

Literature, &c.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

YANKEE SARAH-NADE.

BY SAMUEL SLOOUM, OF GOSLIN RUN.

I'm sitting on the stile Mary,
Sitting on the stile,
But the bull dog in the front yard,
Keeps barking all the while;
Why don't you tell your pa, Mary,
Or John, if he's about,
To ask young Sammy Slooum in,
And make the dog git out.

Now I'm sitting on the fence, Mary,
Before the kitchen door,
But the pesky ugly bull dog
Barks louder than before;
And I thought I saw a shadow, Mary,
A shadow slim and tall,
All arms and legs, like Reuben Brown,
Against the whitewashed wall.

If that is Reuben's shadow, Mary,
If that was Reuben's shade,
'Twill bring the 'spects back on me,
I'm very much afraid;
Oh, why this cruel treatment,
Why keep me in suspense,
Why don't you make the dog git out,
And let me off the fence?

I've got a keow and calf, Mary,
The calf is three weeks old,
A score of pretty sheep too,
As ever led in fold;
And daddy told me yesterday,
When Dappie had a colt,
He'd let me have it, certain, sure—
Ain't that Reub Brown a dolt.

And mammy's knitting stockings now,
To buy a cotton web;
One half the sheets are to be mine,
And half for sister Deb;
And mammy says whichever one
First brings a partner hum,
Shall have the pumpkin-blossom quilt—
Say, Mary, won't you come?

Gee whilkins! you'd ought to see
The rooster and the hen,
That uncle Peleg Shackleford
Sent me by cousin Ben.
I guess he wakes the folks around,
When he gins out to crow—
If he was here to blow his horn,
He'd bring you out, I know.

But, Mary, if you won't have me,
And will have Mr Brown,
I guess as hows there's other gals
That's wide awake in town.
But, one thing you ought to know
Before I turn my back—
That is, that Prudence Pattingale
Gin your Reub Brown the sack.

From Household Words.
LOST ALICE.

We were married not long after, and for six months we dwelt in a 'Fool's Paradise.' When I think, that but for me, it might have lasted to our dying day, I can only sigh, and take up the burden of my life with an aching heart.

They had called Alice fickle—oh, how wrongly! No human being could be truer to another than she was to me.

'I only wanted to find my master, Francis,' she used to say, when I laughed at her about it. 'I was looking for him through all these long years, and I began to think that he would never come. But, from the first moment when I heard you speak, and met your eyes, I felt that he was near me. And I am glad to wear my master's chains,' she added, kissing my hand.

And I am sure she was in earnest. I pleased her best when I treated her most like a child. She was no angel—a passionate, high-spirited creature. She rebelled a thousand times a day, although she delighted in my control. But it was pretty to see her, when she turned to leave the room, with fire in her eyes, and a deep flush on her cheek—it was pretty to see her with her hand upon the lock even, drop her proud head submissively, and wait when I said—'Stop. Shut the door and listen to me.' Yet it was dangerous. I, who had never been loved before, what could I do but become a tyrant, when a creature so noble as this bent down before me!

She loved me. Every chord of her most sensitive heart thrilled and trembled to my touch, and gave forth sweetest music; yet I was not satisfied. I tried the minor key. Through her deep affection for me I wounded her cruelly. I can see it now. Some wise idea found its way into my head and whispered that I was making a child of my wife by my indulgent ways, and that her character would never develop its strength in so much sunshine. I acted upon that thought, forgetting how she had already been tried in the fiery furnace of affliction and, quite unconscious, that while she was getting back all the innocent gaiety of her childish years, the deep lessons of her womanhood were still lying beneath the sparkling surface of her playful ways.

