

## NATURE

On a winter's day in autumn field,  
When the winds blow, birds sing,  
Rains fall, comes June, comes spring,  
Its secret many a year has not revealed.

There is a dewy dawn hath writ in red  
And white, and summer's feet  
Left many an imprint sweet.  
Yet something longed for hours still unsaid.

There are thousand sunsets have not waked to speech  
The western slopes, nor night's  
Pale flock of stars the heights.

The sea's kiss wins no answer from the beach  
Dead, silent, nature stands before our eyes  
We question her in vain  
And heartless strive to gain  
Her confidence: she vouchsafes no replies

And yet, oftentimes I think she yearns to bless  
And comfort man with sheaves  
To please him with her leaves.  
The wildest blast hath tones of tenderness.

And there are voices on the sea in storm  
Not of the waters' strife:  
Faint tones, as though some life  
Amid the tumult struggled to take form.

There is an undertone in everything,  
That comforts and uplifts,  
A light that never shifts  
Shines out on touch on the horizon ring.

I know, beyond your mountain's gloomy sides,  
There's something waits for me  
That I may never see—  
Same love-blurred face, same stretched  
Hand hides.

Some spirit, something earth would half dis-  
close.

Half hides, invites the soul  
Unto some hidden goal,  
Which may be death, or larger life—who  
knows?

—William Prescott Foster, in *Century*.

**AMERICAN DASH**  
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## CHAPTER VIII.—CONTINUED.

When Mrs. Kennard now drew near the great square over which loomed the light and pretty facade of the chief hotel, she at once perceived that Kathleen was being a great deal noticed and silently admired. "Little wonder, too," it swept through her mind, "for as she walks there now her form and face seem to embody this delightful thing of 'Chopin's that his majesty's musicians are playing so finely." And then Mrs. Kennard approached her daughter. But before she could reach her side, old Mrs. Madison, with wrinkled face, gouty step, and a cane big enough for a British squire beset by the same malady as herself, came hobbling forward.

"My dear Mrs. Kennard, I don't know how I can stay any longer in Saltravia unless you present me to your daughter! It isn't only that four or five young men are always tormenting me for a presentation to her, knowing that I know you. It's that lots of tiresome old persons like myself, of whichever sex, make my life a burden with their longings." Here Mrs. Madison shook her head, and so briskly that her gold-rimmed glasses trembled on her high, clear-carving nose. "Ah, Mrs. Kennard, it's old things that are the wisest lapidaries for pronouncing on the color and water of that dearest of all diamonds, youth!"

"My daughter will be charmed to meet you, and your friends, also, my dear Mrs. Madison, of course," was the reply given by Kathleen's mother. But while she stood and strove to talk blandly with this old alienated Knickerbocker (for who could forget that the Madisons were leading people in the palmy days of the Van Lieruses, and that a Madison once married a Van Lierus, as far back as 1786?) she was secretly throbbing with discomfort and chagrin.

Alonzo Lisenpen here in Saltravia! And not only that, but on terms of special favor with the king! It was ruin of all those delicious hopes! For the very moment that he heard Clarimond had admired Kathleen, what would he be sure to do? Prejudice his royal friend, beyond a doubt, against both herself and her child. Oh, it was too aggravating, too maddening!

When she reached Kathleen, Mrs. Kennard grasped the girl's wrist with a tremor and force that instantly betrayed her trouble.

"My dear Kathleen," she began, "I have such wretched news!"

"Wretched news, mamma?"

"Yes, don't stare at me. Everybody, I hear, is staring at you. There—I won't clutch you in that idiotic style any more. You—you know, my dear, that I—have always prided myself on my repose."

"Well, mamma?"

"Let's walk along quietly toward the hotel, as if nothing had happened. I've just heard from Mrs. Madison that your wonderful beauty and grace have set everybody talking about you."

"And is that all that has happened?"

Kathleen asked, with a decided languor.

"No, I only wish it were! My dear child, where did you think Alonzo Lisenpen had gone after—after the breaking of your engagement? Don't look demoralized, now! Answer me!"

Kathleen had visibly started, and her change of color was manifest. "Gone?" she repeated. "I heard that he was here in Europe. You remember, mamma, something was said about an Austrian grand duke having wanted him to purchase works of art for his private gallery—but I never believed the report. It was never confirmed. I—"

"Kathleen, believe the report now, if you choose!"

"Believe it, mamma!"

"Yes. But change the Austrian grand duke to a Saltravian king."

Kathleen looked fixedly at her mother for several seconds as they moved still nearer to the steps of the hotel. When she spoke it was clearly to show that she had in a measure understood.

