

Growing Old.

Softly, oh softly, the years have swept by thee,
Teaching thee lightly, with tenderest care;
Sorrow and death they have often brought
Aigh thee,
Yet they have left thee but beauty to wear;
Growing old gracefully,
Gracefully fair.

Far from the storms that are lashing the ocean,
Nearer each day to the pleasant home light;
Far from the waves that are big with commotion,
Under full sail, and the harbor in sight;
Growing old cheerfully,
Cheerful and bright.

Past all the winds that were adverse and chilling,
Past all the currents that lured thee unwilling
Far from thy course to the hand of the blast;
Growing old peacefully,
Peaceful and blest.

Never a feeling of envy nor sorrow
When the bright faces of children are seen;
Never a year from the young wouldst thou borrow—
Thou dost remember what lieth between;
Growing old willingly,
Thankful, serene.

Rich in experience that angels might covet,
Rich in a faith that hath grown with thy years,
Rich in a love that grew from and above it,
Soothing thy sorrows, and hushing thy fears;
Growing old wealthily,
Loving and dear.

Hearts at the sound of thy coming are lightened,
Ready and willing thy hand to relieve;
Many a face at thy kind word has brightened—
"It is more blessed to give than receive;"
Growing old happily,
Gladly consenting to grieve.

Byes that grow dim to the earth and its glory,
Have a sweet recompense youth cannot know;
Kiss that grow dull to the world and its glory,
Drink in the songs that from Paradise flow;
Growing old graciously,
Purer than snow.
—Evangelist.

THE YOUNG LAIRD.

A Story of the Shetland Isles.

(Continued).

CHAPTER IV.

When Jean returned to the Manse, one of her little brothers met her and told her that Don had been up to some mischief. "And we think he has been up to some mischief," said the boy confidently, "for he looked cross and ill, and father was talking to him in the study, and when they came out, father looked very grave." Jean could guess what their conversation had been about. She knew now what her father had meant when hinting at an obstacle in the way of her marriage with Don and she felt sure that Mr. Morham had spoken his mind to the young laird. How Don had received such words Jean could not conjecture and longed to know, so she went to her father's room at once.

His troubled brow betokened discouraging news and the girl's heart sank. "Well, my lass," said Mr. Morham, trying to speak cheerfully. "I am rather glad you were not here an hour ago, for I was having a somewhat painful conversation with that poor boy, Don."

"I know," Jean faltered, "and I also know what the cloud is of which you spoke last night. I have heard of Don's shame."

"Who told you?" Is it the talk of the isle already? I did not think it had gone that length."

"Mam Betsy told me. Don is leading Ole into the same folly. What shall I do?"

The last words were spoken pitifully, for the sensitive woman's heart was writhing under its pain, and Jean was not aware of her own power, consequently did not know that it was perhaps given her to save the man she loved. But her father hoped much from her influence over Don, and said cheerfully, "I quite believe that you will be able to set Don right, my lassie. I wish he had waited a day or two before coming to talk to me about you, for he was not in a frame of mind to receive advice or censure, this morning. However, you will put things all right by-and-by."

But that evening Jean thought the "by-and-by" was far away, for Don did not come back, and there could be no doubt that he had resented the minister's well-meant exhortation.

"He will see that father is right, perhaps to-morrow," Jean said to herself. But Don did not come on the morrow, and she feared he was cherishing an unforgiving spirit.

It was not so. In his heart he acknowledged that the minister had

not been unjust; and it was partly shame, and partly an unselfish desire to leave Jean to make a calm decision which kept him away from the Manse.

But the Manse boys would not accept any reason for Don's absence, and when a second day had well-nigh gone without bringing the young laird, Lowrie Morham set out for the Ha'm search of the truant.

Alas! poor Don had not spent the period of self-exile from the Manse as he should have done. He had expected that Jean would write to him or send a message, and when she did neither, he fretted, grew angry, then despairing, and finally resorted to drink as a means of killing time, and curing heartache.

Lowrie, in his usual unceremonious way, walked into the Ha' parlor without being announced, and found Don sitting moodily reading a novel—or pretending to read, while occasionally taking a draught from the spirits-and-water which stood on the table beside him.

There was that in his heavy eyes and nervous manner which told even an unsophisticated youth that Don had taken more drink than was good for him, and Lowrie stood aghast at the revelation in his friend's appearance.

Before he could do more than utter a few disappointed and commonplace remarks, there came a knock to the room door, and presently Ole walked in. He looked flushed and excited, and spoke very hurriedly. "There's a fine breeze blowing, and we will have a splendid run out," he said to Donald at the same time that he less respectfully than usual returned Lowrie's nod.

"I have changed my mind. I am not going," answered Don.

"Not going?" echoed Ole, "why, sir, it is an evening after your ain heart. Stiff wind off the land; white horses on top o' every wave; a clear sky and a well-found boat. I've got a thing ready as ye wished. Ye'll never be for going back o' your word."

