

A SONG FOR SUMMER.

The meadow-lark ripples out o'er the fresh stubble
A bugle note merry to herald the Sun,—
Come wander, O, wander! A truce to all trouble.
Sing Hey, nonny, nonny, the summer's begun!

Sing Hey, nonny nonny! The scent of the hay,—
The dew of the morning,—the sweet of the year.
The hearts of us now are too blithe for the saying
Of aught but "Hey-el-o! The summer is here."

A perch on the fence-post the squirrel sits sentry;
The rabbit runs skipping,—the creek sparkles by;
Small folk of the hill,—the shy woodland gentry,—
Sing, each in his way, "O the summer and I!"

Sing, Hey, for the dawning. The meadow a-quiver
With dew-brushed green where the quail trooped past;—
The haze on the mountains,—the glint on the river,—
Sing Hey-o, the summer!—it's summer at last!

—Leslie's Weekly.

LEOTA.

YOU are very good to me, Leota. I should be decidedly blue when the boys are away on the range. It weren't for your visits."

Ned Forsythe smiled at the Indian girl who was bending over his bunk, and took her little brown hand in his large one, which looked strangely white after his month's imprisonment. A rich color came into her dusky face and her big brown eyes mellowed and softened at the sound of his voice.

"You have saved my life twice, Leota—first when you rescued me from the prairie fire, and then again by your nursing. What can I do, little one, to thank you?"

"If the white man lives Leota asks no more, and he will live for the sake of Leota," she said in accents so hopeful that the man lying there in pain and fever wondered what had disturbed her usual stolid calmness. Before his mind had solved the problem, the girl herself, by a swift kiss as she left him, awakened him suddenly to the fact that it was love, not pity, that had rescued him and whiled away the weary hours of his enforced quiet.

For a moment he was dazed. The thought of his having so unwittingly gained this little savage's love, when another, stately and fair, had turned from him in misfortune, caused him to smile in ironical amusement. She whom he loved was as cold and stern as Leota was warm and tender, and yet—and yet! It was her face he pictured, as he rode that terrible day through the prairie fire; it was her voice he heard as he pushed on through flames and smoke, and it was her name he uttered, when his little broncho stumbled and fell, and together they lay, man and brute, each with a broken leg, threatened with a terrible death. It was the name of Alice that lingered on his lips, but it was Leota who came galloping over the prairie, urging on her pony to the rescue. It was her brown arms that raised him tenderly to her own seat, where, mounting beside him she brought him to the ranch.

"Where did you learn such gentle ways, Leota?" Ned asked one day when she was arranging his pillows and smoothing the blankets on his bunk.

"They taught us to make beds at the Mission," she replied, "but no one ever called me gentle before."

"Leota," would you miss me if I went away?" he asked musingly.

"Nay, speak not so. The Great Spirit will not take you away," she answered with eyes full of tears.

"I am not speaking of death, Leota. I think my chances of going to your Happy Hunting Grounds are over for the present. I was thinking of going to the Southland. There is much talk of war among the white chiefs. Should it really come, I shall go, if I am well enough to pass muster."

The child, for so she seemed to him, turned her face away and stood motionless.

"Why don't you speak, little one?"

"If the white man goes to the war, Leota will die."

"But I would come back."

"To me?" she asked tremulously.

"To you," he replied.

"Do you swear by the Great Spirit that you will come back to me?" she demanded almost fiercely.

"I give you my solemn word that I will come back to you, if I live," he answered gravely; "but, child, the war is not yet declared, so this is idle talk."

Still, the war came. Ned joined Roosevelt's famous rough riders, and the parting was such that he could never forget. Leota's silent, heart-broken good-bye remained with him until the roar of battle drove away all thoughts save those of the moment.

Amid the war-like clatter he seemed to hear a gentle voice and murmured, "Alice."

Like an echo from behind him, came the words, "Alice, where art thou?" "Whose voice was that?" asked Ned, roused to consciousness. As he raised himself, he groaned in pain.

"Lie still, old man. We are both in the same fix, I guess, though I fear your case is worse than mine, for you were raving a minute ago, and whispering a woman's name. It happened to be the same as my sister's. It sounded very sweet to me and I am afraid that I shook you up a bit with my quotation. I'm sorry that I can't be more polite, but I have a Spanish souvenir in my leg which makes it impossible for me to rise and pay my respects, but I'm only a foot or two behind you. It's a deuced bore getting bowled over so early in the game, isn't it? We are missing the very best of it."

"I wish I could see you. It may be my fancy, but I think you are Jack Allerton," said Ned.

"Of course I am, and you are Ned Forsythe, as I live! God bless you, Ned! Well, I say, this is uncommonly jolly."

"Do you think so? I would have applied some other adjective. So you have not forgotten me. I fancied the hole I left had long since closed over."

"There are some who do not forget their old friends. The Allertons are loyal, if nothing else."

"All of them?" queried Ned.

"Allertons, I said. There are no exceptions. You groan, Ned; are you suffering greatly?"

"No, it is nothing—only a little done up."

Another groan and Jack knew that the old friend beside him was either fainting or dead. He made an effort to pull himself nearer, but the pain occasioned was too great, and a few minutes later, when the Red Cross nurse came, he found both comrades lying unconscious with open wounds.

But when the first transport left a few days later, Jack and Ned were on it, bound for home.

"Mother and Alice will revel in a chance to show their patriotism, Ned. We will be nursed and fed without ceasing. I am going to submit gracefully myself, and let them hero-worship me to their hearts' content. You follow my lead, old man, and the prodigal son's entertainment will read like a poor performance compared to the continuous show kept up for us, in the role of wounded heroes."

"You are as ridiculous as ever, Jack. I am glad that a little thing like a mauser hasn't dimmed your spirits. As for me, I beg of you not to let them look me up. I shall get all the attention I need in the hospital."

"Hospital! Who said hospital? You won't see the inside of one very soon. You are going home with me, you idiot. I thought you understood that long ago."

"You are awfully good, Jack, but I can't do it, old fellow. Let me go off by myself."

"And eat your heart out—a fine diet for a half starved and wounded soldier. You will never go to a hospital without a fight with me."

Ned found remonstrance, argument, alike futile, and he wisely left the subject to be settled at the end of their journey. But he had not counted on the fact that he would topple over in a faint when he saw amid the waiting crowd a long remembered face, watching with anxious eyes the landing of the ship. When he came to himself in the smoothly running, rubber-tired carriage, and found his head against the shoulder of the woman he loved he sighed contentedly at the beautiful dream, and feared to speak, lest the vision should vanish and he should find himself once more aboard the crowded, ill-smelling boat.

"Are you comfortable? I thought

you would never come out of that faint."

Comfortable! He reflected that he had never been so comfortable in his life, but he only murmured, "Alice."

"Jack is with mother. One carriage would not hold us all, so Jack had you put in here under my charge."

"It is a long drive, isn't it?" asked Ned, hopefully.

"Yes, rather. Does the jolting hurt you?"

"Nothing hurts me now, Alice. Even my old wound seemed healed for the moment."

"You must not talk. Just lie still and rest."

"It's so strange, Alice. I can't realize it. You are just the same after these two years and I am—"

"You're Ned," she slipped her hand into his and a tear fell on his worn and faded blouse.

He had said she was the same and yet how infinitely tender she had grown.

"Alice, are you—is it really true?"

"Yes, Ned, it is true. I am, I always was, dear. You misunderstood me. I thought you knew me better than to believe me disloyal. I was proud and hurt. But now you are back. Jack wrote me of your strange meeting"—was that a sob in her voice? "You are at a disadvantage. I have you at my mercy now. You can do only as I say while you are ill. I shall be a cruel tyrant, Ned. Remember you are a private, and I am in command."

"A soldier's part is to obey. I am a soldier." Ned closed his eyes and sighed contentedly. He was very weak and tired, and quite willing to accept this form of discipline.

From the moment that Jack came under his mother's care, he grew well by strides, and it was but a short time before he was about the house, but Ned lay calm and quiet, with no sign of mending for many days. Alice sat by his side for hours at a time, with his hand in hers, and he would smile or sigh contentedly. They talked but little. He was not strong and they were too happy for explanations.

"I believe you don't care, Ned, whether you get well or not," said Jack, as he limped into the room one morning. "Stir yourself, old fellow. Hang it, get mad! You are too angelic to last."

"I was never so happy in my life, Jack. Your mother has been, so kind to me, how can I ever thank her?"



"IT WOULD BE EASIER TO DIE."

And Alice, what can I say about her? No words are adequate."

"Don't say anything. Only get out of this. To see you around again will be thanks enough. It would be downright ungrateful of you to die on their hands."

"Sometimes I think it would be better for me to die."

"The fever has made you daffy. For heaven's sake, quit talking such Tommyrot," advised Jack, with kindly brusqueness, as he dragged himself out of the sick room.

