

The Conservator.

LIBERTY, UNION, AND EQUALITY.

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THE MOTHER'S HAND.

BY CHARLES SWAIN.

A wand'ring orphan child was I—
But meanly, at the best, attired;
For oh, my mother scarce could buy
The common food each week required:
But when the anxious day had fled,
It seem'd to be her dearest joy,
To press her pale hand on my head,
And pray that God would guide her boy.
But more, each winter, more and more
Stern suffering brought her to decay;
And then an Angel pass'd her door,
And bore her lingering soul away!
And I—they know not what is grief,
Who ne'er knelt by a dying bed;
All other woe on earth is brief,
Save that which weeps a mother dead.
A seaman's life was soon my lot,
Mid reckless deeds, and desperate men;
But still I never quite forgot
The prayer I ne'er should hear again;
And oft, when half induced to tread
Such paths as unto sin decoy,
I've felt her fond hand press my head,
And that soft touch hath saved her boy!
Though hard their mockery to receive,
Who ne'er themselves 'gainst sin had
striven;
Her, who on earth I dare not grieve,
I could not—would not—grieve in heav-
en;
And thus from many an action dread,
Too dark for human eyes to see;
The same fond hand upon my head
That bless'd the boy—hath saved the man!

From the Olive Branch.

THE TIMELY WARNING.

A LESSON FOR YOUNG LADIES.

By Mrs. M. A. Dennison.

The village clock had struck nine and Aunt Nelly, a dear, middle-aged maiden lady, who was almost the idol of the circle in which she moved, carefully raked up the coals upon her glowing hearth, placed her silver watch in the little china case on the mantel, and taking from the small book case in the corner the family bible that had been in use for five generations, sat herself down in the old arm-chair to meditate and read, as was her nightly custom.

The wind moaned without, the heavy plashing of the rain fell dismally against the windows, the huge grocer's sign opposite, shrieked and whistled as the blast shook it upon its hinges; but tranquil and undisturbed sat the good christian, her meek brow growing brighter as the words of inspiration soothed her spirit. Returning the time worn volume, after she had read her chapter, she moved with a light quick step towards an adjoining apartment, her neat and tasteful bedroom. Gathering back her yet dark tresses, with the serenity of a holy faith she knelt down to pray. Remembering the wildness of the storm, at the close of her petition, she murmured, "Father, pity the friendless and forsaken,—when she was startled by loud and repeated raps at the door, and a shrill voice cried above the raging of the elements—"aunt Nelly, let me in, oh! let me in."

Wondering and fearful, yet obeying her benevolent heart, she snatched the lamp in one hand and with the other throwing a shawl about her shoulders, hurried to the door, and turned the key with a trembling touch.

"Mary, Mary Graham," she exclaimed, as a light figure sprang into the hall, bonnetless, and with her wild locks streaming in disorder, while her choked sobs would not be repressed; "Mary Graham, my poor child, why are you here?"

"My mother, my father," she half shrieked, frantically following aunt Nelly into the room; they have cast me out; disowned me; ruined me; cursed me; and she fell upon the little sofa, convulsed with the terrible emotion that denied her farther utterance.

Aunt Nelly, kind creature, stood a picture of distress, above her protruded form; but with a true insight into human nature, forbore to say a word until the violence of her grief

was spent.

Presently she ceased sobbing, and raising her head threw her damp and heavy locks from her forehead. A flash of anger brightened her passionate, dark eyes, and she murmured with clenched teeth, "cruel, unnatural parents."

"Mary," said aunt Nelly, "I know not what to think of this strange conduct, but your clothes are damp child, you so delicate to be exposed thus; stay, I will kindle the fire in a moment."

"No, no, aunt Nelly, don't trouble yourself for me; I care not whether I live or die; yes, my clothes are wet through, but that is nothing; my heart is broken, aunt Nelly."

"Poor child," said the good woman, hurrying to relight the uncovered embers, "tell me your trouble, Mary, I will advise you and comfort you the best I can."

"I have nothing to tell beyond what you know," said the girl mournfully; "I was to meet Beverly tomorrow, and my parents say he shall never enter their doors. I told them I loved him, and would marry him; that I was engaged—as I am. My father turned pale with rage, and declared he would bury me rather than I should wed him; my mother was very firm—and denounc'd him as an unworthy wretch; she judges only by his face and manner, when I am sure both are perfection. My father told me he would no longer consider me his daughter if I took this step; do you think I would stay another minute after that? No; I would have slept in the road rather than have rested another night under my father's roof. My noble, brave Beverly! I will show them what love can do."

"But, Mary, they would not denounce him without cause, you are very young, my child; you should at least wait until they feel better disposed towards him. The doctor, and your mother, are neither of them rash, my dear; if this man is worthy of you, he will be willing to wait."

"No, no; they are striving night and day to turn my heart against him; they are determined to unite me with Frank Raymond, and him I hate. No; she added, with fierce energy, and springing to her feet, "I will marry Beverly if I lose my soul for it."

