A Country Idyl.

"Oh, let me leave the city's heat,
  Its fripperies and formalities,
And place once more my tired feet
  On nature's actualities.
I'll turn from fashion's mimic train,
Its aping arts, its high disdain,
And bathe my tired heart and brain
  In primitive realities."

He turned from "fashion's mimic train,"
  And sought the calm rusticity
Of field and forest, lake and plain,
  Disburdened of publicity.
But horse flies marked him for their prey,
And down his backbone day by day
The caterpillar wound his way
  In sinuous eccentricity.

And when beneath some arbor snug
  He'd lie in thoughtful revelry,
The bumble-bee and tumble-bug
  Would come with fiendish devilry,
With daddy longlegs run a race,
And march in military pace
Across his bloared and blistered face,
  In wild, tumultuous revelry.

And while the still breeze from the south
  Lapped him in dreams elysian,
The gay green frog leaped in his mouth
  With acrobat precision;
The wookchuck nimbled at his nose,
The weasel chewed up both his hose,
The snake crawled thro' his underclo'es
  In wandering indecision.

He lay there in the valley green,
  The city's strain to calm off,
And the farmer with his mowing machine
  Then mowed his outstretched arm off.
And then he rose with murderous will
And roamed the earth and vowed to kill
All poets who with fiendish skill
  Such pastoral lies could palm off.

SHIRLEY ROSS:

A Story of Woman's Faithfulness.

"Then you must forgive her," she said, averting her eyes from his face, with a little pang at her heart when she saw the pain there. "I have forgiven her; but"—he paused, and his strong fingers pulled nervously at his mustache; then he went on rapidly—"I care for her far too much to keep up a show of resentment against her; still I am not at all sure that it would not be wiser to go away and never see her again."

"Why?" Shirley asked.

"Because—because I can hardly think she cares for me when she doubted me on such slight grounds, Lady Glynn."

Shirley glanced at him: there was no mistaking the pain on his face; and she felt sorry that a girl who had been fortunate enough to win such a love as his should have been weak enough to doubt it, and so raise doubt in his own mind.

"You must not say the grounds were slight," she said earnestly. "Most women,' I think, would have been vexed and pained and you must not think that, because she had not perfect faith, she has not perfect love. Girls are different from men, you know; they want constant assurance of the love they inspire, and you must try to forget her jealousy in love."

"That is love's curse," he answered, smiling, but his face was brighter for the earnest words she had spoken; and the pain he had felt at the want of faith in him which pretty Rosie Venn had shown was almost removed.

Presently the sound of wheels rapidly approaching the house made Madge start up with a quick joyful exclamation. Shirley too rose to her feet; but her knees trembled, and she was forced to sit down again while she tried to appear composed and to quell the nervous agitation which seized her. Madge flew out into the hall, and Mr. Litton followed, for he feared that he might be needed in his professional capacity if Sir Hugh had returned with his friends.

Soon the room door opened and Sir Frederic Oliphant entered, going over to Shirley with outstretched hands and very troubled eyes; and, as she looked up at him, her own were very dim.

"My poor child," he said, gently, "they would not accept bail! We did our best."

"I am sure of that," she said gently, and turned away from him for a moment in silence. "How did he bear it?" she asked steadily then, looking at him with brave steadfast eyes.

"Well and bravely," he answered warmly. "There was a sad dignity about him which disarmed even those who were inclined to be bitter against him."

"I am glad to know that," she said. "Will they let me see him?"

"Yes; if your are well enough and equal to it, you may see him to-morrow."

"Thank you, I shall be well enough. And Guy!"

"Guy remained at Adinbrooke; he wished to be near Sir Hugh."

"That is like Guy," she said softly; and during the rest of the day she was very quiet.

CHAPTER LI.

Punctually at 12 o'clock on the ollowing day Lady Oliphant's brougham drove through the quaint old town of Adinbrooke, and turned up the hill where the old castle stood which was now used as the county jail, and drew up at its gate. The morning was fine and clear, and, as Shirley Glynn and Lady Oliphant passed into the building, a ray of wintry sunshine fell on the younger woman's lovely face, touching it with a momentary brightness which faded as they entered the comparative darkness within. The governor, a stately, military-looking man, with a stern yet not unkindly face and a heavy iron-gray mustache, came down to meet them. He had met Lady Oliphant before, and shook hands with her in a frank friendly fashion, bowing low to Shirley as he did so, and looking at her with interested eyes as they went on together. He had heard much of her beauty and grace, and her name had been familiar to him when she had been a queen in society and *feted* and sought after and followed.

His face was touched with a deep compassion as he preceded the two ladies to his own private room, where Guy was waiting, looking haggard and worn and pale, as if the night had been a long and restless one.

Shirley gave him her hand in silence, and a gleam of tenderness stole into his weary eyes as they met hers, while his heart ached for her with an agony which had never ceased even for a moment. If he could have spared her any further suffering, he would gladly have done so at the cost of his own life; but this trouble nothing could lessen—pains, influence, wealth, all were alike powerless.

"I must ask you to wait a few minutes," Captain Graham said courteously. "It will not be longer, I think."

He placed chairs for them, then left them alone in his pleasant sitting-room. It was a cheerful room handsomely furnished, and windows looked over a garden which in the summer was bright and fragrant with the beauty and the smell of flowers. Lady Oliphant and Guy exchanged a few sentences as they waited; Shirley sat by the window, looking out with wistful eyes and pale parted lips. Something in the place seemed to stifle her; even in that cheerful airy room she could scarcely breathe; and Guy, without speaking, opened the window near which she sat. Her eyes glanced up at him gratefully, and then she looked out again at the dreary garden.

Presently the door opened, and a pretty golden-haired little girl came bounding in, but stopped shyly, seeing the strange ladies. Guy bent down to her and took her little hand in his. She was a daughter of Captain Graham's, whose acquaintance he had made the night before.

"Don't go away, Amy," he said, smiling. "Come, and speak to these ladies. Did you want your father?"

"Yes," she whispered shyly, shaking her curls over her face as she left her hand in his; and Shirley turned from the window at the sound of the sweet childish voice, and the stifled sensation at her heart left her as she saw the shy bright blue eyes looking at her wistfully from beneath the veil of falling yellow hair.

"Whose little girl are you?" she said softly: and the child crossed the room and put her chubby little fingers on Shirley's soft sealskin.

"Father's," she answered brightly.

"And mother's?"

"Yes; but mother has gone away, you know; the angels came and fetched her."

"Did they, darling?" Shirley's fingers were parting the wavy golden hair from the pure white brow, and her eyes, very intent and tender, were studying the child's face.

"I was sorry," the child went on, "because no one ever kissed the place and made it better, when I fell down, as she did; but father was very sorry;" and the bright face shadowed a little at the remembrance.

"And you were his little comfort?"

"Yes, who told you so—did father? He always calls me that."

Shirley lifted her on to her knee, and pressed her quivering lips to the pretty hair; and the little girl with all a child's quick instinct and pity for any one suffering, put up her arm and clasped Shirley's neck and nestled her golden head against the soft sealskin of Shirley's coat; and there was inexpressible comfort in the tight clasp and the clinging little hand.

It seemed to Shirley, as she sat there with Amy Graham nestling in her arms, that much of the darkness which had fallen upon her spirit as she entered the castle had been lifted since the child had entered the room. That anything so good, so bright, so innocent should have lived in that gloomy place was sufficient to remove half its gloom: and Amy never guessed what a little comforter in truth she had been to the beautiful lady who had clasped her so tenderly and so closely.

"You live here always, Amy?"

"Yes, always; but sometimes we go away together to the sea-side, father and me and the nurse."

"Do you like the sea-side, my dear?"

"Yes; but I like the castle best."

"You have no little brother or sister?" Shirley asked softly.

"No"—the child shook her head as it rested against Shirley, and the blue eyes grew very wistful—"I had a little brother once, but he went with mother to heaven."

"Captain Graham has seen great trouble." Lady Oliphant said, in a low voice. "He lost his young wife and little son within a few days of each other."

Shirley looked up wistfully; she was thinking, perhaps that "grief is more for the living lost than ever it is for the dead;" but she remained silent; and in a few moments Captain Graham came back, his stern face softening into a beautiful tenderness as he caught sight of the child in Lady Glynn's arms and saw the more peaceful look in the beautiful hazel eyes which met his with sudden swift inquiry.

