

A SWEETHEART'S VALENTINE.

I roll my chair up to the blaze
That fills my chamber with its glow,
And sit and dream of other days—
A half-forgotten long ago;
And in my lap, unfolded, lies
A youthful treasure half divine,
As bright as was the sender's eyes,
For it is her old valentine.

How fair the words which here appear
That cross the page she smiled upon!
I listen, for I seem to hear
The laugh which told her labor done.
A queer conceit? Perhaps to you
Came long ago the self-same line;
"The rose is red, the violet's blue,"
Glow on my sweetheart's valentine.

Why tell me that the rose was red?
So were her cheeks 'neath winter's
sleets,
The violet, blushing in its bed.
Could not out-blue her radiant eyes;
Across the snow from rustic Miss
About whose name Love's tendrils
twine,

Sir Cupid carried with a kiss
This quaint, perfumed old valentine.

The rose is just as red to day
As when she penned her complement true;
Though fade the hues of eyes away,
The violet remains as blue;
The years behind us only prove,
Despite their shadows and their shine,
That many a maiden's hopes and love
Went with ye olden valentine.

—The Ledger Monthly.

WHAT HE LEFT.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"I know not of the truth, d'y'e see,
I tell the tale as 'twas told to me."

Mark Brownson was dying, slowly, but surely, so the physician told his wife, and advised that if he had any business to settle, it should not be delayed.

"He is sinking, and even now I see his mind is, at times, a little clouded. However, I suppose there is nothing of importance that he should consider," said the doctor.

"He has made no will," said Mrs. Brownson.

"Is that necessary? I did not know—"

"I think it is very necessary, doctor, for his children's welfare. Not that I think it at all likely there can be any contest about what Mr. Brownson has. Yet to provide against any future troubles, it would be prudent, I think."

The good doctor assented, but looked much surprised.

And well he might. No one imagined old Mark Brownson had anything to will. But he was a very eccentric man; and the economical style of his establishment was likely one of his notions.

"Are you suffering much pain now, Mark?" asked Mrs. Brownson, a few moments after, when she was seated at her husband's bedside.

"Yes, yes; give me my composing draught—the opium—anything to relieve me," answered the suffering man.

His wife obeyed, and after his groaning and restlessness had ceased, she said:

"I want to talk to you, Mark. Can you listen now?"

A nodded assent gave her permission to proceed.

"Do you not think it would be as well for you to express your wishes with regard to the disposition of your stocks and other effects? You may outlive me Mark, and this thing not be necessary, still I think it better to attend to such business," said Mrs. Brownson, closely watching the effect her words might have on the sufferer.

She had feared possibly they might shock him severely, but depending much on the favorable influence of the opiate she had ventured on the business she considered so important.

A look of satisfaction replaced the anxiety of a moment before. She had no longer cause for fear. Calmly Mark Brownson heard her suggestion, and said, in a feeble voice:

"What have I to will?"

"Why, dear, you forget. Your long sickness and the opium—no wonder!"

There is the stock in the 'Liverpool Steamship Company,' and that in the 'Australian Mining Company.' Surely you have not forgotten your large amount in our State bonds? And how much you have in 'Fire and Life Insurance stock' I cannot just remember now. However, by reference to the papers I can tell."

Again she watched her husband's face. It only expressed a rather puzzled brain, as though he was trying to remember.

"You have such papers? I cannot think," he said.

"Don't try to, dear. It is not necessary. I will just look over your papers, and make a statement; and when I read them over to you in presence of the lawyer, you can assent. You wish an equal division between myself and our daughters, I know. Is it not so?"

"Yes, yes. You are always right," murmured her husband.

"There, dear, go to sleep now. Some time when you are easy we will fix this," said Mrs. Brownson.

And the next day, at an hour when she knew her husband's mind was best prepared, a lawyer was summoned, and a statement of stocks and bonds to the amount of two hundred thousand dollars placed before him, and Mark Brownson expressed his wish to have an equal division of his effects made between his wife and two children.

The will was made, and duly signed and witnessed by two of the nearest neighbors and the only domestic, a worthy woman

who had been with Mrs. Brownson for many years.

A few days more, and Mark Brownson had passed from earth.

Many wondered at the very quiet and unostentatious style of the last services for him; but the widow had said:

"In death it shall be with him as he always preferred in life."

And then when all was over, and the summer months were coming, Mrs. Brownson sold out the modest little establishment, and, with her daughters and their faithful servant, went to board by the seashore, at a very fashionable resort; but of course, not to mingle in the gay festivities of the season, only to recruit her health, which was very much impaired by long attention to her suffering husband, and to have the girls escape the heat and dust of the city.

A few days after they were settled in their new abode, Mrs. Brownson said to her attendant:

"Margaret, you were very much surprised by hearing Mr. Brownson's will."

"Oh, yes, ma'am, indeed I was."

