The Master and the Reapers.

The master called to his reapers:
"Make scythe and sickle keen,
And bring me the grain from the uplands,
And the grass from the meadows green;
And from off of the mist clad marshes,
Where the salt waves fret and foam,
Ye shall gather the rustling sedges
To furnish the harvest-home."

Then the laborers cried: "O master
We will bring thee the yellow grain
That waves on the windy hill-side,
And the tender grass from the plain;
But that which springs on the marshes
Is dry and harsh and thin,
Unlike the sweet field grasses,
So we will not gather it in."

But the master said: "O foolish!
For many a weary day,
Through storm and drought, ye have labored
For the grain and the fragrant hay.
The generous earth is fruitful,
And the breezes of summer blow
Where these, in the sun and the dews of heaven,
Have ripened soft and slow.

"But out on the wide, bleak marsh-land
Hath never a plow been set,
And with rapine and rage of hungry waves
The shivering soil is wet.
There flower the pale green sedges,
And the tides that ebb and flow,
And the biting breath of the sea-wind,
Are the only care they know.

"They have drunken of bitter waters,
There food hath been sharp sea-sand,
And yet they have yielded a harvest
Unto the master's hand.
So shall ye all, O reapers,
Honor them now the more,
And garner in gladness, with songs of praise,
The grass from the desolate shore."

SHIRLEY ROSS:

A Story of Woman's Faithfulness.

He had not seen Shirley for more than a year, and only once or twice during his long exile had a letter from her reached him—frank, and friendly letters, such as a sister might write to a brother who was absent from her. Guy had smiled a little sadly over the cordial words; they were the only letters he had received from her, save the few during the brief separation just subsequent to their engagement, and contrasting them with these, he saw how the eager young girl had grown into the grave saddened woman who had suffered and loved and borne a load of anguish rarely laid upon the shoulders of frail humanity. But all the letters breathed a spirit of tenderness and trust which touched Guy sensibly as he read them, and which made it easier to keep away from her until such time had passed after that peaceful death in Adinbrooke Castle as would admit of his claiming the precious charge Sir Hugh had left him.

He heard much of her from others, more especially from Lady Oliphant, who was a constant correspondent. She told him how useful and earnest and beautiful was the life which Shirley led in the pretty cottage-home he had chosen; for she had steadily refused any of Sir Hugh's wealth save the small annuity he had left her in the will he so regretted at the last. She told him what good she did, how much she was loved, and she cheered him with a few words of hope which brightened Guy's lonely life abroad with the thought that perhaps, after all, the visions poor Hugh Glynn had seen with his dying eyes might become blessed realities in the time to come.

But, when the roses were in bloom a second time, Guy received his summons home in a pretty affectionate note from Madge Oliphant, asking him to come back to be present at her marriage.

And, with his heart beating with a sense of joyous expectation and a passionately tender longing for the sight of Shirley's face once more, Guy turned his own toward home.

CHAPTER LIII.

It was on a lovely summer evening that Guy Stuart got out of the train at the little country station, and found Madge and her ponies waiting for him in the golden sunlight. She greeted him joyfully, and as he bent and kissed her cheek, it seemed to him that he had seen nothing so fair in all his wanderings as this "bonny English rose."

"It was very good of you to come to meet me yourself, Madgie," he said, as he accommodated his long limbs to the limits of Madge's fairy-like little vehicle.

"Did I not always come to meet you when you came to Erindale?" she asked, gayly.

"Yes; but you were only a lassie then; now you are a young lady about to be married, and a very important personage altogether. When is the great day, Madgie?"

"The great day is to-morrow," she replied, with a laugh and a blush. "You will soon see outward and visible signs of it."

"To-morrow! Then I am only just in time?"

"Yes. We expected you quite a week ago."

"You gave me no date, Madgie. I suppose you were in such a wild state of excitement that you forgot that I was not likely to know what day you had fixed."

"In a wild state of excitement!" she echoed, tossing her pretty head. "*A propos de quoi*, Guy?"

"*A propos* of a wedding! Young ladies are always wild about weddings, so what they must be about their own particular one passes the limits of my imagination completely!"

"Well, you see, I am the exception which proves the rule," Madge said, laughing. "I am much as usual, thank you."

