A Woman's Avowal.

- At 20 I thought Love was most charming, But in his net caught My case was alarming. A tyrant is Love, And he holds us while dying,
- As the hawk holds the dove; 'Tis all sighing and crying. At 15 is the chance, For such as would dance. Amusement and laughter

Reigned at my marriage,

But I learned soon after My bliss to disparage; With a husband oft grumbling And imps howling free, Twas bewildering and humbling; Could the dance then suit me? At 15 is the chance,

For such as would dance. -Old French Song, translated by Toru Dutt.

LOVERS YET.

(By the author of "Madoline's Lover.")

"You must learn to love us," said Val entine; "we are your husband's dearest kindly upon her.

friends." Poor Dora had no graceful words ready; her heart was full of gratitude, but she knew not how to express it. Ronald looked at her anxiously, and she caught his

glance. "Now," thought Dora. "He will not be pleased." She tried to say something of her pleasure in seeing them, but the words were so stiff and ungracious that Ronald hastened to interrupt them.

A luncheon of fruit and wine was brought out into the garden, and they talked merrily-of Earlescourt and the dear old friends there; of the ball and Prince Borgezi; in all of which Dora felt that she had no share.

Who was this beautiful lady, with her

fair face and golden hair? The same face she saw that Ronald had painted in his picture, and every one admired. How graceful she was! How she music over her perfect lips. Where had in her power to please and win the artist's Ronald known her? Why had he never told her of Miss Charteris?

"Ah," thought Dora, "if I could be like her!" And a sudden sense of wonder struck her that Ronald had not loved and married this fair and gracious lady.

Valentine neither forgot nor neglected her. She tried to draw her into their conversation, but Dora replied so uneasily and so briefly to all her remarks that she saw the truest kindness was to leave her alone.

They spent a few hours pleasantly, and Lady Charteris would not leave until Ronald promised to take his wife to spend a long day with them.

"I can hardly promise for Dora," said Ronald, kindly; "she seldom leaves home."

"Mrs. Earle will not refuse me," said Valentine, with that smile which no one ever resisted. "She will come with you and we will make her happy."

When the day was settled the ladies drove away, and Ronald watched the earriage until it was out of sight.

"My dear Valentine," cried Lady Charteris, when they were out of hearing, "my dear child, what could possess Ronald Earle? What could he see in that shy, appointed house. It was pleasant to awkward girl to induce him to give up everything and go into exile for her sake? She is not even pretty."

"She is altered, mamma," began Valentine.

"I should imagine she is, and unhappy too. She is frightened to speak-she has no style, no manner, no dignity. He must have been insane."

"I am quite sure he loved her," said Valentine, warmly, "and loves her now." "That is just the mystery," replied her mother-"a clever man like he is, accustomed to intelligent and beautiful women. I shall never understand it."

"Do not try," said Valentine, calmly. "She is evidently nervous and sensitive. I mean to be a true friend to Ronald, mamma, I shall try to train and form his wife."

Poor Dora! She was already trained or the fragrance of the heliotrope in a common blue-bell. Yet they wondered grasp, and he slighted it? that in this simple girl, ignorant of the He did not dwell upon these thoughts, world and its ways, they did not find a but they would come into his mind. and not art had done both.

Charteris and her daughter; they are so rather more of duty than of pleasure. kindly disposed toward you. I shall be so pleased to see you good friends."

" How beautiful she is, Ronald! That is | had met in Earlescourt gardens as it was the lady you call Guinevere in your possible for her to be. He wrote to tell his picture. Tell me about her. You remem- mother that at length there was hope of an bered her face exactly; should you remember heir to their ancient house. He was very mine as well?

in the simple loving heart.

"Far better," said Ronald, with a smile; eyes looked so strangely upon him. and then he looked up in alarm, for Dora Lady Charteris had planned an excursion was weeping wildly, and clinging to him. I wish I was like her. Shall you ever tire of it. Ronald was asked to join them, and

and did not return to his studio that day, and anxiety—out in the beautiful country but sat talking to her, telling her how noble with Valentine. But when the morning and good Valentine Charteris was.

GPAPTER XII.

