

The Examiner.

AND SEMI-WEEKLY INTELLIGENCER.

"THIS IS TRUE LIBERTY WHEN FREE-BORN MEN—HAVING TO ADVISE THE PUBLIC—MAY SPEAK FREE."—MILTON'S EURIPIDES.

New Series.

CHARLOTTETOWN, NOVEMBER 30, 1850.

Vol. 1: No. 86

The Lady's Choice.

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"In terms of choice I am not solely led
By nice direction of a maiden's eyes."

Merchant of Venice.

(Continued from our last.)

The only one of Frank Harcourt's family with whom I then became acquainted, was his cousin Louis Heyward, and, among the whole circle of my acquaintances, there was no one whom I so cordially disliked. His form was diminutive and slightly misshapen, while his face would have been positively ugly, but for the effect of a pair of large, dark, soft eyes which seemed to speak a more fluent language than his lips. His manners were cold, quiet and indifferent; he mingled but little in society, and I think our well-filled library and my music alone induced him to conquer his reserve sufficiently to become one of my habitual visitors. To me he was always polite and gentlemanly but no more. He never flattered—never even commended, though he often looked as if he would have censured, had he felt himself privileged to do so. Frank used to take great pains to bring him out into company. (Heaven forgive me if I wrong him in believing now that he wanted him as a foil to his own exceeding beauty,) but, excepting at our house, Louis was rarely seen in society. He had devoted himself to the gospel ministry, and, in order to support himself independently during the period of his theological studies, he had engaged to give instructions in some of the higher branches of education, at one of our principal schools. In fact Louis Heyward was only a poor student, a schoolmaster,—yet he dared to criticise the conduct of the flattered and spoiled Mildred Marchmont; and he alone,—of all the gifted and the graceful who bowed before her power,—he alone—the deformed, the unlovely—seemed to despise her influence.

"Pray how did you discover that he was actuated by such feelings? he surely did not venture to disclose them?"

"No, Emily; he was usually silent and abstracted in my presence. His relationship to Frank placed him at once on a familiar footing in our family, and, we soon became accustomed to his somewhat eccentric manners. When not listening to my harp or piano, he was often occupied with a book, seeming utterly regardless of every one around him. But, often, when I have been sitting in the midst of an admiring circle of 'danglers,' bestowing on one a smile, on another a sweet word, on another a trifling command, and, in short, playing off a thousand petty airs which belles are very apt to practice in order to claim the attentions of all around them,—I have stolen a glance at that cold, grave countenance, and there has been such severe expression in his speaking eyes,—such a smile of contempt on his pale lip, that I have blushed for my own folly even while I hated the cynic who made me sensible of it. I was constantly disputing with him about trifling matters of opinion, and I delighted in uttering beautiful fallacies, which I knew he would contradict. It was a species of gladiatorial game which I enjoyed, because it was new and exciting. I had been so long accustomed to assent and flattery that it was quite refreshing to meet with something like opposition, which could arouse the dormant powers of my mind. The information with which my early reading had stored my memory,—the quickness of repartee which generally belongs to woman,—the readiness to turn the weapon of the assailant with a shield for our own weakness which is so very feminine a mode of argument,—all

afforded a new gratification to my vanity, and while I heartily disliked the disputant, I yet eagerly sought the dispute. Louis at length discovered my motives for thus seeking to draw him into discussions, and, after that, no provocation could induce him to enter into a war of wit with me. In vain I uttered the most mischievous sophistries,—in vain I goaded him with keen satire; he smiled at my futile attempts, as if I were a petted child, but deigned me no reply. It was not until then that I estimated the treasures of his gifted mind, for when he no longer allowed himself to be drawn from his reserve,—when his fine conversational powers were no longer exerted, I felt I had lost a positive enjoyment which when in my possession I had scarcely thought of valuing.

"I happened one afternoon to be walking on the Battery with two cousins, when we overtook an acquaintance who was unattended except by a young brother. We immediately joined her, and, with a feeling of gratified vanity, (knowing that she had once diligently sought to attract Mr. Harcourt,) I stepped back, and taking the arm of Louis, left the lady in uninterrupted possession, for a short time, of my handsome lover. There was a mean and petty triumph in my heart at which I now blush, and as I looked up into the face of my companion, after performing the manœuvre, I was almost startled at the stern contempt which was visible in his countenance.

"Come, Mr. Heyward, do make yourself agreeable for once," I exclaimed, with levity, "do tell me you are flattered by my preference of your society."

"I never utter untruths," was the cold reply.

"My first impulse was to withdraw my arm from his, but I restrained myself, and flippantly said:

"You are as complimentary as usual, I perceive."

"Would you have me to feel flattered by being made the tool of your vanity, Madam?" said he, while his cheek flushed and his eye sparkled; "do I not know that you only sought to gratify a malicious triumph over your less fortunate rival?"

"A denial rose to my lips, but my conscience forbade me to utter it. I was perfectly silent—yet, perhaps, there was something of penitence in my countenance, for he immediately added:

"Good Heavens! Mildred,—Miss Marchmont, I mean—what capabilities of mind,—what noble characteristics of feeling you are daily wasting in society! How rapidly are the weeds of evil passion springing up amid the rich plants of virtue which are still rooted in your heart! How awful is the responsibility of one so nobly gifted as yourself!"

"What do you mean, sir?" exclaimed I, startled at his earnestness.

"Have you never read the parable of the unfaithful steward who hid his talents in the earth?" was his reply: "God has given you beauty and mental power, and wealth and influence; yet what is your beauty but a snare?—What are your talents but instruments to gratify your vanity? Where is your wealth expended if not in ministering to your luxuries? What suffering fellow-being has ever been cheered by your sympathy?—or what weak and erring mortal has ever been strengthened in duty, or wakened to virtue by your influence?"

I cannot express how deeply I was shocked and pained at these impressive words. An emotion resembling terror seized me;—I was actually alarmed at the picture they abruptly presented to my view.

"Louis continued: 'forgive me, Miss

Marchmont, if I have trespassed beyond the limits of decorum. I speak the language you are but little accustomed to hear; but my conscience and my heart have long reproached my silence."

"You are a severe judge, Mr. Heyward," said I with a faint attempt to smile; and just at that moment we were interrupted by some jesting remarks from the party who preceded us. No opportunity was afforded for renewing our conversation; but as we approached home, Louis lingered so as to secure a moment's time, and said in a low voice:

"I will not ask you to forgive my frankness, Miss Marchmont, for something tells me that the time will come when you will not resent my apparent rudeness. I owe to you some of the happiest, and, it may be, some of the saddest moments of my life. Before we part, I would fain awaken you to a sense of your own true value, for amid all the frivolities which now waste your life, I have discovered that you were born for better things." As he uttered these words, we found ourselves at my father's door, and with a cold bow he turned away.

"That night I was engaged to attend a brilliant ball, but my spirits were depressed, and my brow clouded by unwonted sadness. Whether wheeling in the giddy dance, or gliding with light words and lighter laugh amid the groups of pleasure-seeking guests, still the deep voice of Louis Heyward rung in my ears; and the words 'you were born for better things,' seemed written upon every thing that I beheld.

"You are a triste to-night, ma belle," said Frank Harcourt, as he placed me in the carriage to return home: "I shall be quite jealous of my crooked cousin, if a *tele-a-tele* with him has such power to dim your radiance."