"I am not going," said Don doggedly, at the same time helping himself to some more spirits, and then pushing the decanter across to Ole, who accepted the civility with pleasure.

Said Lowrie, "It is like to be a rather rough night on the water, for the wind is steadily rising. What prank were you two meditating, if a fellow may make so bold as inquire?"

"Only going to the Voders," for a sail, Master Lowrie," said Ole, suddenly turning to the lad and adding, "you come instead o' the laird, I've no see the storm yet that could master me in the management o' yon boat."

"Yes, Lowrie, you go," added Don, conscious of little besides a desire to get rid of the boy's reproachful eyes. "It isn't a night for the Voders," answered Lowrie with slight hesitation, for his soul rejoiced in mad adventures and he would have eagerly joined Ole if a grave doubt regarding his sobriety had not presented itself.

"I doubt ye're feared," laughed Ole.

"Bosh!" exclaimed the lad, rather hotly; then turning to Don, he said: "We have been wondering, up at the Manse, what has become of you these two days."

The young laird's bent head had dropped a little lower, and he said in a gruff tone, "And it wasn't worth anybody's while to come and ask after me, I suppose?"

"How can you talk such nonsense, Don, but let me tell you I was for coming yesterday, only Jean said I had better not bother you."

"Oh, she did, did she? Then I suppose she didn't bother herself to send any message to-night?"

"She did not know that I was coming here." Here Ole interrupted the conversation by addressing Don in coaxing tones to induce him to start upon the proposed expedition; but Don was obstinate, and at last Lowrie, seeing that the young men's tempers were fast getting the mastery over them, exclaimed, "There Ole, man, let the laird alone. I'll go with you." Then to Don he said, "I wish you would send a note down to Jean to tell her that I have gone for a sail, and of course won't be home till morning. By that she will know that we are all right, you too, you know."

"Oh, very well," said Don carelessly. But Lowrie had begun to have some suspicions of the state of matters between Jean and the young laird, and he would not be satisfied with such a promise. Writing materials were at hand, and Lowrie persuaded Don to scribble a few words to Jean. "That will comfort her," thought the lad, who had, he believed, found sufficient reason for his sister's pale cheeks and heavy eyelids. He saw the note dispatched, and then he said, "You will come to the Manse to-morrow, won't you? And Don, old chap, I wish—I wish you'd let that alone."

Lowrie pointed to the glasses on the table, then hurriedly left the house, followed by Ole.

The couple did not speak much during their short walk to the shore,

for Lowrie cut short his companion's attempts at conversation, and fortunately they soon reached the place where a favourite boat was lying ready for her voyage.

Ole's expert hands soon had the sail set, and before many minutes the boat was speeding seaward before a smart breeze.

Lowrie had taken the tiller, and was keeping a watch upon Ole, who held the sheet. There was less of his wonted boyish recklessness in the lad's manner, and somewhat of a superior's reserve in his bearing towards the other, who did not relish such novel treatment by any means.

As they got farther from the land the boat began to plunge and scatter spray, and then Ole rising from his seat, said, "Shall I steer now?"

"No," said his young companion sternly and with much of a man's firmness in look and gesture.

"No! you are not in a condition to guide your-self, far less others. Sit down, and attend to what I say."

Completely subdued, Ole did sit down and stared at Lowrie in perfect amazement. Although his mind was considerably confused, he had sense enough to discern at once the marked change which had come over the bearing of the Manse boy, who had been accustomed to defer very much to Ole in all matters pertaining to a boat.

His nature was weak, and he was easily swayed by others, which was fortunate for both himself and Lowrie at that time. Any insubordination just then might have proved fatal. But although his wrath was kindled, the foolish fellow said nothing, and the boat flew on before the wind, which was rising every moment. A moody silence was kept by both Lowrie and Ole. The attention of the former was entirely given to the management of the boat, and presently his companion observed that their course was not directed to the Voders.

The Voders, I had better explain, were a group of rocks lying some miles off the land—not a safe locality to visit at any time, far less on such a night as that of which I am writing, when the breaking waves were thundering upon the Voders with power to overwhelm the stoutest ship that ever floated.

I have said that Lowrie Morham was rash, even foolhardy at times, but he was not so on this occasion, and, instead of steering for the Voders, he gradually turned the boat in quite a different direction. Presently Ole remarked a little insolently,—

"Do ye call this making for the Voders?"

"Certainly not," said Lowrie, shortly.

"Feared?" asked Ole with a sneer. The lad glanced around at the surging waters, and the expression of his face woke an uneasy sensation in Ole's breast. There was a quiver of dread in his voice as he half-scoldingly repeated, "Feared for a drop o' spindrift?"

"Yes," answered Lowrie, "I am afraid to face the Voders to-night. I don't want to be drowned, and I don't mean to be, that's more."