"Alonzo is here?" she faltered. "You mean that?"

"He lives here, and lives under the very wing, so to speak, of Clarimond. It seems that his friend, Eric Thaxter, sent him to come on here after the failure." Then Mrs. Kennard gave a few further explanations which ended by the time they reached the huge enclosed balcony of the hotel and ascended its steps. Kathleen sank into a chair, not trembling, but looking as if tremors might at any moment begin.

"We must go away from here, mamma," she presently said, glancing up into her mother's face while that lady stood in placid grandeur beside her. "We must go at once."

"Oh, now, my dear Kathleen: You surely won't be so foolish."

"He will think we came solely on his account."

"But I tell you he isn't here."

"Still, he may return any hour. No, mamma: I will not stay. Let us go to Vallambrosa to-morrow. We intended going there, you know, when you suddenly got this craze for Saltravia."

Mrs. Kennard tightened her lips together, stared straight ahead, and gave not a syllable of response. Oh, of course Kathleen must have her own way! It would be folly to keep her here against her will, for that will had modes of making itself felt which coercion sooner or later failed to profit by. And to think that the presence of this detestable Alonzo should shatter such a lordly edifice of shining and prismatic dream! Ah, it was too hard rowing! In a certain sense Kathleen was right; the horrid creature might think she had come here because of him, though any thrills of dignity on the subject would have been wholly idle if it were not that this bugbear was actually an intimate of the king. In that abominated capacity he was fate appointed, as one might say, to head herself and her daughter off. Scalding tears of ire and disappointment gathered to the eyes of Kathleen's mother while she stood and watched the spacious hotel grounds, dotted with strollers and sweeping on toward the palace, white and splendid against its dark-green mountain side. She had raised her handkerchief, to brush away these fiery tears if in reality they should show signs of falling, when a kind of fury among the people on the laurels made her curious to learn its cause. This soon became plain, as she discerned a group at some distance away, headed by a man of noble and gracious presence. She had seen Clarimond a day or two ago, on the occasion when Kathleen had so evidently won his head, and once having seen, it was not easy to forget him. She now leaned down and murmured to Kathleen:

"The king, my dear. And I think he is coming this way."

"Let us go upstairs, mamma," said Kathleen, rising. "Or will you remain here, and shall I—"

The words died on her lips, for just then old Mrs. Madison came puffing up the steps with a young gentleman of striking appearance at her side. "Mrs. Kennard," called the old lady, "I couldn't stand the pressure of circumstances any longer. I'm compelled to beg of you that you'll make me acquainted with your lovely daughter, so that I can appease the longings of Mr. Eric Thaxter, who is resolved to know her on die."

"Mr. Thaxter certainly shall not die without knowing Kathleen," said Mrs. Kennard, in her most dulcet tones. And then there was an exchange of introductions gone through quietly and quickly, as most well-bred persons manage to do with such matters.

Kathleen, who was one of those women made even more interestingly beautiful by weariness and pain, at once found herself liking Eric Thaxter. It had all come back to her that he had been "Lori's foreign friend," and for this reason he was now clad with a peculiar enticement. While Mrs. Madison bowed over her cane and held converse with Mrs. Kennard, the girl, low-voiced and spurred by a desperate sort of frankness, addressed Eric.

"I've just heard, Mr. Thaxter," she said, "that Mr. Lisenpen lives here, and with you."

"Yes," replied Eric, "but at present—"

"He is in Munich. I've heard that, too. The whole piece of intelligence has given me great annoyance. I take for granted that he has told you of our broken engagement."

"Yes, Miss Kennard, he did tell me."

Prepared though she somehow was for this candid reply, its gentle delivery sent the rose tints flying into her face. Her eyes moistly sparkled as she fixed them on Eric's. "Oh, I'm so sorry mamma and I should have come here!" she exclaimed, though with a softness of tone that defeated her mother's thirsting ear. "We never dreamed that he was here! I think nobody in New York except, perhaps, his sister, Mrs. Van Santvoord, really knew just where he had gone." Then she drooped her gaze for an instant, and while she did so her observer had, as he himself might have phrased it, artistically explained her. "The face for a Pygmy," passed through his mind, "and all the more entrancing because Nature has gifted her with that divinity of charm—the incessant for-getsfulness that she is so beautiful. She doesn't think in the least about the history of her profile. Self-consciousness, the curse of most feminine beauty, has mercifully spared her. A woman like that, who treats herself as if she were a spinster of sixty, with defective

front teeth and a baby nose on her chin, becomes an unconscious goddess. I don't wonder Long adores her still, and I don't wonder Clarimond is aching to know her."