It, for a time, she had charmed me out of my graver self, I resolved to be charmed no more. I devoted myself again to my business, heart and soul, and sat poring for hours over law papers without speaking to her. Yet she did not complain. So long as she was certain that I loved her, she was content, and took up her pen again, and went on with the work our marriage had interrupted. Her writing desk was in my study, by a window just opposite mine; and sometimes I would cease to hear the rapid movement of her pen; and, looking up, I would find her eyes fixed upon my face, while a happy smile was playing around her lips. One day the glance found me in a most unreasonable mood. The sense of her love half pained me, and I said curtly:

'It is bad taste, Alice, to look at any one in that way.'

She dropped her pen, only too glad of an excuse to talk to me, and came and leaned over my chair.

'And why? when I love some one.'

This was a bad beginning of the lesson. I wanted to teach her, and I turned over my papers in silence.

'Do I annoy you, Francis?'

'Not much.'

Her light hand was playing with my hair, and her breath was warm on my cheek. I felt my wisdom vanishing, and tried to make up for its loss by an increased coldness of manner.

'One kiss,' she said. 'Just one, and I'll go away.'

'What nonsense, Alice. What time have I to think of kisses now?'

She stood up and looked me in the face.

'Do I tease you, Francis?'

'Very much.'

She gave a little sigh—so faint that I could scarcely hear it—and left the room. I had scared her gaiety away for that morning.

This was the first cloud in our sky.

It seems strange, now, when I look back upon it after the lapse of years, how perseveringly I laboured to destroy the foundation of peace and happiness on which I might have built my life. The remaining six months of that year were months of misery to me, and I doubt not, to Alice, for she grew thin and pale, and lost her gaiety. I had succeeded only too well in my plan, and she had learned to doubt my affection for her. I felt this by the look in her eyes now and then, and by the way in which she seemed to cling to her dog, as if his fidelity and love were now her only hope. But I was too proud to own myself in the wrong, and the breach widened day by day.

In the midst of all this estrangement the dog sickened. There was a week of misgiving on Alice's part, when she sat beside him with her books, or writing all the time—there was a day when both books and manuscript were put away, and she was bending over him, with tears falling fast, as she tried to hush his moans, and looked into his fast glazing eyes—and there was an hour of stillness, when she lay on the low couch, with her arm around his neck, neither speaking nor stirring. And when the poor creature's last breath was drawn, she bent over him with a passionate burst of grief, kissed the white spot upon his forehead, and closed the soft, dark eyes, that even in death were turned towards her with a loving look.

She did not come to me for sympathy. She watched alone, while the gardener dug a grave and buried him beneath the study window. She never mentioned him to me, and never paid her daily visit to his grave, till I was busy with my papers for the evening. So the year which had begun in love and happiness, came to its close.

I sat in the study alone, one morning in the February following, looking over our some deeds that had been long neglected, when I heard Alice singing in the balcony outside the window. It was the first time I had heard her sing since Fred's death, and I laid down my pen to listen. But hearing her coming through the hall, I took it up again, and affected to be very busy.

It was a warm, bright, beautiful day, and she seemed to bring in a burst of sunlight and happiness with her as she opened the door. Her own face, too, was radiant, and she looked like the Alice of the old farm house, as she came on tiptoe and bent over my chair.

'Well, what is it?' I asked looking up.

She laid a pretty little bouquet of violets, tied with blue ribbons, before me.

'I have been to the conservatory, and have brought you the first flowers of the season, Francis. And something else, which, perhaps, you may not like so well.'

She bent over me as she spoke, and leaning her hand lightly on my shoulder, kissed me twice. She had been chary of her caresses for some time, and when she did this of her own accord, I wheeled round in my chair, and looked up at her.

'You seem very happy to-day, Alice.'

'It is somebody's birthday,' she said, stationing herself on my knee, and looking into my eyes. 'And I wish somebody very many happy returns!—her voice faltered a little—and if there has been any wrong feeling, Francis, for the last six months, we will bury it to-day, now and forever.'

She clung to me in silence, and hid her face upon my breast. I was moved, in spite of myself, and kissed the brown hair that was scat-

tered over my shoulder, and said I was quite willing to forget everything (as if I had anything)! At which she looked up with a bright smile, and I daresay thought me very magnanimous.

