

From Graham's Magazine.

Since first my childish heart
Was conscious of the sacred tie
That death alone can part
Then, from your kind, unselfish care,
I learned to know how blest
Is she who owns the love that lives
Within a brother's breast.

Our home was bright and beautiful
With all things rich and fair,
Yet dreary would its halls have been
Had not your love been there ;
For who would share a princely home,
Though filled with pomp and mirth,
If sweet affections hovered not
Like angels round its hearth ?

But oh, I can remember still
How in the midst of play,
You threw, to please your baby-pet,
The ball and hoop away.
To teach my faltering lips to speak
For hours you'd linger near,
And hail with joy the faintest sound
That fell upon the ear.

“My brothers!” were the gentle words
That first I learned to name,
And glad was I, each lesson o’er,
The kiss of love to claim.
And now, as looking o’er the past,
Too sadly I repine,
It checks the tear-drop and the sigh
To think you still are mine.

I never knew a mother's love—
That blessing Heaven denied—
My footsteps through the paths of life
It was your task to guide;
And when, amid earth's brilliant hopes,
My happy heart beat high,
You whispered there were sweeter joys
Beyond the azure sky.

"My brothers!" on each brow there dwells
A cloud of thoughtful care,
But may no word or deed of mine
E'er place a shadow there;
And though I never may repay
Your deep and changeless love,
The earnest prayer I breathe for you
May reach the throne above.

And when my eyes are closed in death
My spirit shall be near,
For sure I am the dead will watch
O'er those in life most dear ;
And in the home to which I go,
Life's errors all forgiven,
Oh with what joy shall I behold
My brothers meet in Heaven !

MARY L. LAWSON.

A STORY OF THE AFFECTIONS.

WHO that has attended the death-bed of the loved and cherished, can ever forget its touching and painful scenes? The sands of life passing rapidly away—the pulse becoming feebler and fainter—the voice lower and weaker—the light fading from the glassy and spiritual eyes—the mingled expression of love, hope and agony resting upon the thin, pale features—And, when at last the lamp goes out—the hands fall cold upon the motionless bosom—the limbs become rigid, and the spirit wings its flight to another world, who can forget the heart screams of the doating mourners—the grief long suppressed, but now bursting forth as a torrent—the tears, the cries, and the exclamations, half in love and half in madness!

I once was present at the death-bed of a mother—a true and martyr-like woman—who had hurried herself to a premature grave, in an effort to provide for the comforts of two young and lovely daughters; and were I to live a thousand years, the memory of that hour would still linger vividly in my mind. She died, too, in the full faith of a blessed hereafter—conscious of the purity of her life, and cherishing, as the jewels of the soul, the sublime truths of the Christian religion. But her daughters—her young and unprotected daughters! She left them to the tender mercies of a hollow world, and thus, with the undying fondness of a mother's heart, fixed her straining eyes upon their sad but beauteous features, even as the soul parted from the body, and the faith of a blessed religion brightened the pathway to a clime of bliss.

Sobs and tears and loud lamentations came from those lovely orphans. They were now indeed alone in the world; and though they had been taught in some measure to prepare themselves for so frightful a bereavement, they could not realize all its gloom and desolation. They had never known a father's care, for he had been taken from them in their early childhood, before they were capable of appreciating his value. Their mother had been the whole world to them—she had watched them in their hours of illness—she had prayed for them, and *with them*—had pointed out the paths of danger in the ways of life—had indulged them beyond her means—had deprived herself of many a luxury, ay, many a necessary, in order to administer to their comfort and improvement, and now, as they looked upon her cherished form, cold and still in the icy embrace of death, oh! God, how wretched and lonely seemed their condition. In vain their few friends endeavored to soothe their sorrow—to soften the anguish

Compelled to abandon his native land at but a few hours notice, the father was able to collect but a small sum of money to assist his family in the country of their exile. He survived his arrival in the United States only two years—merely long enough to acquire a knowledge of the English language, and, with his lady, to attempt the establishment of a school of instruction in the French. The daughters were at this time, too young to assist, but the mother, though utterly unused to a life of toil, saw and appreciated her position, and roused all her energies to the undertaking. She continued the school, and with partial success, after the decease of her husband. Compelled to economize in every possible way, she looked forward to the period when her children would be able to assist her, and thus her task would be greatly lightened. Increasing, as they hourly did in beauty and intelligence, and manifesting, in every possible way, their appreciation of her love, and her untiring exertions spent in their behalf, her heart warmed toward them with every breath which they drew, and she would freely have laid down her life to ensure their welfare. But what will not a mother do for the beings of her affection? What will she not sacrifice?—what trials and sufferings will she not submit to? Well and touchingly was it remarked by a Venetian lady, with regard to Abraham and Isaac, that “God would never have commanded such a sacrifice of a mother.”

Mrs. La Roche had thus with difficulty, but still in a spirit of great cheerfulness, conducted her little school for four years after the decease of her husband. But her health now began to fail. She had overtasked her powers; her constitution, which was naturally feeble, gave way. Still, she struggled on in the most heroic manner. "A few years longer," she flattered herself, "and I may abate my labors. Then my children will be able greatly to assist me, if not wholly to take my place." She saw them ripening in beauty—and the natural dream of a mother raised up suitors in abundance. So lovely—so correct—so imbued with the pure principles of religion—so accomplished! The heart of the widow rejoiced in the anticipated triumphs of her offspring. Alas! even then the seeds of death were doing their work, stealthily and in silence. A little longer and the body refused to administer to the wishes of the mind. Mrs. La Roche was prostrated on her death-bed, and her children, as already described, were orphans in the fullest and most painful sense of the term.

Amy La Roche, the youngest sister, at the period at which we write, was thirteen; Clotilde, the elder, was sixteen years of age. A lovelier pair never mingled their tears together by the cold corpse of a parent. Taught to regard her as the soul and centre of their social world—as the being to whom they must look for counsel and advice next to the Almighty—they clung to each other in their desolation, each striving to soothe the other, and each unconsciously adding to the poignancy of the other's grief. Clotilde wept wildly, but the sorrow of the younger seemed more heart-felt. The one was all feeling and impulse, and her agony of grief was relieved, in some measure, by the violence of the paroxysms—the fury of her despair. The younger was naturally of a thoughtful and melancholy nature, and her mild blue eyes, seemed to mirror in their gentle lustre, the very depths of her soul. She was too young, moreover, to have a thought of fondness for another being on the earth beyond her mother. No other passion of her nature had been called even into fancied existence, and thus the poor girl pined day by day, until she became thin and pale, and the elder found it necessary to conceal her own sorrow, in order to bring back the spirit of girlhood and joy to the fair features of her dearest Amy.

Throughout the crisis of their bereavement, they were visited assiduously and constantly by, but one individual—Pierre Martien, or neighbour Pierre, as they called him, was intimate with their father in the more prosperous portion of his life, and had, like him, sought this country as a place of refuge during the perils of the revolution—perils which destroyed his family, and left him lone and wretched. He had nevertheless, accumulated a considerable fortune in the United States, and, at the period of the widow's decease, was on the eve of returning to France. Touched, however, by the sad condition of the sisters, he delayed his departure, and called day after day to the noble duty of watching over two fair beings, so entirely helpless and unprotected, and of administering every comfort and assistance in his power. This faithful friend was now in his sixtieth year—still manly and gentlemanly in his appearance, and exhibiting but little of the weakness or infirmity of age. Week after week he postponed the day of his leave-taking, and yet he steadily persisted in his determination to return, at the same time condoling with the orphans, assisting them as delicately as possible, and hinting a fear that his departure would expose them to annoyance and misfortune. Clotilde saw and admitted all this, but what could she do? She still continued to keep up the little school, which her mother had bequeathed to her as an inheritance, but her inexperience and youth unfitted her, in a great measure, to exercise sufficient authority over the pupils, and thus, while she found them constantly diminishing in number, she discovered, with horror, that the health of her young sister was rapidly sinking. The color was fading from her cheeks—the bright light from her eyes. Her existence seemed to have lost its spring and fountain on the decease of Mrs. L.

Neighbour Pierre, also, noticed the change, and his heart melted within him at this new source of anxiety and distress. He sent for and consulted one of the ablest physicians of the city—for his nature warmed strangely and unconsciously toward the orphans, since he had visited them so frequently—and he was told that a change of air would alone save the life of the fading beauty. He pondered long upon this painful intelligence; at first unwilling to communicate it to the elder sister, for he knew that it would strike like an arrow through her soul. What could he do?—what was his duty under the circumstances? He pressed his hand upon his forehead and mused painfully for hours. A thought darted to his brain. But no—he repelled it as unworthy—as unmanly—as treacherous to the friendship he had felt and professed for the dead father of the sisters. And yet it returned again, and grew stronger and stronger, until he had no power to resist its influence.

