Bernardina's Lover.

BY LOUISE ALEXANDER.

"Well, what do you make of it?" asked Mr. Jack Maunder, as he laid down his brush and palette and folded his arms, as though to brace himself for the reply.

"Not much," said a very pretty young lady, as she closed her book with a delightful little yawn, and with both ruthless hands rumpled her blonde bangs out of all their smooth symmetry. "With the thermometer at ninety," she murmured, "the gifted heroine was a trifle fatiguing; we are informed she is epigrammatic without hearing any of her smart speeches; then the hero—evidently he is the long-haired poet of the future—but with none of his poetry on exhibition. By the way, Jack," suddenly turning upon him eyes that were like blue flowers, "what interest had you in the book?"

"None in the world," said Mr. Maunder, morosely, "except that I wrote it."

"Why, you clever old boy," exclaimed the young lady, rousing into animation at this announcement. "Then there must be something in it," she said, cheeringly, "else they would not have published it, would they? You didn't have to pay them to print it, did you Jack?"

But Mr. Maunder, under this soothing criticism, was rapidly packing up his artist's paraphernalia, with an accession of gloom, patent to Bernardina's blue eyes—"clear windows where observation sat laughingly."

"I think you are not very polite, Mr. Maunder," she said, with pointed formality, "to leave my questions unanswered, when I have made myself quite stiff, posing for "Titania" all the morning."

"You are always laughing at me, Dina," remonstrated the young fellow, in a tone of sulky complaint, which produced an exaggerated appearance of penitence in the incorrigible Miss Ray.

"On the contrary," she said, with a wicked little gleam of the blue eyes, "I feel a sort of reflected glory in having the honor of your acquaintance, you delightful dilettante young man."

So Mr. Maunder pulled at his moustache in a wrathful state of indecision, and swallowed his resentment as best he might. He was a tall, slender young gentleman, with a sufficient share of masculine good looks to subjugate the average feminine fancy—a course of conquest he had been wont to pursue, until Bernardina Ray had revolutionized all his past experience. She was so entirely unlike every other day lady he had hitherto encountered, with her delicious, tormenting frankness, and gay spirit of mischief. That she lived in a different world from his own, was only an added allurement to the already infatuated Mr. Maunder.

What moments of intoxicating bliss he had spent within that little vine-covered cottage, where dwelt Bernardina and her widowed mother; or better still, the hours passed upon the grassy slopes out side, while he painted Bernardina as Titania among the fairies, but in reality she resembled more a Dresden shepherdess in *bisque*, with her intense blue eyes and finely-grained complexion.

Already Mrs. Maunder, whirling away the summer days at Newport, had received faint intimations of her son's latest infatuation, and apprehension became confirmation strong as proofs of Holy Writ, when Jack boldly expressed his request that Miss Ray should receive an invitation to his mother's garden *fete*.

On the whole, Mrs. Maunder, with all her exclusive patrician pride, concluded to concede this card to Miss Ray, if only as an expedient by which she might be enabled to criticise this rustic beauty.

Her son was undoubtedly an emotional young man with an artistic tendency, and a susceptibility to the charms of young maidenhood, particularly alarming to the mother who adored him.

And if her maternal solicitude was of a somewhat worldly character, she had proved her confidence in her only son by an allowance so liberal, that obviously nothing more practical could have been expected of him in the way of achievement, that a few paintings of dubious commercial value, or a trifling little rhyme now and again for one of the magazines.

Mr. Maunder had displayed much diplomacy about obtaining the invitation to the garden party; but his sense of complacent satisfaction was changed to something very like dismay, when, he discovered there were futher obstacles ahead.

"I suppose a faded blue organdy, or a white one of remote antiquity, would not be exactly appropriate for your mother's lawn?" said Bernardina, with less than usual of her gay good humor. Somehow that bit of pasteboard had opened vistas of exhilarating possiblilities to Bernardina, shut up in her world of books and maiden dreams as she had been, until the chance advent of this deferential young prince of the gay outer world.

He had won over the quiet mother, by the charm of his frank youthfulness and courteous bearing, and to Bernardina he had come as a revelation of youth and congenial comradeship.