Aunt Nelly shrank back with an exclamation of horror; a dirge-like wail sounded on the air, as the wind lifted its tempest voice, an unusual gust shook the creaking sign till it groaned again.

"You will repent that speech, my dear child," mournfully murmured the good woman, her eyes filling with tears—remember, the holy book says, "the eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles eat it."

Affected by her solemn manner, the beautiful head of the young girl drooped again, and she gave way to another violent outburst of grief. Suddenly she exclaimed, starting to her feet, "I hear horse's hoofs; they are his, they are Beverly's oh! let him come in, let him come in, aunt Nelly, he said he should be here to-night," and she almost knelt at her feet.

The good woman had not time to reply, before the steed was reined up before the door; Mary Graham hastened herself to give the new comer entrance, the wind threw a sheet of spray in her face, but she cared not for that; she seized the extended hand of her lover, and pressing it to her lips, led a tall figure into the sitting room. He had hardly entered the, bright rays of the little lamp had but lightly pencilled his face against the dark background, when Mary sprang from him wildly, and aunt Nelly exclaimed, "Frank Raymond! how pale and fearful you look; Mary, child, do not faint or I must send

for doctor Graham! Sit down Frank; I know something unusual has happened."

"You have not injured him," said Mary in a low, exhausted tone. "I know you hated him, but you cannot have injured Beverly."

The young man bent upon her a glance of the most mournful eloquence—his lips were white and they trembled as he essayed to speak. "Mary," he exclaimed, in a thrilling, startling tone, "I would not have harmed a hair of his head to save my life—I know knowledge that you loved him would insure his safety, even in mortal combat; but Mary, I have bad news to tell you, though I would have waited till the morrow—but, but I was exhausted—I could go no farther towards home."

Spectral-like looked poor Mary as she sat in a distant corner, her cheeks of a deathly hue, her eyes shining with excitement, and the heavy waves of black hair falling in wet masses on each side of her face—she fixed her glance upon him, her lips parted, but she could not speak; she would have lost all self command but for the dread that her parents would be summoned. Placing her hands hard against the arms of the old-fashioned chair in which she sat, like an immovable statue she nerved herself to listen.

"Will you hear what I have to tell you, or shall I first speak to doctor and Mrs. Graham?"

"To me, to me," she articulated, while her lips scarcely moved.

"Well then, Mary, pardon me that I must wound your feelings, this Beverly is not worthy of you—worthy!" he again exclaimed almost fiercely, "he is a villain of the deepest, blackest dye."

Mary sank back in her chair, but her eye flashed.

"He has a wife—a dying wife," his voice grew husky; "I saw her, spoke with her; I beheld the tears fall drop by drop upon that marble cheek as she told me of her husband's desertion; told me—to save you Mary, from disgrace and infamy; for if she had not heard of you, no power could have wrested the fearful secret of his cruelty from her breast! Oh! my God! to see a woman, a fragile, gentle, angelic being, wasting hour by hour—an orphaned, friendless woman, dying with the slow torture of a breaking heart—Mary, and his voice grew awfully calm—"would you, the fair and pure, consent to wed one with such guilt upon his soul? Never wept I, a man, such bitter tears, as when I stood beside the couch of that sufferer. Oh! the lines upon her face were not made by toil, by care, they were graven by the hand of the oppressor; her husband, her murderer, exults in the thought that the sods will soon hide her in the grave."

If Mary had before assumed the attitude of inamobility, this information had struck her speechless and powerless. She did not move until aunt Nelly said very softly, "my dear Mary, you see now that your parents knew best; then she slowly raised her head to her face, and bowed her head upon them."

The young man sat upon the little sofa, watching her intently; his eyes looked heavy, and his brow haggard; a short cloak which he generally wore was wrapped tightly around him, and its ample folds pressed against his left side in a somewhat strange manner.

"I knew that Beverly would return to-night or to-morrow," he continued faintly, "so since day before yesterday, I have ridden day and night that I might arrive first; and I assure you I can prove all I have said."

While he spoke, aunt Nelly had been looking fixedly on the floor at his feet; now she arose, came nearer with a light, and uttered an exclamation of horror. "Blood was there. Frank, where are you

wounded? tell me child; how ghastly you look; I did not see before, how came this blood here? you are certainly suffering."

"It is not much," he answered in a fainter tone and striving to smile, "he—intercepted me—caught the reins, swore I should fight him; I urged Nelson—the noble creature sprang from his grasp; I should have escaped unhurt, but he fired after me; and my left arm is powerless, I believe." He ended the last word with a heavy sigh, and clutched vaguely at the air, then exhausted with loss of blood, swayed and fell heavily back upon the sofa.

To throw on cloak and hood, and fly across the street to the grocer's house, where a young student was spending his vacation, was with Aunt Nelly but the work of a moment. Mary staid behind, moaning piteously, as she walked the floor, wringing her hands, occasionally pausing to cast a fearful glance upon the pallid face of the man, who had indeed, proved his true devotion.

