msa_sc2901_scm2353-0044 ©Maryland State Archives

THE KENT NEWS.

Frustra, laborat, qui omnibus, placere, studet.—"He labours vainly, who endeavors to please every one.

BY E. MANSFIELD. CHESTER TOWN, Md. $1 50 PER ANNUM, in advance.

VOL. 13. SATURDAY, MARCH 19, 1853. NO. 47.

POETRY.

(Written for 'The Kent News.')

I AM WEARY.

BY MYRA.

I am weary, I'm lonely, and why am I so?
Is there no light on my pathway, no sunshine, no glow?
Is the spring not returning to gladen my eye
With the fair bloom of flowers and soft vernal sky?
Seen nature all clothed in her mantle of green,
With the hues of the rain bow entwined in the sheen;
Will appear as a virgin, adorned for her bridal,
And the birds little throats no longer be idle.
Already the violet and crocus appear,
And a fragrant effluvia exudes on the air;
Yet the melody of birds, and the fragrance of flowers,
No longer beguiles my lone tedious hours.
And why has this coldness come over my heart
This feeling of deadness, can nothing impart
One glow through my bosom as in days that are past,
One sensation of warmth its soft radiance to cast?
Ah no! for love's hours to me are all fled,
My fond hopes lie withered, are blighted and dead.
The peace of my heart forever is broken,
And this of thy perfidy, false one is the token;
Yet will I not curse thee, thy conscience will play
Its part in thy torments and pale with dismay
Thy features all writhed in agony and woe,
You will suffer still more than I undergo;
For while pain throbs my bosom, my conscience is clear,
I acted sincerely but you insincere.

Kent County.

POPULAR NOUVELLETTE.

THE MOB CAP; OR, MY GRANDMOTHER'S TRUNK.

BY MRS. CAROLINE LEE HENTZ.

[CONCLUDED]

"Let me see you, Clara, before you start," said Mrs. Stanley—and she added, smiling, "I hope you have not not tried to look too well."

'Oh, pray, mother take care," cried Clara, shrinking from the dreaded hand that touched her shawl; 'it will tumble my dress to take it off now. It is only my plain muslin frock,' and hurrying away with blushes and trepidation, she felt that her punishment was begun.

Arrived at Mrs Clifton's—she became more dissatisfied, when she saw their elegant hostess, dressed in the simplest attire, consistent with fashion and taste, with no ornament but a cluster of roses, wreathed amidst locks of gypsy blackness and oriental abundance Her piercing eye rested a moment on the beautiful Fanny, then flashed towards Edward, with a very peculiar expression. He understood their meaning, and undefinable sensation of pain and displeasure oppressed him. Mrs Clifton was too polite to confine her attention to those she most wished to distinguish, but moved amongst her guests, endeavoring, as far as possible, to adapt herself to their different capacities and tastes. She had invited her father's friends, wishing extremely to make them her own, and to convince them that she valued their sympathy and good will.

'You seem dispirited this evening, Mr. Stanley," said she as Edward, unusually silent, stood leaning against the harp, from which he had more than once heard thrilling music; "perhaps I ought to say, preoccupied. It may be wise to abstract the mind in the midst of a throng, but I am afraid it is rather selfish."

"I should think that the wisdom consisted in the subject of the abstraction,' replied Edward, "and I believe I am as unwise as I am selfish."

"I do not think so,' said Mrs. Clifton, and she looked at Fanny, whose serene countenance was beaming from the opposite side of the room. "Beauty, whether the subject of attraction or contemplation, fills the mind with the most delightful ideas, and elevates it by the conviction that the hand that *make it is divine* I do not agree with the moralist who would degrade it as a vain and valueless possession. The woman who possesses it, may exercise boundless influence over the heart of man, and if exerted aright how glorious may be the result!—Often have I sighed for the celestial gift—yet, perhaps, I should be neither better nor happier."

"You!" exclaimed Edward.