"You are as saucy as usual, Madge. How are your father and mother?"

"Very well, indeed."

"And the Hall is turned upside down, I presume?"

"Nearly," Madge answered, gayly. "The dining-room is intact; so you will have your dinner in peace, which assurance will, I know, be a great comfort to you. You see, Guy," she added, more soberly, "I should have preferred a very quiet wedding, but mamma and papa did not like disappointing all the village people, who have been looking forward to all kinds of gayeties; so last night there was a ball for the tenants and household, and—"

"To-night?" said Guy, laughingly.

"There is a dance for ourselves. Mamma wanted it to-morrow night; but I said that I did not see why I should be out of it, so I begged to have it to-night."

"Quite right. And, if the bride-elect will honor an old fogy so far, I beg to put in a retainer for a dance or two."

"As many as Jack will let you have," she said, merrily. "Guy, how dare you call yourself an old fogy? You look ever so much younger than you did when—when I saw you last."

"Do I? I am glad of that. I am glad too, Madgie, that Jack has been able so to arrange matters that he will not be obliged to take our sunshine away from us."

"No; that has been settled very comfortably. Mr. Kearton takes the management of the house at Calcutta, and Jack stays in England."

"It would have gone hard with your people to spare you, Madgie."

"Yes, my heart was almost broken when I thought of it. It was so terrible to think that I must leave either papa and mamma or Jack. It was miserable, Guy."

"Poor little Madgie!"

"Sometimes I almost wished that I had never seen Jack," she said, half ruefully: "and the next moment I felt that not even mother wanted me as he did."

"Poor Jack! The past shadow will make the sunshine of the present all the brighter."

"That was just what—" Madge began, impulsively, but she stopped, coloring a little.

"Just what, Madgie?" Major Stuart asked, looking at her with a little smile; but Madge shook her head, smiling also, and did not finish her sentence.

Perhaps he guessed what the conclusion would have been, for he did not urge her; but a great longing came into his gray eyes.

They drove on in the golden sunlight, down the pretty leafy lanes which were so pleasant in Guy's eyes. When he had seen them last they were bare and leafless and glittering with hoar-frost, now the hawthorn, both pink and white, was blooming in the hedges, and the banks were ablaze with floral treasures.

Perhaps it was because the thoughts of both were so full of Shirley that neither of them spoke of her. Once or twice glancing at the grave face of the man by her side, Madge saw the yearning in his gray eyes, which she interpreted rightly; and she touched the pretty ponies lightly with her whip to increase their pace; for were they not bringing them home to Erindale Hall and to Shirley?

The golden sunlight was taking a shade of rose-color when they turned in at the park gates, passing the little ivy-grown lodge where Shirley and Madge had first met, and driving swiftly up the avenue, Sir Frederic and Jack were standing on the white stone steps, and the great hall door was crowned with an arch of flowers, one of the unmistakable signs of the morrow's proceedings; and, while Guy greeted the two gentlemen, Madge disappeared into the house.

"The child would not let any one meet you but herself," Sir Frederic remarked, smiling. "We are glad to see you again, Stuart, and I hope your wanderings are over."

"I hope so, too," Guy said, smiling, but with a great earnestness in his voice; and they all proceeded together under the flower-crowned doors into the great hall, which was likewise full of unmistakable signs of the coming event, where they stood talking, until Madge returned, slipped her hand through Guy's arm, and led him away, talking fast and merrily the while, to hide her great agitation.

At the door of a little room which Guy remembered well as her own favorite sanctum she stopped, opening it very softly, and motioning to Guy to enter. She did not follow, but closed the door after him, and then slipped away with an April face of smiles and tears as she thought who was waiting for him within.

For a moment after he had entered the room Guy thought that it was empty, but the next he became aware of a slender woman in white standing by the open window, with her face turned toward the setting sunlight and his heart gave a sudden great bound of joy and gladness as his eyes rested upon her.

How often during the long months of his exile and waiting he had yearned for the sight of her face, the sound of her voice, the touch of her hand! Even as a thirsty man in the desert craves for water he had thirsted for her, his darling, whom he had loved so faithfully, so unselfishly, so perfectly, all his life long.

She was so lost in some day-dream or musing that she did not hear him enter, nor the closing of the door, and he was able to watch her for some minutes unperceived. He saw that she was no less beautiful than she had been in the old days, and that her loveliness had increased rather than diminished; and, as she stood there in the sunlight, in her soft white dress, with one deeply tinted rose nestling in the lace at her throat, she was a sight "to make an old man young."

As she stood, she sighed softly—sighed although there was a little smile upon her lips; then she turned quickly, feeling suddenly, as people do, that some one was watching her; whereupon Guy immediately went forward; and all her heart went out in glad welcome to him, although for a second she could not move. Then she held out both hands to him, and the next instant—how it happened neither ever knew—she was in his arms, held there in a clasp which spoke more plainly than any words of Guy's longing and Guy's love, while her eyes—the lovely, lustrous hazel eyes, so passionate—looking up to his, told him, better than the sweetest words could all he wanted to know.

In that moment it seemed to Guy that all the past suffering was forgotten in the the great joy and blessedness of their reunion. For many minutes he could find no words to speak to her; she was so true, so beautiful, so loving, that he could not utter what he felt; his joy and love were alike dumb. But she needed no words. He held her in his arms, crushing her in a close, fond embrace, looking down at the sweet face as if he would never tire of the rapt fond gaze: and, as they stood thus, the golden sunshine streaming into the pretty room fell upon them both, a pressage of the happier days to come.

Shirley was the first to break the rapturous silence. Putting her hands upon his breast, she looked up into his face.

"You have come back to me, Guy?" she said softly.

"I have come back, my darling."

"You will not go again?"

The sweet voice was a little hurried and breathless now.

"Not if you tell me to stay, Shirley."

There was another silence as Guy watched the lovely pink flush mounting over the fair pale face up to the roots of the pretty hair. The sweet eyes were downcast now, the red lips quivering a little.

Guy stooped down and steadied them with his own and the flush faded.

"Shirley," he said very earnestly, very tenderly, very softly, "If, during all these years we have passed far from each other, you have learnt to love me less than you used to in the old days, and not only to love me less, but to love me differently—as a friend, as a brother—let me hear it from your lips now. But—"

"But what, Guy?" she said, lifting her eyes now to his, with a little smile in their lustrous depths.

"But if not, Shirley—if you care for me still—"

"If!" she repeated, with a tone of tenderest reproach in her sweet voice, and her arms crept up about his neck.

Closer in his arms now, nearer to his heart, clinging to him with a love which had never swerved not faltered, a love which had endured, and would endure, they were very happy.

* * * *

The tenants' ball given in honor of Madge's marriage had been a great success, and the ball given to Sir Frederic and Lady Oliphant's friends on the eve of their daughter's wedding-day was not less so. The entertainment gained considerably by the presence of the charming bride-elect, whose fair and radiant smiles were pleasant to see and to remember.

Out of consideration for the event next day, it was not to be a late party, but dancing was kept up with unabated vigor, and the bonny queen of the ball must have danced her tiny satin slippers into holes on the occasion.

Many of the guests were to remain at Erindale for the night, in order to be present at the wedding on the next day, and from garret to basement the grand old house was bright with light, while the gay strains of the dance-music rose and fell softly.

"Madgie," Jack whispered, when, having waltzed her cleverly out of the circle of the dancers, they found themselves for a few minutes alone in the solitude of the conservatory, where the light fell on the rich-hued flowers and on Madge Oliphant's golden hair and white dress, colorless and pure as the dress she would wear next day, "tell me, my dearest, are you quite happy?"

"Quite happy, Jack," she answered, leaning her bright head against him for a moment.

"You have no fears, no misgivings, Madge?"

"No fears—oh, no—and no misgivings, Jack—save one."

"And that, my own?"

"Is that I am not worthy of your love!"

He caught her in his arms and pressed his cheek to hers.