The summer days had drifted on with ever-increasing confidences between these two, and that perfect absence of constraint which a more conventional acquaintance might have engendered. Scarcely a day passed without their meeting, and to-day Mr. Maunder was intent upon gaining his point. Bernardina should go to the *fete*.

"Beauty is like a rich stone, best plain set," he quoted sagely, with his young eyes looking unutterable things. But Bernardina knit her pretty brows crossly. "Thanks," she said, shortly, "only I should prefer some of the baggage of virtue, once in a way." And then Bernardina looked as though she were quite out of patience with the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune."

"Let me buy you a dress, Dina," said Jack audaciously, but blushing the while at his own temerity. "It would be a purely business affair. I am sure you have wasted enough time, posing for 'Titania'"—

"Thank you," said Bernardina, as if she were not in the least obliged, however. "My self-respect is worth ever more to me than a new dress, Mr. Maunder."

But this loftly attitude was not natural to Miss Ray, and she was already a little ashamed of her ill-humor.

"You are a good fellow, Jack," she said, unbending into a smile, and extending her hand with a graciousness which Mr. Maunder was not slow to accept with a servile and abject show of satisfaction.

"I have read about girls making themselves picturesque out of old window hangings and their grandmothers' dresses," said Bernardina, after this reconciliation. "Mother," as that gentle lady appeared in the doorway; "Have you any ancestors, or brocaded dresses, hidden away in your trunks up-stairs?"

"I fear not, my dear," said the mother, smiling quietly, as her eyes always did when they rested on Bernardina. "But there are those dimity gowns, that have been lying away ever since you were a baby, Dina—if they would be of any use."

But Bernardina was already away.

"You are worth a dozen ancestors, mother dear," she cried gayly, as she disappeared.

Presently then, behold Mr. Maunder, seated modestly beside the window with a pair of scissors grasped firmly in his hand. and a mass of dimity before him, prayerfully anxious to be helpful in the work of demolition; for as Bernardina grandiloquently put it, "dispatch was everything."

That was a joyful week, with Jack and Dina running races down the seams, both of them in the wildest spirits, while the placid mother sat smiling as she sewed. What would have been Mrs. Maunder's emotions, could she have beheld her son at the mercy of this young Delilah?

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"Now be candid with me, Jack," said Bernardina, upon the eventful Thursday, as she turned slowly and seriously about for Mr. Maunder's inspection. "Do I look *amateurish?* Have I a home-made appearance?" with a consuming anxiety in her blue eyes, and an evident distrust of her own charms. "I have a painful misgiving that it requires to be pulled tight in front, to make it fit right in the back; and *vice versa*," she went on, with a somewhat nervous laugh, while Jack pulled at his moustache, and looked profound.

"In other words, it fits too much," agreed Jack, with a suspicious readiness of assent.

"Then you show very bad manners to say so," said Bernardina, with some inconsistency, but great spirit. But her indignation soon melted under the stress of weightier emotions. "And I have a burning doubt about the set of this off sleeve," she resumed, returning to her anxieties under the exigencies of the occasion.

"Now, Jack, I put it to you, as a man and a brother—is there not a suspicion of *bagginess* in that sleeve?" with a bewitching backward glance over her shoulder.

But Jack, having learned discretion, was not to be entrapped a second time. He raved over the success of their united efforts, and appealed to Mrs. Ray to sustain the veracity of his statements; and when he had exhausted his vocabulary, rather sheepishly he produced a slender parcel and proceeded to unfurl a handsome sunshade.

But Bernardina speedily relieved him of his misgivings.

"Why, you delightful creature!" she cried, with her blue eyes smiling dark and brilliant from beneath the lace border of the parasol. "You have quite restored my self-respect, and made it possible for me to fancy myself one of Worth's *confections*."

So Bernardina ate her former words with perfect cheerfulness, and was whirled away to the *fete* in a state of complacency, second only to Mr. Maunder's sense of satisfaction.