"Well, Margaret, I do not wish you to mention anything about it down here. Mr. Brownson, you know, never let it be known to the world. And so it must be for the present. I do not wish my daughters to be married for anything but their own good qualities. They are good and beautiful enough to marry well, without having any other inducements for suitors. Now, Margaret, you know just how I feel, and what I mean!" said the anxious mother.

"Certainly I do! And I feel as much concerned about my beautiful young ladies as you do, ma'am. Never fear but I will look out for their interest," answered the worthy woman.

And to do as she said, to the best of her understanding, Margaret set out for a walk on the beach, with some of the other servants and their escorts, the waiters from the hotel. And before the next noon it was well known what a good chance there was for two young men to win as beautiful wives as ever were seen, to say nothing of the other greater attractions.

And very soon the sisters, Maud and May, were objects of universal observation. Yet it was very difficult to get an introduction, the young gentlemen all found; for the widow kept the beautiful girls very much secluded.

Numberless were the delicate attentions paid them, in the way of bouquets, books, and so on, sent by Margaret; and several cards to Mrs. Brownson, with the request for an introduction, accompanied by references—among which came those of Vernon Wadsworth and Harry Bennett.

The first one Mrs. Brownson knew well by reputation. He was a young physician of very fine promise, and, being of one of the best families in the State, she considered him worthy of her attention. The other, she had heard since her arrival there, was the possessor of a very fair amount of worldly goods, the life-long accumulation of an old miser uncle. So, from the many aspirants, Mrs. Brownson selected these two to present to her daughters.

Just at this time, Doctor Alton, Mrs. Brownson's friend and the physician who had attended her husband, arrived at the sea-shore; and through him, without any more trouble or waiting the mother's pleasure, young Doctor Wadsworth obtained an introduction, and presented his friend, Bennett.

And although both of these young men did their best to keep back all others by various manoeuvres, many more became acquainted with the lovely sisters, who soon, much to their own surprise, became decidedly the belles of that resort.

Carefully Mrs. Brownson had guarded her secret from her girls, fearing, perhaps, it would have a prejudicial effect, changing their sweet, unassuming manner, which was one of their greatest charms; or, perhaps, for other motives best known to herself.

Although Doctor Wadsworth and young Bennett very much feared the approach of other suitors, it was quite needless, for the girls were best pleased with the first who had sought them and drawn them forth from their seclusion.

The older one, Maud, a brilliant brunette, received with undigested pleasure the devoted attention of Harry Bennett; while gentle little May, so fair and timid, always greeted the handsome doctor by a rosy flush suffusing her beautiful face; and then, from a shy, quick glance from the eyes, that had drooped at his approach, he would see the glad light that told how welcome his coming was.

"We must win them now, doctor; you see how much they are admired and sought here. What will it be when they are out of their mourning robes and in the gayeties of the city? This is our best chance. What say you?" asked young Bennett, a fortnight after their introduction.

"Say! That the very idea of even losing sight of that gentle, beautiful May for a day, fills my heart with misgiving and great anxiety. I tell you, I began this affair rather in fun—"

"You mean after *funde* perhaps!" interrupted Bennett.

A flush suffused Doctor Wadsworth's face for an instant, and he answered:

"Well, I'll admit that he is not at all objectionable; but really, now that I know May Brownson, I would not be willing to

resign her to another man, even if she had not a dollar in the world."

There was an expression about Harry Bennett's mouth that looked as if his lips wanted to say: "I don't believe you!"—only they did not just dare to. Harry Bennett was as much in love as he could be with any one other than himself, still he was not going to leap without looking. So, after learning a little more than he had already heard from Margaret, he was called, very urgently, to the city. After an absence of only two days he was back again, and stated to Doctor Wadsworth his knowledge of Mark Brownson's possessions. That evening Mrs. Brownson received proposals for both of her daughters.

She must consider the matter, and consult with her friends, the prudent mother thought and said to the anxious suitors.

This made them each more determined to secure the prize.

"Dear May, plead with your mother for me!" said the ardent young doctor.

"Mamma will consent after a while," answered the gentle girl.

"After a while! Why not now? I am going away next month for a long time. I cannot leave you, May. Would you wish me to?"

May turned pale at the thought, and raised her pleading eyes to her mother.

It was enough. Doctor Wadsworth had used the surest weapon. A separation was dreaded by both mother and daughter, and each for different reasons. And then it was an easier thing for Harry Bennett to obtain the mother's consent, to claim his love at the same time.

Mrs. Brownson, after giving her consent, requested a private interview with her prospective sons-in-law. The girls were sent from the room, and then Mrs. Brownson said:

"I have thought possibly, gentlemen, that a very foolish rumor may have reached your ears respecting the wealth possessed by my daughters, and that—excuse me, but I must allude to it—this may in a measure have influenced your selecting them from the many young girls here—"

"Oh, madam!" both men exclaimed simultaneously.

"If I tell you they have nothing but their pure hearts and loving natures, will you not be disappointed?"

"No, madam. How can you judge me so?" exclaimed both.

"I am glad it is so. I would not have you marry my daughters under false impressions."