"And you never think—you never fear that Oh Madgie, even now, in my great happiness, I cannot help thinking of—"

"Jack"—she lifted her head and looked at him with deep earnestness—"this evening, when I went to Shirley, and she told me that what we had all so longed and wished for was to take place, she said that she had no regret now for the past, that all the sorrow had been blessed to her, that the present happiness was brighter for the past darkness, that there was no shadow—not one—upon her or Guy now. Jack"—the golden head was pressed closely against him now—"if you cannot forget, think of it as she does—with gratitude and love; and"—she looked up smiling—"out of that trouble has come something for which you at least ought to be thankful, you ungrateful boy, since without it you would never have known me!"

He drew her closer in his arms.

"And you are more than able to make me forget the past," he said tremulously: and the last shadow of the cloud fell away from them.

Other lovers beside Jack and Madge sought the solitude of the conservatory to talk to each other in uninterrupted felicity; but perhaps of all none were more peacefully happy than Guy Stuart and Shirley Glynn as they stood there toward the end of the ball, while Sir Frederic and Lady Oliphant were speeding the parting guests. Many an interested and admiring glance had followed Lady Glynn that night, for her story was well known, and it surrounded her with a halo of romance which her grace and beauty had increased: while to her, as well as to Guy, a ball-room was a sight unfamiliar enough to be interesting and pretty, and to have many a touch of pathos and sentiment.

"Shirley," Guy said softly, as he bent over, "when am I to take you home?"

"When you like, Guy," she answered, smiling.

"Thank you, my dearest," he said with a grave tenderness which pleased her; and there was a steadfast light in the deep gray eyes which boded well for the happiness of the future which rose before them with its rainbow of hope and joy. "Do you remember, Shirley," he added, "that once before I said that, looking into the future, I could see no shadow of parting with you?"

"I remember, dear Guy."

"But the shadow ought to have been there, dearest."

"I saw it, Guy," she said softly.

"I cannot see any shadow now, my darling. Can you, Shirley?"

"No—for there is none, Guy."

* * * *

Unmistakable signs of a wedding were plentiful the next morning; and the sun shone gayly on Madge Oliphant's wedding-day, streaming through the stained glass windows of the parish church on the assembled guests as they waited for the bridal-party.

The old church was crowded, the chancel alone being reserved for the guests; the rest of the building was thronged with the good people of Erindale, the women in their gala dress, the men with nosegays in their button-holes in honor of Miss Madge.

And in the carved pews of the chancel there were familiar faces—Sir Oswald and Lady Fairholme, the latter as bright and sweet and sparkling as ever, and Mr. and Mrs. Litton, who had been married a year or more, and were settled in London, where the young surgeon's skill and perseverance and genuine love of his profession were meeting with their reward. They had come down for the occasion, for Rosie Litton and Madge had been fast friends in their girlhood. There, too, was Shirley, grave and beautiful in her rich dress of shimmering silk and lace; and, as Mr. Litton's eyes rested upon her, he recalled the pale trembling woman who had come to him through the winter night, and their midnight walk through the snow. There also was Guy, so tall, erect, and stately, with a wonderful tenderness in his eyes as they dwelt upon Lady Glynn, his face that of one who has borne and endured, and conquered sorrow, and learned peace and faith through pain.

There was a low but irrepressible murmur as Madge and her dainty white-robed bride-maids came up the aisle and a gleam of passionate tenderness and joy flashed into the eyes of the handsome young bride-groom who stood waiting for her, and by whose side she knelt to make the vows which she purposed, with all the strength of her pure young heart, to keep.

It was a pretty sight and a touching one. Shirley's eyes watched them with a grave tenderness which had something a little wistful and sad in it. Perhaps she was thinking of her own wedding-day and its disastrous ending, and of the tears which had fallen upon the gleaming satin and lace of her wedding-dress. No such fate was in store for Madge, she thought thankfully; and, looking at Ruby, she met her earnest and sympathizing glance with a fond little pressure of the hand. The next moment they were both smiling at Bertie Fairholme, who, in a dainty court-suit of velvet and lace and silk stockings, brought up the rear of the bride-maids with little Amy Graham, and who had evidently given all his childish heart to his little golden-haired companion.

It was a pretty wedding, the guests said afterwards, the prettiest that some of them had ever seen. There was no lavish display of wealth, and the good wishes that followed the young bride were heartfelt and earnest. As she went down the path on her husband's arm the sunshine fell upon them both, as it fell upon their future lives.