"Why don't ye turn back then?" "Turn back! It would take a better man than either of us to bring the boat back in the teeth of this gale—as you know very well."

Ole was too good a sailor not to understand, even in his somewhat dazed condition, that they were in some danger, and his courage fell considerably.

"What will ye do, Master Lowrie?" he asked meekly.

"I am going to land on Humba."

"If ye can, ye mean."

Lowrie gazed anxiously ahead at a small island rising dark and solitary out of a whirlpool of conflicting waters. It was small and uninhabited; the moon was shining directly over it, throwing its sombre form into bold relief against the sky. There was no beach or creek where a boat could effect a safe landing. The island was a mere rock, rising out of deep ocean, and surrounded by crags, some high, some scarcely above the tide-mark. In fine weather it was easy enough to run a boat alongside of those crags. When a tempest was raging, it was scarcely possible to land safely upon them.

There was no other land anywhere in the course they were driving, and beyond Humba spread the Atlantic—broad, measureless, storm-tossed. "If we can't take the isle," said Lowrie very gravely, "we must be carried out to sea. The isle is our only hope."

The knowledge of their imminent danger completely sobered Ole, and he began to whimper. "It was a fool's trick to gang afloat to-night—whatever will come o' us! If it had no been the laird's whisky—"

"Stop that!" Lowrie exclaimed. "Don't add cowardice to the rest of your folly, and listen! There is no chance for us out on the open sea. We must try for Humba."

"But ye ken as well as I do," Ole cried, "that there is no possi-

bility o' running safely alongside o' the Humba rocks to-night."

"Nevertheless that is our only hope. I shall make for the isle, and when the boat strikes—as she will—we must try to get hold on land somehow. That's all that is for us now."

"Lord have mercy on us," groaned Ole, yielding to the unmanly fears which usually master one who has not early learned self-control. The minister's son bowed his head one moment in silent prayer, and a swift thought sped to the Manse and Jean. Then, with compressed lips and flashing eyes, he grasped the tiller yet more firmly, and brought the boat round so that her side was to the shore when, carried by wind and wave, she crashed on the rocks.

(To be continued.)

The Dishonest Man—Who is He.

IN WORLDLY MATTERS.

1. One who deceives and cheats.
2. One who takes advantage of others' necessities for personal profit.
3. One who sells at exorbitant prices.
4. One who will not pay his honest debts.
5. One who buys on time, with no prospect of paying.
6. One who lives beyond his income.
7. One who gets his groceries on time, and pays cash for his wines and tobacco.
8. One who, when in debt, continues to wear fine clothes, live in fine style, and indulge in expensive habits.
9. One who promises to pay on a certain day, and, being disappointed in getting the means, instead of apologizing to his creditor, avoids his presence.
10. One who handles that which he knows is a direct curse to the people simply because there is money in it.
11. One who, having enjoyed the results of others' labor and expense, refuses to render a just recompense.
12. One who is knowingly guilty of any of the above sins, and does not immediately repent.

IN RELIGIOUS MATTERS.

1. One who professes to be a Christian, and will not accept the plain statements of the Bible.
2. One who sees the truth, but will not acknowledge it.
3. One who acknowledges the truth, but will not obey it.
4. One who says, "I believe every word of the Bible," but when shown to be in error, says, "The passage is somewhat doubtful."
5. One who says he believes "the wages of sin is death," but thinks God will not damn any one for not keeping all the commandments.
6. One who says "Yes, yes," to that which he does not believe.
7. One who joins the church from worldly or mercenary motives.
8. One who takes advantage of his religious standing to win the confidence of others, and then betrays it.

A man may join the church, and bear the name Christian, and multitudes may rise up to speak his praise; but if he is guilty of any of the above sins, God pronounces him a dishonest man.—Herald and Review.

A Catechism.

Did you ever see a counterfeit ten-dollar bill? Yes.

Why was it counterfeited? Because it was worth counterfeiting.

Was the ten-dollar bill to blame? No.

Did you ever see a scrap of brown paper counterfeited? No.

Why? Because it was not worth counterfeiting.

Did you ever see a counterfeit Christian? Yes, lots of them.

Why was he counterfeited? Because he was worth counterfeiting.

Was he to blame? No.

Did you ever see a counterfeit infidel? No, never.

Why? You answer.

I am through.

Random Readings.

Not failure, but low aim, is crime.—Lowell.

To try to be brave is to be brave.—Macdonald.

To have what we want is riches; but to be able to do without is power.

Men speak of the fair as things went with them there.—George Herbert.

Reputation is what men and women think of us; character is what God and the angels know of us.

Christ is the river of forgetfulness, in which by-gone guilt is overwhelmed.—Robertson.

When a man wants to find fault he will do so if he has to spend all his time looking for it.

Great occasions of serving God present themselves seldom, but little ones frequently.—Francis de Sales.

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