Accuse him not harshly, gentle reader—pronounce not against him rashly. *He* was alone in the world, and *they* were without friends and protectors. *He* was compelled by circumstances to revisit France, and yet he felt a voice within him assert that he had a duty to perform to the children of his deceased countryman. How could he best perform that duty? To subject two young, inexperienced and beautiful girls to the snares of the vicious and the reckless—to desert them in the hour of greatest need—to abandon them to the charities of a cold world—or worse, to the accursed arts of

the profligate and libertine—the thought was full of anguish. Again he paused. He ascended to his chamber, and there, kneeling in prayer, he sought advice and council from the Searcher of all hearts. He arose from his knees refreshed in spirit, and comparatively calm and resolved. The next hour found him at the dwelling of the sisters. The younger was evidently weaker than on the day before, while the countenance of Clotilde wore a still more melancholy aspect. For a long time the visitor hesitated. He looked steadily into the beautiful features of Clotilde, where all was yet life and hope, and youthful splendor, only mellowed and spiritualized by the tender anxiety of a sacred love, and his heart again misgave him. But he rallied his courage and drew her aside. He announced to her, in as kindly terms as possible, the opinion of the physician; and, as he saw the big tear start to her eyes at the consciousness of her inability to accompany Amy to a milder climate—softer and sunnier skies—he took her hand, and offered to become her husband. “Thus,” he added, “dear Clotilde, I will obtain a *right* to protect you. Thus may we immediately sail for France, and, with the blessing of Heaven, a hope may be indulged of the restoration of our lovely Amy.” He alluded to his disparity of years, and his reluctance to venture such a proposition, but he implored her, no matter what her determination, to judge his motives generously. As he lived and had faith in the Divinity, he believed that he was influenced purely, justly and virtuously.

Clotilde covered her face with her hands. She had unbounded confidence in the principles of her father's friend—for he had ever conducted himself with the most scrupulous delicacy. She saw too, the position of her sisters, and she felt that the life of that sweet and affectionate girl was as dear to her as her own; and yet, she knew not what to do or say. One only thought—one only dream interfered with the course she believed to be dictated by duty. The path of her young life, chequered and darkened as it had been, had not been all shadow. A momentary rainbow had flashed its glories above. A youthful form sometimes mingled with her dreams. A voice deeper and sweeter than those of the every-day world, sometimes rose to her memory, and whispered to the listening spirit of her soul. She was now nineteen years of age—a full and perfect woman—and how seldom is it in our land, that the fair and beautiful, the enthusiastic and the warm-hearted, pass through so many summers without discovering some being in the crowd purer and holier than the rest—some kindred spirit—some sympathetic soul! A look—a word—a pressure of the hand will sometimes give tone to the story of a life.

Clotilde La Roche and Arthur Morville had met when

"Life seemed bathed in Hope's romantic hues." She was but seventeen, and he twenty-two. But a few months passed, and the ocean divided them. He was the son of a bankrupt merchant, utterly penniless and prospectless, and thus when an opportunity presented of a voyage to China, as the agent of an extensive commercial house, he was compelled by the force or circumstances, to embrace it, even at the risk of an absence of five years. Thus they parted. "He never told his love" in words, but the heart must be cold and insensible that requires such formal interpretation. The spirit of Clotilde wandered with and lingered around him. Her name was mingled with his prayers, and her image haunted his sleep—the brightest, sunniest angel of his dreams. And he was not forgotten. She did not strive to forget, and if the effort had been made, it would have been a vain one.

Two years had now gone by, and Arthur was yet abroad. Foolish and timid as they were no correspondence had been agreed upon, and he, unconscious of the interest he had excited, was afraid to write. He was poor—little better than a beggar—when he left his kindred and his home. He had no claim upon one so beautiful and lovely, and the pen was dashed to the earth in despair whenever he ventured a letter.

But the offer of Pierre Martien ! It revived

He sent for the friend of her father and told him all. If he would take her for his wife under these circumstances, she would freely accord her consent. Nay, she believed his motives to be generous and noble, and she honored him therefor.