Arrived at the scene of festivity, people were not slow to discover this new beauty, who was the obvious object of Mr. Maunder's devotion. If the ladies were inclined to be critical about the set of her gown, the men found no such barrier to their admiration—and in point of fact, Bernardina did look sufficiently charming in her simple ceam-white gown, with folds of tulle caressing the white column of her throat, and the big bunch of roses beneath her dimpled chin vying with the color in her cheeks. For once at least Bernardina drained the intoxicating cup of social success, with a gay and whole-hearted enjoyment which some pronounced the perfection of art, and the masculine element declared to be adorable. But it was over; and next morning poor Jack had to hear his sister's criticisms at breakfast.

"Fancy my feelings," said the eldest Miss Maunder, with dignity, appealing to her mother for sympathy; "when I showed her Jack's picture of 'The Sylph,' she asked me if I did not think the legs resembled champagne bottles—and half a dozen people standing around."

"If I knew her better," said another Miss Maunder, stifling a yawn, "I should advise her to change her mantuamaker."

But this was too much for Jack's equanimity. Before his mental vision arose a picture of Bernardina, with her pretty perplexed face and hopeful gayety, while she planned and contrived the costume which these worldlings now would criticise.

"Mother and sisters," he said rising manfully to the occasion, "I should like you to know that the lady you are discussing I intend, if possible, to make my wife." And then he was gone, leaving this thunderbolt behind him. But his head was in a whirl as he took the well-known road to Bernardina's.

He would ask her to marry him that very morning—his pretty darling, who was worth a dozen of those cold-hearted conventional creatures; but he would let them see—he didn't exactly know what, but he kept up his resolution, until he had poured out his heart at Bernardina's feet.

But Bernardina took the recital very coolly. "Should you feel justified in marrying against your mother's wishes, when you are dependent upon her bounty?" she demanded a little scornfully. "May I inquire what other means you have to marry upon, Mr. Maunder?" She asked with a portentous calm.

But this was a practical question which visibly discomfited Mr. Maunder, and tended to check the flowery rhetoric of his declaration. He even looked a little foolish.

"I have some sort of a farm in Virginia, but I've never seen it," he admitted sulkily, after a somewhat blank pause.

And then the storm broke.

"Then my advice to you is, Jack Maunder," she said bitingly, "to learn how to earn your own bread, before you invite a wife to share it with you. Do you think I would thrust myself upon an unwilling family, and ask to be supported? Not I, Jack Maunder. My own poor mother ruined her whole life, by just such a marriage as you invite me to make; but because I have been foolish and happy and light-hearted, I am not altogether lacking in common-sense; and sooner than marry the way you ask me, I'll live and die and old maid, Jack Maunder."

With which awful declaration Bernardina came to the end of her breath, with several emphatic shakes of her head, and her blue eyes flashing dangerously.

"At least you have not spared me any," said poor Jack, with his lips trembling boyishly under his long, fair moustache; and under the reproachful gaze of those miserable brown eyes all Bernardina's scorn vanished.

"Show yourself a man, Jack," she whispered, with her cheeks flushing suddenly, "before you ask me to prove how well I love you."

There was less danger of misunderstandings now, with his fond arm about her waist and brown eyes gazing deep into blue ones. So they exchanged their views and vows of deathless faith and constancy, and then Jack went boldly forth, to wrestle with the virgin soil of Manitoba. And when Mrs. Maunder discovered that this astonishing development of manliness and independence in her only son was due to the influence of the spirited young lady who would not marry him otherwise, her opposition gave place to a genuine good feeling, which time and a closer acquaintance have not altered.

Bernardina and Jack have been married now ten years. A little procession of lads and lassies go tripping about the old farmhouse, like miniature copies of their blue-eyed mother.

Jack has forsaken the fields of fiction for those of agricultural reform, and they are very happy. They have all grown to love their free, healthy home life, where Bernardina reigns, the "joyful mother of children." In her, Jack still retains unlimited faith and love—happy Bernardina!

CURRENT GOSSIP.

Facts and Fancies Briefly Stated.

There are more than 10,000 deaf mutes in Spain.

A green rose is one of the newest productions of botanical science.

A pinch of snuff large enough to produce a good sneeze will cure hiccough.

The mortality in the vicinity of the Chicago slaughter-houses is 21 per 1,000 per annum.

It is said that no case of injury to the eyes from the incandescent light has been reported.

A well-digger in Osco, Ill., found a hollow log twenty-eight feet below the surface of the ground, and in the log a vigorous frog.