Perhaps his words had good effect. At any rate Ned took a turn for the better and began to improve steadily, though slowly.

One day when he had arrived at the dignity of sitting up the faint color in his cheeks gave Alice courage to say:

"Ned, why have you been so slow about getting well? Why didn't you care? Have I not a right to know?"

"Should a man keep an oath, Alice, which was made in good faith, but without much reflection and with absolutely no conception of the wretchedness that the keeping of it would entail? Tell me, Alice, what you think."

Alice's face whitened and she hesitated before speaking.

"An oath has always seemed a sacred thing to me, Ned, but surely you have taken no oath to die? her voice was a mere whisper.

"No, Alice, no; but it would be easier to die than to keep my oath. Help me, Alice. I have sworn to return to the West if I live."

"Why, that is not so terrible, Ned. Couldn't—wouldn't you take me with you?" Alice asked bravely.

Ned's only answer was a hoarse sob as he buried his face in his hands. Alice knelt on the floor at his side and gently uncovered his face.

"Ned, dear, you must tell me what it all means."

"Forgive my weakness, Alice. The thought of leaving you unnerves me, for if I keep my oath, Alice, it means lifelong separation for us. I should have told you when I first came, but I thought I would not live, and it was so much easier to drift on without spoiling the beautiful present, for I thought that was all there was for me. The doctors on the boat gave me no hope of life. I have never told you dear, how near to death I was just before the war. I was rescued, Alice, and tenderly cared for by one to whom, on leaving, I made this wretched oath."

Ned paused.

"Go on, tell me all," Alice demanded.

She still held his hands, and as she heard of his narrow escape from fire and his long sufferings, she clasped them still tighter and she listened eagerly to every word until the little story was done.

"My own happiness seemed wrecked. Why should I not make this child happy if I could? My life was a poor thing enough. If devoting it to her should assure the happiness of one of God's creatures, wouldn't it be better than selfishly brooding on what might have been? Thus I reasoned in the brief moment before I answered her, and, Alice, while the oath was on my lips, your image was in my heart. Heaven help me, what shall I do?"

The tears which had been streaming down Alice's face ceased, but she was pale and her hands were icy cold.

"There is no question, Ned; you must return to the poor child, Leota."

"No, no, Alice, I can't leave you!" cried Ned.

"It is my wish," Alice answered firmly. "You will go back, of course. There would be no happiness for us should we ignore your honor."

She rose and walked away, leaving him to face the future alone, while she fought out in her own room the battle between the two combatants who so often cross swords, love and duty.

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Much to Jack's joy and his own disgust, Ned's strength returned rapidly. He did not, nor did Alice, make a confidant of either Mrs. Allerton or Jack and it was assumed by them that business called Ned away. When the last day of his long stay came, Alice bore herself bravely. Ned took her in his arms and for an instant she clung to him. In a moment she drew away with the whispered word, "Courage." Her task was to help him, and he needed all her encouragement and prayers, for it had been a thousand times easier for him to face death on the burning prairie, or before the Spanish bullets at San Juan, than it was to hear himself from her who was dearer than life itself.

After the parting was over and Jack and Ned had driven off, Alice gave way. She buried her face on her mother's shoulder and sobbed hysterically.

"Poor child! She is worn out with anxiety and nursing," said Mrs. Allerton, "and I am glad that she can rest now."

"Alice is beginning to look like a reconcentrado, mother," said Jack, a few days after Ned's departure. "Can't we do something to freshen her up and put a much needed pound or two of flesh on her?"

"I don't know what to do, Jack, sighed his mother. "I wanted her to go out of town, but she shudders at the very suggestion of leaving the house. What do you think is the matter with her?"

Jack whistled thoughtfully.

"Never mind, mother. Don't worry. She will be all right when Ned comes back."

"Ah, when Ned comes back," repeated Alice, who had happened to overhear Jack's words. "When Ned comes back," was a question, and her heart gave back the despairing answer, "Never." She had done it herself. He would have stayed had she asked him, but she had ruthlessly, for the sake of an ignorant, savage child, ruined their two lives. She hated herself for her Quixotism, and then again, she loathed herself for wishing Ned to do anything save that which was right and honorable, and she would not have called him back for worlds, though her heart was sick with yearning and her brain ached with the continued warfare between the nobility of her mind and the constancy of the love she bore him.