'And we will make a new beginning from this day, Francis.'

'If you will, my child.'

She caressed me again, after a queer little fashion of her own, which always made me smile, and which consisted of a series of kisses bestowed systematically on different parts of my face—four, I believe, being allotted to my forehead, two to each cheek, two the chin, four to my lips, and four to my eyes. She went through this ceremony with painstaking care, and then looked me in the face. All her love and tenderness seemed to come up before me in that moment, and efface the past and its unhappiness. I held her closely to my heart, and her arms were around my neck.

Will any one believe it? My wife had scarcely left me five moments before the fancy came to me that I had shown too plainly the power she had over me. For months I had been schooling myself into coldness and indifference, and at her very first warm kiss or smile I was completely routed. She had vexed, and thwarted, and annoyed me much during those months: it would not do to pardon her so fully and entirely before she had even asked my forgiveness. I took a sudden resolution; and, when she came back into the room was buried in my papers once more. Poor child! She had had one half hour's sunshine at last.

'One moment,' she said, taking the pen out of my hand, and holding something up over my head. 'I have a birthday gift for you. Do you want it?'

'If you give it to me, certainly.'

'Then ask me for it.'

I said nothing, but took my pen again. Her countenance fell a little.

'Would you like it?' she asked me, timidly.

'There was a saint in old times,' I said, quietly, going on with my papers, 'a namesake of mine, by the way—Saint Francis of Sales—who was accustomed to say, that one should never ask or refuse anything.'

Well! But I'm not talking to Saint Francis; I am talking to you. Will you have my little gift? Say yes, just to please me—to make my happy day still happier.'

'Don't be a child, Alice.'

'It is childish, I know; but indulge me this once. It is such a little thing, and it will make me very happy.'

'I shall not refuse whatever you choose to give me. Only don't delay me long, for I want to go on with these papers.'

The next moment she threw the toy (a pretty little bronze inkstand made like a cupid, with his quiver full of pens) at my feet, and turned away, grieved and angry. I stooped to pick up the figure, it was broken in two.

'Oh, you can condescend to lift it from the ground!' she said sarcastically.

'Upon my word, Alice, you are the most unreasonable of beings. However, the little god of love can be easily mended.'

'Yes.'

She placed the fragments one upon the other and looked at me.

'It can be mended, but the accident must leave its trace, like all others. Oh, Francis!' she added, throwing herself down by my chair, and lifting my hand to her lips. 'Why do you try me so? Do you really love me?'

'Alice,' I said, impatiently, 'do get up. You tire me.'

She rose and turned very pale.

'I will go then. But first answer my question. Do you love me, Francis?'

I felt anger and obstinacy in my heart, nothing else. Was she threatening me?

'Did you love me when you married me, Francis?'

'I did. But—'

'But you do not love me now?'

'Since you will have it,' I said.

'Go on!'

'I do not love you—not as you mean.'

There was a dead silence in the room as the lying words left my lips, and she grew so white, and gave me such a look of anguish that I repented of my cruelty, and forgot my anger.

'I did not mean that, Alice,' I cried.—'You look ill and pale. Believe me, I was only jesting.'

'I can bear it, Francis. There is nothing on this earth that cannot be borne—in one way or other.'

She turned and left the room, quietly and sadly. The sunshine faded just then, and only a white, pale light came through the window.—I so connected it with her sorrow, that to this day I can never see the golden radiance come and go across my path, without the same sharp, knife-like pang that I felt then, as the door closed behind her.

Alice became weaker, and grew really ill. A tour on the continent was strongly recommended by the doctors as the likeliest means of restoration. It was impossible for me to go; but some friends of ours, one Mr and Mrs Warren, with a young daughter, were going to Italy for six months, and it was arranged that Alice was to accompany them.