"I am not worthy of him, of any one, she murmured; "I am a passionate, wayward, wicked girl, and oh! Father, I am rightly punished—yet that one so seemingly perfect should be so depraved, oh!—God, help me to cast his image from my heart. If I had only have trusted father and mother, all would have been well; fearful, fearful lest so—if poor Frank should die."—And then she would sob hysterically, wholly unmindful of the student, who had entered with Aunt Nelly, and with her assistance, had loosened the cloak, and succeeded in restoring the poor young man to consciousness.

"He should be under the care of a skillful surgeon," said the student; "his arm is badly shattered. His name is too distant—and."

"Can we get him to father's," asked Mary in a subdued tone—"He would know what to do."

"I could walk there if it was not for this deathly faintness," said Frank, feebly, as he turned a look of deep gratitude upon Mary.

"That would never do; I will just go over and harness up; you must ride," and the student after staunching the blood, and carefully binding up the arm, hurried back home.

At midnight Mary slept uneasily; tears stained her fair cheeks, and her hand was locked in that of her mother, who sat beside her only, but wild child, her heart beating high with joy, that thus she had been snatched from an awful and untimely fate. Neither she nor the doctor had known of their daughter's absence, until young Frank Raymond was brought to their door.—True, they had remonstrated with her, and her father's warm temper had led him to say some things harshly, but they did not dream of her desertion.

The next morning Doctor Graham wore a serious face at the breakfast table; Frank's fever was high, he said, and the wound a dangerous one; he glanced at Mary she was in the act of conveying a cup of coffee to her lips; she sat it down untasted, the color left her face, and rising from the table she hastened to her room. Her mother started to follow her, but Doctor Graham laid his hand upon her arm saying, "my dear, let her go alone, she needs all this discipline—let her settle between her God and herself; she has been very headstrong, and no doubt but for this timely warning, would have eloped with the wretch who won her heart, in spite of our warnings."

Three weary weeks passed by, and Frank Raymond, but a shadow of his former self, for the first time in his long sickness, crept down to the parlor; but upon whose arm? and whose eyes looked so lovingly in his face? Mary Graham supported him; she had been a faithful nurse; in his delirium

he had learned how fervent and deathless was his affection; she saw with a renewed vision; she remembered many things that were possibly inconsistent with the supposed purity of her former "adorer" as he styled himself. Often, with much sorrow, had she regretted that she had deemed herself so much wiser than her parents; and now that she is the happy and loving wife of Frank Raymond, she looks back with almost mortal terror, on her intimacy with a man against whom her parents had repeatedly warned her, for he who left a dying wife to snatch an only child from a happy home, lies convicted of the basest crimes, in a prison cell.

MORAL. Parents are generally good judges of what will best constitute the happiness of their children; and passion is blind.

DRAWING FROM CURIOSITIES.

The *Drawing Room Journal* boasts the acquisition of the following oddities to its "museum":

A horn taken from an Irish bull. Some peelings taken from Christ Church bells.

A political rib from the right side.

A ring stolen from a maiden's laugh.

A few old threads taken from Cape May.

A ribbon taken from the cap of a Climax.

A little and big toe from the foot of the Alleghany Mountains.

The end of the North Pole.

A stocking darned with Cleopatra's Needle.

DISTANCE OF THE SUN.

The following domestic illustrations of inter-stellar distances,

we quote from "*Household Words*:"

"Imagine a rail-way from here to the sun. How many hours is the sun from us? Why, if we were to send a baby in an express train, going incessantly at a hundred miles an hour, without making any stoppages, the baby would grow to be a boy—the boy would grow to be a man—the man would grow old and die—without seeing the sun, for it is distant more than a hundred years from us. But what is this, compared to Neptune's distance Had Adam and Eve started, by our rail-way, at the Creation, to go from Neptune to the sun, at the rate of fifty miles an hour, they would not have got there yet; for Neptune is more than six thousand years from the centre of our system."

SERIOUS ACCIDENT.—The man with the high dickey met with an accident last Sabbath, which should serve to warn all those youths who are tormented by ambition in the matter of linen. The man with the high dickey attended church; his dickey was "done up" with an extra quantity of starch, an extra polish, and a feather-edge around the top. He listened for a while to the sermon, but at length it was observed that he nodded. At "fifteenth" he was fast asleep and nodding heavily; and, awful to relate at each nod his dickey cut his ears. He still slept and nodded, until the preacher arrived at "seventieth," when he sank into a profound slumber, while at the same moment his head sunk into his dickey, and both ears were completely severed from his cranium, and dropped into his side-pockets! At this juncture the preacher, in a loud voice, quoted this text—"He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." The high dickey man awoke and found himself deprived, by a strange accident, of his most distinguishing features. He was fair to pocket his loss, however, and retired from the church in an unenviable mood, and if he again attends worship, especially during the dog days, we fear that he will be more stiff-necked and hardened than ever.

[Museum.]

Kossuth wisely declines taking any part in nigger politics.