

A VISION OF PEACE.

It was a noise of shawms and tuned flutes
That swelled and rang and floated in the air,
With myriad interchangeable salutes
Of note with note in complication rare,
And peace was there.

It was a waving of unnumbered tresses
Of leaves and bending boughs and softened shine,
Of rays transfused into the dim recesses,
Palpitant type of the quick breath Divine,—
That was her shrine.

It was a heaven of grandly wheeling stars
And cuscating meteors and the light
Which trails from aether-darting comet cars,
And Peace was there revealed to open sight
In raiment bright.

Lo! 'tis a world purged clean from all alloy,
And star-crown'd in the soft, blue air on high,
Throned by the illimitable fount of joy,
See where she sits and smiles with radiant eye,
Eternally.

Awake our souls! awake the harp and lute!
Cast golden crowns before that final throne!
The breakless song shall never more be mute;
Hymn the white vesture with a silver tone!
She reigns alone.

Dreams all. Those tender eyes are sad and stern,
And lighten only to approve the sword
Which flashes where the war-fires hottest burn,
And crimson stains incarnadine the sward
For cleansing poured.

One glance of pitying scorn the weaklings earn
Who in her name bid wrong and rapine reign,
Woe to them if they have no souls to learn,
Offended Peace treats with a high disdain
Their babblings vain.

But most she seethes with a celestial wrath
The slaves of wealth and selfishness and ease,
Whose higher nature rusts in senseless sloth,
And in that they wax fat and rich, cry peace
Where there is no peace.

While wrong remains, God curses all repose,
And lurid is the dead, unnatural light,
Phosphoric, that from putrefaction glows.
It lights the lull that bodes a coming fight
Dread, blinding, bright.

Know verily that thunder-charged air
Is not at rest, but strung for deadly strife;
God's elements in fearful tension there,
Must grapple to set free the prison'd life
In all things rife.

Mountains must be made low, rough places plain,
Voices must cry in the waste wilderness,
Baptising blood must fall in awful rain
Ere angel tongues proclaim the Prince of Peace
And fightings cease.

—London Spectator.

THE FATE OF MRS. SMITH.

I love you dear one. Will you be my wife?"

The question had been growing to its birth for a week, and was given to the world on the fairest day in all the year.

It was mid-June, "the time of roses and the longest day." The heights of Cliveden, robed in many-shaded green, cast a verdant reflection into the burnished bosom of the flowing Thames. The sky burnt like an enamelled shield, and the royal sun blazed down his appointed path towards his couch in the west.

In the towns the pavement burnt, and the air quivered with the summer heat. A new-born love would surely have died amid the road and reek of a city; but one in the Thames Valley, where the cool river murmured all day, and the nightingales trilled and jugged all night, where faint breezes fluttered the leaves and swung the heavy-headed roses—nature's censurers—the tiny love grew hourly and waxed stronger, drawing the maiden and the man closer and closer together, till, on that perfect afternoon their hands met, and the man spoke.

"I love you, dear one, will you be my wife?"

The birds above twittered, and the river below sang, but the girl's heart stood still, and her face grew as white as her gown.

Philip Tressider saw the creeping pallor of her fair cheeks.

"Dorinda, darling, have I frightened you? Have I spoken too soon? Forgive me if I have; but, indeed, I thought you cared—a little."

Dorinda Vane raised herself from the scarlet punt cushions amid which she had flung herself with lazy abandonment an hour ago. She had thrown aside her hat, and the sunshine filtering through the leaves struck golden notes back from the tangles of her ruffled curls.

She pushed the hair back from her forehead as she sat upright.

"You have not frightened me, Philip, but I was wishing you had not spoken," her voice sank to a faint whisper, and a hot flush overwhelmed the pallors of her face—"for—I do care—a great deal."

A look of passionate joy swept across his handsome bronzed features.

"And for that sweet reason you will be my wife," he cried, eagerly.

She laid one hand, small and very white, and innocent of rings, across his smiling mouth, and shook her head sorrowfully.

"And for that reason—which to me is bitter—I cannot marry you."

