

Literature, &c.

From Graham's Magazine for June.
LOVE AND PIQUE;
 OR, SCENES AT A WATERING PLACE.
 By Mrs. Emma C. Embury

THE PIAZZA.

Two weeks passed away, during time Miss Oriol had shown her skill in female tactics by managing to secure the attentions of Mr Beauchamp, while she had transferred Cecil to Ellen Grey until she should be able to decide upon his future life. One evening, Cecil, who had long known and admired Mrs. Dale, invited her to walk with him on the piazza, that they might witness the effect of moonlight upon the distant sea.

'I am indebted to Miss Grey's headache for the invitation,' said Mrs. Dale, laughing, as she took his arm, 'had she been in the saloon, my eyes would never have been thus favored with a moon-light scene.'

Forrester entered a disclaimer against the lady's assertion, and a playful conversation ensued, when Mrs. Dale, suddenly changing the topic, said:

'Pray tell me, Mr. Forrester, if Mr Beauchamp is so immensely rich?'

'I really cannot take it upon me to determine that delicate question, Madam,' was the reply, 'but, as a firm believer in the doctrine of compensations, I am bound to suppose he is wealthy.'

'Not understanding your premises I cannot fairly understand your deductions,' said Mrs. Dale playfully.

'Why, Providence always bestows something to compensate for great deficiencies, and as Mr Beauchamp can not boast either mental or physical gifts, I take it for granted that he must have money.'

'Really, Mr Forrester, I did not think you were so ill-natured. I am sure Mr Beauchamp has the prettiest hands and feet in the world, and his ardent admiration of the ladies proves him to possess a good heart.'

'To your last argument I can offer no opposition, Madam,' was the gallant reply; 'but as to his hands and feet, I can only say that it is not the first time that ladies have been driven to extremities in their search for his good qualities.'

'Well, I suppose,' responded Mrs. Dale, laughing heartily, 'that I must allow your wit to atone for your severity, but how long is it since you turned satirist?'

'Ever since I made the discovery which all the experience of others cannot teach us—that all is not gold which glitters.' I have almost come to the conclusion that nature, like an over-careful housewife, hides her gold and silver in least suspected places.'

'In that case Dame Nature might be in the predicament of a queer old lady I once knew who hid her rich plate under the rosters in the garret, and when she wanted it upon occasion of a dinner party, was obliged to borrow of a neighbor because she had forgotten where she had deposited her treasure.'

'I believe if we want to find a really virtuous and true hearted woman, we must look elsewhere than among the beautiful.'

'Fie! fie! if I had the slightest claim to beauty, I should banish you from my presence for that ungallant speech.'

'You ought rather to consider it a compliment, for there is not another woman here to whom I would have uttered it, or who would have understood me, if I had.'

'Ah! now you flatter my intellect at the expense of my person, and no woman ever relished such a compliment. But to return to your assertion; how can you venture to despise the allurements of beauty after feasting daily on such a banquet of loveliness as Miss Oriol offers to our eyes. I look at her, woman as I am, with delight, for I never saw so fresh, so pure, so malleable like a complexion.'

'Your comparison is more correct than you imagine, Madam; her beauty is indeed like that of the marble statue, carved by a right cunning and skillful hand, yet wanting the Promethean touch of soul.'

'While Ellen Grey is the delicate alabaster vase, beautifully and finely wrought, and with all its exquisite loveliness brought out in rich relief by the lamp which lights it from within; is it not thus you would have continued the comparison?' said Mrs. Dale mischievously.

'Your illustration is a beautiful one, and perfectly true,' was the reply; 'Ellen Grey is full of gentle and womanly feeling.'

'Well, as you have known the lady longer than I have, it would be idle to dispute your assertions; indeed, I must confess, when I watch her sound, unruffled look and manner, I am irresistibly reminded of the old Norse legend of the Snow-Woman—so dazzlingly beautiful, so fatally cold.'

'Yet I have seen her under circumstances which would have given you a very different impression of her. Imagine that beautiful woman attired in the simplest manner, all fashionable airs laid aside, and apparently the very creature of romantic feeling; imagine such perfection of loveliness, with eyes of softness and voice all tenderness, apparently yielding up her whole soul to the sweet impressions of nature amid the loveliest scenery that even our beautiful land can produce; imagine the effect of such beauty seen beneath the soft light of the summer moon, or gazed upon in the silent sanctuary of the forest glades, or mingling its fascinating influence with the lovely sights and sounds which charm the senses in the sunset dell, when the voice of the singing rivulet makes music on its way.'

'Upon my word, Mr Forrester, you are almost a poet; you must be in love.'

'Perhaps I am, but Miss Oriol is not the object.'

'How could you resist the fascinations you so enthusiastically describe?'

