

## LIBERTY'S MARTYRS.

BY EVA KATHARINE CLAPP.

(Lured by the rays of the great electric light upon the statue of "Liberty," on Bedloe's Island, hundreds of sea birds nightly dash themselves against the wire net-work around the heavy glass lantern and are found dead at the feet of the Goddess when morning dawns.—*Newspaper paragraph.*)

Alone, on the desolate shore she stands,  
Serene, as the years drift by,  
While drawn,  
As by dawn,  
To her outstretched hands  
Her wild, winged worshipers fly.

The forms born to burrow, or climb, or creep,  
Are safe on the earth, where they cling,  
But they who dare,  
Are of space and air,  
And stardust must soar and sing.

They are thrilled and filled with a fervor caught  
From the infinite wind-swept main,  
In their steadfast flight,  
Toward the blinding light,  
And their welcome is—death and pain.

Oh! wings, wings, wings,  
Striving through dark and rain,  
Merely to droop in death at the end,  
Has your struggle been all in vain?

Nay, call them not wasted, those visions bright,  
That inspired each tiny breast  
With such keen delight  
Through that weary flight,  
Toward the huring star of rest.

No fate so tragic doth Wisdom teach  
Upon Nature's glowing page,  
By symbol or speech,  
For brave souls that reach  
Toward light, through each bitter age.

And true as the course of the rolling year  
Is the song that you sweet stars sing,  
That Right growth strong,  
O'er the black shade, Wrong,  
As summer overtakes the spring.

Then beat, beat, beat, brave hearts, through  
Oppression's night,  
While Liberty stands by the bleak sea-sands,  
Upholding her beacon light.

## FEMININE STRATEGY.

### CHAPTER I.

He had been telling her all he had to tell, and now she stood there quite still, neither by word nor glance vouchsafing the answer for which he pleaded.

"I must know the best or the worst, Christine," he whispered. "Speak to me, darling."

She started violently, and a vivid color rushed to her cheeks. Her broad garden-hat hid that, but it could not shut out the sight which died away in a low, half sob.

"I am sorry if I give you pain," she said, softly, so softly that the words came almost in a murmur, "but I can not be your wife."

"I understand," with a short, hard laugh; "you will not. Pray, be frank."

At this she silently removed her glove and held out her hand. A soft, white hand it was, and one little finger was encircled by a heavy band of gold.

"Married?"

"Not yet." And Miss Illerton's voice grew firmer now. "I am engaged to Arthur Gower."

Her companion was a tall, dark man, with a sunburnt face and a heavy mustache and honest brown eyes. Evidently not the man to be easily overcome by any passing emotion, yet now he fairly staggered beneath the blow her words had dealt; so when he spoke again it was with a calm desperation.

"Forgive me," said he; "I have had so many hopes that—"

"Why did you not write to me?" she interrupted, turning upon him sharply.

"I waited to tell you. I was a fool, that is all."

"Let us have done with folly," commenced Christine, almost wearily. Then, with a sudden, passionate outburst—"Ah! why need you have done this? Could you not see? Could you not understand?"

Now he caught her outstretched hands, and, holding her in his arms, pressed her close upon his breast. For one little moment the poor lips quivered beneath a rain of kisses, for one little moment only; then, adroitly freeing herself, she said but this:

"Go now, Ralph."

"Christine!"

"Go," she repeated; "it is too late; understand me—too late! I shall marry Arthur Gower, and I would not do otherwise now, even if I could."

And so, quitting the deep shadow of the willows, never looking back, Miss Illerton walked down the garden-path, her dainty white gown fluttering in the morning breeze, her whiter face hard and fixed and strangely stern.

Some one met her as she crossed the hall.

"Where is Mr. Gresham, Christine?"

"Are you ill, dear?"

"No; I will be down presently, Clara," passing on quickly.

This abruptness would have offended almost any other woman, but Clara Volney, unlike almost any other woman, simply turned away, a pained pitiability easily read in the troubled glance of her blue eyes.

She stood leaning against the doorway, just a little tinge of color in her cheeks, her slender little fingers mechanically threading an unruly yellow curl, when Miss Illerton sharply called to her from the gallery above.

"Clara!"

"Yes, dear."

"I want you."

Obedient Clara was presently in her cousin's chamber, listening to a half confession born of self-rebuke and a wild yearning for some word of tender consolation.

"We have no secrets from each other, have we, Clara?" commenced Miss Illerton, "No, none."

"From the time—so long ago!—when my poor father died—from the moment when he put your hand in mine, and bade us love each other, not as cousins only but as sisters dear, have I ever, by word or deed, put that last curse to shame, Clara?"

"Never, Christine."

"Think again."

"Never," reiterated the girl.

