

Literature, &c.

THE ELOPEMENT:

OR, THE MERCENARY MARRIAGE.

'Poor Emily, how I pity her! She will never survive the news of my marriage. Poor girl! she will droop like the pale lily when plucked from its stem. Well, I am sorry it should be so, but she is not the only girl whose heart will be a prey to disappointment on hearing of the wonderful event. Well, there's nothing like creating a sensation, after all. Running off with an heiress! How the world will talk of the fashionable elopement, and the papers— Oh! we shall hear of nothing else for some time to come. To be sure, Eliza is neither pretty nor enchanting: Emily was both, and I once— No— Well, perhaps I did once love her, at least I fancied so, and I can never love Eliza, but I shall not be dependant on my wife for happiness. Wealth will procure me all I can desire. I must try and persuade her to be a good house-keeper and not interfere with my pleasures. Ah! if she had been as bewitching as Emily, or if Emily had possessed her wealth—but things cannot be altered. I am sincerely sorry for the poor forsaken one. How sad her fate! a broken heart caused by a disappointment. Ah! 'tis certain it will be so, for she adored me, she idolized me, and no wonder. Hem!

Such were the musings of Henry Courtenay, as, in company with the bride elect, he pursued his way to the far-famed village of Gretna-Green. His reverie was so deep that he scarcely noticed the frequent warnings his companion gave the postilion to quicken his pace. At length her dread of pursuit having, in some measure subsided, she turned and glanced at him most wistfully.

'Henry,' said she in her softest tone, what are you thinking about?

'About you, dearest,' was the reply.

The bride gave him the sweetest smile imaginable, such a smile as might have melted the coldest heart, but we very much fear it was not duly appreciated.

'Are we near the end of our journey?' asked the bridegroom listlessly.

'One mile will complete it by the driver's account. Is it not a delightful evening, dear Henry? How sublime are the works of nature! How fair the scene around us!' said 'he bride, assuming an air of sentiment.'

Her rhapsodies, meditations, soliloquies were suddenly interrupted by a shout from the driver.

'Pursued sir; pursued ma'am!

'What does the fellow mean?' said Henry, somewhat hastily, waking from a fit of abstraction.

'Why, I mean that if you'll give a look backwards you'll see some 'at as 'ill set you all of a flutterification, according to my ways of thinking. Go on Bobby: come quicken, my old boy.'

The bridegroom put half of his body through one of the chaise windows, and to his great dismay, perceived another travelling carriage about half a mile behind them.

'Monstrously provoking!' exclaimed our hero. 'Oh! I shall faint!' cried the bride; 'they will overtake us. We are discovered; we are lost. Oh! my dear Henry, save me,' said she, grasping his arm convulsively.

'Come my dear,' said he tenderly, 'compose yourself. Don't be alarmed; we shall outrun them yet. Come my lad, drive on, you shall be well paid for your pains.'

The postilion certainly did drive at a pace worthy of John Gilpin himself, and in a few moments they had reached their destination.

'Bravo!' said Henry, exultingly, springing out of the chaise, 'but we have not a moment to lose.'

'Wish you much happiness, sir. How much will you give me for running for the priest, sir? Shall I help the lady out, sir? A thousand expressions like these saluted their ears the moment the chaise stopped.

The enemy was in view. All was bustle and confusion, but fortunately they were not long in suspense, for the convenient knot-tie soon made his appearance. The ceremony was hurried over and actually concluded when the other chaise stopped. The bride clung to her husband for support as they hastened to the inn.

Their fears began to diminish, when, instead of an angry papa, they beheld an elegant youth assisting a lady to alight, whose exquisitely fine form and rich dress excited the admiration of our hero, but she was so closely veiled that he had no opportunity of beholding what he conjectured must be the most beautiful face in the world.

'What a splendid creature,' he exclaimed involuntarily; and then, recollecting himself, added, 'Do you not admire him, Eliza?'

'He is very handsome,' said she, carelessly, but I know one who is much handsomer.'

An approving self-complacent smile beamed on the countenance of Henry, but we fancy the fair bride would not have been quite satisfied had she observed the interest with which he gazed on one of the happy pair as they passed the window.

On the evening of the day preceding that on which these events occurred the lovely Emily Stanhope was enjoying the pleasures of a gay *tele a tele* with her favoured admirer, Frederick Fitzroy, when a letter was brought in directed to her.

'Oh!' said Emily, glancing at the superscription; 'I am so delighted; it is from dear Catherine, and her letters are always a great treat.'

She put the letter into her reticule, and was about to resume the conversation, when Fitzroy interrupted her.

'Now, my dear Emily, do not be so ceremonious. Pray read your letter. Surely you do not regard me as a stranger.'

'Well, Frederick, as you wish it, I will dispense with ceremony, for I really am dying to know the contents of this letter.'

'I hope it is from Catherine, Emily,' said Fitzroy, looking at her somewhat archly.

'Oh yes, it is indeed. Frederick, I would not deceive you for worlds.'