More touched than ever—seeing the evident sacrifice she was about to make as a tribute to duty and her love for her sister—the old man hesitated. Again he meditated upon the subject, questioned his own heart closely, and endeavored to penetrate his motives.

It was finally agreed that they should immediately sail for France—that the engagement should be announced before their departure—and the marriage should take place immediately after their arrival.

But why prolong the story? The God of the orphan watched over and protected the sweet sisters. The voyage was pleasant beyond their most sanguine expectations. Amy gained health and strength with every favoring breeze, and when they landed at Havre, her eyes again sparkled with the fire of youth and joy, and her cheeks glowed with the hues of beauty. Clotilde, too, seemed more lovely than ever, the sea-air had greatly improved her. Her spirits mounted, her soul again rejoiced—and even the apprehension which occasionally crept over her breast, in connection with the coming marriage, gave her less anxiety than she could have believed a few weeks before.

They landed on a bright spring morning. The arrival of a foreign ship, had collected a group around the place of debarkation. Among them were several Americans. And see! whose form is that pressing forward so eagerly? It is — it is — much changed—but not enough to escape the quick eyes of youth, and the mind of love-fraught memory. Yes, Arthur Morville rushed forward—the wanderer from the far East! What a meeting! How joyous—how unexpected! Even the presence of strangers is forgotten! Eyes sparkle—cheeks glow—breasts heave—and hearts respond. The old man looks on, first in surprise, and then with a quiet and benevolent smile, mellowing his features, advancing to Clotilde he whispers, "Be not ashamed—your joy is my joy—and all will yet be well."

A few weeks thereafter and Cloilde La Roche became the wife of Arthur Morville. Pierre Martin gave the wife away, at the same time publicly recognizing the young couple and the beautiful Amy, as his adopted children. Heaven, say we, soften the pillow and hal-
low the dreams of the friend of the fatherless!

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From the Recreations of Christopher North,
Volume 3.

CHRISTOPHER'S CONFESSION OF HIS FIRST LOVE.

LOVE.

This is the age of confessions, and why, therefore may we not make a confession of first love? We had finished our sixteenth year, and we were almost as tall as we are now; for our figure was then straight as an arrow, and we had almost like an arrow in its flight. We had given over bird nesting; but we had not ceased to visit the cell where first we found the grey little's brood. Tale writers are told by critics to remember that the young Shepherdesses of Scotland are not beautiful as the fictions of a poet's dream. But she was beautiful beyond poetry. She was so then, when passion and imagination were young; and her image, her radiating, un fading image, is so now, when passion and imagination are old, and when from the eye and soul had disappeared much of the beauty and glory both of nature and life. We loved her from the first moment that our eyes met—and we see their light at this moment—and the same soft, burning light that set body and soul on fire. She was but a poor shepherd's daughter; but what was that to us, when we heard her voice singing one of her old plaintive ballads among the braes! When we sat down beside her—when the same plaid was drawn over our shoulders in the rain storm—when we asked her for a kiss—and was not refused—for what had she to fear in her beauty, and her innocence, and her filial piety?—and were we not a mere boy, in the bliss of passion, ignorant of deceit or dishonor, and with a heart open to the eyes of all as to the gates of heaven? What music was in that stream! Could "Sabeana odours from the spicy shores of Araby the blest" so penetrate our soul, as that breath, balmy than the broom on which we sat, forgetful of all other human life! Father, mother, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, and cousins, and all the tribe of friends that would throw us off—if we should be so base and mad as to marry a low bred, ignorant, uneducated, crafty, ay, crafty and designing beggar—were all forgotten in our delirium—and not an everlastingly sacred devotion to nature and to truth. For in what were we deluded? A voice—a faint and dewy voice—dadened by the earth that fills up her grave, and by the turf that, at this very hour, is expanding its primroses to the dew of heaven—answers, "In nothing!" "Ha! ha! ha!" exclaims some reader in derision. "Here's an attempt at the pathetic!—a miserable attempt indeed; for who cares about the death of a mean hut girl?—we are sick of low life." Why, as to that matter, who cares about the death of any one mortal being? Who weeps for the death of the late Emperor of all the Russias? Who wept over Napoleon the Great? When Chatham, or Burke, Pitt or Fox, died—don't pretend to tell lies about a nation's tears. And if yourself, who perhaps are not in low life,