"It is false!" cried Miss Illerton, her cheeks ablaze now; "I have wronged you by a foolish silence; I have insulted the dead by willful disobedience; in nothing have I acted like a sister; a sister would have gone to you and said: 'Clara, I have promised to be Arthur Gower's wife; this ring I wear is the token of love; I am happy, share my content.' That is what a sister would have done—what I should have done; is it not?"

"Arthur Gower?"

The flush had quite faded from Clara's cheeks, but her eyes were bright with some keen emotion of surprise or joy, or maybe pain.

"Yes," went on Christine, never needing this, "and just now, in the garden, who should come but Ralph Gresham, and—he loves me, Clara."

"Well?"

"But it is too late," said Miss Illerton, almost in undertone.

"What did you tell him?" asked her cousin, eagerly.

"What I have told you—that it was too late, and that I would not, even if I could. She spoke very slowly, marking each word with a lingering emphasis; then, as the last fell from her lips she started up with a merry laugh. "Just think of it, Clara—Arthur

Gower! Did I tell you what he said? Listen. It was the droll-t' wooing! He took my hand and slipped that ring upon my finger; I knew then what was coming, and so kept very still. 'Christine,' said he, 'it is our parents' wish, you remember, that you should be my wife—will you consent?' And I consented, of course. So, there, now, that troublesome affair is arranged, and I am to marry him, and—For heaven's sake, Clara, open that window! one stifles here!"

She came and stood by her cousin, and in silence the two looked out upon the stretch of land where the flat brown tracts were all cut by low fences, and then beyond upon the dark belt of woods, now softened and shadowed by the purple haze of the fast falling night.

Presently, turning to Miss Illerton, Clara asked, in a hal'-whisper:

"Are you happy, Christine?"

"Who? I? What a droll question! Why, I am now the happiest woman in the world."

The next gray daybreak stole in through that same window upon a woman who had passed the livelong night crouched in that great chair, her head resting upon the broad sill.

A pale-faced creature, who looked up listlessly when the shadows commenced twitting in the far-reaching eaves, and then with a sigh and a shudder turned from this ever new glory of the coming day.

"O, Lord!" she cried, and said no more.

You are not to judge. Surely this was a cry for thanksgiving, for, by her own confession, she was the happiest woman in the world.

### CHAPTER II.

A summer's day slowly dying—a tender gloom stealing down the long aisles of forest trees and the low murmur of softly plashing riplets; a mass of jagged black rocks, with the last rays of sunlight glinting upon their bald tops, and gnarled branches overreaching low, fern-tufted banks, to dip in the peaceful water.

Imagine this, and you have the picture of the little lake at "The Crag." Then imagine a tiny, prettily painted canoe, with a young woman at either end, and a gentleman fairly dividing his attention between his companions and the skillful management of the slender oars.

Now you have Miss Illerton, her cousin and Arthur Gower.

They had been floating lazily on, with barely a word now and then to break a stillness almost painful, until they neared the dangerous Black Rocks; then the little wherry became entangled in the stealthy current and veered with a treacherous lurch—a lurch sharp enough to fling one of the women backward, and dangerous enough to startle Arthur into a singularly awkward betrayal of emotion.

The little form had barely swayed when the gentleman, with a hoarse cry, sprang forward.

"Clara! My God, Clara!"

That was all he said; yet, when he remembered himself, he was holding Clara Volney in his arms.

"Is she hurt?"

The voice was Miss Illerton's, and now Arthur Gower remembered, too, that the woman whom he should marry was beside him.

"Are you hurt, Christine?" he asked, flushing hotly as his arms fell from Clara.

"Nor am I," protested her cousin, laughing nervously. "Only frightened. It was so sudden, you see."

"Yes, it was sudden, certainly," acquiesced Miss Illerton; "sudden and pleasant."

This extraordinary assertion remained uncontradicted, for not another word was spoken until the boat was being made fast to the low, quaintly contrived landing of roughly hewn logs; then, as Miss Illerton stepped upon this rustic platform, Arthur Gower touched her hand, "evidently in a

moment."

But the startling vehemence of this appeal produced an effect altogether contrary to the one intended. Clara only gave way to a perfect passion of sobs, while Miss Illerton impatiently shrugged her shoulders, and without another word walked from the room.

Throughout that livelong night had she been with her past, and that grim gossip had told her many bitter truths, had shown her the graves deep buried in her heart, had uncovered the faces of the dead there lying, and of these, one there was—ah, heaven! how near, how real!

"But it may never be now," she murmured, "never! Dead? Ay, in very truth he is dead to me! For when I kill his trust I killed his love, an so a good Lord, be merciful!"

The old cry, you see. Truly, her need was sore.