The valuation of Florida is $69,000,000 barely more than half the amount invested in Boston's Back-bay in twenty years.

The Philadelphia *Ledger* estimates the Quaker city's population at 975,000, and expects the million limit will be reached in a year.

Philadelphia has eight women physicians who have each an annual practice of over $20,000, and a dozen or more women dentists who make large sums.

Five hundred million dollars were represented at the wedding of Miss Rita Armstrong and Mr. A. J. Drexel, the banker's son, at Elberon, the other day. Among the presents was $500,000 to the bridegroom.

A New York scientist says that the earth's polar ice is penetrating the interior of the globe like a wedge, and that as soon as it reaches the furnace there will be an explosion that will split the world into pieces too small for truck patches.

Mr. Thomas Bailey Aldrich, who has just returned from a three months' trip through the interior of Russia, says: "The civilization of Moscow reminds me of some wild Indian chief who, in his old age, puts on a pair of epaulettes or a high hat It simply emphasizes savagery."

John G. Whittier has made a contribution to the Charleston relief fund, and says: "New England in this matter knows no North and no South, and if here and there any old jealousies and resentments remain, they should be swept away in the flood of practical sympathy for our afflicted fellow-countrymen."

Private information from Belle Plaine, Ia., states that the flow of water from the bursted artesian well there does not abate, and pours forth ten million gallons daily. It has stopped seven springs in the immediate locality. The water flows off without doing any damage, and the supply may turn greatly to the town's advantage in the future.

A young man out of work began peddling leadpencils about Norristown, Pa. He went into a manufacturer's office, and, as the proprietor good-naturedly listened, praised his pencils and drew figures on a piece of paper to show how good they were. His method of drawing and precision of touch led the manufacturer to question him. He proved to be a designer of ingenuity and skill, and before he went out had secured a place.

Kill the Cat.

A father on the occasion of his son's marriage gave him a little special advice. "You are going to be married, my son; and you will wish that your wife should be quiet and submissive to you in all matters. Follow the advice which I now give you. Procure a cat, and one night after your marriage so arrange that the animal shall be in your sleeping room at the time you and your wife retire to rest. You will go to the room as usual, and on entering it you will pretend to be very much surprised and annoyed that the cat should be found there, and you will draw your sword at once and slay it. Your wife, of course, will be terribly frightened, and from the sight of the slain cat, and a hint from you that she will fare likewise if she is not very careful over herself, you may depend upon it that she will be the proper, dutiful wife that she should be."

"Must you leave me?" she asked, and clutched his encircling arm and tightened his grasp. "Yes, my darling," he said, "dearly as I would love to stay, I must go." "Business?" "Not exactly." "Why must you go, then?" "Because," he replied, gently moving away from her, "I want to go down and play a game of billiards. I must have more exercise."

YOUNG FOLKS.

A TALK ABOUT BRIDGES.

(CONTINUED.)

Before we begin to talk about stone bridges, let us name the different parts of an arch, as nearly all our stone bridges are arched.

The stones of which the arch is made are called *voussoirs*. The one at the top is called the *keystone*, and this point is called the *key* or *crown* of the arch. The lowest stones are called the *springers*. The large three-cornered spaces above the sides of the arch are called *spandrels*. The walls or masses of masonry in the water, on which the arches are supported, are called *piers*. Those which are against the bank are called *abutments*. The low wall which is built on each side of the top of the bridge, to keep people from falling off, is called the *parapet*. The distance between the ends of the arch is called the *span*. When you read that an arch is of fifty feet span. it means that a straight line between its ends would be fifty feet long.

An ordinary bridge must be prepared for the attacks of four enemies; first its own weight; second, the stream that it spans; third, the people who use it; fourth, the weather.

It is sometimes a very nice problem to plan a bridge so that the weight of the stones will make it stronger, and not weaker. In order to be strong, an arch must have something immovable to brace its feet against, and its crown must be as heavy that it will not be pushed up into the air by the pressure of the sides.

