Waiting.

I have set my house n order
For a stately step to grace;
I have bidden the mirrors keep record
Of a never forgotten face;
I have brightened with thrifty cunning
The walls of my sylvan home;
They are beautiful in the shadow
Of him who vouchsafes to come.

I have swept the leaves from the greensward,
And the gray stones t nkle and shine;
I have loosened each fretful tangle
Of the twisted cedar and vine;
I have ordered the waters waste not
Their splendors upon my eye,
But to wait, like my heart, for thy footsteps,
And a gush when thou drawest nigh.

Myself I would dress for thy presence;
But there I must stand and weep,
Since the years that teach Love's value
His vani-hing treasures sweep.
But words that are spells or magic,
And merciful looks and ways,
Shall brighten the wasted features
That faded when none did praise.

Thou gracious and lordly creature,
Do the trees, when thou passest by,
Let down their fair arms to embrace thee,
And the flowers reach up to thine eye?
Do they wait, all athrill, when thou passest,
For a touch of thy life divine;
Do they fold their meek hands when thou fleetest,
And die for a breath of thine?

My heart has leapt forth to embrace thee;
It clings, like a babe, to thy breast;
And my blood is a storm-stirred ocean
That waits for the world of rest.
Time loses his paltry measure
Now that Love's eterne draws near,
And the lingering moments that part us
Are endless in hope and fear.

Oh! what if, beyond thy sunshine,
Some gathering storm should brood?
Thy rapture, forsaking, shall leave me
Alone with God's orphanhood.
The heart thou hast blest so inly
Shall wait no inglorious breath;
Come hither, then, ye who walk twinly;
So enter here, Love and Death!

—*Julia Ward Howe.*

ESTELLE'S INFATUATION:

A NOVEL.

Tears came into Caleb's eyes, but he did not speak. His heart in its own selfishness understood this waywardness, this ingratitude of the sick brain and sore soul. Still, it just for the moment stung him to hear this woman, for whom he would have died as patiently as he now served her, long for the advent of another friend who, she said, would be the Paraclete, the Comforter, he had tried to be and was not.

Estelle did not see his face. If she had, perhaps she would not have read it aright.

"But she isn't herself. My queenly lass, she isn't herself," said Caleb, in a low whisper, as he shambled to the gate of the cemetery for the carriage left standing there. "And I should be wrong to take notice of a chance word like this, which means naught but itself. And it's but natural, after all, that she wants one of her own sex and kind. For what am I but a hodmadod, good only to fetch and carry!"

And with his round red eyes still full of tears, he motioned the *cocher* to drive up to the gate, and then went back for Estelle.

"Tell her to come—to come at once," said Estelle.

It was the burden of her speech all the way home.

"I shall be so glad to see her! She will manage it for me. She would have made him a far better wife than I did. Perhaps she will marry him when he has made himself free as well as me. Only let her come! Oh, I wish she was here now!"

"A little patince, a few nights' sleep, Mrs Charles, and she'll be over the doorstep," said Caleb, encouragingly. "Don't put yourself about. She'll come by the first train she can get."

"And Charlie will be glad," said Estelle.

As she said this she shivered and put her hands before her eyes. The little child she had left to its fate and had almost forgotten suddenly seemed to rise in the air before her, as it had risen more than once before. "But *she* will take it," she said to herself; "and it never knew me, and never will regret me." Then, with a cry that was like something struck and wounded, she flung up her arms, and said: "All! All! I have lost all! Home, name, my child and my beloved, and the world says my virtue. But I had him, and he loved me. What do I care for the rest—even for the child—in comparison to him!"

But she broke into tears, and sobbed with a passion Caleb had never seen before.

With an impulse he did not care to command, he leant forward and took her hands.

"Mrs. Charles, I cannot have this," he said, a little more firmly than he was wont to speak to her, but with infinite tenderness and respect too. "It's just foolishness, this looking back. You'll do yourself a mischief by carrying on like this. What's done is done, and there is no good in grieving over spilt milk. Your true friends stick by you, whatever the world says; and you have never yet been slighted by them as knew. Let the rest pass. What are they to you?"

"How good you are!" said Estelle, after a pause. "What should I do without you, Mr. Stagg?"