"Sir Hugh can see you now," he said quietly. "Have you been making friends with my daughter, Lady Glynn? She is generally a little addicted to shyness."

"She was not afraid of me," Shirley said as she put the child down—and Captain Graham noticed how long and close and fond the kiss was which she pressed upon the rosy cheek—and then she followed the governor out of the room.

He led her himself down the long passages and the stone steps, thinking meanwhile that it was rare for the gloomy prison to receive such a beautiful visitant, and himself too opened the door of the cell where Sir Hugh was confined.

"I will take care that you are not disturbed," he said very gently. "And, Lady Glynn, I need hardly tell you that he is very weak, and that—"

"I will not forget," she said steadily. "I will not be less calm than I am now. Thank you, Captain Graham."

She went in softly; he closed the door after her, and Shirley was in the prison-cell with which her dreams had been haunted more than once.

It was a bare whitewashed room, scrupulously clean, and through the high barred windows a ray of wintery sunshine had struggled in and lay softly on the floor, while in the little grate a fire was burning cheerily. Sir Hugh was fully dressed, lying upon the bed with closed eyes, and he looked so haggard and attenuated and death-like that Shirley's heart almost ceased to beat with a sudden fear. Her noiseless movements, the soft unrustling velvet dress that she wore, did not attract his attention, and she was fully a minute in the room, watching him, before he saw her.

Her thoughts went back almost involuntarily to the days when she had known him first, and she saw him again as he had been then, so handsome and distinguished, so full of life and health and gayety; she remembered the New Year's-eve ball at Fairholme Court and their interview in the school-room, which had been the beginning of such misery, and it almost seemed as if she could hear again the patter of the rain against the window-panes as she had heard it then, and the moan of the wind in the leafless trees. And it was his love for her which had brought him to this grievous strait, the impulse of an undisciplined heart, which, having always received "good," could not bear to resist "evil."

The heavy lids were slowly lifted, and his eyes opened and he saw her, and over his face came a sudden brightness which gave it for a moment some of the beauty of other days. The next minute she was kneeling beside him, and his weak arms were round her, his face hidden where Amy's golden head had rested a few minutes before, and there was silence.

It was Shirley who, remembering Captain Graham's injunctions, moved first. She disengaged herself gently from his weak clasp, and put him back upon the pillows, and his eyes dwelt upon her with all the old passionate tenderness as she bent over him.

"So you have come to me, Shirley?" he said at last, while his eyes drank in the beauty of her face and his hands clasped hers closely.

"You expected me, Hugh? You knew I would come?"

"Yes, but—"

"But what, dear?"

"But I was almost sorry afterward that I had asked you. This is no place for you love."

"It is my fittest place, Hugh; and as often and as long as I can I will be with you here."

He smiled feebly.

"How pleasant it is to hear you speak in that little tone of decision," he said. "It is very pleasant to see you in that dress, Shirley."

He touched her velvet and fur with his slender fingers for a moment; and she smiled bravely into his altered face.

"I am glad," she said brightly. "But tell me of yourself, Hugh."

"Of myself, dear?" he echoed. "There is not much to tell, save that I am happier, much more at rest, than I have been during all these long months."

She stooped toward him and put her lips to his forehead.

"And you are not suffering much, Hugh?"

"No—hardly at all. And I am much stronger. Captain Graham sent me that arm-chair, Shirley: and it is only sheer laziness which makes me lie here."

He rose as he spoke, and staggering to his feet, managed with Shirley's aid, to reach the arm-chair, where he lay back exhausted even by that effort.

"I can see you better here," he said presently, smiling at her, with his pale lips quivering a little and his eyes very dim. "And I want to see as much of you as I can, my brave, generous darling. I seem to have so much to say to you, Shirley, and—and not very much time to say it in."

As she was kneeling by his side, he took her hand, and, folding it in both his, pressed it near his heart. The touch seemed to lessen the pain there, he thought, as he met the wistful eyes.

"They told you about yesterday, dear?" he asked, after a short pause.

"Yes. Was it very painful, Hugh?"