Within a month from the day there was another wedding in the old church, a very quiet wedding, with no gay *cortege* of bride-maids and groomsmens, but which, notwithstanding, the village turned out to witness to a man, for there were a beautiful bride and a noble-looking bride-groom, and a few true and tried friends who had been with them in their sorrow and were with them to share their joy. Mr. Venn was assisted in his office by Mr. Grey, the Vicar of Easton, and his curate, his daughter Lucie's husband; and his wife and daughters were present. Jack and Madge were there also, having returned to England for the purpose, the former a proud and happy young husband, the latter the prettiest little matron imaginable.

As Guy and Shirley went down the aisle together, inseparable and blessed, those who loved them felt that their "feast of joy" was not the less glad because of their experience of misery. They had learned to suffer and to endure, and the suffering and endurance had enobled and strengthened them; and, as the sunshine fell upon them and the soft summer air floated by, it seemed as if some passing angel had touched them with his flying wings and blessed them with a heavenly blessing; and no sweeter words had ever fallen upon Shirley's ears than those two which Guy uttered when they were once more alone—"My wife."

"For them
Night has faded far away;
Their sun has risen and it is day;"

and from their present bliss they could look back thankfully and without pain on that long and desert land through which they had toiled with weary feet.

A plain white marble tablet in the church where they worship bears, without name or date, the short prayer—

"MISERERE, DOMINE!"

and, in the words of him in memory of whom it was placed there, the future lives of Guy Stuart and his wife may be summed up—

"I see a happy home brightened by mutual love and joy and peace, a home where I am not forgotten but remembered sometimes with compassion and pity. I see two persons perfectly happy in their mutual love and trust. I see the husband, strong, brave, true, loving and protecting, and striving by a tenderness which never fails to make his wife forget the misery she has suffered. I see the wife loving, honoring, trusting, and looking up to a man worthy of all her tenderness, and making the sunshine of his home and of his life. I see too in that happy home a pale young mother lying, smiling and serene, with a child in her arms. I see the stately old home bright with restless children, who scamper swiftly down the galleries, and whose sweet gay voices echo through the old rooms, filling them with mirth and laughter."

And what the dying eyes saw in vision has come to pass in reality; for it is even so.

THE END.

To Death in Her Bridal Robes.

A romantic case of attempted suicide is reported from Buda-Pest. As the morning express from Vienna was approaching the station at Palota a girl in a white bridal dress and a wreath of orange-blossoms on her head rushed out from a copse, and threw herself in front of the engine. Before the train could be stopped the locomotive had passed over her body. The unfortunate creature, fearfully mutilated, was conveyed to Buda-Pest, where on reaching the railway station her legs had to be amputated. Although her case is critical, hope is entertained of saving her life. It appears that the girl, who is only 18, was a governess residing close to the spot where the attempted suicide occurred. The faithlessness of the man to whom she was engaged to be married is said to have driven her to her desperate resolve.

A Mad Bull in a Theatre.

Much excitement was occasioned at Nottingham, England, the other day, by an infuriated bull. The animal knocked down and injured several persons in the market-place, and afterward rushed into the Theatre Royal, entering by the stage door. It did considerable damage among the scenery. A number of property deer used in forest scenery were conspicuously exposed, and these the bull savagely attacked and destroyed. Eventually the animal was driven into a blind alley, and despatched by a bullet.

Fun After Dinner.

Helen—Oh, Ethel! there's a man-of-war coming directly toward us.

Ethel—Do let me take the glass! I have been here six weeks, and it is the first man of any kind I have seen.—*Life.*

BATS CAPTURE A HOUSE.

They Drive the Inmates Out by Fear of Ghosts.