It is but a monosyllable, but the most laboured panegyric cannot have been have so expressive. The clear olive of Mrs. Clifton's cheek was coloured with a brighter hue as she laughingly resumed—"I did solicit a compliment, but its brevity recommend yours. I know I am not handsome. I cannot be if beauty depends upon lilies and roses. In the gay and heartless world I have learned to shine as others do, and have tried the rules of art. My life has been passed much with strangers. You, Mr. Stanley, surrounded as you are, by all the sweet charities of a home, living in its warm and sunny atmosphere, do you not know the coldness and loneliness of the brotherless and sisterless heart."

She spoke in a tone of deep feeling, and cast down her eyes with a deep expression of profound melancholy. Edward did not attempt to reply—he could not embody the new and overpowering emotions that were filling his soul, and he would not utter the commonplace language of admiration He felt like a man who had all his life been walking in darkness, and a dream had all at once awakened him in a blaze of light. Several now gathered around Mrs. Clifton, entreating her to play, and Edward availed himself of the opportunity of drawing back, where he could listen, unseen by her, to the melodious songstress of the hour. He looked at Fanny, who was now near the instrument, and compared the calm feelings of happiness he had enjoyed in her society to the tumultuous tide that was now rushing through his heart.

"I have loved Fanny like a brother," thought he, ignorant of a deeper passion "And now I am a man and a fool——:"

A hand was laid upon his arm.—"Brother are you not well? You look pale to-night." Clara was looking anxiously in his face, and he saw that her own was flushed with excitement.

"Yes, Clara, I am well—but what has disturbed you? Indeed I noticed before we left home that something seemed to weigh upon your spirits. Tell me the cause?"

He drew her hand affectionately through his arm, and for the first time noticed her new ornament.

"It is not the weight of this new chain that oppresses you," said he, lifting it from her neck—"though it does feel rather magnificent You have never shewed me this new gift of yours. Who could have been the donor?"—and he thought of Mrs. Clifton.

'Do not speak of it here," whispered Clara, with so much embarrassment it confirmed Edward's suspicions with regard to the donor, and though he regreted the nature of the obligation, he could not think it was prompted by kindness to an observance of Clara's imitative decorations. The truth was, Clara had been so exceedingly annoyed by the questions, she could not, or rather would not answer.

Some one had suggested that it was a present from Mrs. Clifton, and though she did not affirm it, actually, she was glad to admit the idea as an escape from further persecution on the subject. Still her conscience writhed under he implied falsehood, and she dreaded its detection. To add to her mortification, she overheard some one remark "that Clara Stanley need not put on so many airs about her new chain for it was nothing but pinchbeck, and had a strong smell of brass."

She rejoiced when the hour for retiring arrived; and when she reached home she ran up stairs, went to bed, and cried herself to sleep. Poor Clara! she awakened that night from a terrible fit of the night mare, for she dreamed that her grandmother's icy hands were groping about her neck for the beads she had bartered, that the cold grasp grew tighter and tighter, her breathe shorter and shorter, till she screamed and awoke She dreaded the next day her brother's questioning about the mysterious chain; but, absorbed in his own deep, overmastering emotions, he forgot the subject when the glittering bauble was removed from before his eyes. From this time a change was observable in his character. He became as silent and abstracted as he had before been gay and communicative. He no longer talked of Mrs. Clifton, and even to Fanny he was cold and constrained. Fanny preserved the same equanimity of feeling, though she missed Edward's vivacity and smiles and openly lamented the transformation. She looked rather more serious than usual, but the azure of her eye was undimmed, and the soft rose of her cheek remained undiminished in bloom. Edward turned from the sameness and lustre of her countenance, to gaze upon the changing face that "pale passion loved"—and while he acknowledged the hopelessness of his infatuation, he brooded over it, till it enervated all the energies of his soul. It was fortunate for his mind that domestic circumstances of a perplexing nature roused it into exercise. Some very unexpected claims were made against the estate. Mr. Stanley had died suddenly, and left his affairs considerably involved, but his family now believed every thing was settled and that the small property which remained was all their own. With the strictest economy it was just sufficient for a genteel support, and that was all They had no means of meeting this unexpected exigency, but by the sale of the house—a sorrowful expedient, for it was endeared by every association connected with a husband's and a father's love—besides it was their home, and where should they look for another? Edward remembered the letter of his grandmother. He wanted but a few months of being of age, and the hour of trouble had arrived. He opened and read it, then gave it into his mother's hands with a countenance illuminated with joy.