It is very seldom that a man of good disposition does wrong wilfully. Ronald Earle would have felt indignant if any had of excuse to Lady Charteris, and take care accused him of dishonor or even neglect. He thought Dora enjoyed herself more at home than in society; consequently he left her there. Habits soon grow. The time came when he felt it was the wiser course. He felt more at his ease without her. If Dora by chance accompanied him, he watched her anxiously, fearful lest others should discover and comment upon the little deficiencies she felt so acutely.

The visit to Lady Charteris was duly paid-a day that Ronald enjoyed, and Dora thought would never end. She could although Lady Charteris was kind to her simple heart would have thrilled with been wrong. I am very sorry-let us that now." and Valentine laid herself out to please happiness at his words; but Dora grew make friends." not even when Valentine, pitying her shy, timid manner and evident constraint, took her out into the garden and tried hard to win her connidence. Dora's heart seemed to close against the beautiful, brilliant lady who knew her husband and seemed to close against the beautiful, averted had she told Ronald of her jealous Ronald would not answer, lest they replied; "A little courage, a little patience, and her own, throwing far from her every present either of dress or toys that Valenting and her own, throwing far from her every present either of dress or toys that Valenting and her own, throwing far from her every present either of dress or toys that Valenting and her own, throwing far from her every present either of dress or toys that Valenting and her own, throwing far from her every present either of dress or toys that Valenting and her own, throwing far from her every present either of dress or toys that Valenting and her own, throwing far from her every present either of dress or toys that Valenting and her own, throwing far from her every present either of dress or toys that Valenting and her own, throwing far from her every present either of dress or toys that Valenting and her own, throwing far from her every present either of dress or toys that Valenting and her own, throwing far from her every present either of dress or toys that Valenting and her own, throwing far from her every present either of dress or toys that Valenting and her own, throwing far from her every present either of dress or toys that Valenting and her own, throwing far from her every present either of dress or toys that Valenting and her own, throwing far from her every present either of dress or toys that Valenting and her own, throwing far from her every present either of dress or toys that Valenting and her own, throwing far from her every present either of dress or toys that Valenting and her own, throwing far from her every present either of dress or toys that Valenting and her own, throwing far from her every present either of dress or toys that valenting and her own, throw her her own and her all his friends so well. A fierce hot breath thoughts and fears! He never suspected should quarrel again, but he thought to and all will be well. If it comforts you to

pained her-she hardly knew why.

When Miss Charteris, under pretence of showing her favorite flowers, took Dora away from the others, and condescended to her as she had never done to any other, actually caressing the anxious little face and offering herself to be Mrs. Earle's true friend, pleased with the little twin sisters. Dora's heart closed against her. She only replied by faint monosyllables, and never raised her dark eyes to the face turned so

When Ronald had taken his young wife away, Lady Charteris sat with her daughter in unbroken silence.

"Poor boy," said the elder lady, at length, "and poor Dora! This is one more added to the list of unhappy marriages. How will it end?"

As she watched the sun set in the golden west Valentine asked herself the same question-" How will it end?"

If any one had told Dora she was jealous she would have denied it indignantly, although Valentine was seldom out of her

mind. From pure kindness Lady Charteris wished Ronald to paint her daughter's portrait; it was to be a large picture they could take back to Greenoke. He was pleased with the commission, and began to work at it eagerly. Lady Charteris came Dora said, "I have had my own way, you the house. Your sincere friend. with Valentine, and remained with her during the long sittings, doing everything

The fair face, in its calm, Grecian beauty, grew upon the canvas. Many a long hour, when Ronald was absent, Dora lingered over it. The portrait had a strange fascination for her. She dwelt upon every feature until, if the lips had opened and smiled a mocking smile at her, she would not have been greatly surprised. It was less a picture to her than a living, breathing reality. She would watch Ronald as he worked at it, eager and enthusiastic; then, looking up and finding her dark eyes riveted upon him with so strange an expression, he would call her to see what progress he had made, and, never dreaming of the growing jealousy in Dora's heart, speak with an artist's delight of the peerless features.

Without any great or sudden change, day by day Dora grew more silent and reserved. She was learning to hide her thoughts, to keep her little troubles in her own heart and ponder them. The time was past when she would throw herself into Ronald's arms and weep out her sorrow there.

Ronald did not notice the change. Home seemed very dull. It was a great pleasure to leave the solitary little villa and sit in the brilliant salon of Lady Charteris' wellconversation and gay society,

Valentine had many admirers. Every one knew the Prince di Borgezi would gladly have laid his fortune and title "Altered!" interrupted Lady Charteris. at her feet; but she cared for neither. Ronald often watched her, as noble and learned men offered their homage to her. gracefully; but he never saw in her face home. When Miss Charteris rode out he she turned her white, wild face to him in She smiled brightly, spoke well and the look that he once remembered there. obstinacy. She took Ronald into her a day sad and dark wherein he did not see "Are you ill, or frightened? You look confidence, and confided to him her annoyance when one suitor after another was dismissed.

Ronald was not particularly vain. Like most men, he had a pleasing consciousness toys, and drove over quite unexpectedly to bade her good-night. occasionally remembering his mother's that met her gaze. Ronald was busily lay down to rest! She had quite resolved assurance that Valentine cared for him. engaged in writing. Dora, flushed and she would go and meet the husband who Could it have been true? Was there ever a worn, was vainly trying to stop the cries of was tired of her and the woman who had time when that beautiful girl, so indifferent one child, while the other pulled at her lured him astray. She would listen to all morning's work. that. People do not expect the perfume to all homage, cared for him? Could there dress. The anxious, dreary face struck they had to say, and then confront them. of the rose in a wild strawberry-blossom, ever have been a time when the prize for which others sighed in vain was within his of toys down, and shook hands with Ronald, proceeding struck her. Poor Dora was not

cultivated mind, a graceful manner, and a was seldom that a day passed without his dignified carriage. Their only thought calling at the pretty house where Lady was to train and form her, whereas nature | Charteris always welcomed him kindly. She was sorry for him. He was never de "Dora," said Ronald, as the carriage trop with her. Occasionally, too, she drove disappeared from view, "try to like Lady out to see his wife; but the visits were

Then Dora's health failed. She grew week and languid-irritable at times-as "I will try," she replied, cheerfully. unlike the smiling, blushing girl Ronald kind and patient to his ailing, delicate wife, It was the first touch of jealousy stirring | giving up parties and soirces to sit with her, yet never able to guess why Dora's dark

to some picturesque ruin that had pleased "Oh, Ronald," she said, "for your sake her daugnter, who wished to make a sketch of me, or wish you had not married me?" he had been looking forward for many days Ronald soothed and comforted his wife, to a few pleasant hours away from all care came Dora looked pale and ill. She did not ask him to stay with her, but he read

the wish in her face. "I will not go, Dora," said her husband "I will not leave you. I shall send a note of you all day.'

"Is Miss Charteris going?" she asked quietly.

"Yes: and several others," he replied. "Then never mind me," said Dora; "do not give up a day's pleasure for me."

world for you. He bent over her, and kissed the pale raised her face to his.

cold and hard. "It used to be always so," she thought, in Dora's nature, and it showed itself in " before she came with her beauty and took | full force now.

Ronald talked to Miss Charteris of things bright and happy, she would ask him, wrong. all unknown to her; they seemed to have "Have you seen Miss Charteris to-day?" the same thoughts and feelings, while she and he, glad of her interest in his friends, widened. In after years Dora saw how sentence; a pale, angry face and dark, was outside the charmed circle, and could would reply that he had been to her much she was to blame. She understood gleaming eyes full of passion suddenly never enter it. She watched the growing mother's house, and tell her of music he then how distasteful her quiet, sullen re- flashed before her. admiration on Ronald's face when Valen- had heard or people he had met, or of serve must have been to a high bred, fasti-

band, treating him sometimes as a captive Ronald when he wrote to tell his mother Charteris. and again as a victor, Dora never cared; that he was now the father of little twin but every smile on this fair woman's face daughters, two pretty fair babes, in place of cloud deepening on Ronald's face. He "Hush!" said Ronald, sternly, grasping the long-looked-for heir of Earlescourt.

been taken down into the pretty room him alone. Yet she honestly believed that, pray you," said Ronald, "while my wife Charteris and her daughter came in; first love for Dora, of her simplicity and Ronald joined them, and there was a long many virtues, she might restore peace and discussion as to the names.

ladies will be very grand personages some and to her clearly, rightly judging mind day. It would be a nice compliment to there was no earthly reason why he should Lady Earle if you called one Helena."

other Beatrice."

give names to her children. "I admire your choice," said Lady Charteris; "Beatrice and Lillian are very pretty

see, Miss Charteris, with my little ones.