"Dorinda! Why? I adore you, and you, and you say you love me. What reason can there be against our marriage?"

For answer she laid one hand upon his coat sleeve. Well cut, well worn, well brushed as the garment was, it was more than ordinarily threadbare. No one but a millionaire or a very poor man would have worn such a coat.

Then, with a gesture, she indicated her shabby little frock, her sailor hat, trimmed with a scrap of cheap blue ribbon, her mended shoes.

Philip Tressider caught her meaning at once, but he was not beaten yet. Other men as poor as he had won wives, so why not he? "I am poor, bitterly, cruelly poor," he cried.

"When my father died burdened with debts of honor, he little guessed the terrible legacy I should take upon myself. But, darling, another year or so and they will be discharged, and I hope to get my company in a few months. And with you by my side, I should struggle through to better times."

"Listen to me, Philip," said Dorinda, a weariness creeping into her voice, and a tired

worn look shadowing the glories of her violet eyes; "till we met at the Marchants a week ago, you knew nothing of me. Oh, yes; I know you took me down to dinner at the Kynastons, and danced with me twice—you see I remember—at Lady Newbold's dance. But all that counts for nothing. We were almost strangers till a week ago. You have seen me in a white muslin frock at a dance and in a white cotton frock on the river. I dare say, you have never noticed the difference between my white gowns and those of other girls. Men don't know that muslins and cottons are equally the badge of wealth and of poverty. The Marchants are old friends of mine, and they insist on my staying here with them every year for a fortnight before their smart set come. You would see how poor I was if I were among other girls."

"Dorinda! I won't believe that the shabbiness of your gowns or my coats, can influence you in this matter."

"Heavens forbid!" cried the girl, sadly. "But let me finish. Perhaps you don't know that at home—ah! Philip, if you could see my home, you would pity me." A sob caught her throat, but she forced herself to go on. "There is no mother there, she died eight years ago, but there are two girls—one so pretty, Philip—and three boys, all so good and dear—and then—there is—my father."

One glance at her face, scorched by a blush of shame, told him the rest.

"I understand—go on," he said.

"I want to get the girls away from home before they are any older, and the boys have to be put to something. They are good now—but the example"—she sighed. "The man who marries me must be able to help them. Oh! my love don't make it too hard for me! I am the eldest I am pretty. I must do the best for them. I must try to marry a man with money."

She bowed her head upon her knees, and a passion of sobs shook her frame for a moment. Then she faced Philip and—the future. She was deadly pale, and her eyes glittered, but her voice was steady:

"Take me back, please. I am rather tired."

He rose without a word, snatched the punt from beneath the overhanging Cliveden woods, and sent it gliding down the stream.

It was just such another afternoon three years later when Sir Philip Tressider landed at Folkestone Harbor.

In face he was a thought thinner, perhaps, a shade more bronzed; otherwise time had passed him by unchanged. But Dame Fortune had played queer tricks with his life. Fame had come to him through his profession rank and riches through his family. Now he was returned from India on leave, and was going to stay with friends at the place where he had landed.

Suddenly a voice, sweet and gay, cried:

"Why, it's Philip Tressider; don't you remember me?"

He looked down, and saw the girl he loved best in the world.

"Dorinda!" he cried, and clasped her two small hands within his own. "You! How happy to meet! I have but just arrived—and you!"

"I live here, and you must come and see me. There's my home," and she waved her hand towards one of a terrace of high white houses.

As she did so he looked at her, and at once noted that times with her, as with him, had bettered. Her lovely figure was moulded into a gown elaborate with lace and embroidery, an airy bonnet of the daintiest construction was perched above her golden locks.

"May I come and see you tomorrow?" he asked eagerly.

"I shall be so glad if you will," she answered, smiling deliciously into his eyes.

The next moment he caught a glimpse of his friends, Col. and Mrs. Dorian, and, hastily taking leave of Dorinda, struggled through the crowd to them.

That night at dinner Mrs. Dorian spoke across the table to where, behind an embankment of flowers and lights, her husband sat.

"I met Mrs. Smith today. That horrid husband of hers is coming out again."

