

WRITERS FOR THE EXAMINER

Friends. In careless childhood's joyous day, I was sweet to have a friend...

In youth, that season when the mind is moulded to the form, it never can change, how good to find...

In manhood, when the storms of life beat down most heavily, and when, amid unequal strife...

In age, when strength and energy are swift on the declivity, 'tis sweet to share the company of friends...

In death, that lonely, solemn hour, whose arm alone can overpower the darkness of that end...

And throughout all the stages here, from childhood to the grave, he of all friends is the most dear...

Southport, P. E. I., March 20th. J. B. D.

THE FAIR GOD.

BOOK SIX.

CHAPTER I.

(Continued.)

"I begin to understand you," the 'twin said, still more kindly, "You thought it your fault that the king was a prisoner; you fled for shame."

"Yes—for shame!" "My poor friend!"

"But consider," said Hualpa—"consider how rapidly I had risen, and to what height. Admitting my self-accusations, when before did man fall so far and so low? What wonder that I fled?"

"Well, you have my judgment. Sent yourself and hear me further."

Hualpa took the seat this time; after which the 'twin continued:

"The seizure was made in the palace. The king yielded to threats of death. He could not resist. While the strangers were bearing him past the *teocallis*, and you were looking at them, their weapons were at his throat. Had he yielded to his prayer, and given the signal, and had Cuicuilhua obeyed, and with his hands attempted a rescue, your benefactor would have been slain. Do not think me dealing in conjectures. I went to him in the street, and prayed to be allowed to save him; he forbade me. Therefore hold not your self in error; be happy; you saved his life a second time."

Again Hualpa gave way to his gratitude. "Nor is that all," the 'twin continued. "In my opinion, the last rescue was nobler than the first. As to the Lord Cuicuilhua, be at rest. He was not himself when he chided you so cruelly; he now thinks as I do; he exonerates you; his messengers have frequently come, asking if you had returned. So, no more of shame. Give me now what else you did."

The sudden recall to the past appeared to throw Hualpa back; his head sunk upon his breast again, and for a time he was silent; at length he replied:

"As I see now, good 'twin, I have been very foolish. Before I go on, assure me that you will listen with charity."

"With charity and love."

"I have hardly the composure to tell what more I did; yet the story will come to you in some form. Judge me mercifully, and let the subject be never again recalled."

"You have spoken."

"Very well. I have told you the words of the Lord Cuicuilhua; they burnt like fire. Thinking myself for ever disgraced, I descended from the *acotea* to the street, and there saw the people's confusion and heard their cries and curses. I could not endure myself. I fled the city like a guilty wretch. Instinctively, I hurried to Tihuano. There I avoided every habitation, even my father's. News of evil travels fast. The old merchant, I knew, must needs hear of the king's seizure and what regarded as my crime. So I cared not to meet his eyes. I passed the days in the jungle hunting, but the charm of the old occupation was gone; somehow my arrows flew amiss, and my limbs refused a long pursuit. How I subsisted, I scarcely knew. At last, however, my ideas began to take form, and I was able to interrogate myself. Through the king's bounty I was a lord, and owner of a palace; by his favor, I further reflected, Nenetzin was bound to me in solemn betrothal. What would she think of me? What right had I, so responsible for his great misfortune, to retain his gifts? I could release her from the odious engagement. At his feet I could lay down the title and property; and then, if you refused me as a soldier or slave, I could hide myself somewhere; for the grief-struck and unhappy like me, earth has its caverns and ocean its islands. And so once more I hurried to Tenochtitlan. Yesterday I crossed the lake. From the Chalcan I heard the story which alone was needed to make my humiliation complete—how Nenetzin, false to me, betrayed the purpose of her father, betook herself to the stranger's house, adopted his religion and became his wife or—spare me the word, good 'twin. After that, I lost no time, but went to the palace, made way through the palofaced guard at the gate and doors, each of whom seemed placed there to attest the good king's condition and my infamy. Suitors and lords of all degrees crowded the audience-chamber when I entered, and upon every face was the same look of sorrow and dejection which I had noticed upon the faces of the people whom I passed in the street. All who turned eyes upon me appeared to become accusers and say, 'Traitor, behold thy victim!' Imagine the pressure upon my spirit. I made haste to get away—unseenly haste. What my salutation was I hardly know. I only remember that, in some form of speech, I publicly resigned all his honorable gifts. I remember, also, that when I took what I thought was my last look at him—friend, patron, king, father—may the gods, who have forbidden the relation, forgive the illusion!—I could not see him for tears. My heart is in my throat now; then it nearly choked me. And so ends my account. And once more, true friend, I come to you, Hualpa, the Tihuanoan, without title, palace or privilege; without distinction, except as the hero and victim of a marvellous fortune."

The 'twin was too deeply touched, too full of sympathy, to reply immediately. He arose and paced the arched arcade. Resuming his

seat again, he asked simply, "And what said the king?" "To what?" "Your resignation."

"He refused to take back his gifts. They could not revert, he said, except for crime."

"And he was right. You should have known him better. A king cannot revoke a gift in any form."

"After a spell of silence the 'twin spoke again. 'One matter remains. You are not guilty, as you supposed; your friends have not lost their faith in you; such being the case, it were strange if your feelings are as when you came here; and as purposes too often follow feelings, I ask about the future. What do you intend? What wish?'"

(To be continued.)

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