But aloud Eric said, with his native affable bluntness:

"My dear Miss Kennard, it's not a very mighty planet after all. Don't bore yourself about Alonzo's proximity. When he knows that you've honored Saltravia with your presence, he will probably be quite too ashamed of his past misconduct to let you get the faintest glimpse of him. Oh, I know just how atrociously he behaved. He's told me, and I've scolded him without pity."

Kathleen bit her lip and watched the speaker for an instant with searching and wistful eyes.

"He's told you?" she breathed. "But if you don't think me to blame at all, Mr. Thaxter, he—he must have given you a very generous version of the whole affair." Then she drew herself up, and with almost a lofty calmness went on. "But we are going to-morrow. We have decided to push on toward Vallambrosa. No doubt you know it. They say it is so delightful, and quiet there. Retirement is what I most care for just now."

"Retirement?" echoed Eric with a mock gesture of despair. "And here I am, Miss Kennard, come to you as an envoy from the king, who greatly desires the pleasure of your acquaintance."

Perhaps Eric had without intention loudened his voice a little. Anyway, Mrs. Kennard heard all that he had just said; and considering the fact that Mrs. Madison had a minute ago uttered certain tidings of a most exhilarant sort to her, she was now suddenly transported once more with hopeful surprise.

"My dear," she said to Kathleen, as the latter drew backward several steps, with a distinct show of reluctance, even deprecation. "I trust that if Mr. Thaxter wishes to present you to the king you will not hesitate to accompany him!"

But here Eric shook his head and broke into a light laugh.

"Miss Kennard needs not to accompany me, by any means," he said. "If you will merely walk with her down toward this little fountain where the bronze tritons are, I will bring the king to her."

Mrs. Kennard caught her daughter by the wrist. She was excessively agitated, and showed it to the great secret amusement of Eric.

TO BE CONTINUED.

## DANGERS OF CELLULOID.

It Is Very Risky to Use Buttons Made of the Material.

Mr. C. V. Boys informs the London Times of the dangers to women through the use of celluloid buttons. One case has come under his notice, in which a lady, standing near a bright fire, had one of the buttons of her dress ignited by the heat, whereby her dress was scorched. Mr. Boys gives the following rough tests of the danger of celluloid ornaments:

A gas flame was directed against one side of an iron ring, the head of a common match containing phosphorus was placed on the ring about two inches from the flame, and a piece of the button was similarly placed at an equal distance on the other side. A second piece of the button was also placed on the ring, but at twice the distance from the flame. A small piece of paper was laid lightly over each. After five minutes, the first piece of the button ignited, and burned with a bright flame; after twelve minutes the second piece did the same; while, after seventeen minutes, the match head was still unchanged. On testing it with a light, it immediately burst into flame. A third piece of the button was pinned to the surface of an old duster, which for the purpose of the test was equivalent to a dress, and the duster was hung from a chair in front of an ordinary bright fire, but outside the fender, and at a distance at which the skirts of a dress might any day be found. In two or three minutes there was a cloud of smoke, and a hole was burned in the duster.

CHAPTER IX.

Kathleen opened. After the ladies had left the balcony Eric again joined them. "If you will kindly wait just there by the fountain," he said, pointing towards a charming aquatic design in bronze whose spirits of water had caught the slant sunrays and turned to liquid gold, "I will at once cause you and monsieur to meet. And remember, please, we call him 'monsieur,' he prefers it."

"And I am to speak with him in French?" asked Kathleen, somewhat nervously.

"If you wish. I suppose you do not speak Saltravian?"

"Heavens, no!" she exclaimed, still more nervously, and not noting the dry twinkle in Eric's eyes.

"The king will probably address you then in French. But if you prefer English he will accommodate you. It is one of the great self-delusions of his reign that he speaks English at all recently."

Here Mrs. Kennard broke in, with her blithest laugh: "Oh, my dear child speaks French very prettily," and as Eric departed with a bow she turned to Mrs. Madison, who had just rejoined her, and said in a voice made purposely low enough for him to hear:

"What a delightful man this Mr. Thaxter is! No wonder the king likes him so!"

Clarimond, who did everything with grace, soon had himself presented to Kathleen and her mother precisely as if he were some ordinary friend of Eric's, with whom the latter had chance to be moving among the paths.

"And it all went off so easily!" as Mrs. Kennard remarked after. "Be-

fore we knew it, Kathleen, he had shaken hands with both of us, and had asked you if you didn't want to go with him and see the carp fed in the great marble basin of the *grande sauvage*."