Mr. Earle did not oppose me." Valentine thought the words harsh and strange; she had no clew to their meaning. She could not have imagined Dora jealous tentions and a kindly heart dictated it, but me to meet her here that she might plead of her. She made some laughing reply, it worked fatal mischief. When Ronald your cause, Dora-that she might advise and passed on. Dora was not lonely now, was leaving her mother's house, Miss me to remain more at home with you, to the care of the little ones occupying her Charteris openly placed the letter in his go less into society, to look more at the whole time; but far from their binding Ronald to his home, he became more es-

tranged from it than ever. The pretty picturesque villa was very small; there was no room available for a nursery. Wherever Dora sat, there must the little ones be; and although they were very charming to the mother and the nurse, the continued cries and noise irritated Ronald greatly. Then he grew vexed, Dora cried, and said that he did not love them, and so the barrier grew day by day between those who should have been all in all to consciousness of what Valentine wanted

each other. The children grew. Little Beatrice gave promise of great beauty. She had the Earle in her face, Ronald said. Lillian was a fair, sweet babe, too gentle, her mother thought, to live. Neither of them it had been otherwise.

home. Some hours of every day were passed with Valentine; he never stopped accompanied her; he liked to meet her at dumb, silent despair. parties and balls. He would have thought

thought, purchased a grand assortment of little fits of temper, sighed heavily, and forgot to cry.

help you?"

gloomily.

words implied-spoken before Valentine, know whether to pity or blame her. man and wife, the bloom and freshness are and Valentine signed to Ronald to take broken down, and nothing can be put in the jealous heart of Ronald's wife. its place.

CHAPTER XIII.

The angry, passionate words, spoken by Ronald, almost the first he had ever Ronald might have guessed there was uttered, soon faded from his mind, but something wrong from the tone of her voice, they rankled like poisoned arrows in Dora's but Ronald was not of a suspicious nature. heart. She believed them. Before evening "Now, Dora," he said, gently, "you her husband repented of his anger, know I would give up every pleasure in the and called himself a coward for having scolded Dora. He went up to her and

little face. Time had been when the "Little wife," he said, "we have both

There was just a suspicion of sullenness

"It is no matter," she replied, coolly; "I once, but they are all dead now."

From that day the breach between them | Valentine Charteris never finished her

grew silent, and lost the flow of spirits her arm. "Stop these wild words, Dora! Lady Charteris was very kind to the that had once seemed never to fail; and Are you mad?" lonely young mother—so kind that, had she during the few weeks that followed, a strong borne any other name, Dora must have resolution grew in her mind. She was his loved her. A glimpse of the old happiness true friend, and she would try to restore came back, for Ronald was proud and peace and harmony between him and his wife. She waited for some days, but at her One bright morning, when Dora had mother's house it was impossible to see where the infants lay sleeping, Lady if she could talk to him, remind him of his harmony to her old friend's home. She "You must have an eye to the future," thought Ronald to blame. He had volunsaid Valentine, smiling. "These little tarily taken active duties upon himself, to me?" little one with the fair hair Lillian, the Valentine waited day after day, hoping to A faint flush rose to her face as she thought would do so much good; but, as spoke. She would allow no interference no opportunity came she resolved to make here. This smiling beauty should not one. Taking her little jeweled pencil, she crouched behind those trees deliberately wrote the following lines that were in after time a death warrant:

"DEAR MR. EARLE,-I wish to speak to When Valentine bent over the cradle and in our grounds to-morrow morning about kissed the children before taking leave, ten; let me see you there before you enter VALENTINE CHARTERIS."

-there was nothing wrong in it-good in- "Miss Charteris is your friend; she asked

written to you," she said with a smile. it was for that she summoned me here."

You must not refuse the request it contains.' "I will send him home happy to-morrow," she thought-"he is easily influenced for coolly. "Miss Charteris, I would kneel to good. He must make up the misunderstanding with his pretty little wife-neither of

them looks happy. Ronald did not open the letter until he reached home. Then he read it with a half-

"She is a noble woman," he thought. Her words made me brave before—they will do me good again.'