"But poorly, I doubt," said Caleb, simply, feeling amply rewarded for all his heart-breaks, all his sacrifices and outlay, by this one brief acknowledgment of his services.

By that evening's post the letter to Lady Elizabeth was written, and Caleb took it to the office himself to make sure of its safety.

Truly was Estelle a fated woman—fated to work evil to men by her love and theirs—as Helen of Troy, or that Serpent of old Nile whose kisses lighted flame and fire, and slew like sharp-edged swords—fated to work evil to herself, and to build her own funeral pyre out of the hearts she had broken.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BLOWING UP OF THE STORM.

A luncheon party was on hand at Thrift. Really made up in Lady Elizabeth's honor, though apparently for the Smythe Smiths, it was one of the few entertainments which Anthony Harford had given since Estelle had ceased to exist for him—how many months ago now!—months that had lengthened into years, if sensation may be the measure of time.

Those of the neighborhood who were invited were glad of this break in the monotony of their country life, and especially glad to go to Anthony Harford's. And more than one mother with a bevy of nice good girls still tacked to her maternal skirts sighed with profound pity as she spoke of poor dear Mr Harford's desolate, and worse than desolate, state. If he did but know the truth, it would be so much better for him! If Mrs. Harford had been killed, or had committed suicide in a fit of mania—she was always a little odd and abstracted, was she not?—why then, you see, he would be free to marry again. And really that poor little boy of his would be so much better off with a lady for his step-mother instead of a mere uneducated hireling as a nurse. And if she had gone off with any one else—but who could it be? No one here, for certain; perhaps some one she had met abroad—then he could get a divorce, and thus also he would be free. In any case it would be so much better if he knew; and he was greatly to be pitied for his miserable state of uncertainty—neither married nor single—not free, yet not bound.

As letters are always like the unknown treasures of Pandora's box in the country, the Smythe Smiths stopped their carriage and took their bag from the postman, Mr. Smythe Smith distributing the contents. To his wife were many of the most profound unimportance, though among them was one which interested her greatly—one from her son, announcing his engagement with Lady Venetia Lackland. To Lady Elizabeth came two only—one from her mother, the other, in an unknown hand, redirected from abroad. Love conquering curiosity, she opened her mother's first, and read there the further news of Estelle's sad life, the death of Charlie, and Caleb Stagg's departure. The other was from Caleb himself, telling her of Estelle's perilous condition, and asking her to come out to the Riviera at once. Here, then, was a fresh turn of the rope, and a new coil for all concerned. It was well for Lady Elizabeth that the Smythe Smiths were so much preoccupied with their own affairs they had no time to study her face. It would have betrayed too much if they had. Not that she had any longer the perplexity of choice which had disturbed her conscience in the first instance. Now that Charlie was dead, and Estelle in need and sorrow, Anthony must know the truth. He could not kill the one, as he would have done had he come up with him; surely he would not harm a hair of the head of the other. In any case, he must be told, and she, Lady Elizabeth, his friend throughout, must tell him. It was one of the most painful moments of her life, but it had to be gone through.

As it chanced, the Upperfold party were the first to arrive at Thrift.

They were sitting about the room—Mr. and Mrs. Smythe Smith full of happy babble undertoned, Lady Elizabeth silent but speculating on what Estelle had cared for most in this stiff and desolate-looking chamber—when Anthony came in. Even more visibly than with Lady Elizabeth he bore the impress of something amiss on his face. His dark eyes were aflame with that fierce yet sombre light of a man's concealed passion. He looked at Lady Elizabeth with a wistfulness as if he wished to speak to her, and found in her face consolation—of a kind.

No private talk was, however, possible to people who knew their proper bearings, and the two whose souls were so heavily laden had to bear their respective fardels for the present unshared.

After the luncheon was over and the guests had risen, a number of them spread themselves over the garden and in among the houses. Anthony and Lady Elizabeth were left together. He had said to her in a low voice, "I want to speak to you," as she passed him at the table, and she had therefore held herself apart. For she, too, wanted to speak to him—to tell him what she knew. Thus the thing was soon arranged, and what people might choose to say of this private meeting did disturb neither of them. He laid his broad hand on her arm and said, for any one to hear who could or cared: "Come with me into my study, Lady Elizabeth. I have something to show you and say to you."

"Yes," she answered. "So have I something to say and show you."

"About the same thing?" he asked.