Suppose two boys stand back to back, and spread out their feet, so that together they make a sort of letter A, or arch. Suppose they are near the side of a large room, where the first boy can brace his feet against the wall. He will now find it very easy to maintain his position so long as the second boy can maintain his. But the second boy, with nothing to brace his feet against, will find it very tiresome; no matter how hard he digs them into the carpet, they will be in constant danger of slipping away. But now we will put two more boys in similar position, and place them so that the feet of the second and the feet of the third will come together and brace against each other. This makes all the boys comfortable except the fourth. We will add another arch to our bridge by puting in two more boys, and now they are smiling except the sixth, who bites his lips and wishes we would hurry up with the next arch. So we put in two more boys, and then two more, till we have extended our bridge entirely across the room, and the last boy can brace his feet against the wall. This makes everything secure.

But suppose one of these arches is made of two small, light boys. What will happen? Why pretty soon the feet of the small boys will begin to give way and be pushed by the feet of the large boys pressed against them, till the small boys are brought up standing, with their heels together as well as their backs, and the two arches of large boys will have settled down in the same proportion.

This will enable you to understand a difficulty that is sometimes met in building a stone bridge of several arches. Of course the two end arches will each brace one foot against the bank, which we may consider immovable. The piers may be so thick and heavy that of themselves they will sustain the pressure or "thrust," as it is called, of the other sides of the arch. But sometimes it is necessary to make the piers so high and narrow they cannot do this; and if one arch were built at a time, its pressure would push over the pier. If the arches are all of the same size and form, and we build them all at once, they can brace their feet against each other and be just balanced. But sometimes the formation of the bed of the stream is such that the piers cannot be placed at equal distances apart, and so the arches cannot be all alike. Sometimes the balance is maintained by making the short spans lower arches than long spans. In a low arch the pressure is more outward than downward; in a high arch it is more downward than outward. In our bridge of boys you will find that if two large boys forming an arch stand nearly straight, spreading their feet apart only a little way, while the small boys forming the next arch have spread their feet far apart and brought their bodies nearer to the floor, the two arches will balance just as would two equal arches of equal-sized boys. You see every one of these boys is sustained by two things: the floor, and whatever he braces his feet against. The straighter he stands, the more he is sustained by the floor and the less by the wall or the feet of the next boy; the lower he gets, the less he is sustained by the floor and the more by the wall or the feet of the next boy. In other words, the straighter he stands (and consequently the higher arch he makes), the more the thrust of that arch is downward; when the lower he gets, the more its thrust is outward. In the bridge we can also put an extra amount of stone over the small arches; but here we must drop our comparison, for we don't want to put any big stones on the head of small boys.

Sometimes an arch must be very small, to make room for the water to pass in time of floods, and yet it is desirable to have the top of the bridge as low as possible, so that it will not be necessary for teams or trains to go up or downhill in passing over it. This makes the masonry very thin and light at the crown of the arch, and the weight of stone in the spandrels might throw up the key. Occasionally this difficulty has been overcome by making the spandrels hollow—that is, by making large round or arched holes through them. This not only lightens them, but makes additional passage-way for the water when it rises high. A very pretty example of this is afforded by the Bridge of Pont-y Pyrdd, over the river Taff, in Wales. Of two bridges previously erected at this point, the first was carried away by a freshet, and the second fell by its own weight, the masses of masonry in the spandrels throwing up the key. The present structure is a single span of one hundred and forty feet, and has three round openings in each spandrel. It has stood firm for a hundred and twenty years.

The piers of a bridge must stand parallel with the current, and should be as narrow as they can be with safety, so as to present as small a mark as possible to its natural enemy, the stream. This is all the time trying to undermine them and, in times of freshet, and during a freshet it often [illegible] masses of ice against them with tremendous force. For this reason they are made sharp at the up-stream end. Sometimes a separate breakwater of wood or stone is built for the protection of each pier; and these are often placed at a little distance from the piers; because if they rested against them whenever they were struck by a log or cake of ice the shock would be communicated to the bridge, and in time this would loosen the masonry.