He left the folded paper upon the table in his studio; and jealous little Dora, going resembled her, and at times Dora wished in search of some work she had left, found it there. She read it word by word, the Perhaps in all Ronald Earle's troubled color dying slowly out of her face as she life, he never spent a more unsettled or did so, and a bitter, deadly jealousy wretched year than this. "It is impossible piercing her heart like a two edged sword. exchange the dull monotony for sparkling to paint," he said to himself, "when dis- it confirmed her worst fears, her darkest turbed by crying babies." So the greater doubts. Howdared this brilliant, beautiful part of his time was spent away from woman lureRonald from her? How dare she rob her of his love?

Ronald looked aghast at his wife's face to ask himself what impulse led him when she re-entered the sitting-room. He to seek her society; the calm repose of her had been playing with the children, and fair presence contrasted so pleasantly with had forgotten for the time both Valentine the petty troubles and small miseries of and her note. He cried out in alarm as

"What is the matter, Dora?" he cried.

When the little ones reached their first | She made no reply, and her husband, birthday, Valentine with her usual kind thinking she had relapsed into one of her

the villa. It was not a very cheerful scene Poor, foolish, jealous heart—she never who looked somewhat ashamed of the gifted with great refinement of feelingaspect of affairs. Then turning to Dora she | she looked upon the step she contemplated took the child from her arms, and little rather as a triumph over an enemy than Beatrice, looking at her with wondering eyes, a degradation to herself. She knew the place in the grounds where they would be seat: and Dora thought that, if she placed to hear all unseen.

"We spend too much in gloves and Before Ronald partook of breakfast horses," added Dora, bitterly; but no Dora had quitted the house on her foolish sooner were the words spoken than she errand. She knew the way to the house would have given the world to recall them. and the entrance to the garden. She had Ronald made no reply, and Valentine no fear; even were she discovered there, anxious to avert the storm she had no one could surmise more than that she unwittingly raised, drew attention to the was resting on her way to the house. She crouched behind the trees and waited. When Valentine left them, Dora and was wrong, weak, and wicked; but there Ronald had their first quarrel-long and was something so pitiful in the white face bitter; he could ill brook the insult her full of anguish that one would hardly

too !- and she for the first time showed him | The sunshine reached her, the birds how an undisciplined, untrained nature can were singing in the trees, the flowers were throw off the restraint of good manners all blooming-she, in her sorrow and and good breeding. It was a quarrel desolation, heeded nothing. At length she never to be forgotten, when Ronald in the saw them-Valentine in her white morning height of his rage wished that he had never | dress, her beautiful face full of deep, earnest seen Dora, and she re-echoed the wish. emotion, and Ronald by her side. As she When such a quarrel takes place between surmised they walked straight to the trees, gone from love. They may be reconciled, seat by her side. Sweetly and clearly but they will never again be to each other every word she uttered sounded to Ronald, what they once were. A strong barrier is but they fell like drops of molten lead on

"You must try," Valentine was saying; "I used to think you would be a hero. You are proving yourself a very weak and erring man."

Dora could not distinguish Ronald's words so plainly; he said something about "life and its mistakes."

"I told you once," said Valentine," that consequence of his own actions was a true share of Italian. The young nurse looked hero. Grant the worst—that you have up in wonder at the hard voice, usually made a mistake. You must make the best you can of it, and you are not doing

"No," he said, gravely. "I am very I love." unhappy-more so than you can imegine, Valentine. Life seems to have lost all its

of jealousy stirred the simple nature. them. When he returned home, looking himself that perhaps she was not far know that my warmest, deepest sympathy

"You may spare your pity, Miss Chartine played and sang, and her restless Valentine's messages to her. So Dorafed dious man like Ronald. She did not see it teris," cried a hoarse voice. "W hy have heart grew weary and faint. She had the dark, bitter jealousy that had crept into then, but nursed in her heart imaginary you made my husband dissatisfied with wrongs and injuries; and, above all, she me? Why have you taken his love from Rosali talked and laughed with her hus. It was a proud but anxious day for yielded to a wild, fierce jealousy of Valentine me? Why do you write notes asking him For some weeks Miss Charteris saw the evil and wrong of his low-born wife?"

"No, not yet," she cried; "but this false woman will drive me so!"

Then Miss Charteris rose, her calm, grand face unruffled-not a quiver on her proud lips. "Stay, Miss Charteris, one moment, I

apologizes for her folly. "It is all true," cried Dora. "She wrote and asked you to meet her here."