Kathleen and the king walked side by side, it is true, but they only paused for a moment to watch the carp dine, afterwards passing on to where the terraces of the palace dropped grandly down to an artificial lake, and a hundred windows blazed like huge diamonds or rubies where the westering sun smote them. Above, on the long marble balustrades, two or three peacock were perched, one pure white as the sculptured stone itself; and below, half way between the lily-pads and the rustic landings, floated a few stately swans.

Somewhere behind one of those radiant windows the princess of Brindis sat, and near her was Bianca d'Este. It was quite probable that the king knew her risqué maternal observation during his present saunter with the young American lady whom he had sought to know. Since the arrival of his mother he had not presumed thus publicly to associate himself with any new foreign acquaintance. If Kathleen had been a man her disrelish might have had its limits. At present there in her palatial ambuscade, with her cherished Bianca to share the humiliation whether real or fancied, this disrelish became a boundless disgust. \*\*\*

"It pleases me greatly, mademoiselle," the king was meanwhile saying, in his flexible and almost native French, "that you should so care for Saltravia after so brief a stay here."

"How can one help caring for it?" returned Kathleen, as they paused on one of the velvet-swarded terraces. Looking sideways across her shoulder she perceived that the same group which had accompanied the king before they met were following him now, at a distance respectful and discreet. She perceived, too, that her mother and Mrs. Madison were also not far behind them. This was possibly what her companion wished. It struck her that he was a gentleman, this comely and fascinating monarch, who wished many things most decisively, and who had the art of making his desires operative with the same cool ease that belongs to the touching of an electric bell and the summoning of a needed lacquey.

"The weather here," she continued, "is always so enchanting." And then she looked into Clarimond's face with one of those smiles that his dislikes of commonplace women had even thus quickly caused him to feel was the harbinger of something at least quickened by piety. "I am already sure, monsieur," she added, "that *la pluie et le beau temps* are subjects which you control at pleasure. You keep the first amily exiled and you allow the last, like one of your ancestor's court-jesters, to do all the genial things that it pleases."

Clarimond laughed: "No, mademoiselle," he replied, "you overrate my powers of dominion. I'm more sensible than that far-away English king who commanded the sea to obey him, or that Persian one who whipped it with rods."

According to Horace Greeley, this is slavery. In a speech made in 1845, he said: "Whenever the ownership of land is so engrossed by a small part of the community that the far larger number are compelled to pay whatever the few may see fit to exact for the privilege of occupying and cultivating the earth, there is something very like slavery."

This condition of servitude, under our present system, must supervene so soon as the supply of free land fails, when those who are unable to buy land of those who claim the ownership of man's heritage, must pay to those who thus monopolize God's free gift just whatever they choose to exact for the privilege of living upon the earth. Moreover, the chains of servitude grow more and more galling, and the lapse into slavery more complete as the pressure of population grows more intense. The increase in the selling value of land is not, strictly speaking, rent, because such increase attaches as well to land which yields rent as to land which does not. Rent is all such wealth as is possible to be produced, or acquired, upon any certain location, which is above or in relation to such a quantity of such wealth, as the producer or acquirer thereof is willing to accept for his services in producing or acquiring such wealth. This, it will be noticed, has the same ultimate and produces the same results as the "iron law of wages." Owing to the fact that labor has been displaced with labor-saving machinery, without a corresponding decrease in the hours of labor, to such an extent that there is an excess or surplus of labor, the laborers compete with each other for employment, with the tendency that the regulation rate of wages shall become that sum which will provide for labor a "bare subsistence" of the meanest and poorest grade upon which any laborer is willing to try to subsist. Even so with rent. As the pressure of population becomes more intense and competition for a place to live becomes more bitter the standard of living is continually lowered and rent claims an ever increasing share of the pittance received by labor under the operation of the iron law of wages. This, in its turn, has an apparent tendency to raise wages, by lowering interest and profit, so that in an advanced state of civilization (?) in a densely populated country, the land owners absorb the product of the whole community, except the minimum sum with which productive and distributive labor, employers and employed, can support itself in each individual's respective class, or grade, of the several classes and grades into which labor has foolishly divided itself. This means a minimum rate of profit and wages, while to capital is allowed the lowest rate of interest which will induce its investment, which is the reason why interest is always the lowest where land is worth the most money.

Now a few figures to show the vast

import and significance of this overshadowing question. It is estimated that the land values of the United States in 1890 approximated twenty billions of dollars, and that the average increase in the value of land is at least five per cent. This meant an increase