There is a dwelling on West Fayette street, near Fulton avenue, that for the past twelve months has been the cause of much fear to superstitious neighbors, particularly to the colored colony in Bruce street. In the last year the house has had three tenants. The first family lived there two months, the second about a month, and the house then remained idle for a little time. The neighbors would see the new tenants get their furniture and coal in and then make preparations to vacate. Servant girls whispered the stories of the strange house to one another, and many were the conjectures of the cause of the queer doings. Shortly after the first family moved in the children would wake up and scream for protection, declaring that some one was in the room, and had pulled the bed clothes off them. The gas would suddenly flare up after burning steadily for some time, and go out, leaving the occupants of the house in utter darkness. This sort of thing continued until the folks moved into more desirable quarters. Loud and unaccountable noises were heard in the house nights. Except that one of the back third story windows was open there was no entrance except by unlocking either the front or the back door. The young folks in the neighborhood would give the house a wide berth and scurry along past it as quickly as possible. The windows would rattle and the doors bang without any apparent cause, and finally the thing got to be intolerable and the second tenant moved. The next family that moved in were entirely ignorant of the reports that had been circulated about the house, and they settled themselves in the firm belief that they had secured a good dwelling at an extremely low figure. In a little while they, too, began to be disturbed, and would vainly light the gas after it was repeatedly put out. One night recently it was determined to ascertain, if possible, what caused the strange doings, and watch was set. The lights were dimmed and all but two of the family retired. After getting nearly asleep the watchers were rudely awakened by the sound as of the flapping of wings and a peculiar chittering noise. The gas, which had been dimmed, had gone out, and refused positively to be lighted again. The watchers were in a dilemma. Matches were at a premium, and in the dark none could be found. The flapping of wings kept on, and the alarm was increased visibly by the smothered cries and the uneasiness of the ghost catchers. After a long search a match was discovered, and the fears of the scared people were considerably lessened by a ray of light from a gas jet. The cause of all the excitement was two large bats. They continued to flutter until one had been killed and the other escaped by the open window. The next day an examination of the gas pipes was made, and they were found to be clogged up in such a manner that when an extra force of gas was put on the whole house was cut off. The mystery of the noise in the house was cleared up. It is supposed that the bats had free access to the house at all times, and their flapping around the rooms, particularly when the house was vacant, made the racket. The question of the bedclothes being pulled off the children is only accounted for in the belief that they went to bed after partaking of too much supper, and were restless and kicked off the clothes.—*Baltimore American.*

Queer in the Extreme.

An artesian well sunk under the salt waters of New York Bay, on the Jersey side, produces pure fresh water in abundance.

The English put-a-nickel-in-the-slot machines have got so far along that they now give a chew of tobacco to any one who drops in a penny.

Mr. Sinn, of Royston, Ga., dreamed the other night that he had shot a burglar, and awoke to find that he had shot himself and was minus a finger by the operation.

There are two sunflower stalks of natural growth at Rochelle, Fla., one of them has 1,000 and the other 1,136 blooms and buds. The stalks are about ten feet high, with branches reaching out about six feet.

One Huolarinen, of Helsingfors, Finland, was during his life believed to be on a friendly footing with the devil. His will leaves all his land and property to that individual and the authorities of Finland are much troubled about what to do.

In Paris a man makes a living by going about the streets playing on a clarionet through a canula placed in a hole in his throat after the operation of tracheotomy. When he has finished a little tune he takes the canula out and exhibits it to the audience to show that there is no deception.

Mainly About Women.

Boucicault and his daughter Nina do not speak.

Tableaux at summer resorts are giving entertainment at much expense of time and labor, and the "May Queen," the "Gypsy Camp," "Jacob's Dream" and others are making their annual appearance.

Ella Wheeler Cox seems to have become a convert to the mind cure. In a recent poem she says:

Think health, and health will find you
As certain as the day,
And pain will lag behind you
And lose you on the way.

A distinguished physician, who recently retired from practice, has built himself a fine house in the suburbs of Paris. Over the portice he placed the following simple but significant inscription:

Who would have thought it,
Melons and cucumbers bought it!

Sarah Bernhardt has gained a good deal of flesh of late. But she is far from requiring a Banting process.

Where the Quail Belongs.

An Austin teacher was instructing his class in natural history.

"To what class of birds does the hawk belong?" he asked.

"To birds of prey," was the reply.

"And to what class do quail belong?"

There was a pause. The teacher repeated the question:

"Where does the quail belong?"

"On toast!" yelled out the hungry boy at the foot of the class.

Mr. Crowley, the Liberian chimpanzee who has attracted so much attention at Central park, New York, died yesterday morning of malaria.