"No, my darling I think I am dead to pain now. I remember thinking once that, if you knew of my crime, the sight of the horror and repugnance in your eyes would kill me; but, when you knew it, and Guy, it seemed as if I did not care who else saw my shame. And they were all very good and patient, Shirley, although poor Guy was terribly cut up because they would not take bail."

"We were grieved at that, Hugh."

"Were you, my darling?" he said wistfully. "I think it is almost better so. I have been such a burden to you these last weeks that—"

She raised her hand to his mouth and silenced him, and he caught it and pressed it fondly to his lips.

"It is better so, Shirley," he said again. "I cannot help feeling what misery I should have saved you and Guy if I had been honest and brave enough to do what was right at first. But regrets are unavailing and useless—besides, it is too late for any atonement now."

They were silent for a space then, the eyes of both resting on the red glow of the fire, and Hugh's faint, struggling breathing alone breaking the stillness.

"Guy has been so good to me," he went on softly. "I have no words to speak of his goodness. I think the very sight of him puts life into me, Shirley. My darling, it takes so much of the pain away to think that I leave you in his care."

Weeping now, she leaned her head against his arm, and asked him tremulously and brokenly through her tears not to speak to her; there might be happiness for them yet.

"For you, yes, my best and dearest, happiness enough, I pray Heaven, to atone in some measure for the misery of the past; but Shirley, if you look forward a little, only a few short weeks, you can not but see that it will be better for me. Darling, forgive me! I did not mean to pain you. I am not worthy of one of those precious tears, and yet they make me so happy."

They were falling now thick and fast upon his fevered hand, and it seemed to Hugh Glynn that they fell upon his heart like the blessed rain from heaven upon the parched earth, bringing healing and softening and fertility where all had been dry and barren before.

"Last night, dearest child," he went on quietly—and Shirley noticed that he never called her his "wife all through these bitter days—"when I awoke all the past came before me—all my past life so selfish and worthless and useless, and all the wretchedness I made by my fatal love for you—all those years of our married life, when—"

"Ah, do not talk of them!" she entreated sadly. "I cannot think of them now without deep pain. If I had been less proud and unforgiving, if I had not cherished my anger against you, all this might never have been. Oh, Hugh, I am as guilty in the sight of heaven as you can be—ay, and more guilty, since my sin lasted for years, and yours was immediately repented of."

"Love, you had every right to hate me," he said sadly; "I had injured you past all forgiveness. But let us not talk of the past, since it so pains you. Let us talk of your future, Shirley."

She started and looked up at him.

"You know, dear child, that by the will I made soon after—after"—he hesitated a little, then went on hurriedly—"I stole you from Guy, I left what was all yours by right away from you, and now—"

But her gentle hand upon his stopped him.

"Hugh!" she said entreatingly.

"What would you say, my dearest?" he asked as he saw how her lips quivered and how the pained color rose in her face.

"Hugh—that will—do not change it—I could not—"

There was no need to finish the sentence; he understood her, and a flush of shame rose to his hollow cheek.

"I see, my dear," he said, after a long silence. "I will not urge you then. Tell me about your brother," he went on presently. "Will he ever forgive me all the misery I brought on his sister?"

"He thinks that he was more the cause of that misery than you, Hugh," she answered gently. "But you are very weary, dear. Will you let me read to you now?"

"Yes, presently. Do you ever sing now, Shirley? I have so often thought of that song you sung one day in the oak parlor at Fairholme Court. It was the day Guy proposed to you, I think, and I shall never forget your face as you sung it. Oh, my darling, soon, when you are free, you can place your hand in your king's with perfect confidence, for

"'Titled by gift of God is he,
And rich in a rarer thing than wealth!'

Does it pain you for me to talk thus, Shirley?" he continued, wistfully. "Dear, it is my only comfort now to think how your future will atone for the past."

"Let me read to you, Hugh," she pleaded earnestly.

"Presently, dear. It is so pleasant to look at the happier things in store for you. You have had bitter things long enough, poor little woman; but, if it pains you, I will think of them when I am alone. Yes, I am ready, dear, if you will read."

The Book, a worn and shabby little volume, which had taught them both many a lesson during those terrible days at Erindale, was lying on the table. Shirley drew it toward her, and turned over the leaves hesitatingly.

