

Literature, &c.

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THE STORY OF HENRY FITZMAURICE.

Henry Fitz-Maurice was the younger son of a Baronet, who resided within twelve miles of this village. Of his early years, little need be said. He was endowed with feelings of extreme sensibility which were not unfrequently trampled on and wounded by the more boisterous companions of his youth—but Henry's natural disposition was not changed by the sufferings which resulted from the peculiar constitution of his feelings; he only retired further into himself and concealed more carefully from the eye of a cold and sneering world, the warm fountains of genuine affection that were ever fresh within him. Such a character was not likely to gain many friends; his thoughts and sentiments differed from those of his companions; they could not enter into his feelings, for his heart was finer cords than theirs. When at length he did find one who returned the warmth of his affection, his whole soul became centred in that one object; a dream came over him; the world was dressed in flowers; he regarded it as a gay landscape; a scene intended for the enjoyment of herself and the dear object of his love.

It was in his nineteenth year, that he became acquainted with the family of the Somers; in that family, Mary Somers was the principal object of attraction; the loadstar that centered in itself all his thoughts and all his affections. Mary Somers was beautiful, not regularly or critically so; but the expression of her face was such as must have led, every beholder to pronounce it peerless. She had not the sparkling black that bespeaks the intellect within; but, she had those deep blue eyes which tell that the heart is made for love, and for all the softer feelings in their utmost intensity. There was a smile on her countenance, but it rather breathed through her features, than was impressed on her beauty. In fine, the artist who could have portrayed such beauty, might have worshipped the child of his creation.

Such was Mary Somers; and, before her, did Henry pour out his whole soul; for her mind was a befitting inmate of her person. He adored as the idol of his heart, her, who had first appreciated the sensibilities of his nature, and responded to them with sympathy and love. Never were two happier beings in this world of misery, were all happiness hollow, all sorrow but too real, than the young lovers.

Mrs. Somers saw the affection that was springing up between them; but, as she was pleased with Fitz-Maurice, and chiefly solicitous for the happiness of her only daughter, she never thought of opposing their attachment. But while they were thus dreaming of bliss, there was a viper at work to mar their beautiful vision.

Lord Abingdon had seen Mary Somers, and was resolved to possess her; but he knew the futility of any attempt, till his rival was removed from the neighbourhood. To effect this, his insidious design, he immediately wrote an anonymous letter to Sir Thomas Fitz-Maurice, stating that his son was about to bring disgrace on his family by a secret marriage with Mary Somers. Sir Thomas had no sooner read the letter, than he sent for his son, and in the most abusive manner demanded of him why he had paid any attentions to any lady without the permission of his father. Henry's cheek turned pale as his father spoke, but it was not the paleness of fear, it was that of indignation and wounded pride.

"And what may my good son be intending to do, as soon as the marriage knot is tied? will he bring his bride to an unasked, an unwelcome inmate at my house?"

"Father," said Henry, striving to master his choking passions; "father, I never thought of marrying without your permission and approval."

"Lying scoundrel! have you not arranged with your mistress to elope? have you not planned a secret marriage?"

"I have not."

"Say not that word again, or the door of your father's house is closed forever against you."

"I have not, on my honor, I have not."

"Your honour, indeed!"

"By all that's dear to me, by all my hopes of salvation—"

"Leave the house instantly, from this hour I disown you."

"Nay, hear me," and he fell on his knees, but his father spurned him from his presence.

The scene is changed! The dull clouds were hanging over the heavens; watery vapours were streaming up from the earth; and, as the moon faintly glimmered at times through the dense mists, the blackness of the night scowled around her; the eddying gusts swept through the tall trees, now bending to their might—the rain fell in large heavy drops, the tempest howled, the thunders roared, and the lightnings gleamed through the blackened sky!

At that dread hour; for the old church bell had but just tolled midnight: in a chamber, that in vain tried to resist the torrents which were pouring into it and afforded no shelter from the howling blast; lay a youth stretched on a bed of sickness. By the side of the straw pallet stood a candle nearly burnt out: the dull flame flickered for a while in the socket and then died, "Aye," said the invalid, "thy life is gone, it has wasted away; and I feel that mine

is going too; may my death be as quiet as thine. But oh! it is cold," and his teeth chattered as he spoke. It was at this instant, that I entered. I had heard that there was a sick stranger in the house, and had come to see him, but how much was I shocked and surprised when I beheld Henry Fitz-Maurice; his cheek sunken and pale, his eyes swollen, his whole frame emaciated; and, alas! how much changed from what I had last seen him.