"When May is mine, I shall think I have secured the most valuable fortune any man can have," said the doctor, with a really honest look in his eyes.

"When Maud is mine, I shall know I have secured all I would wish," added Harry Bennett, with rather a sly twinkle in his eyes.

And so it was agreed that they should be united there, and after a very private wedding leave for an extensive bridal tour.

"The old fox! Is she not a sly one? She thought to throw us off, I do believe. But I am as bright as she," said Harry Bennett, after the interview.

"Really, Bennett, that is not a very respectful way of speaking of the mother of your promised wife," replied Doctor Wadsworth.

"Well, no; you are right. But just to think of her talking so to us!" answered Harry, with an air of injured pride.

The ceremony was over. After an acquaintance of less than six weeks, Doctor Wadsworth and Harry Bennett had won their wives.

And while the brides had retired to change their dress for the travelling-suit, the happy young husbands requested to speak a moment with their mother-in-law.

"Indeed you must speak; I will not," said Doctor Wadsworth, in a low tone, as he closed the door, and with Bennett approached Mrs. Brownson.

After a moment's hesitation, Harry Bennett said:

"Now, Mrs. Brownson, that we have proved our sincerity and real love for your daughters, there is no reason for any longer concealment."

"About what, sir?" asked his mother-in-law.

"Come, my dear madam; this is entirely needless. You have tried and proved us. Now to business."

"Really, Mr. Bennett, I am at a loss to understand you. Will you please to be explicit?"

"Well, madam, then I must tell you that I am perfectly well aware that my wife is entitled to the one-third of two hundred thousand dollars left by her father. Now, my dear madam, we are going on a very long and expensive trip, and may need more than I have in ready money. Now, that is just the whole truth," said Harry, who had gotten over his slight embarrassment, and then spoke in a very business sort of manner.

Not so with Doctor Wadsworth; he seemed very much mortified, and looked as if he wished he was away from that scene.

"Mr. Bennett, I spoke to you about this report, and told you how false it was, did I not?"

"Oh, yes, madam; but you see—"

"You still believe this, even when I again tell you that neither I nor my daughters have a dollar in the world beyond the small amount I have now from

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the sale of my household effects? I assure you, sir, I speak the truth," said Mrs. Brownson, in a tone and manner that would have enforced belief.

But Harry Bennett said, triumphantly: "Madam, I have seen Mr. Brownson's will."

"That will, my dear sir, is not worth the paper it is written on. Mr. Brownson was out of his head, and imagined he was possessed of that sum in bonds and stock. If you can find any such possession, no one would welcome it more gladly than I. You can readily prove the truth."

Harry Bennett gazed bewildered from his mother-in-law to Doctor Wadsworth, and then said in a low voice, as if to himself:

"Caught and caged."

"And I am glad of it," exclaimed the doctor, who was truly glad of anything to end that very embarrassing interview.

"Come, Bennett, we must arrange our trip to suit the extent of our purse, and be happy with the prizes we have won."

"Well, madam, I must say that the old gentleman's will was worth something. For I'll own up now, it helped very much to secure you one very nice young man for your son. I'll speak a word for him, although he has been done up to a very Brown son! I'm ready now, Wadsworth, and we won't shorten our trip one mile; for I've got a fortune, thanks to my old uncle. Yes, and another, I'll have to admit (there she is now), thanks to her father's will."

Mrs. Brownson could not resist a smile. She had no misgivings about her children's future happiness. If they had not already secured their husbands' affection, she knew they would soon; for who could help loving such lovely girls!

Nervous Headache.

A very distressing and common malady, doubtless it has its origin in some unbalanced condition of the nervous system. One of the simplest, safest, and most efficient remedies is Nerviline. Twenty drops in a little sweetened water gives almost immediate relief, and this treatment should be supplemented by bathing the region of pain with Nerviline. To say it acts quickly fails to express the result. Druggists sell it everywhere.

REFLECTIONS OF A BACHELOR.

Nothing keeps a man so straight as knowing that his wife would forgive him for anything.

The average woman would have no use for a man if she could succeed in reforming all his bad habits.

The only thing necessary for a man to know about any one woman is when to take her at her word and when not to and then not to.

Lots of men who aren't bigamists have one wife too many.

Lots of women think they want a vote, when all they want is a voter.

If women did the proposing they would probably say, when they handed the man the ring, "It needs cleaning awfully."

Married people get along the first year on the novelty of the thing; after that it becomes habit.

The man who boasts oftenest that he has never told a lie probably makes his wife believe that he has a great regard for her mother.—New York Press.

A SUDDEN CHILL often means sudden illness. Pain-Killer is all that is needed to ward it off. Unequalled for cramps and diarrhoea. Avoid substitutes, there is but one Pain-Killer, Perry Davis'. 25c. and 50c.

"Marie, I have come to-night to ask you for your hand—I!"

"You ask a great deal, George."

"On the contrary, it is such a very little one that!"

"It is yours, George, dear."

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