"It is all well, dear mother—more than well—though dead she yet continues her guardianship of love. Clara, where is the trunk whose value I have just learned? It will save us from ruin."

Clara looked aghast.

"The trunk!" stammered she, "what good can it do us?"

The explanation may be given to the reader in fewer words The trunk contained a false bottom, in which the good lady had placed deeds and papers, containing an amount of property which left a rich legacy to her grandson.—Knowing the temptations to which youth is exposed, and knowing too that necessity calls forth the noblest powers of mankind; she did not wish him to know of the existence of this property till he became of age; and being somewhat eccentric in her character, and fond of surprise, she had adopted this singular method of bequesting to him her fortune. Clara read the letter, and sat like a statue of stone. She wished the earth to open and swallow her, the mountains to fall and crush her to atoms, to save from the remorse and shame that had overtaken her.

"Clara, what is the matter?" said Edward, sitting down by her side; "can you not go for the trunk, Clara?"

The unhappy girl tried to speak, but only uttered a piercing shriek, and fell prostrate on the floor. Excessively alarmed, they raised and endeavored to bring her to compoure, but she continued to wring her hands and exclaimed:

'Oh what have I done! what have I done!"

They gathered at length from her broken sentences, the extent of their misfortune. The treasure was lost, irredeemably lost, for it would be impossible to trace the course of one who led an itinerant life, and was probably now in some remote part of the country If it ever were discovered, it would probably be at some distant day, and the demand was immediate and pressing. Neither Mrs Stanley nor Edward could add to the agonies of Clara's remorse, by unavailing reproaches, but they both keenly felt how much it added to their calamity, to think the means their guardian angel had laid out for their relief, was wrested from them by the hands of a daughter and a sister.

"We must submit," said Mrs. Stanley, with a heavy sigh, "to the will of God."

"We must *act*," said Edward, "and be not cast down, my mother If Heaven spares my life and health, we shall never know one real want. In this country there no such thing as *poverty*, and as to vanity and show, let Clara's bitter lesson prove the emptiness of their claims."

When it was known that Mrs. Stanley's dwelling-house was advertised for sale, to satisfy the demands of impatient creditors, there was much astonishment and sorrow, for she was a women universally beloved for her meekness, loving kindness, and tender charities. The neighbors gathered in to question and condole, and great was the sympathy expressed for Clara's inconsolable grief. They did not know the secret burden that weighed her to the dust, and wondered much to see the young bowed down so heavily, while Mrs Stanley seemed calm and resigned. Fanny Morton was very sorry, and expressed herself on the occasion with all the depth of feeling of which her tranquil nature was capable, but Edward more than ever felt the immeasurable distance of their souls Hers could not comprehend the depth and sensibility of his. The lightning of heaven, and the cold phosphorescent light of earth are not more different in their properties. Mrs. Clifton came, but not with the crowd. She waited till others accused her of standing aloof from her favourites in the day of adversity. She came alone, leaving her carriage, her servants, and all the paraphernalia of her wealth behind her. Mrs Stanley knew how to appreciate this delicacy, as well as the added deference and respect of her manners. She asked no questions—she added no condolence—she came, she said, to solicit a favour, not to confer one. She wished to become purchaser of their beautiful cottage, whose situation she had so much admired. She had learned that her father had desired to become the owner of the lot, if Mr Stanley ever disposed of it. She was anxious herself that it should not pass into other hands, and to secure their continuance in the neighbourhood.