'Why, to tell the truth, I narrowly escaped the fate of the silly moth; I came very near singeing my wings in the blaze of her beauty, but I soon discovered that she possessed none but personal attractions. To be sure we had quite a sentimental flirtation, and I remember many fine sentiments which she uttered, but I early found how thin and poor was the soil in which they had taken root. You know the more luxuriant growth of wild flowers is always to be found in a morass—or perhaps a more graphic illustration of my meaning might be found in the fact that to a pestilential Maremma, whose atmosphere is so fatal to life, displays the richest and most gorgeous array of Flora's favorites. Laura Oriol might be loved for a week or two, but any man with common sense would soon see thro' her false character. For my own part I confess that I amused myself with her very pleasantly during the early part of the summer.'

'Indeed, I believe she fancied I was really caught in her snares, and no doubt considers that Cecil Forrester's \$30,000 will do very well to fall back upon in case nothing better offer.'

'Hark!' exclaimed Mrs. Dale, as a slight sound, like a half suppressed exclamation struck upon their ears, 'I really believe some one has been listening to our conversation.'

'When we first came out here,' said Forrester coolly, 'I saw a lady take her seat within the recess of yonder window; she dropped the drapery of the curtain behind her, so as not to be observed from within, and she has been sitting in the deep shadow flung by this heavy column. She has heard every word we said; at least she has heard all I said, because I purposely deferred my most severe remarks until we passed within eye shot.'

'For Heaven's sake, what do you mean? you seem agitated; who was the lady?' asked Mrs. Dale.

'Do you not imagine? It was Miss Oriol.'

'Oh, Mr. Forrester, how could you do so? and to make me a party in such cruelty too,' exclaimed the lady, much vexed.

'Now that there are really no listeners, dear Madam, I will tell you the whole story, and you shall decide whether I am so very wrong; at all events I have had my revenge.'

And Cecil Forrester related to his warm hearted friend the story of his love and its sudden termination, not omitting a single word of the dialogue which he had overheard between the mother and daughter.

When they re-entered the saloon Miss Oriol had disappeared, but if Cecil could have known the tumult of her feelings he would, perhaps, have regretted his own vindictiveness. All the little feeling which she possessed, all that she had of heart, was bestowed on Cecil Forrester. She did not know how much she had valued him until she compared him with the object of her present pursuit; and, interested, selfish and ambitious as she was, she had determined to turn from the allurements of wealth if she could win back Cecil to his allegiance. To be thus outwitted, made the plaything of his idle hours, foiled at her own weapons, was a bitter mortification, and this, coupled as it was with a sense of unrequited tenderness, aroused her

almost to madness. The cold, proud beauty shed tears of vexation and regret. She almost hated Cecil, and yet she was conscious that the most bitter drop, in the cup which had thus been returned to her own lips, was the assurance that he had never loved her. His quotation of her own remark about his fortune convinced her that he had overheard her plans, and she was now stimulated by pride to urge their speedy fulfilment.

THE LAST SCENE.

'Have you heard the news, Mr. Forrester,' exclaimed Mrs. Dale, as, two days after the confidential disclosure of the piazza, he entered the saloon; 'Ah, I see by your look of innocent surprise you are blissful ignorance.'

'What has happened?' asked Cecil carelessly, 'any thing which serves to break the monotony of a seaside existence must be a blessing.'

'I do not know whether you will think it so,' said the lady laughing, 'Miss Oriol has eloped with Mr. Beauchamp.'

'I am glad of it—from my very soul I rejoice at it,' exclaimed Cecil Forrester, while a dark, vindictive smile gave a most disagreeable expression to his unusually fine face.

'Why, how strangely you look at me,' replied Mrs. Dale, 'what is the matter?'

'Nothing—nothing—when did it all happen?'

'Did you not see her go out with him to ride last evening? Well, it seems Mr. Beauchamp's servant had been privately despatched to the city with their baggage, and instead of returning the lovers rode directly to the next town and were married.'

'Why did they give themselves so much trouble? If Beauchamp had asked the old woman she would have dropped a curtsy and thanked him for the offer.'

'The is the mystery of the whole affair; Mrs. Oriol pretends to be very indignant, but it is easy to see she is secretly pleased. Miss Oriol has written a letter to Miss Grey in which she entreats her to break the tidings tenderly to poor Mamma; excuses herself on the plea of irresistible affection, talks of Mr. Beauchamp's ardor and her fear of maternal opposition, and finishes by requesting Ellen to allow his favorite Mrs. Dale to acquaint Mr. Forrester with her regret at having been the cause of disappointment and sorrow to him.'

'What the devil does she mean by that?'

'Why to make Ellen jealous of me and destructive of you, and thus disappoint both your love and revenge,' said Mrs. Dale.

'She shall not attain her ends,' exclaimed Forrester impetuously, 'I will tell Ellen the whole story. I am glad she is actually married to Beauchamp, and I know the reason he did not want to ask her mother: he was afraid of inconvenient inquiries.'

'What do you know about him?'