"I imagine so," she answered.

Strong, athletic, brave as he was, Anthony quivered like a hysterical woman. His forehead and upper lip were wet with those drops which bespeak a man's agony.

"My God! if you did but know what I have heard!" he said, fiercely.

"What ever it is, you will bear it with patience and nobleness," returned Lady Elizabeth, in her soft steadfast way, claiming magnanimity because believing in it.

He grasped her arm as if his fingers had been a vise, and, with the action of a jailer, opened the study door, and, as it were, thrust her in.

"If this is true, I have but one course before me," he said, as he shut the door with a clang, and touched the revolver in his pocket.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE STRUGGLE.

"Read this," said Anthony, thrusting a letter into Lady Elizabeth's hand. "Can it be true? My God! it seems impossible of *her*—that woman of all! So pure and sweet as she was!"

He turned away to the window. The passion of wrath and grief that held him was almost more than he could bear. He felt as if he must die under it; and he did not wish Lady Elizabeth to see his agony.

The letter, which bore the Kingshouse postmark, was anonymous and written in a feigned hand, though Lady Elizabeth fancied she could detect certain well-known scratchy characters through the disguise. Whoever wrote it was thoroughly up in the later history of the unfortunate fugitives, for the letter gave the whole story clearly and succinctly "up to date," as people say, without a mistake anywhere, save in color. It told of the discovery by Mrs. Medlicott of Estelle and Charlie Osborne on the Riviera; of their passing as man and wife under the name of Mr. and Mrs. Charles; of the young bride's virtuous indignation at the cheat which somehow seemed to lessen the legal sanction of her own estate, and the brave way in which she stripped this false mask from those shameless faces; of the man's death; of Caleb Stagg's subsequent protection of the abandoned female left to poverty and shame. This last scene in the sad drama was laid out on the same lines as the first; and the faithful omadhaun's unselfish care, with Estelle's half-unconscious acceptance, was treated as an act of cynical profligacy on his part and of nameless infamy on hers. This was the false note which gave its worst aspect to the whole affair, and made the first crooked step so unpardonable. One lover was unspeakable abomination for a married woman; but immediately after the death of that one, to pass into the hands of another, to be cared for, supported, "protected" by him—what shame of strange disgrace ever equalled this? And this was the life and deed of Estelle, she, as Anthony had said, of all women the most sweet and pure!

"Can it be true?" asked Anthony, coming back to the table by which Lady Elizabeth was standing, still holding the letter in her hand.

"It is true, and false," she said, in a low voice, but quite distinctly.

"Yes?" said Anthony, as a spur, when she paused.

"Estelle did live with Mr. Osborne, as the letter says," she continued; "but Caleb Stagg is simply her friend—the stop-gap between her and starvation. He is not her lover."

"Not her lover?—only a platonic friend, full of zealous philanthropy and Christian charity?" sneered Anthony.

"Yes," said Lady Elizabeth.

"You speak confidently, my dear lady," he returned, with a bitter laugh; "more confidently than I should dare to do. You are a bold moralist to set the limits of a woman's degradation when she has once begun. I never found those limits yet, and I have seen something of life."

"I know Estelle, and I love her," she said, as gently and as firmly as she had spoken before.

"And I neither know nor love her?" he replied, with the same sneer.

"If you believe her capable of this infamy, neither," she said in answer.

"Then you think a man's love is measured by his *lachete?*" he said, fiercely, after a pause, coming back to the table and confronting her, much as if she had been the cause and origin of all.

"No, indeed not! indeed not!" she answered; "but by his magnanimity—his ability to understand all the circumstances, and to forgive those which offend himself—yes; that I do think is the measure of a noble man's true love."

"Desertion of husband, home and child—silence for months, leaving the deserted to all the agonies of suspense and ignorance—selfishness added to profligacy—and now the second fatal plunge into a still lower depth of dishonor—all this to be accepted by a husband as a venial offence—a slight departure from the strict lines of duty—to be condoned and forgiven without much difficulty? And then Lady Elizabeth Inchbold would say a man had loved his wife as he should; and that self-respect in repudiation would have been harsh and brutal!"

"I do not say this, Mr. Harford. You are scarcely just to me," she answered.

"Not just to allow that you make guilt int resting, if less than admirable? Do you want me to confess that it is also admirable, and that our prosaic old notions about fidelity and honor and all the rest of it are mere lumber?" said Anthony. "I must be under your tutelage some time longer, Lady Elizabeth, before I can pass in your school."

"If you will discuss this matter with me without anger against me—or her—we may come to a better understanding," answered Lady Elizabeth, with her well-known patience and self-suppression. "If you will not—or cannot—there is no use of my staying here."

"Kleine Sorgen machen zartlich, grosse machen hart und wild," say the Germans. And the saying was true now with Anthony. His whole nature seemed to have become both soured and warped, and for the moment no good impulse was possible—no good influence could touch him. Had an angel from heaven been standing there in Lady Elizabeth's place, he would have been no more soothed, no more amenable to reason, than now. Doubtless it was an unrighteous impulse, but it was sadly human.

"I am quite calm and willing to discuss any subject on any basis you may desire," said Anthony, by way of reply. His calmness, by-the-way, was shown in his fiery eyes and the sneer on his uplifted lip. "What anger can I have against you? If your ideas of a man's honor differ from mine, that is my misfortune. I object to my wife's passing from me to another man, and from that man to yet another. It does not seem to me quite the right thing for a woman to do. You uphold it in your friend, and blame me that I resent it. We are not agreed, that is all. But why anger?"

For a moment Lady Elizabeth flushed and quivered with pride as much as indignation. To the humblest-minded, the most democratic lady, come these moments of pride when a man's touch is rough and a man's word is rude. Then she remembers the inheritance of her birth, and stands on her superiority. This indignation of pride, however, lasted only a short time with Lady Elizabeth. With an effort she controlled herself, and again thought only of the work in hand.

"You do not put it any the more fairly, Mr. Harford," she said, more coldly than she had spoken before; "for, in the first place, she has not passed into other hands. I tell you again that Mr. Stagg is no more to her than her servant. He is, indeed, to all intents and purposes as much to her as her servant!"

"Who will have to settle accounts with me," said Anthony.

"If in any other way than by your rendering him respect and gratitude, your accounts will go wrong," said Lady Elizabeth.

"And here again we differ," said Anthony, in the same manner as before. "According to your code I have not only to forgive the first lover, but to be grateful to the second. Your sliding scale is peculiar, Lady Elizabeth. It scarcely suits a man who has learned the rougher side of life in such a school as mine has been. We are not taught these subtleties."

"Yes, you have to forgive the dead and be grateful to the living," repeated Lady Elizabeth, ignoring the latter half of his speech. "And you have to be merciful to the dying," she added, tears coming into her eyes.

"When she is dead I will forgive her," said Anthony.

"She may be dead now," said Lady Elizabeth. He turned on her fiercely.

"What do you know about her?" he asked.

"Everything," she answered.

She had Caleb's letter in her hand, that awkward, stiffly worded letter, with the pure soul shining through like the moon through fog and vapor.

"And for how long, pray, have you been the confidante of my runaway wife?" he asked, with dangerous quietness.

"She has not confided in me at all, but I have known for some days now that she was alive; that he was dead, and she perhaps dying only to-day."

Anthony strode across the space which had been between, and took her by the arm, harshly rather than rudely.

"You are my friend?" he said, in a hoarse voice.

"Yes," she answered, "I am."

"And you have known for some days that she was alive—you knowing what a hell my life has been to me since she left me—how I would have kissed the hands and feet of my worst enemy who had told me she was alive—and you kept it from me—you, Lady Elizabeth Inchbold?"

"Yes, I did," she answered.

Her perfect calmness and the steady look in her soft eyes seemed almost to paralyze Anthony. He unclosed his hand from her bruised arm.

"My God! you women are fiends sent to torture us!" he said, wildly. "All alike! The best and the worst faithless and untrustworthy alike!"

"Is it faithless and untrustworthy to keep back a thing like this when the one to whom it would else have been told is as wild and unreasonable as you?" she asked. "With that revolver in your pocket, and all your hot anger; with Mr. Osborne dying, and she, poor girl, in her agony; could I tell you, to add to her misery the greatest pain of all—your sudden appearance, your violence, and who knows what else! Ask yourself, how could I? I am her friend as well as yours, and I would not have her hurt by any deed of mine!"

"How do you know I would have hurt her?" he asked, fiercely. "Am I a brute or a man? Why should I not have been gentle with her?"

"Because you are not always reasonable," she answered. "If I could have trusted you I would have told you. As things were, I dared not."

"A wild beast!" he said, savagely.

"Too much like one at times," she returned, her voice and eyes more gentle than her words.

For the first time during this painful interview the expression on Anthony's passionate face changed. Some of the fierceness died out of it to make way for a human look of blank amazement. It was so strange to him to have this soft and sympathetic woman stand there as his assessor. He had been so used to her sweetness, to the consciousness of her affection and her sympathy, which was like a satin cloak in which he wrapped himself luxuriously, that this sudden change to unwavering condemnation struck him as something strange and unnatural in her rather than as injurious to him. Anyway, it gave a new turn to his thoughts, and swept back some of that rolling flood of anger against others.

"You are not the Lady Elizabeth I knew at Kingshouse," he said.

"Nor are you the Mr. Harford I thought I knew," she retorted.

"No! This is really interesting," he sneered. "Where is the change? In what am I different?"

"In nobility of nature," she answered. "The man I thought I knew three or four years ago at Kingshouse was brave and unselfish, magnanimous, gentle to weakness, courteous to women, reasonable, high-minded. The Mr. Harford I find here at Thrift is unreasonable, unforgiving, able to see a thing from his own point of view only, unable to judge beyond the mere fact, revengeful and cruel. I am right to say that he has changed—at least from my ideal."

"Oh, I never posed for an ideal," said Anthony, contemptuously.

"Perhaps not; but this does not say that you were not a better man than you are now. You have been tried since then, and you have not stood the test."

"Which brings us round to our starting-point," he said. "You advocate the baseness of condonation, I the self-respect of a man of honor who refuses to shake hands with sin, or to lower himself by sympathy to such a depth of degradation as that to which your friends have sunk themselves."

"No; you mean you refuse to forgive a woman who has sinned much, and suffered as much as she has sinned, and who has paid the full penalty of her fault—the woman you say you love. Greater men than you, Mr. Harford, have forgiven even worse offences, and the Master forgave more than all. It is neither brave nor strong to stand out as you are doing for the sake of yourself against her—your honor, as you call it, against her suffering. I will not call it good, for I do not think it is."

"I am sorry I cannot please Lady Elizabeth," said Anthony, still contemptuously, but with less intensity of insolence and wrath.

"It is not whether you please me or not; it is whether you do right or wrong," she answered, very gently.

"Frankly what would you have me do?" He spoke with the air of a man lowering his sword, but still on guard.

"Forgive her," she answered—"forgive her frankly, fully, heartily. Remember that she loved Charlie Osborne long before she knew you. Remember, too, that false announcement of his death, which you knew on your wedding day to be false. If she has left you, think how you and her mother deceived her. Cannot you bring all this to bear for her pardon? Divorce her if you will; but why? She is not herself; her mind is evidently unhinged." Here her soft voice broke, and her eyes uprilled with tears. "Let her be in peace, Mr. Harford. Fate has already avenged you."

"And you knew she did not love me? And you did not tell me this either? Oh, false, false, like all the rest!" he said bitterly, passionately.

"How could I?" she answered. "You knew it in your heart yourself, but you would not acknowledge it. If all the world had told you, you would have married her just the same."

"God help me! I would, for I loved her," he said, covering his face in his hands.

"And because you loved her, forgive her," she pleaded. "Think of her sufferings rather than her sin. By all that you have felt, feel for her. Tell me that you will forgive her."

Anthony did not speak. His whole strong frame was quivering, and one heavy tear broke through the interlacing of his fingers.

Weeping with less restraint, and all her tears in her voice, Lady Elizabeth went up to him, and with a woman's true instinct, laid her hands on his shoulders.

"I am going to her to-morrow," she said, her broken voice having in it the accent of a caress, like a pearl on a quivering golden string. "Let me carry her your forgiveness; let me tell her that you pardon and pity her! Tell me that you do, Mr. Harford—Anthony—the man I once thought so noble, and who was so noble!"

For a moment there was no reply. The silence in the room was broken only by a few half-strangled sobs—groans rather than sobs—while Lady Elizabeth's slender hands rested on those massive heaving shoulders with a touch as tender as an angel's. She looked like the typical angel as she stood there, her fair face pale with emotion, her eyes full of pleading love and pity, her body slightly thrown forward, her whole attitude and bearing as instinct with dignity as with pathos, as pure as it was tender—she, the friend, pleading for pardon of the wife with the man she herself loved. A strange revulsion of feeling took possession of Anthony. He suddenly forgot himself, and his thoughts went only to Estelle's sufferings. He pictured her ill, in want, dying—that woman he had loved so madly needing help, and he not there to give what he was so grandly able to give! Perhaps the gentle touch of those white hands on his shoulders, the soft breath that just swept over his hair as if from a feather fan, a subtle perception, not so strong as a thought, that the world held another woman beside Estelle—perhaps all this helped to soften him and to quench the fires of his wrath. Whatever it was, he was overcome, and his mood changed suddenly. He uncovered his disordered face, thrust his right hand into his pocket, took out the revolver, and laid it on the table.

"You have conquered," he said. "I forgive her. Shall I give this to you?"—again taking up the revolver—"or can you trust me?"

"I will trust you," she answered, scarce able to speak. "You will not break your word."

He took her hands from his shoulders and held them in one of his; the other he put round her waist and pressed her to him How long it was since he had held a woman in his arms! How the touch of that supple, slender form seemed to give him new life, to subdue him to the strong man's tenderness, conquered in his strength and brought back to his better self! At the first he did not speak, nor did she try to free herself. Both were too moved to remember what significance that embrace might have—he with her hands held up to his breast, his arm round her waist, and she with her face turned away and her eyes fixed on the sky seen through the window. At last Anthony spoke.

(To be Continued).

Definitions.

Time—The servant of eternity.

The future—An eternity of to-morrows.

Now—The crown jewel in the coronet of endeavor.

The past—The mighty urn of countless to-morrows.

To-day—A draft on the bank of Time that is always cashed on sight.

Yesterday—Our demon or our good angel, as we neglected or improved it.

Moments—The playthings of forever, broken and cast aside as soon as tried.

Different Views.

Jones—So you are from Salt Lake City, Mr. Brigham? Could you tell me what became of young Jags that moved out there awhile ago?

Mr. B.—Why, that young feller was lynched only just afore I left for bigamy.

"Bigamy! I don't understand. I thought"—

"Waa', ye see, he wudn't take mor'n two wives, so the avengin' angels nabbed 'im; Nice young chap, too!"

Well Represented.

Young Man (applying for situation)—I have had considerable experience as a commercial traveller, sir. Would you like to engage me to push your products?

Manufacturer—Your services will hardly be required. There are already about seven million men engaged in pushing our products in this country. We manufacture baby carriages.—*Burlington Free Press.*

Extreme wakefulness, distressing nervousness, chronic rheumatic pains, sciatica neuralgia; any of the above disorders are symptoms of advanced kidney or Bright's disease. Prof. Wm. H. Thompson, of the University of the city of New York, says: "More adults are carried off in this country by chronic kidney disease than by any other one malady except consumption." The late Dr. Dio Lewis, in speaking of Warner's Safe Cure, said over his own signature, "If I found myself the victim of a serious kidney trouble I would use your preparation."

An esteemed contemporary prints the following advertisement, apropos of the sale of the old Poe house: "Wanted, by an author about to become famous, a small house, rent free for life, in consideration of the large price which may afterward be obtained for said house from some admirer of the author."

The Chicago capitalists interested in the removal of the famous Libby Prison from Richmond to Chicago have begun the tearing down of the building, and its transportation to Chicago. One hundred and thirty cars will be employed in making the transfer at a cost of nearly $10,000. The purchase price of the old prison, the labor necessary to preserve the identity of each particular brick and the transportation and re-erection will cost the projectors fully $75,000.

While the west-bound Grand Trunk freight train was taking on additional cars at Dorval station yesterday it was run into by an east-bound freight, but as the moving train was going slowly the damage to rolling stock will not exceed $6,000.

Willie Uglow, a boy of 7, son of Mr. J. Uglow, of Newcastle, N.B., was drowned by falling from a bridge into a pond while fishing yesterday afternoon, shortly after school.

Christian Scientist—Do you believe in spirits? Kentuckian—Thanks; don't keer if I do.—*Epoch.*