I am no longer to be held responsible for any promises made to me by any man who comes to me under the influence of intoxicating liquor. I will make up for the past if you will let me—"

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He Didn't Die. Moses Rabenstein had gone to Europe on business, and, of course, had a return-trip ticket. When in London he was taken dangerously ill, and for a while it looked as if he was going to meet his namesake.

"I don't want to die here," he moaned. "I want to go back home." "Do you want to die there?" asked the heartless nurse. "No, I don't want to die there neither. I don't want to die here, I want to die at home," he muttered.

"What difference does it make to me? This country is good enough, I think. You had better be preparing to meet your maker."

My Interview With the President.

I thought that I was well enough known in this town not to be misrepresented just because I called in a friendly manner on President Cleveland. I'm getting tired of having my friends meet me on every street corner and say, "Well, did you get it?" "How did you come on with the President?" "Think you'll get the Walkerville Consulate?" and that sort of talk.

Now, the interview, or rather the two interviews, with the President I have looked on as entirely private and of no political significance whatever, and yet the reporters persist in thinking that because I am reticent that, therefore, I was refused some office. This being the case I feel it due to myself and my friend Grover to state just what happened during my recent visit to Washington.

When I got to the White House I was ushered into the study of the President, who, I found Mr. Manning standing beside the President, while Mr. Lamont, the Private Secretary, was fondling a club on the other side.

"How do you do?" I said. "We are all in very robust health," said the President, and he did not address myself especially to him.

"So that's the Private Secretary, is it? It's rather funny; I saw it played in Detroit just before I left."

"Those that have seen Lamont play with that club don't regard the drama as funny," said Manning severely. "I should advise that you keep my reception most freezing. The attitude of the Executive was frigid, and very much below zero."

"I never thought," I remarked, attempting once more to break the ice, "that Washington was so cold. It was not so cold," put in Lamont. "Well, President," I continued, "we've got 'em."

"It certainly looks as if you had," said Manning. I began to think Manning a most objectionable person and my past joke about Manning the shirt salesman remained in my mind.

"Can we do anything for you?" asked the President for the first time. "Nothing, except say good-by," said Manning. The President sank back in his chair, Manning dropped into another, and the club fell clattering on the floor from the hand of the President.

Thus I left them, but had not gone far when Lamont came running after me bareheaded. "Didn't you want to file an application?" he said.

"I wanted to file nothing. I haven't a thing to file," I said. He was writing my hand and cordially invited me back. The next interview with the President left nothing to be desired and I found Manning a first-rate fellow. That night the Cabinet and myself had a great time of it around the city, and I may say that my presidential advisers are most cordial.—Lusk Sharp.

His Aunt's Teeth. "Please, sir, give me an emetic, and quick, please." "The up-town druggist peered over his counter at the customer and saw a small 8-year-old boy and a big Newfoundland dog. The boy's face was dirty and tearful, and the dog's face was weary and lugubrious.

"An emetic!" exclaimed the druggist, and then, seeing that the boy's hand clutched his gastric region in agony, he hastily compounded the draught and handed it over the counter.

Hastily the little hands clutched the glass, and lifted it, not to the mouth associated with them, but to the dog's. Too much surprised to interfere, the druggist breathed a mental prayer and watched the proceedings. The dog scented the nauseous stuff, touched it with the tip of his tongue, shook his head in disgust, and squatted down on his haunches.

"He won't take it," sobbed the boy, bursting into tears, "and there's no other way I can get them out of him." "Get what?" stammered the druggist.

PIERCING THE EARS.

An Hour With a Louisville Auratologist. At 4 o'clock Friday afternoon a young lady, tall and slender and a blonde, emerged from a private room at a jewelry-store on Fourth avenue. Her hair at face was drawn with graces, and her mouth was down at the corners, while her ripe-red lips were quivering with pain.

As she came out of the room with an indignant look in the direction of the head salesman, who had left the same room but a moment before with a sharp-pointed and slender steel instrument in his hand. A close observer might have noticed a small crimson spot on the lobe of the young lady's left ear. This same crimson spot, upon further investigation, would have been found to be a drop of blood.

The young lady was very, very, and smarting with pain, and she didn't linger any longer in the jewelry-store than it required to walk to the door, which she slammed spitefully after her, as she stepped out on the street, with another withering look over her shoulder at the head salesman.

"What's the matter?" asked a journalist, who had just stepped in to buy a \$4,000 diamond pin for his new spring scarf. "I have been piercing the young lady's ear," answered the salesman with a moon smile, "and she didn't like the operation."

"Do you make a business of piercing ears?" asked the newspaper man. "We do a great deal of it here for our customers. At least I do a great deal of it. I don't think anybody else in Louisville has ever undertaken the same sort of work. Within the last ten years I suppose I have pierced the ears of at least two thousand girls and young ladies. The operation is a very simple one. All I require is a sharp steel point and a stout cork. The lobe of the ear is placed on the cork and the steel point is pushed through in a twinkling. Then either a bit of brass is left in the opening, or the earrings are put in. The operation is a very simple one. All I require is a sharp steel point and a stout cork. The lobe of the ear is placed on the cork and the steel point is pushed through in a twinkling. Then either a bit of brass is left in the opening, or the earrings are put in. The operation is a very simple one. All I require is a sharp steel point and a stout cork. 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