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The dusk of the cool autumn night had fallen on the home of Man-with-the-eagle-eye, the Indian interpreter, when a tall stranger entered. The fitful blaze of the camp fire threw a ruddy light on his pale face, and a girl lying in her blankets sat up suddenly and greeted him with a glad cry.

"It is my white chief! I knew he would come back to Leota. The Great Spirit has been good."

Ned took up the little wasted figure, but a choking in his throat prevented his speaking. He knew instinctively that he was not the only guest in that tepee, and in the presence of death he was mute, but tenderly and with true affection he held her and looked down into the great, soft eyes which were lighted with happiness.

"My white chief did not forget Leota. He came back, as he said he would," she murmured.

"Yes, thank God!" Ned answered with a sob, and the small, dark face on his breast broke into a smile, which lingered long after the simple, loving spirit had flown.

When Ned put her gently down the old Indian father, with solemn, unrelaxed face, sat down beside his dead and in slow, guttural tones began to speak.

"She rode the burning prairie to the railroad station for news of the white men's battles. The fire overtook her; we found her burned, dying. The medicine man from the village says it was hope that kept her alive. It is over. The white man will leave my tepee. Living she was yours, but now she is mine. The child of my heart is dead. Leave us alone together."

Ned walked out into the frosty night, reverently keeping his head bared, as he stood for a moment by the open door. Then with a sigh he turned his face Eastward.—Waverly Magazine.

A DISTORTED VIRTUE.

Old Man Was Penurious that He Might Be Generous.

The distinction between a virtue and a vice is sometimes not so clear to any one capable of apprehending it as the moralist would have us believe. At least, there is doubt enough to make one hesitate to pronounce judgment against the seeming sinner.

Mary Forbush had two lovers some fifty years ago. She was as good as she was fair, and she had a true and tender heart. She said "no" to Frank Gordon as gently although as firmly as she said "yes" to John Mann. She was married after a short engagement, and was happy wife, mother and grandmother all in due course.

Everybody said Frank Gordon would soon choose another sweetheart; but years went by and he did not take one. By and by he was recognized as the best friend of the Manns. He was always asked to their family parties. He knew all the children's birthdays, and was "Uncle Frank" to them all, and in high favor with boys and girls. Not a trouble or a hope but found its way to his sympathetic ears. He grew old a little too fast, and presently began to be classed with the generation before his own rather than with that of John and Mary Mann.

Loyal and kindly as he was in many ways, as time went on he became penurious to the point of miserliness. Even his gifts to the children dwindled to nothings. His coat was so shabby that he looked like a beggar at a feast in the one family where he visited. He did a commission business, and nobody knew whether it was large or small, for he kept but one clerk, who was as reserved as himself. People used to sneer at his stinginess, and even the Manns made plans to induce him to relax his vigilant watch on his pocket-book—but in vain.

At last he died—after an illness of only a few hours. When his will was opened it was found to consist of bequests to the Manns. There were twenty thousand dollars apiece to Mary and John, ten thousand apiece to each of their six children, and five thousand apiece to each of ten grandchildren. The hundred and fifty thousand dollars—at least five times what any one had supposed him worth—represented the long, slow savings of fifty years.

The miserliness which had defaced the man's character as the world saw it was judged more gently when it appeared as the manifestation—mistaken, perhaps, but genuine—of a lifelong devotion to a pure love.

George Elliot, writing of Mr. Gilfil, says, "It is with men as with trees; if you lop off their finest branches, into which they were pouring their young life-juice, the wounds will be healed over with some rough boss, some odd excrescence; and what might have been a grand tree, expanding into a general shade, is but a whimsical, misshapen trunk. Many an irritating fault, many an unlovely oddity, has come of a hard sorrow."

The Marble Bible of Burma.

Great as has been the amount of labor expended on the various Bibles of the world, the palm for execution must be given to the Kutho-daw, which is a Buddhist monument near Mandalay, in Burma. It consists of about 700 temples, each containing a slab of white marble on which the whole of this Buddhist Bible, containing over 8,000,000 syllables, has been engraved. The Burmese alphabet is used, but the language is Pali. This wonderful Bible is absolutely unique. The Kutho-daw was erected in 1857 by Mindon-min, the last king but one of Burma. The vast collection of temples together form a square, with a dominating temple in the center. Each of the marble slabs on which the sacred text is inscribed is surmounted by an ornamental canopy in pagoda form.

Always Welcome.

There is talk of still another "Byrons revival." Burns seems to be the only immortal who doesn't need "reviving"—as some one said in a speech to the Burns Club. He's with us every day and welcome.—Atlanta Constitution.