"Always the same chapter, Shirley," he said, with a little smile. "You know—that which tells of the son who was dead, and alive again, who was lost and found."

Steady and sweet and grave and reverent was her voice as she read those grand words which tell of a Father's infinite love and never-failing pardon—words which have brought comfort and healing to many a sinner; and, as he listened, the look of peace deepened on the haggard attentive face of Hugh Glynn, and his thin burning fingers closed over her hand.

When the reading was over, they sat for awhile silent in the dim firelit cell, their hands clasped and Sir Hugh's head resting on his wife's shoulder. The same strange sense of unreality which had been upon Shirley before was upon her now; it was all part of the same dream. Was it possible that it was Hugh Glynn, the man she had hated and despised, who was lying thus peacefully against her now, and that it was her heart which was so full of pity and compassion and tenderness? Was it his hand which clasped hers, his voice which said softly—

"Love, I am too happy! It is not right that such a wretch as I have been should know such blessedness as this! Shirley, it seems to me more than ever now that your forgiveness and Guy's are an earnest of that other forgiveness for which I hardly dare to hope."

And then again he pressed her hand passionately to his lips; in his humiliation he never sought to touch her mouth and call her by tender names, which almost broke her heart, remembering how he loved her and how he had suffered for that love.

After a time, seeing that he was very much exhausted, she induced him to rest upon the little pallet-bed again. It was approaching the time when she must leave him, she knew; and he guessed so also by the sorrowful yearning which came into her eyes.

"If I were brave enough and unselfish enough," he said huskily, "I would tell you not to come here any more, my darling; but I cannot give up entirely the comfort of seeing you. But do not come often, Shirley; this is no place for you, and—"

"Hugh," she answered steadily, "I will come, as I said, as often and for as long as they will let me."

He smiled gratefully and sadly.

"It will not be for long, dear, even at the longest," he said feebly. "Thank Heaven, oh, thank Heaven for that! Oh, Shirley, if you could know how the thought of the trial haunted me at first, how often—oh, how often—I saw the crowded court, the judge, the accusing faces, the contempt of my crime and cowardice and baseness in every eye! How I used to wake at night struggling with the terror of it, and dared not go to sleep for fear of it recurring! Oh, Shirley, even now, if I dared, I would pray that the end might come before that, that I might not be judged at any earthly tribunal, but by that Judge who is more merciful than any earthly judge!"

And Shirley, as she bent over him trying to soothe the agony of terror which had seized him, in her heart echoed his prayer.

CHAPTER LII.

Three weeks went by. Sir Hugh Glynn was very ill, sick unto death; and with every hour the certainty increased that he would not live to be tried for the deed he had done under the summer sky on the rocks at Easton. His illness was a complicated one, brought on partly by exposure and want, partly by remorse and misery. The exposure to the weather on that Christmas night when he had been found senseless in the snow by the woman he had wronged so deeply had aggravated the chest-complaint from which he had suffered for months; one lung was entirely gone, the other was going fast, and the end might come at any time.

Daily, almost hourly, he wasted and became weaker, and each day, when the prison door closed after Shirley, she wondered whether, when she came on the following day, he would be living to give her that fond bright smile which always came into his eyes when they rested upon her, no matter how great his suffering had been the minute before.

To the last day of her life Shirley remembered Captain Graham's kindness and consideration for her then. The circumsta ces of the case were strange and unusual certainly, and perhaps admitted of unusual privileges; but every care and kindness which were possible were extended to Sir Hugh in his prison-cell; and he was grateful and contrite exceedingly.

He did not suffer much, except when the terrible paroxysms of coughing recurred and the subsequent hemorrhage, and a word of complaint never passed his lips. It was often difficult to Guy Stuart, remembering the Hugh Glynn he had known in the by-gone years, to recognize him in this patient, uncomplaining, penitent sufferer. That Hugh Glynn had been so proud, so selfish, so impatient of any contradiction, so unbending, so heedless while the prisoner in Adinbrooke Jail was so unselfish, so tender over others, so repentant and gentle, that he won sympathy from all with whom he was brought in contact.