The letter was opened, and Emily eagerly perused the friendly epistle, till at length the following paragraph met his eye:

'I have long warned you, my dear Emily, of your swain's inconstancy, but I can now affirm, from positive authority, that Thursday is the day fixed upon for his elopement with the wealthy Miss L—.

The affair is not dreamed of by her family, and the information was accidentally conveyed to me by an intimate acquaintance of Courtenay's who had the story from himself, and I hear he expresses great sympathy for you in your disappointment; but, if I rightly understand your feelings, I should suppose that you will neither shed a tear or commence a prosecution on his account. I shall expect very shortly to hear of your being united to the worthy and fascinating Fitzroy. I should rejoice if you would hasten the happy event, and mortify (for he deserves it) the inconstant mercenary, Courtenay.'

Emily read no more; she threw away the letter, and then hastily picked it up, and was leaving the room, when Fitzroy prevented her.

'Stay, dearest Emily, what means this? Have you any sorrows with which I cannot sympathize? Did you not promise that at least I should be your friend; have I done anything to forfeit that title.'

'Forgive me Frederick, you shall know all. Read this,' said she, handing him the letter; 'yet stay,' she added, while a blush suffused her cheeks, 'there is something you must not see. Promise me that you will read no farther than this,' said she, smiling, and pointing out the limits of his perusal.

Fitzroy bowed assent, but whether he kept the promise this bow implied we cannot say; we rather think not, for certain it is, that, as he folded up the letter, he muttered something about a happy event, which deepened the color on Emily's cheek.

'Pardon me, dear Emily, if I ask you one question' Emily smiled. 'Are you sorry that Henry has proved faithless?'

'Sorry, Frederick,' exclaimed Emily, and she looked rather angry a moment, and then a smile succeeded, which certainly did not seem to denote much sorrow.

'Well, I was beginning to feel rather jealous when you looked so serious just now. I cannot wonder that you should feel offended at Courtenay's conduct, especially as he adds to his fault by daring to publish his faithlessness to you, which he should blush to own: but surely, Emily, you will not suffer him to triumph long. May I hope that the sweet promise you made me of being mine, when you obtained your freedom, will shortly be accomplished? Speak, dearest Emily, speak!'

'It would be wrong to keep you longer in suspense, dear Fitzroy; I am yours.'

'And when shall I have the happiness of calling you, my own dear Emily, my wife?'

Emily spoke not, but she hid her blushing face upon his shoulder, and what more passed we cannot say; when

her father entered the room, he found Fitzroy in ecstasies, and Emily with a tear in her eye, which did not darken the brilliancy of the happy smile which played upon her features. Emily was going to run away, but the old man detained her.

'Come, come, my Emmy, you are not going to play truant yet; but you both look very queer. A lover's quarrel I suppose? eh, Fitzroy?'

Fitzroy glanced at Emily: Emily blushed, and Mr. Stanhope looked puzzled.

'These young people are very strange, muttered he to himself; 'childish caprices. Better sense when they are married.'

'Emily, dearest, will you allow me to tell your father what a dear good girl you are?'

'No occasion, Fitzroy: know that already. Best child in the world; but the housekeeper told me you were quarrelling; I want to know what it's about?'

'Quarrelling, papa!'

'Yes, she said that you were running out of the room, and that Fitzroy pulled you in again, and that you looked very angry.'

'Oh! she is quite mistaken, papa; read this letter, and you will see what made me look angry.'

So saying handed him the letter, and attentively regarded the workings of his countenance.

'Mean villain!' said the old gentleman, tearing the letter to atoms. 'Pities my Emily. Expects her heart will break to shivers, I suppose. Promise me that you will hate him, Emily, or I'll disinherite you and make Fitzroy my heir.'

'That will amount to the same thing in the end, Mr. Stanhope,' said Fitzroy, laughing, 'for dear Emily has promised—'

'What has she promised? Keep you a little longer in suspense, I suppose, and then, perhaps—'

'No, no; dear sir,' said Fitzroy, interrupting him, 'to-morrow is to be the happy day!'

'To-morrow! impossible. Why, the settlements are not made; no preparations made; why, where's the wedding dress, child? Next week you might manage it, but it's out of the question to-morrow.'

'Not so, my dear sir. Our settlements are already made; are they not, Emily? and our preparations can all be made in about an hour, and Emily will have no gay bridesmaids to criticize her dress, and we can get plenty of dresses after the ceremony is over, I am sure.'

'Settlements made! no dress! no bridesmaids wanted! well really children you are very odd; you puzzle me. Do explain how are you going to manage it?'

'Why, my dear sir, you must not be angry if Emily does not appear at the breakfast table to-morrow, and if the room is found uninhabited, and if she happens to be missing for a few days, do not be uneasy.'

'Oh! I see,' exclaimed the old man, and he rubbed his hands in ecstasy, 'you mean to fly away with her. Capital scheme! Meet them at Gretna Green! Married the same day! Excellent plan! Mortify that rascal! Well, Emily, you've done quite right; you have your father's spirit. Acted nobly; No prudishness and affected nonsense. I like straightforward work. Fitzroy is worthy of you, and you shall have my blessing, my noble girl.'