"Oh, how quite too awful!" lisped a little woman, with rouged cheeks and a very décolletée bodice, who sat at Tressider's right hand. "Mrs. Smith says he is quite quiet now. Indeed, it seems he can't help being so. The brain disease has affected his spine, and he is helpless."

"How ghastly!" said the décolletée lady, with a shudder.

"It's a mercy for his poor wife" growled a man across the table.

"Why?" said Tressider, to keep the conversation going.

"Well, Jack Smith used to be a very good fellow," explained Col. Dorian, "till his father died. A restraining influence was lost with him, and Jack dropped into money and bad habits at the same time. Folkestone is not above a bit of gossip, and in a couple of years the women hereabouts thought twice before they bowed to young Smith in the streets."

"Then he married such a lovely girl. She's quite a 'lioness' in Folkestone circles. You must meet her Tressider. She was a Londoner, and I fancy, knew nothing about him save that he was rich. Jack put on the brake for the first three months of married life—had his wife's family to stay with him, and seemed quite domesticated. But that period of suppression only made him worse and the man became a brute."

"Why didn't they suppress him?" said Tressider.

"Well, they did; but not till he had chased his wife all over the house with an open razor. He went raving mad."

"And now he's coming out again?"

"Yes," said Mr. Dorian; but he is quite harmless now, merely idiotic." Then he nodded to the décolletée lady, and all rose from the table.

Next day the hours were all too long till Sir Philip found himself outside the house that held Dorinda.

"Is Miss Vane at home?" he inquired.

"No one of that name lives here," said the smart maid.

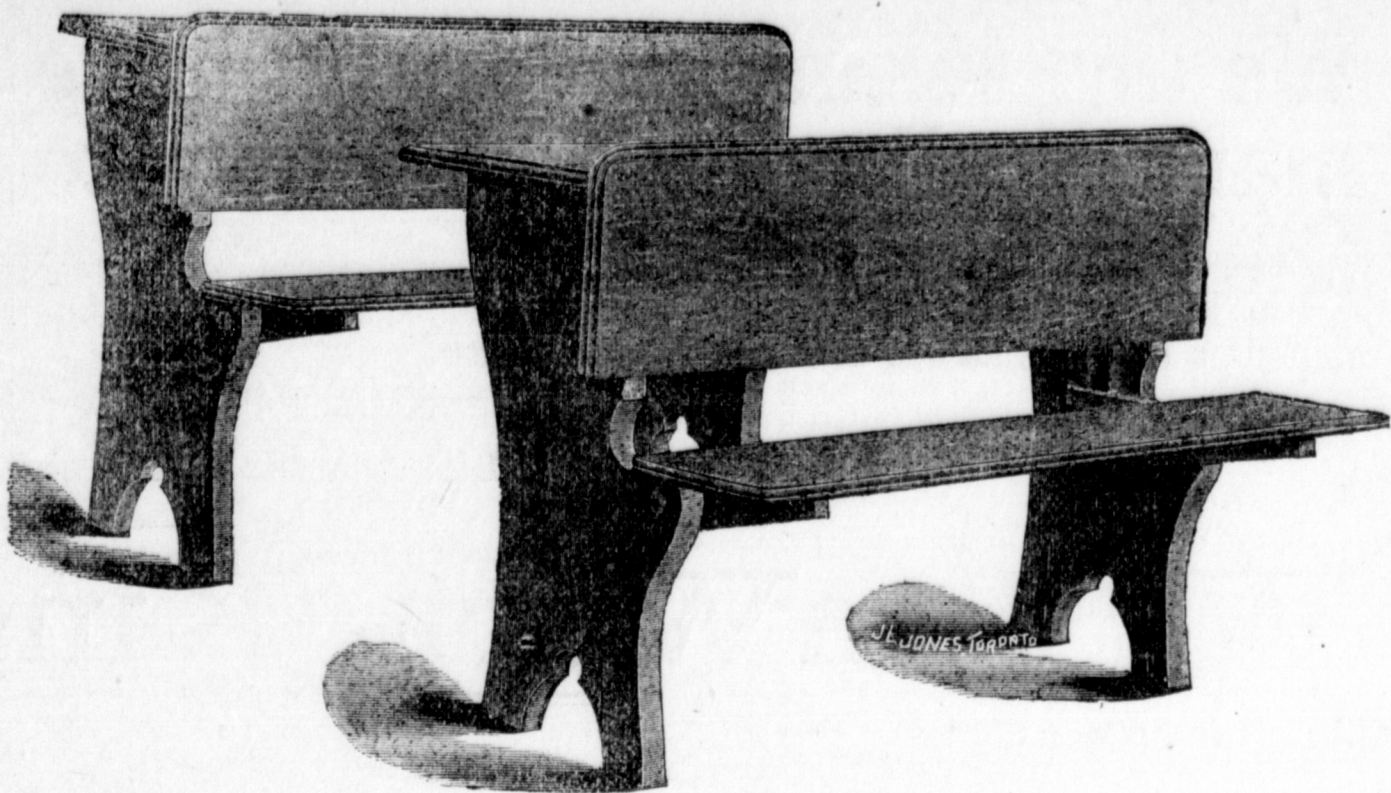
"Perhaps next door?"