Shirley saw him daily for a short time. Sometimes he was well enough to talk to her, at others he was able only to lie with her hands in his, and his eyes resting with undying love and tenderness on her face. Sometimes he would ask her to read to him—always those same blessed merciful, divinely beautiful lines which comforted him as nothing else could. Sometimes his mind wandered a little from very weakness, and he would murmur disconnected and broken words which told them much of what he had suffered and borne in the past; but often, when he was in this condition, the touch of Shirley's lips upon his brow and her voice speaking his name would bring him back to the present, and he would make a pathetic struggle against the unconsciousness for a few moments; when he would wander again, or sink half into a stupor, half into a sleep.

(To be continued.)

A REMARKABLE SERMON.

Archdeacon Farrar on the Religious Denominations.

Ven. Archdeacon Farrar spoke thus in the course of a sermon preached in Westminster Abbey, and in anticipation of the Lambeth Conference then about to sit:

"Perish the hand which would circumscribe by one hair's breadth the limits or the definition of the Church of Christ; perish the arms that would exclude from that one flock of the Good Shepherd the 'other sheep which are not of this fold;' perish the narrow superstition that the wind of God, which 'bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth,' can only be conveyed by mechanical transmissions. I, for one at any rate, refuse to flatter the priestly pride which would sectarianize the catholicity of the Church of Christ. The articles which I accepted at my ordination taught me that the visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men wherein the pure Word of God is preached and the sacraments duly administered, and I, for one, even if I were to stand alone, would repudiate and protest against the uncatholic teaching which would pretend to do what it cannot do by unchurching any who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth.

"When I speak of the Church in general I do not mean this or that communion, under this or that organization, but I mean, in their ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, the whole multitude of the saints of God. What! are we not to claim as full and honored members of the Church of Christ in every possibly true sense of that word because they were Moravians those holy missionaries who planted successfully

Sweet Sharon's Rose
On icy plains or in eternal snows?

Or Williams, the Apostle of Polynesia and the martyr of Erromanga, because he was a dissenter? Dr. Carey and others in India, because they were Baptists? Or Elizabeth Fry because she was a Quakeress? If there are any who think that He who died for all mankind cares mainly or chiefly for outward organization, their views of Christ are not such as I learn from Him who made keeping the commandments the essential entering into the Kingdom of Heaven. I say with Whitefield: "Do they profess repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ? If so, they are my brethren." True and unswervingly loyal in my love for the Church of England, yet I would stand bareheaded before any true saint of God, and be he Romanist or Independent, or Quaker or Presbyterian, so he be a saint of God, desiring ten thousandfold more that I may stand with him before the throne of Christ rather than with those who, though they may have had "Lord, Lord," or "The Church, the Church," forever on their lips, and have spent their lives in the endless round of outward ordinances, may yet, if their lives have been unloving and unworthy, hear those awful words, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites," and "Depart from Me, I never knew you." For it is Christ, and Christ alone, it is not episcopal government, or apostolic succession, or ancient ritual, or the orthodoxy of curiously articulated creeds; it is Christ, and Christ only, and the innocence which shines in the lives of them that truly believe in Him, which has been the strength of Christianity."

How She Got Out.

"O, papa, I was caged once," said a little girl. "When I was visiting auntie in the country last summer I went into some bushes, and after a while I found I was caught. The bushes were so thick that I couldn't get out."

"Well, how did you finally get out?"

"O," she replied, with a toss of her curly head, "I had a little hatchet and I hatched myself out."—*Chicago Tribune.*

This is the Worst.

Blifkin's boy, who was engaged in rubbing Dalmatian insect powder on his dog, got off this dreadful one to his mother: "How does a campaign flag differ from this insect powder?" Of course she gave it up, and the boy answered and said: "Because one is flung to the breeze and the other is brung to the fleas." He had to go to bed without his supper.

The King of Denmark will celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of his reign on Nov. 15th next. Recently he learned that a subscription was being promoted among all classes of Danes to present him a magnificent jubilee gift in the shape of a country seat in Jutland. He has written a letter in which he states that when he looks upon the existing economical conditions of Denmark and sees the hard struggle for existence which his people are carrying on he feels obliged in conscience to refuse to accept any gift so costly.

Mr. T. Gallagher, Chatham township, while engaged fixing a rack-lifter the other day, slipped and fell a distance of 30 feet to the floor, escaping with a few bruises.