'And my everlasting gratitude, dearest Emily,' said Fitzroy, in a low tone; 'but lately a cloud hung over my destiny, but now all is brightness, all is bliss.'

'Dearest Frederick,' said she, affectionately, 'I sincerely regret that you should ever have suffered a moment's uneasiness on my account, but, situated as I have been, it was unavoidable. I told you of my early engagement, and of my determination to fulfil it, if necessary even though it should be to sacrifice happiness and you; but I have long known Henry's faithlessness, and only waited further proofs of it to exculpate me from blame in keeping my promise of being yours, should I ever be free.'

'The happiness I now experience, my beloved Emily, is sufficient to atone for years, nay, a life of sorrow. I can hope, I can rejoice, I can call you my own: my bliss is perfect. I want no more. But say, my sweet Emily, do you partake my joy?'

'The knowledge of your happiness, my dear Frederick, will ever gladden my heart, and strew with flowers my pathway through life.'

'Well, Emmy dear,' said Mr. Stanhope, who had overheard this last sen-

tence, 'that's a very pretty little speech, I must confess, but I never could understand those fine sentimental ideas, though your poor mother was very fond of sighing, and talking of flowers, and things of that sort, poor, dear woman, (and here the old man wiped away a tear.) I will remember when I asked her to name the happy day, she smiled just as you are smiling now. Oh! such a smile. Bless me, child, how you remind me of her. Why, I declare, here's tears in my eyes, though I am as happy as King George: (perhaps far more so;) I never felt as happy in my life, except once, (and here the old gentleman heaved a sigh at the remembrance of his own wedding day.) But, Emmy, my dear it's time for you to go and make your preparations. Sorry you should be so hurried, but it's only for once, Good Night, dear. Fitzroy and I will settle it, I promise you; and you'll have to get up and run a race with the larks in the morning; and I'd advise you to drive quick enough, or you may see old papa in pursuit of you, for I declare I'm growing young again. Bravo! Emily, you've cured my gout; never felt better in my life. Good night, dear. God bless you!'

'Well, Emily,' said Fitzroy, following her out of the room, 'I hope you will obey my summons in the morning. You know it will be your duty to obey.'

'Not in the morning,' said Emily, laughing, 'I may yet rebel.'

'Well, I will allow you to rebel after our journey is over, but not till then.'

'Take care: do not promise me to many liberties, for I am very, self-willed.'

'Are you?' said he, affectionately, taking her hand; then your will shall be my law.'

'And yours my pleasure, dearest Frederick,' said Emily, as she flew up the stairs.

The arrangements for her journey were soon completed, and Emily sought her pillow to dream of future bliss to be shared with the beloved one: but we imagine her slumbers were rather light, for long before the appointed time she sat waiting for the moment to arrive when she would welcome her lover.

'How strange it seems,' mused Emily; 'who would have guessed yesterday that I should so shortly become the wife of Fitzroy. I am like a prisoner set free. Oh! that foolish engagement, what trouble it has cost me, and to end thus; but it is always the way with those silly first fancies, for I can call them nothing else. Well might papa say that first love is madness. Indeed it is not worth calling love; a chimera of the brain; a delusion; a childish whim. Henry Courtenay was certainly, very handsome; danced well, sang well, and was very agreeable, and I admired him, because all the world did so; but as to loving him, I never did, I am sure. True affection must be founded upon esteem, and I never could esteem him or regard him in the same light as I do dear Frederick. He has a mind so congenial to mine; a heart so tender, so sympathetic; a manner so elegant; a taste so refined; a countenance so noble and interesting—'

How many more good qualities and perfections she might have added we know not; for, at this moment, the chaise with dear Frederick, drove up to the door, and in a few moments the happy pair were on their way to Scotland.

(To be continued.)

SHORT PATENT SERMONS.

BY "DOW JR."

I have selected the following words as a text for my present discourse—

This at full length the pampered monarch lay,
Fattening in ease and slumbering life away.

My hearers—notwithstanding that industry, with her bran new broom, has swept ten thousand evils into the dust pan of oblivion, still if we look into the dark corners of this wide world, we shall find that the cobwebs of sloth, large and strong enough to entangle turkey buzzards, are yet hanging there, obscuring the few feeble rays of enterprise that yet glimmer in those benighted regions. The three story Patagonian of the south wallows in the mire of indolence and grows fat upon the gravy of ignorance; the Lilliputian Lapplander of the north lolls in laziness, and willingly puts up with the cold porridge of poverty; the besmeared Hottentot of the east snoozes in his mud built hut, careless of to-morrow's fare, and content with the crumbs that fall from some stray angel's bread. But, my friends, while these half-famished, miserable models of humanity are thus slumbering amid the stupefying vapors of ease, I want you to reflect upon what a sad condition their poor souls are in. Their thoughts never are thrust beyond the filthy circle of some selfish