"Dora," said her husband, gravely, "did you read the letter Miss Charteris wrote

"I did," she replied.

"And you deliberately came here to not fulfil them. He would not feel hurt listen to what she had to say to me?" he "I have made my choice," said Dora, in at her speaking, she felt sure, for he had continued. "You deliberately listened to a clear ringing voice. "I shall call this voluntarily sought her aid years ago. So what you were never intended to hear?" His grave, stern dignity calmed her find a chance for those few words she angry passion, and she looked half-frightened into his quite white face.

"Answer me!" he said. "Have you and purposely to listen?"

"Yes," she said; "and I would do so again if any one tried to take my husband

"Then may I be forgiven for the dishonor I have brought to my name and race!" said Ronald. "May I be forgiven for thinking such a woman fit to be my wife! Hear me," he continued, and the All the world might have read the note passion in his voice changed to contempt. bright side of our married life, and be "That is the first note I have ever a better husband than I have been lately; "I-I do not believe it," sobbed his

"That is at your option," he replied, . ask your pardon for the insults you have received. If a man had uttered them I would avenge them. The woman who spoke them bears my name. I entreat your pardon."

"It is granted," she replied. "Your wife must have been mad, or she would have known I was her friend. I deeply regret that my good intentions have resulted so unhappily. Forget my annoyance, Mr. Earle, and forgive Dora; she could not have known what she was saying."

"I forgive her," said Ronald; "but I never wish to look upon her face again. I see nothing but dishonor there. My love died a violent death ten minutes since. The woman so dead to all delicacy, all honor. as to listen and suspect, will never more be wife of mine."

"Be pitiful," said Valentine, for Dora was weeping bitterly now; all her fire and passion, all her angry jealousy, had faded before his wrath.

"I am pitiful," he replied. "Heaven knows I pity her. I pity myself. We Earles love honorable women when we love at all. I will escort you to your house, Miss Charteris and then Mrs. Earle and myself will make our arrangements." In her sweet, womanly pity Valentine

bent down and kissed the despairing face. "Try to believe that you are wrong and mistaken, Mrs. Earle," she said gently. "I had no thought save to be your friend." They spoke no word as they passed through the pretty grounds. Valentine

When Ronald reached the cluster of trees again Dora was not there. Just at that moment he cared little whither she had gone. His vexation and sorrow seemed almost greater than he could bear.

CHAPTER XIV.

The passion and despair of that undisci-"You are not strong enough, Dora, to sure to meet. Miss Charteris called it her plined heart were something pitiful to see. nurse this heavy child," said Miss Char- bower: it was a thick cluster of trees under Reason, sense, and honor, for a time, were teris. "Why do you not find somebody to the shade of which stood a pretty rustic all dead. If Dora could have stamped out "We cannot afford it," said Ronald, herself behind the trees, she would be able face, she would have done so. Ronald's her whole heart and soul were in angry revolt, until bitter thoughts raged like a wild tempest within her. She could not see much harm in what she had done; she did not quite see why reading her own husband's letter or listening to a private conversation of his was a breach of honor. She thought but little at that time of what she had done; her heart was full of anger against Ronald and Valentine. She clasped her hands angrily after Miss Charteris had kissed her, crying out that she was false. and had lured Ronald from her. Any one passing her on the high road would have thought her mad, seeing the white face, the dark gleaming eyes, the rigid lips, only opening for moans and cries that marred the sweet summer silence. He should keep his word ; never—come what might—never should he look upon her face again-the face he had carressed so often and thought so fair. She would go away-he was quite tired of her, and of her children, too. They should tease him and intrude upon him no more. Let him go to the fair false woman who had pretended to pity her.

The little nursemaid, a simple peasant girl, looked on in mute amazement when her mistress entered the room where the

children were. "Maria," she said, "I am going home, over the seas to England. Will you go

with me?" The only thing poor Dora had learned the man who could endure so bravely the during those quiet years was a moderate

> soft as the dooing of a ring dove. "I will go," she replied, "if the signora will take me. I leave none behind me that

With trembling, passionate hands and white, stern face, Dora packed her trunks charms for me. I had such great hopes and boxes-the children's little wardrobe and her own, throwing far from her every