"If by gratifying my father's known wish," continued Mrs. Clifton, her brilliant eyes softened by visible emotion "I can relieve you, Mrs. Stanley, from, I trust, a transient embarrassment, I shall not consider myself less your debtor—when the time comes that you desire to reclaim it, I will not withhold its restoration."

The tears, which sorrow had not wrung from Mrs. Stanley's eyes, now fell fast for gratitude. She pressed Mrs Clifton's hand in hers, and said, in a low voice, "You have caused the widow's heart to sing for joy—may heaven reward you for your kindness"

Clara, incapable of restraining herself longer, threw her arms around her neck, and sobbed out, "Oh, madam, you have saved me from despair."

Mrs. Clifton, who attributed her words to the natural regret of a young and ardent heart, on the prospect of quiting the home of childhood, warmly returned the involuntary embrace, and bid her call back her smiles, and be ready to accompany her on the morrow in a botanical excursion. When she rose to depart, Edward rose also to accompany her home. He was no longer gloomy and reserved. He no longer looked upon her as an enchantress, moving high above him, in a region of inaccessible light and splendour, but as a woman, endowed with all the warm and lovely sensibilities of her sex—a being whom he might dare to love, though he could never hope to obtain—who might forgive the homage, even though she rejected the worshipper. Had not humanity, always the accompaniment of deep and fervent passion, ruled his perceptions, he might have derived an inspiration for his hopes, from the softened language of her eyes—a language which others had not been slow in translating. They entered the magnificent saloon. The contrast its gilded walls presented to the agitating scene they left, was felt by both.

"Desolate is the dwelling of Morris" said she, in an accent half sad and half sportive,—"silence is in the house of her fathers."

'Dwells there no joy in song, white hand of the harp of Luthal" continued Edward, in the same poetic language, and drawing the harp towards her. It is always delightful to find the train of our own thoughts pursued by a friend—proving that we think in unison. Mrs. Clifton felt this as she swept her hands over the chords, and called forth that sweet and impassioned melody peculiar to the daughters of Italy. She paused, and her dark eye rested a moment on the face of her auditor. It was partly shaded by his hand, and she saw that he was overcome by some powerful emotion. Again she sang but her voice was low, and she ceased at length as if weary of the effort.

"You seem spell-bound by the genius of silence," said she, "I should be wrong to break the charms."

"I know I must appear more than stupied," replied he, "when there is every thing around to inspire me. But my feelings have been deeply oppressed by anxiety, and the weight of anxiety has been removed by a debt of gratitude, which, however pleasing and gracefully imposed, is only too deeply felt."

"Oh! let not your pride be jealous of the happiness I have dared this day to purchase. What have I done for you and yours, half—half so precious to YOUR remembrance as, to *mine*?—Your sister's tearful blessing, your mother's hallowed prayer."

She spoke with fervor and sensibility, and her countenance was lighted up with such an exalted expression, Edward was scarcely able to restrain the impetuous impulses of passion that urged him on. The confession trembled on his lips, but pride and poverty, two stern moniters, stood by his side, and forbade the avowal of his madness and presumption.

"No!" said he to himself, "let me live on in silence and secrecy of hopeless devotion, rather than by unguarded rashness risk the loss of that confidence so dangerous, yet so delightful. She allows me to be her friend Let me never date to aspire to more."

Thus reasoned Edward Stanley, and thus he schooled the language of his lips—but the passion denied utterance in words, flashed from his eyes, and modulated every accent of his voice.—He looked back upon this evening, passed alone with Mrs. Clifton, amidst the breathings of poetry and music, and exulted in the reflection that he had not committed himself by any act of imprudence, he might hereafter vainly rue—Sometimes his feelings rose up against Clara, for the selfish vanity that had led her to sacrifice the fortune that might have placed him above the suspicion of mercenary motives, but her unappeasable sorrow for her transgression, would not allow him to cherish any resentment towards her. Sometimes to his conscience reproached him for the part he was acting towards Fanny; the idol of his boyish fancy—but every hour passed in her presence, convinced him that she looked upon him more as a brother than a lover, and wrapped in a mantle of constitutional indifference, she seemed scarcely aware of the wandering of his heart

"Oh! I am so glad you are not going to leave us! I do not know how I should live without you and Clara."

Fanny's most ardent impression in joy and sorrow, was, "I am so glad—I am so sorry." It was a great deal for her to say—but she looked at Clara exactly as she did at him, and Edward, whose heart was now enlightened, felt that she did not love him, and he rejoiced in the conviction.

"One evening, just between twilight and darker hour, he was returning from a long walk, when, a little before he left the woodland path that led into the public road, he met an old woman muffled in a cloak and hood—he bowed, and was passing on, when she accosted him in a voice that was not known, and approaching nearer to her, he knew by the spectacles gleaming through the shades, under the deeper shade of a mob-cap, his ancient friend of the stage-coach, and he greeted her with great cordiality. She told him she was travelling about as usual, and had stopped in the village to make a visit to Mrs. Clifton, the grand daughter of her old friend.

'It is growing dark and late," said he, "let me see you safe to her house, for you have mistaken the path that leads to it."

"Stop a moment," cried she "if you are not in too much haste and, let me rest on this log by the wayside. I am old, and it wearies me to walk fast. Sit down, young man, and let me ask after your welfare. I have not forgotten your kindness to the aged, nor never shall I."

Edward brushed the dust from the log with his handkerchief, and preparing a seat for her, with great reverence placed himself at her side.

"Come," said she, "I must soon be gone, but I want to know if I can serve you. I am an eccentric old creature, but I am well off in the world, and when I die, I cannot carry my money into the grave. I am told there is a pretty young girl in the neighbourhood, whom you love, and would marry, were you not poor. Do not blush to own it, for if it is so, and I can make you happy by my means, I shall bless the hour that brought us together even near the end of my pilgrimage."

Her tremulous voice faltered, and she raised her handkerchief under her spectacles.

"Thank you, a thousand times, for your generous offer," replied Edward, much moved; "but indeed, madam, you are misinformed. I would not marry, if I could.'

"Young man," cried she, "you are not sincere. The heart craves for a kindred heart. You would not live alone. Confide in me, and I will not betray you; trifle with me, and you may lose a friend, whose professions are not lightly made. Tell me do you not love the fair girl, whom they call the beauty of the village, or is it but a passing rumour that has reached my ears?"

Edward wondered at the interest this singular old woman expressed in his destiny, but he did not doubt its sincerity, and he would not repay it with dissimulation.

'No, madam. I do not love her, otherwise than with brotherly kindness.—Where I *do* love, I cannot hope, and all your generosity cannot avail me there"

"Where?" said she "I want no half confidences. The imagination of age is dull to that of youth. Tell me all, or nothing."

'There is one, then, whom, were she poor, beggary would be a paradise, but whom fortune has placed so far beyond my reach, it would be madness to name, and presumption to aspire to. Sometimes, emboldened by her condescension, I have dared to think, had my lot been different—but no—it can never be. I need not say more—you know where your steps are bound."

A silence followed this avowal, and Edward was as much absorbed by his own feelings, as almost to forget the presence of his companion. At length she spoke.

"I do not see the great presumption of your hopes if you mean the widow Clifton. I see nothing to make her beyond your reach, unless you choose yourself to be put up in the clouds.—She is rich, it is true, but what does she want in another? She has found no joy in wealth. I know the history of her marriage; it was involuntary on her part and brought no happiness—a state of splendid bondage. Why do you not at least learn from her whether your love is hopeless? If I, an old woman—if my heart warmed towards you, the first moment I saw you,—is her young bosom made of stone, that it cannot be melted, or impressed?"

