

A SONG OF THREE BEAUTIFUL THINGS.

God three beautiful things hath made, Birds and women and flowers, To charm the roaming eye, and spread Sweet magic o'er the hours;

And who loves not all the three, Let him live with his loveless self alone, Like a crab in a shell, or a toad in a stone, Far away from me!

Flowers are beautiful when the breeze Is purpled o'er with blossom, And all the buds that crown the spray Their fragrant stores unclose;

And who loves not this best of the three, etc. Birds are beautiful when they keep High concert in the spring, Or wheel their mazes o'er the deep With gently sloping wing;

And who loves not this second of three, etc. Women are beautiful when they wear All summer in their smiles, And sweetly lighten while they share The workman's weary toils;

And who loves not this best of the three, etc. God three beautiful things hath made, To feed discerning eyes, With outflow of His glory shed O'er earth and sea and skies;

And who loves not all the three, Let him live with his loveless self alone, Like a crab in a shell, or a toad in a stone, Far away from me!

-J. Stuart Blackie, in Cassell's Magazine.

A BOGUS ANCHORESS.

The doctor's wife scanned her visitor in silence. With the aufracity of an out-and-out Protestant she was revolving in her mind certain impious questions. This was the third mendicant in pious garb who had come to her door within a month, soliciting alms for the support of some far away religious institution.

"How he must have suffered!" "He never seemed to think of himself at all. Was possessed with a fear that the fireman might be blamed. Beautiful little fellow in spite of his shabby clothes. Broad white forehead, curling brown hair and thoughtful gray eyes.

"Sister Veronica, I really do not feel justified in helping your hospitals and asylums any more. I think it time we were looking up the poor about us. There may be fellow beings suffering in our midst without a murmur; people whose pride forbids them to appeal to public charity.

"The doctor's wife stood at the window with mingled curiosity and interest, and watched her visitor's departure. To her surprise the latter did not continue up the street, but retraced her steps along the lonely path leading in the direction of the station-house.

"Several months sped by, and the good lady, in spite of her creditable resolutions, had taken no active steps toward ascertaining the circumstances of her neighbors. One day had been too chilly, another too windy, a third to warm, to sally forth on her charitable errand.

"There came a day when the doctor was late to his six o'clock supper. The table was spread in the cosy little dining-room and the tea simmered on the hearth. The young housewife vibrated between table, stove and window.

to the table alone and tried to eat, but only succeeded in swallowing a cup of tea and a bit of fruit. Then she resumed her post by the window. A rain was falling, which increased until it came in gusts and squalls, then settled into a steady downpour.

"It was after nine o'clock when she descried a dark figure hurrying up the street. The gate opened and shut with a click, and the doctor bounded up the steps of the portico, to be met with a tearful greeting on the part of his wife.

"How did it happen—the injury I mean?" "Slipped and fell under a backing engine. They seem to have been pretty badly off—the mother and child—and the fireman of yard-engine No. 26 had been in the habit of throwing off lumps of coal for the little fellow to pick up.

"I declare, Bessie, I never suspected there was such destitution in this place. You remember those wretched dug-outs on the other side of the railroad? Nothing to screen the entrance but a piece of worn-out tent-cloth.

"The boy? Then you had a child?" Grosvenor assented with a mute gesture. "Ruth Stanhope," repeated the doctor's wife slowly, looked steadily at her husband, who sent her back a significant glance.

"A high wind was blowing, and clouds of dust darkened the air about her. Battling with a miniature sirrocco, she yet found time to marvel at the strength of character that had enabled the petted southern girl, born and cradled in the lap of luxury, deliberately to renounce the life of ease open to her.

"For a moment the woman gazed calmly upon her questioner, then turned with an expressive glance to the low pallet where her boy lay sleeping, by his side the crutch that must be his life-long companion.

"I understand her perfectly," returned his wife, with prompt feminine decision; "she is constructed on a different principle from ordinary women. Some gentle instinct of sympathy—of womanly tenderness—is wanting in her composition.

arrived in the place, and brought him home. "Bessie, you remember Jack Grosvenor—the oldest friend I have. You remember he would have been best man at our wedding."

"But there was no answering smile on the face of the man she so cordially greeted. She remembered her husband's description of the gay, lighthearted fellow, and tried to identify him with this sober-faced reserved man, who had silently seated himself by the window, and was looking out over the plains with an abstracted air.

"That is very good," said Mrs. Belden, absently wondering why her husband should make such a point of his friend's business success, or speak of it as if it were of vital interest to her.

"I can't say it seems so very strange to me," remarked Grosvenor, taking part in the conversation for the first time, and speaking in a labored, husky voice; "I wonder that she put up with it so long. We have had a hard time of it for years.

"The citizens of Palmaea may be a trifle uncivilized, my dear, but they are not wanting in the common attributes of humanity. The boys have been busy this evening. They have rented that little house Brown's family vacated last week, and a couple of hundred dollars will be placed in the bank to-morrow to the little boy's credit."

"Her heart chilled at the sight of the cold, proud face, whose severity was increased by the piece of stiff, white muslin bound about the head as a protection from the smoke and coal dust of the ironing stove. Mrs. Belden looked in momentary abhorrence at the mass of lace and embroidery lying upon the ironing table, guessing only too well the owners of the tawdry splendor.

"Notwithstanding the mother's impassive demeanor, the visitor's eyes filled with sudden tears. She twirled her hat strings and searched the cold face, wondering how she had best communicate the tidings of which she was the bearer. She observed the dignified movement of the tall figure across the room, the shapely hand that changed the cool iron for a fresh one, and she remembered how the same hand had held a light without flinching while the little boy's limb was being taken off.

"My husband's old friend, Jack Grosvenor, is at our house." "Alive?" "The word spoke volumes. The pain and agony of years were concentrated in the cry. The hot iron she was holding fell upon the lace draperies and burned its way through them, as she clutched at the table to steady herself, while her brown eyes sought her visitor's with a look of piteous entreaty.

step sounded outside, the door was flung open, and Jack Grosvenor, returned to something like his old impetuous self, strode across the room and caught the fainting woman in his arms. The white turban fell back from the pale face, its rigid features relaxed into a happy smile, and the doctor's wife, struck by the transformation, was startled with a sudden recognition, and murmured softly, "Sister Veronica!"

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