They remained abroad nine months instead of

six. People wondered and joked about my wife's deserting me; but I only laughed, and said, I should soon go after her if she remained away much longer: and they thought we were still a model couple. But, had they seen me sitting in my office, at night, over Alice's letters from abroad, they would have known what a gulf had opened between us two. I read those letters over and over again, with aching throbs going through and through my heart, at every word. They were full of incident and interest, and people called them beautiful, who had not seen the mixture of womanly passion and childlike playfulness in her character that I had seen, and I was to see no more.

At last she returned. I came home tired enough one evening, to find a letter lying on my table, informing me that she would cross to Dover on the morrow. I went down to Dover to meet her. Our estrangement had worn deep into my heart. She had loved me once; she should love me again.

I was worn, haggard. I took a bath and made a careful toilet after my hurried journey. As I was taking my last look in the glass, the hotel waiter came to tell me they had arrived.

I followed him more nervous than I had ever been before in my life. Warren grasped my hands as I opened the door, and Mrs Warren—bless her kind heart!—burst out crying.

'Oh my dear Frank! I am so glad to see you. And we have brought you your Alice home, so well.'

Next moment she entered, a little King Charles' spaniel frisking about her feet. I had her in my arms at once, but it was not until she kissed me that I knew how cold and pale she was.

'Alice, are you ill?' I asked, holding her away from me, and looking into her face. Her eyes met mine, but their old light was quite gone.

'Not in the least ill, Frank,' she said quietly. But you must remember I have not seen you for nine months, and you startled me a little.'

My household fairy had fled, and I could only mourn that I should never look upon her sweet, young face again. It was another Alice, this. I had slain my own Alice, and nothing could re-animate her.

I was like one in a dream all through the day, and when we came home, I could not wake.—I had made many changes in the house, and all for her. I took her through the rooms on the day after our return, and showed her the improvements. She was pleased with the furniture; she admired the pictures and the conservatory; and seemed delighted with the little gem of a boudoir which I had pleased myself by designing expressly for her. She thanked me, too. No longer ago than a year, she would have danced through the rooms, uttering a thousand pretty little exclamations of wonder and delight, and I should have been smothered with kisses, and called 'a dear old bear,' or some such fit name at the end; all of which would have been very silly, but also very delightful.

I think I bore it for a month; but one morning, as I sat at my solitary breakfast—for Alice took that meal in her room now—the bitter sense of wrong and unhappiness and desertion came over me so strongly that I went up to her room.

'Are you busy?' I asked, as she laid down her pen and looked around.

'Not too busy to talk to you,' she said.

'Alice, how long are we to live this life?—she changed color.

'What life, Frank?'

'The one we are living now. It is not the happy, loving life we used to live. You are not mine as entirely and lovingly as you once were.' 'I know it.' And she sighed and looked drearily at me.

'Why cannot the old days come back again. If I made a terrible mistake, can you never forgive it? I thought it was foolish for us to love each other as we did—at least, to show it as we did—but I have found now, that love is earth's only true wisdom.'

She smiled sadly.

'Give me back that love, Alice, which I would not have. Oh, give me back the lost sunshine.'

I rose from my seat and stood beside her, but she drew back and shook her head.

'Frank, don't ask me for that.'

'But I shall know how to value it now, Alice.'

'That may be; but I have it not to give you, my poor Frank.'

I clasped her to my heart. The passion in that heart might almost have brought back life to the dead; but she did not move. She was like a statue in my arms, and only looked at me and sighed.

'Too late! Too late, Frank!'

'Will you never forgive me?'

'Forgive? Do you think I have one unkind thought or feeling towards you, Frank? Ah, no! But I am chilled through and through.—My love is dead and buried. Stand away from its grave, and let us meet the world as we best may.'

I leaned my head upon my hands, and my tears fell, and I was not ashamed of them.—But they seemed to rouse her into a kind of frenzy.

'You?' she exclaimed suddenly. 'You, who a year ago sowed the seed which has borne this fruit, can you weep over your