'Only this morning I met her a person who knows him well. His history is soon told. He was originally bred a tailor, but, having a soul above the buttons, he cut the shop, and has since been hanging on the skirts of society in a manner very different from that intended by the honest old father. His bank stock and sugar plantation may exist in the regions of the moon, where all things which unaccountably disappear from earth are said to be collected, his negroes are still on the coast of Guinea, and he really lives by his wits. A run of luck at the gaming table or a lucky bet on the race course enables him every now and then to pay old debts, and live for a time like a gentleman until his funds are exhausted, when he again betakes himself to his vocation.'

'Can this be possible?'

'There is no doubt of it; he is a mere adventurer, and as Miss Oriol is something very similar, they are matched as well as paired.'

Cecil Forrester afforded another proof of the truth of the poet's line,

'Full many a heart is caught in the rebound.'

The following winter saw him the happy husband of Ellen Grey, while all trace of Mr. and Mrs. Beauchamp was lost to their view. About two years later, when business had compelled Mr. Forrester to visit one of our southern cities, he strolled into the theatre to get rid of an idle evening, and as he gazed with listless curiosity on the gorgeous spectacle of Indian life which occupied the stage, he was suddenly struck with a familiar expression in the countenance of the stately queen of the Zenana. He looked again, the resemblance seemed to grow upon him; he went round to the stage box, and in that near proximity

to the actress all doubt vanished. He looked upon the still repleat beauty of Laura Oriol.

RAMBLING RECOLLECTIONS OF A SOLDIER OF FORTUNE.

BY W. R. MAXWELL.

The author of this volume is known by his 'Wild Sports of the West,' and the mingled vigor and humor of the present work will sustain his well-earned reputation. The story with which the volume commences is revolting in its character, but possesses that sort of fascination for the reader a well told horror always does. The ferocious power of the 'Outcast' is well fitted to give us an idea of the writer's power in fiction which we had not anticipated in opening the book. As a thorough blackguard of the vilest die we know no character fit to compare with its hero, and we imagine such will be the feeling of all the readers who take up the book. The following scene is given by no ordinary hand; its concise strength entitles the writer to a high rank amongst sketch and tale writers:—

'I reloaded my musket and ascended to the first floor, and a low whispering told me that the chamber before me was inhabited. I knocked loudly, but no one replied,—and determined to waste no time, I tried my strength upon the door, and the fastenings were too feeble to resist it.

Two females were the occupants, and two lovelier ones could not have been discovered in Rodrigo. The eldest was in the full bloom of womanly beauty—the younger, a lovely girl of sixteen. Between them a likeness existed that told it was a mother and her child.

'The horrid crash which the explosion of my firelock had caused would have harbingered the appearance of a demon, and no doubt, I looked one. I had received some flesh wounds in the breach; my face and jacket were stained with blood and blackened with gunpowder; my countenance was flushed by recent excitement; I had drunk freely before the storm—and the expression of my features told how little mercy might be expected at my hands.

The younger female uttered a piercing scream, threw her arms wildly round her mother's neck, and as a last hope clung to that loved one for protection, while the despairing look with which the oldest supplicated pity, might have had influence on any spirit less savage than my own. But I was callous—already, the blackest passions were raging in my breast—with brutal force I tore the screaming girl from her parent's arms, locked her in my own, and covered her lips with noxious kisses.

The wretched mother made a strong effort to release her daughter from my grasp—she might as easily have loosed the lamb from the lion's hold. In an agony of grief she pressed her temples with her hands, and then, as if a thought had struck her suddenly, she seized the lamp, rushed to a corner of the chamber, unclosed a concealment in the wall, took out a purse of gold, knelt at my feet, and placed it in my hand. She saw some hesitation in my manner, the bribe she fancied was not probably sufficient, and she plucked jewels from her ears and fingers, and a sparkling crucifix from her breast, and as she pressed me to accept them, implored me to spare the honor of her child. The language was Spanish, and unknown to me; but, oh God! how ardent was that prayer for pity!

'I hid the purse and jewels in the breast of my jacket, and the poor victims believed perhaps that I had relented in my purpose. One minute undecided them. A noise arose below—men's feet were heard upon the stairs—and a private of the ninety-fifth, with a Portuguese muleteer rushed in.

'Another minute and a damning deed was done! They forced the mother to a distant room—and her cries, loud and wild at first, and then ceasing suddenly, as if utterance was violently stopped, told how savagely she was outraged. Nor did her child experience from me that mercy which the unfortunate parent had vainly purchased. In an hour, when my companions in crime returned, the poor victim, like a flower blighted before it blooms, stole away dishonored and abased, to mingle her unavailing sorrow with a parent's, herself subject to the worst insult which hell prompts, and demon man can perpetrate.

Each of my fellow comrades had plundered apparently to their satisfaction, for both had a bundle roughly tied up. They had found some bottles of wine—and we sat down and drank to an infamous confederacy.

'The revelry was short—a drunken cheer was heard at no great distance