"Many a truth is uttered in the language of mockery. That walk with Louis had become an era in my life. How I longed to weep in solitude! The weariness and satiety which had long unconsciously possessed me,—the unsatisfied cravings for excitement, which had long been my torment, now seemed to me fully explained. Louis Heyward had unfolded to me the truth,—he had revealed the secret of my hidden discontent, when he told me *I was born for better things*. I had 'placed my happiness lower than myself,' and therefore did I gather only disappointment and vexation. Why did I not utter these thoughts to my affianced lover? Why did I not weep upon his bosom and seek his tender sympathy? Because I instinctively knew that he would not understand me. The charm which enrobed my idol was already unwinding, and I had learned that there was many subjects on which there could exist no congenial sentiments. For the first time in my life, I began to reflect; and, with reflection, came remorse for wasted time and ill-regulated feelings. Like the peasant girl in the fairy tale, mine eyes had been touched with the ointment of disenchantment, the illusion which had made life seem a scene of perfect beauty and happiness was dispelled forever, and I now only beheld a field where thorns grew beneath every flower, and a path where duties were strewn far more thickly than pleasures.

"A circumstance which soon after occurred confirmed my melancholy impressions. Do you remember little Fanny Rivers whom my mother took while yet a child, with the intention of making her my confidential servant and dressmaid? She was about my age, and had grown up to be very pretty,—with one of those sweet, innocent, child-like faces, which are always so lovely in woman. Soon after your marriage she abruptly

left my service, and much to my regret I was unable to obtain any trace of her. At the time of which I have just spoken, however, I received a note from her. She was sick and in distress, and she requested from me some pecuniary aid. I did not receive the appeal with indifference, and instead of merely sending her assistance I determined to seek her in person. I found her residing with a relative, a poor washerwoman, and as I sat by the sick bed of the young invalid, I for the first time beheld, with my own eyes, the actual life of poverty. Hitherto I had been lavish of money in charity, from a thoughtless and selfish wish to avoid the sight of suffering, but now I learned to sympathise with the poor and unhappy. Poor Fanny was dying with consumption, and daily did I visit her humble apartment, led thither as much by my morbid and excited feelings as by my interest in the failing sufferer. But it was not till she was near her death hour that she revealed to me her painful story. Never shall I forget her simple words:

"I used to think ma'm that nothing was so desirable as fine clothes, and when I saw you dressed in your beautiful silks and satins, I used to cry with envy because I was only a servant. As I grew elder this wicked feeling increased, and often when you had gone to a party, I have locked myself in your dressing-room, and put on your laces, and flowers and jewels, just to see how I should look in such fine dress. I felt very proud when the large glass showed me that I looked just like a lady; but it only made me more envious and unhappy. At last my hour of temptation came. One,—whose name I have sworn never to reveal,—came to me with promises of all that I had so long wanted. He offered me silk dresses, and plenty of money, and said I should have servants to wait on me if I would only love him. He was so handsome, and he brought me such costly presents,—he talked to me so sweetly and pitied me so much for being a servant when I ought to be a lady, that I could not refuse to believe him. He told me I should be his wife in the sight of Heaven, and he ridiculed what he called my old-fashioned notions, until he made me forget the prayers which my poor mother taught me and the Bible which she used to read to me. I was vain and so I became wicked. I sold my happiness on earth and my hopes of Heaven hereafter, for the privilege of wearing fine clothes; for indeed, Miss Mildred, I never was happy after I left your house."

(To be concluded in our next.)

If you transpose what ladies wear—**VEIL**,
'Twill plainly show what bad folks are—**VILE**.

Again, if you transpose the same,
You'll see an ancient Hebrew name,—**LEVI**.

Change it again and it will show
What all on earth desire to do, **LIVE**.
Transpose the letters yet once more,
What bad men do, you'll then deplore,
EVIL.

AN UNMUSICAL NIGHTINGALE.—A New York journal says:—It was the Revd. Mr. Nightingale (the vagabond!—he ought to be throttled) who gave, as a 4th of July toast, "Our fire-engines; may they be like old maids, ever ready, but never wanted."

The present Mayor of Southampton—one of the most influential men, if not the most influential man, in the South Hanpts, (England)—was 25 years ago a village blacksmith. He now ranks among the first nobility of that shire.