"I think not, sir," rejoined the servant, adding, "but my mistress, Mrs. Smith, may know."

"At that moment Dorinda herself flashed like a sun ray into the hall, and drew him into a dainty little boudoir.

"But, Dorinda!" Philip cried, laughing at

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her impetuosity. "They told me you didn't live here. A Mrs. Smith—"

"I am Mrs. Smith!" said Dorinda simply. The story he had heard last night flashed back to him, but he thrust it from him. The same was so ordinary, it was impossible that this fair thing could be the sport of so cruel a fate.

"But not Mrs. Jack Smith?" he cried eagerly.

She gave a gesture of assent; then her self-control gave way, and she abandoned herself to his arms and wept upon his breast.

But during the three weeks that remained to her of freedom and of happiness she never again yielded to her misgivings and fears. And after the final scene between herself and Philip she wrote:

"I love to know you care for me. Your affection is the only live thing in my dead life—the single flower within my desert heart. But, Philip—my Philip—and I call you so for the last time, our ways lie apart. They only touched for those few dear hours at Maidenhead. My duty lies here, as the wife of a sorely afflicted man who took me and mine from poverty. Your way, Philip, lies out in the world. Dear heart, no woman can ever love you as I do now, but the least loving of wives will be your glory. I should only be your shame. Kiss me once, and once again, now farewell forever."

A month later Sir Philip received a letter from Col. Dorian.

"Folkestone, August,—Dear Tressider: When are you coming to look us up again? Heaps of your old friends are down here and the weather is lovely. By the bye, we have had rather of a shock just recently. You remember Mrs. Smith, I dare say. In fact, my wife always thinks you were taken with her pretty face and golden hair. The poor little woman is dead. That wretched husband of hers managed to drag himself to her bedside one night last week, and smothered her with her own pillows. There was no reason for the act, of course, for she was the most dutiful of wives. The funeral was yesterday. Every one was there, and heaps of flowers. Yours always,

"Fred Dorian."

Sir Philip Tressider read the letter twice, then his head sank upon his outstretched arms and he wept.—St. Paul's.

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Hartland, Nov. 9, '95.

NOTICE.

Notice is hereby given that application will be made to the Legislature of the Province of New Brunswick for legislation respecting the following matters relating to the amendment of the Acts of Assembly relating to the Town of Woodstock.

1st. To amend acts in respect to collection of taxes from non-resident ratepayers.

2nd. To amend acts so that taxes will be a lien on real estate.

3rd. To amend acts so that a Mayor or Councillors cannot either directly or indirectly enter into any contract with the Town or have any bills against the Town while holding such office.

4th. To amend acts so that the Mayor and Councillors shall each be individually personally liable for all bills contracted without first obtaining the consent of the Town Council.

5th. To amend law in reference to holding the elections for Mayor and Councillors.

J. C. HARTLEY,
Town Clerk.

Woodstock, N. B. Jan. 7th, 1896.

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