Every load that is driven over a bridge has a tendency to shake it down, and the faster it is driven the more effect it has. When you drive a nail with a hammer, if you bring the hammer down slowly it will not drive it as far as when you bring it down quickly. If you make the hammer twice as heavy, *or* bring it down twice as fast, it strikes the nail twice as hard; if you make the hammer twice as heavy, and bring it down twice as fast, it strikes the nail four times as hard. Now, if the top of a bridge could be made absolutely smooth, as smooth as glass, and if the wheels of the vehicles were perfectly smooth and round, it would make no difference how fast they were driven. But this can never be. The wheels must always meet obstructions. These may be the edges of pavingstones, or the ends of planks, or the pebbles of gravel, and whenever they do meet an obstruction they first strike it and then mount and go over it. Every such stroke is like the blow of a hammer on the bridge, and the effect will be according to the weight of the hammer and the rate at which it is moving. A load of three tons moving ten miles an hour will strike six times as hard as a load of one ton moving five miles an hour. Some bridges are so heavy and strong that no load which is ever likely to cross them will have any perceptible effect. But this cannot be made so, and hence the sign often seen, even on new bridges—"Ten dollars fine for crossing faster than a walk."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

NEGRO SUPERSTITION.

"De Angels Am A-Rappin' at De Do'" Curse of the Colored Race.

The Charleston newspaper correspondent tell us that the frightened colored people sung themselves to sleep on the hymn that begins with the above words on the night of the earthquake. It is said that their singing was wondrous. Intelligent men, familiar with the history of earthquakes, said that the worst was over, endeavored to console the wild, bewildered and panic-stricken race, but they would not be comforted. All seemed prepared and anxious to go. The negro race is a mystery even to the whites who have been raised with them. It seems that neither time nor experience can eradicate their credulity and superstition. But few feel themselves safe without some sort of talismanic protection. They believe in all sorts of conjuration, and are miserable at the loss of their bag of charms. Superstition is so deeply engraved in every fiber and ligament of their natures that they only regard the conjurer as an impostor when he exposes his own tricks. They are amiable, generous and kind-hearted, but superstition is a curse of the race. It has have

LITTLE OR NO THRIFT,

and the proverbial rainy day never dismays them. They live in a country where the lands are productive, and can make a comfortable living, but they skim along and enjoy life as they find it. They care [illegible] nothing for reputation, and generally those who has been in the penitentiary is ostracized. They have no avarice and seldom conspire to swindle but with them an agreement is binding, no contract more longer than agreeable and convenient.

The religious demonstrations of the negro at Charleston during the earthquake were in keeping with the race. Their religion is usually entirely emotional and spasmodic. They are pious to excess at times, praying night and day; then they go to the other extreme. Their ministers are popular in proportion to their power to induce in their congregations a condition of ecstasy rather than for the excellence of their precepts or the uprightness of their examples. In their meetings they sing uproariously, beating time with their feet, and the noise grows louder and wilder, until the whole congregation seems to be as crazy as the lunatics in an asylum. Piety is judged by noise, and those who yell the loudest are the most religious, and those who get struck down senseless, breathless, stiff, and rigid are regarded as sanctified.

LONG AFTER MIDNIGHT

the shout and the music swell, the harmonies wave together and the billowy roar is rolled unto the sea. The sermons are a fervid description of heaven and hell, the resurrection and the judgment. The tumult is general, wild, and often the singing is magnificent.

The colored children learn in the public schools with the rapidity of the whites, and it seems impossible for the race to [illegible] their minds of superstition and religious fanaticism, the former a curse to the latter a mockery of religion. Under whatever condition the negro is found, his religious instincts are sure to be strong. It is a crude religion for the most part. It is a strange blending of what is pure and elevating with a mass of error and superstition, a religion partaking of a highly emotional character. A quiet, orderly, undemonstrative religion would not suit them. They want a noisy, shouting, soul-stirring [illegible] one that affords an opportunity for the display of animal enthusiasm. And the more the preacher is the showy, demonstrative, emotional character, with powerful lungs and maniacal gesticulations—the man who can yell "hell-fire" with such vehemence as to alarm the night watch and call out the fire engine.

A musical exchange has an article on "Silent Music." The worst of it is that there is altogether too little of the article.

"I stayed down town to-night to look over my books, my dear," hiccoughed Mr. Fuddle, the major of the family domicile, when he entered the house at 2 A.M., and found her sitting in a chair by the table with a child in her lap and wearing a very forbidding expression of countenance. "Well, if you have made them balance, that is more than I can do for yourself," was her sharp rejoinder.

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