"Henry," said I, "I am hurt to see you here and in this state."

"It is now too late, the lot is cast, and I must die. But amid all my sufferings I did not think this would have been added to them; I did not think my Mary would have proved unfaithful."

I saw what was passing in his mind, but I was amazed at his last words.

"And why do you fancy Mary unfaithful," said I.

"Is she not Lord Abingdon's bride?"

"No."

"Then his paramour," cried he bitterly.

"No, you wrong her; she is still faithful to you; though she is almost dying, never once having heard from you."

"Never heard from me? Day after day have I written to her, but letters never came from her."

"There is some mystery here," said I, for I began to suspect Lord Abingdon of intercepting the letters, but you must not talk longer; you must recover; your Mary is still constant, and Sir Thomas has repented of his cruelty."

"It is too late, it is too late; this might have saved my life before, but—"

"No, my dear Henry, it is not too late; you may be well enough to lead your bride to the altar."

"It cannot be; would to heaven it were possible."

Sir Thomas Fitz-Maurice was not naturally a bad man or a cruel father; but, his passions were most violent and had always the mastery over him; and having been long in the army, his ideas of discipline and propriety were somewhat of the strictest. The intelligence conveyed by Lord Abingdon's anonymous letter enraged him at once, and the denial of the charge exasperated him still more; his passions were thus worked up to their highest pitch, and you have seen to what results they led. But the first heat of his anger was no sooner over than he began to repent of his severity, and to wish for the return of his son. He fancied that it was only the first excitement of rage that had induced Henry to depart, not knowing the deep-rooted sensibilities of his nature, that had been wounded by his father's treatment of him. Weeks passed on, but poor Henry did not return.

Months passed away; Sir Thomas thought no more of his eldest son who was abroad, but he thought much and silently of his Henry; he thought of the son he had lost, and vainly endeavored to conceal the grief that was consuming him. His limbs now tottered under him; and instead of the hale and hearty man of fifty, that he had been, he became prematurely old, and seemed sinking rapidly into the grave.

It was at this time that he received my letter, announcing the illness of his son, and informing him of Henry's determination never to see home, till he had received from his father overtures of a reconciliation. Sir Thomas, ill as he himself was, ordered his carriage, and taking his physician with him, set off for Mexington, the village where his son was lying sick.

"My poor son! pardon me, my son. Your father asks forgiveness of you, my son, for it is his cruelty that has brought you to your death-bed."

"Speak not thus, my father, it is I that should ask forgiveness of you. Give me your blessing, and I die happy."

"The blessing of an old man, your father, be on you. I have killed you: may all your sins be on my head."

"Nay, speak not so; I cannot bear to hear it. I leave my thanks and my gratitude for all your kindness to me, and now that I have obtained your blessing, let me think of death. But how pale you are; you too are ill, my father."

"The sorrows of the old bear heavily on them; but if youth cannot bear up under those afflictions, your aged father must expect to sink beneath them. Our calamities have been grievous to both; may we meet in a brighter world," and the old man sobbed aloud.

The physician motioned me to take Sir Thomas to his room, saying, it might be fatal to both parties to continue the conversation. "So meek, so forgiving," soliloquized Sir T., as he entered his room, "and to die thus early; it cannot be; God will have mercy on him and me." He will spare my son; for it is I that have caused his death."

The old man fell back on his bed, and exhausted nature sought repose.

Again it was evening; such an evening as the past delights to fancy, and the painter to realize on his canvass. The sun had just hid his golden orb behind the blue mountains—but, the feathery clouds were still tinged with all his setting glory; the deep purple of one part of the heavens melted away into the delicate blue, that hung its veil over another orange and violet; in fine, all the colors of the rainbow mingled their beauties to adorn this fairy sky.

It was at this calm and pleasing hour, that Henry, leaning on my arm, strolled for the first time, beyond the precincts of the garden. He felt better than he had been—the evening was warm; the gentle breeze fanned his fevered cheek; and he fancied it was, good for him to inhale the fresh air at such a time.

"How beautiful are nature's works," said he; "but, I must leave them all. Yet there is something sad in quitting this world, when beauty like this is here. I had hoped to have lived till fame and honor circled round my name; but, now I must leave all these aspirations which I have so fondly indulged, for the grave yawns wide before me! Yes, I come—not many more suns shall shed their lustre over the world till their rays, unfelt, warm the cold Tomb of "Henry Fitz-Maurice."

"See," cried he, breaking off abruptly, "see the glorious prospect opening before me—See these bright immortals through whose heavenly ranks I press forward to eternity; see the golden harp is there, and the palm bough awaiting the end of my labours. Ah! what do I feel? my brain whirls, it reels, but oh, how pleasant; 'tis the dream of coming glories; its brightness dazzles me, there is a film upon my eyes, a dewy mist is on me. Farewell, lovely earth; I go to brighter climes. Adieu, my Mary, and my father."

As he uttered these last words, he sunk exhausted on the ground. His eyes closed, the hectic flush that gilds the portals of the tomb rushed to his pale cheeks, it died softly away, and the spirit had fled forever. He lay before me in the icy stillness of death, and the calm, the angelic sweetness of expression that rested on his features at the last moment of existence, still hovered there, the soul had left the body, but seemed still to keep guard over it. What a melancholy picture of the vanity of all human happiness had I witnessed! Often we fancy that we can perceive its excessive vanity in the world, but the last touch of the pencil must be given by the hand of death; cut off in the prime of youth, Henry had entered in the glories of the future.

Our tale is quickly told. Poor Mary! every morning with the rising sun, she culls the sweetest flowers and bears them to the grave of her lost one; but, the rosy freshness that formerly bloomed on her cheek has changed into a vacant paleness, her eyes are dilated and seem to be starting from their sockets, her lips are compressed, as if to confine the choking sobs, her intellect once so fine, is now a wreck; she is fast following her Henry to the tomb. Every morning at the earliest hour, she may be heard singing her sad ditty as she bears her flowers to the tomb of her Henry.

Old Sir Thomas did not long survive the loss of his son; he sunk into the grave within six months of Henry's death.

Lord Abingdon, the cause of all this misery, died alone in a foreign land, without an eye to weep over him as he descended into an early grave. He fell wounded in a duel, and breathed out his life in the open air.

This is the conclusion of the story of Henry Fitz-Maurice; and, as all the circumstances are so fresh in my mind, so clearly pictured before me, you cannot be surprised at the melancholy that any mention of them always casts over me. Adieu.

A SUNDAY IN THE COUNTRY.

Through the deep shades of night the orient dawn
Cheerfully breaks upon yon reddening hill;
In calm serenity the Sabbath morn
Awakes with sober gladness soft and still;
As, if obedient to her Maker's will,
Nature, through all her realms, kept holy day.
The whispering of the breeze—the babbling rill—
The insects wheeling in their mozy play—
The hum of vocal quires, chirping from spray
To spray.

And now o'er upland lawn and dale a chime
Bursts, as responsive to the voice of praise,
Hymn'd by creation at this solemn time.
The bythesome hamlet at the call displays,
In prim attire, through its converging ways,
Th' assembled throng. Age, with complacent smile,

On the robanster arm its weakness stays,
Pacing along the venerable aisle,
To its accustom'd place within that ancient pile.

'Tis sweet where childhood and where youth
before
Hath knelt, for hoary years to bend the knee;
'Tis sweet to hear familiar tongues adore;—
From sire to son the well-known face to see
Mixing around in kind fraternity;
And sweet it is to think, that when our thread
Is spun, within these precincts we shall be
Mingling our ashes with their parent dead,
And where our fathers rest that we shall lay our head.

And now the solemn organ, sweet and slow,
Peals through the vaulted roof; the sacred song
Harmonious sweets, and seraphs cast below
Their eyes complacent on the tuneful throng.
As one to whom God's holy truths belong,
Reproof, correction, and instruction, he,
The faithful shepherd, spreads his flock among,
As best may suit to their necessity,
Albeit peace, joy, and love his dearer theme
may be.

The service over, crowd the simple folk
Around the pastor by the church-yew,
Who asks their homely cares, or what he spoke
Points in some shape familiar to their view.
Before the cottage doors as th' evening dew
Descends, the aged sit, or lingering stay;
In sober cheerfulness, the younger through
The scented lanes and blooming meadows stray,
And prayer and humble praise close in the Sabbath day.

INDOLENCE is the Dead Sea, that swallows all virtues, and the self-made sepulchre of a living man.

New Works.

From the New York Tribune.

Incidents of Travel in Yucatan. By John L. Stephens, Author of "Incidents of Travel in Egypt, Arabia Petrea, and the Holy Land," "Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas and Yucatan," etc.

RUINS.

But we must pass over these introductory pages and speak more definitely of the ruins discovered and described. The first which he reached were those at Mayapan. They cover a great plain upon the site where, according to historical record, once stood the capital of the whole country, surrounded by a strong wall, the remains of which may still be traced through the woods. Half buried mounds are seen scattered over its surface, the edifices that once surmounted them having with a single exception, entirely disappeared. One of these mounds was sixty feet high and one hundred feet square at the base, built up solid from the plain, with a broad staircase on each of its four sides and a plain stone platform fifteen feet square at the summit. Around its base for a great distance were strewn sculptured stones, with carved figures of men and beasts, and the hideous shapes of demons. Upon a ruined mound some thirty feet in height was still found standing a circular building some twenty-five feet in height, with cornices, double columns and the remains of paintings upon its walls. The whole peninsula of Yucatan was known to the natives at the time of the Spanish invasion by the name of Maya, and this to was the name of the language which they used. The capital city of Mayapan, of which these are the ruins, is said to have been destroyed by the rebellious vassals nearly a hundred years before the arrival of the Spaniards. Striking affinities of the Maya language with those of Asia have been discovered and pointed out by Merian in his work on the subject.

The travellers next proceeded to Uxmal, which they had visited before but imperfectly explored. It was here that their labors on their former visit were so abruptly terminated. Mr. Catherwood has given a great number of illustrations to make perfectly clear the situation, size, appearance, &c. of these most striking remains, which were among the most striking and important observed in the whole peninsula. The first ruin presented is of a building standing upon three great terraces and three hundred and twenty-two feet in length. It is constructed wholly of stone and profusely ornamented with elaborate sculpture. Over the central doorway is the grandest ornament of a man—made up of the enormous figure of a richly adorned and surrounded with characters and a great abundance of hieroglyphics, intended which are undoubtedly hieroglyphics, intended it may be, as a record of the construction of the building and of the design of those who built it. The whole building is long and narrow, below the cornice it is plain but above is ornamented with elaborate sculpture on every side. Views of every part of it taken with the utmost care by Mr. Catherwood are presented in Mr. Stephens's pages. The rooms inside were large and the ceiling forms a triangular arch without the key stone. Out of the back wall Mr. Stephens, in order to discover hidden apartments of stone and was surprised to find in the mortar left by its removal two red prints of a man's hand, not sculptured or carved but stamped by the living hand upon the stone. These marks Mr. Stephens says he met upon almost every building the ruins of which he examined. They were always red and always evidently stamped by the living hand. Their constant recurrence excited in him a lively curiosity as to their purpose and significance; and in the Appendix to the second volume he publishes a letter upon the subject from Mr. Schoolcraft, a well known student of Indian character and habits. He says that the hand is always used by the North American Indians to denote supplications to the Deity; and in the system of picture theca stands as a symbol for strength or mastery theca derived. Mr. Schoolcraft states that he has often met this symbol among the Indians on the Mississippi river. He observed it stamped repeatedly upon the walls of a village temple among the Indians of the Islands of Lake Sa-

perior. Besides this principal house at Uxmal, called the Casa del Gobernador, were five others scarcely inferior to it in magnificence. It would be useless, of course, to attempt to describe all the descriptions of these ruins. He low our author in his descriptions found. He or of those which he afterwards found. He proceeded next to Jalaabo, where he saw a splendid annual fair with bull fights and other fetes. Here he also found vast mounds of ruined edifices and a great number of remarkable monuments, and he visited and explored a curious and wonderful Labyrinth called the Cave of Mexicana, composed of intervening passages running in every direction, with high &c. many of which he penetrated till his way was blocked up by masses of earth which had fallen in. He found here and at Uxmal, and indeed at several other places which he visited a great number of subterraneous chambers which were probably used by the cities with inhabitants as cisterns to supply the cities with water. At Tical were found other ruins with vases containing very curious and interesting sculptured figures and hieroglyphics upon their sides. One of the most wonderful buildings seen at Uxmal where our travellers spent some time, is that called the House of the Dwarf, standing upon a lofty mound and measuring two hundred and thirty feet in length, one hundred and fifty in width, and eighty in perpendicular height—its shape being pyramidal. The crowning structure is a long and narrow building presenting, even in its decay, a most elegant and tasteful arrangement of ornaments.