"She has often spoken," said Edward, finding an increasing fascination in the subject; and drawing still nearer his aged friend, "of the loneliness of her destiny, and of the insufficiency of wealth to satisfy the cravings of the heart. These wild dreams dazzled my imagination, and gilt the future with the hues of heaven. But the dread of being banished from her presence, of incurring the displeasure of one who had been the benefactress of our family—you, who are now in the winter of your days, can have no conception of the strength of these mental conflicts—this warring of fire and ice."

"I have not forgotten the memories of youth," she answered; and impassive as you believe me, there is an image cherished in my breast, whose traits the waves of oblivion can never efface, nor the snow of age ever chill. Few can ever love as I have loved; and love with me, is immortal as the divine spark that lights up this perishing frame.'

She leaned tremblingly against the shoulder of Edward, who reproached himself for calling up emotions so sublime in their strength, thus glowing and triumphant, amidst the ruins of beauty and youth. He drew her cloak more closely around her, and warned her that the night dew was falling.

"You are right," said she, rising; "I was forgetting I am not young like you."

They walked slowly on, in the direction of Mrs. Clifton's house.

"May I not ask the name of the friend, to whose kindness I am so much indebted?" cried he.

"Oh," replied she, laughing, "I thought every body knew Aunt Bridget; for I am one of those universal aunts, whom every body knows, and nobody cares for. My property is my own, and have a right to bequeath it to whomsoever I please. I have chosen you as my heir, and you may consider yourself equal in fortune to Widow Clifton, or any other widow in the land. Not a word of thanks—no gratitude—at least till legal measures are taken to secure it to your possession"

"Singular and generous being!" said Edward; begining to believe her brain was somewhat unsound, "what have I done to excite so romantic an interest, what can I do to prove myself worthy of it?"

"Be sincere—truth is the only bond of love, and concealment with friends is falsehood."

They had now reached the gate of the avenue.

"You will go in?"

"No," said he, "I cannot see her to-night; to-morrow, perhaps—shall I see you then?"

"I cannot tell what the morrow will bring forth. But one thing let me say, young man, ere we part. You must plead your own cause, and not expect it will be done by me. If you have not moral courage and manly spirit sufficient to meet the consequences, whatever they may be, you merit the downfall of your hope, and the humiliation of your pride."

She closed the gate, and Edward watched her dark shrouded figure slowly treading the winding path, and almost imagined he had been with one of those sybilline priestesses, who opened their lips in prophecy, and shadowed the mystic outlines of intuity. "Whatever she may be," thought he, "I will be guided by her counsel, and abide by the result."

As he drew near his own home, and saw the light shining so quietly and brightly through the trees that quivered gently as in a gold shower, and thought how tranquilly the hearts of the inmates now beat, secure from the fear of being driven from that love-hallowed home—when he reflected that for this peace, so beautifully imagined in the scene before him, they were indebted to the very being whose recollection excited the throbing of a thousand pulses in his heart and in his brain,—gratitude so mingled with and chastened his love that every breathing became a prayer for her happiness, even if it were to be purchased at the sacrifice of his own.

He saw Clara through the window, seated at a table, with some object before her, which was shaded by the branches, but her attitude was so expressive that he stood a moment to contemplate her figure. Her hands were clasped in a kind of estacy, and her cheeks were coloured with a bright crimson, strikingly contrasting with their pallid hue. Something hung glittering from her fingers, upon which she gazed rapturously one moment,—then, bending forward the next, she seemed intent upon what was before her. He opened the door softly; she sprang up, and, throwing her arms around him, cried in an accent of hysterical joy—

"Dear brother—the trunk is found—there it is, oh! I am *so* happy!" And she wept and laughed alternately.

There indeed it was—the identical trunk—whose loss had occasioned so much sorrow,—with its red morocco covering and bright nails untarnished. Edward rejoiced more for Clara's sake than for his own—for her remorse, tho'

(*Concluded on the fourth page*)