There was no one in the breakfast-room when Christine entered but Laynor, the housekeeper.

A cheery little octagon was that breakfast-room, especially so when a soft air gently lifted the light curtains of its many windows, and a pleasant light shimmered among the glass and silver of its well-ordered table.

"Where is Miss Volney?"

"She is not very well, Miss Christine," was Laynor's answer—"not well, and she won't be down. I have seen her, and it's only a bad headache; so there's no need to worry, dear."

Miss Illerton did not worry. She ate her rolls and sipped her coffee enjoyment. Then, with her own hands, she prepared a tempting little meal, daintily arranged.

"Let this be taken to my cousin, please."

"My dear, she will not touch but sup. There is really no use," objected Laynor.

"Take it, please, and tell her that I wish her to eat," said Miss Illerton.

Presently she was in Clara's chamber. That young person was yet in bed, and had been weeping. Indeed, judging from her appearance the whole night had been spent in that pleasant diversion. Still, she contrived in some awkward manner to screen her eyes, but her voice betrayed her; that trembled treacherously.

To neither of these tokens did Miss Illerton vouchsafe any notice. In the most matter-of-fact manner possible she busied herself about the room, then approached the sufferer.

"Are you better, Clara?"

"Much better, thank you, Christine."

"Very well. Now listen to me. Why did you not take the breakfast I sent you?"

"I couldn't."

"I understand. See, Clara, you must obey me. Here are my instructions—commands, if you will. You are to remain quite still and try to sleep. Don't attempt to come down to luncheon. Yours shall be brought to you."

"I wish you would not, Christine. Really, I—"

"Nonsense!" sharply retorted her cousin. "Do you intend to starve? None but heroines of high tragedy do such things, and even they always announce their suicidal intentions in doubtful blank verse. You have not done that yet. Will you begin?"

"I am so wretched!" moaned the girl.

"Very good," continued the other, with stoical indifference; "but you are to remain here until I send for you. That will not be before the afternoon. I have much to do this morning, and can not spare a moment. Don't be silly, Clara; don't blind your eyes and blotch your face with tears. There, you are crying again. Good heavens, woman! what a great grief has come into your life!"

"Need you nurse it after such a fashion?"

"One second."

"Oh, how delightful!" exclaimed the girl, her eyes glistening with rapture. "One second only! Here, send this even quicker if you can;" and Mr. Morse found in his hand a neatly folded, gilt-edged note, the very perfume and shape of which told a volume of love.

"I cannot send this note," said Mr. Morse; "it is impossible."

"Oh, do, do!" implored the distracted girl. "I have had a quarrel with William, and I shall die if he doesn't know in a second that I forgive him—I know I shall."

"As Mr. Morse still objected to sending the note, the girl asked:

"Will you send me on?"

"Perhaps it would take your breath away to travel forty miles an hour," said a clerk, trying not to smile.

"Oh, no, it won't—no, it won't, if it carries me to William."

"You could go by train to-morrow."

"But the cars are so slow."

Mr. Morse now comprehended the girl's mistake, and attempted to explain the process of carrying words along the wires.

The girl listened for a few moments, then rolled her burning eyes into a ball and thrust it into her pocket.

"It's too slow, too slow, and my heart will break before William knows I forgive him; and you are a cruel man, Mr. Morse, that you won't let me travel by the telegraph to see William."

"I am very sorry."

The girl left the office in tears.

and now, patiently bearing the burden of the day, waited for that night for which, in the cruel pangs of her anguish, she longingly yearned.

So time wore drearily on, until one day Miss Illerton sat in the library trying to fix her mind on the book which lay open in her lap, when suddenly, she knew not how it came about, a strange rapture expectancy seemed to have overcome her, when directly she heard the drawing-room door close and a visitor enter. A charm took possession of her, and she immediately arose and crossed the room, and as she parted the portiere her breath came in deep, gasping sobs, and she stood quite motionless, her eyes resting on Ralph Gresham.

"Christine!"

The woeiful eyes brightened now.

"I heard of this, Christine. I have been away, you know—far away. I have come for you, 'Chr stine."

"And I have waited for you, oh, my beloved!"

His strong arm was about her now, her head was plowed upon his faithful breast, and it tears wet her cheeks, be sure they were very happy tears. The past, with its sorrows and shadows, was gone; and now a love so great had come to her that through its radiance she read the promise of a blessed peace, and joy unutterable. If you do not believe that the fates were kind to Christine ask Ralph Gresham's wife.

## TOO SLOW.

The first electric telegraph was put in operation between Baltimore and Washington, in 1845, Congress having appropriated eight thousand dollars to keep it running for one year, as an experiment. Of the many amusing incidents of those early days, one of the best is the following, which used to be related by Professor Morse himself: