

"DAY UNTO DAY."

MORNING.

How bravely fair the morning gleams!
The soul, a flame with waking dreams,
Gilds earth and tiring sky,
Akin to all the pulsing hour
Of melody and conscious power
Too glorious to die.
Pure breath of morning, warm with truth,
Favours when love and youth
And hope and heaven are nigh!

NOON.

Fierce, brazen noonday on the shore,
Where need and greed strive evermore,
And wallings drowned in babel roar—
Or barking voices rise.
The Rock is aged and crumpled o'er;
Faith undermined by faithless lore,
Or closed and buried the open door
Of infinite surprise.
Nor dreaming all this babel roar,
This noonday blare that mocks the shore,
A vexing echo dir!

EVENING.

How welcome falls the eventide,
Where only twilight shadows hide
And hushed the clanging mart
Past strife forgot in dream-blast now,
Lost loves caress the fevered brow
And woe the soul apart.
Too sad for joy, too glad for tears,
The twilight music sooths and cheers
And sings: "Trust on, oh heart!"

MIDNIGHT.

Peace-brooding midnight on the sea;
A beckoning calm o'erarching, free—
Dissathmost, immensity—
And silence from the skies.
And soft, though frail thy children be,
How best from thine eyes there to flee.
Adrift, faith-led, alone with Thee,
Great Ruler of the tides!
Though darkness shrouds the midnight sea—
Undaunted by the mystery
Thy loving silence hides!

John H. Jewett, in Springfield (Mass.) Republican.

THE OLD MILL MYSTERY

By Arthur W. Marchmont, B. A.

Author of "Miss Hoodley's Secret," "Madeline Power," "By Whose Hand," "Iza," &c., &c.

Copyright, 1892, by the Author.

CHAPTER VI.

TOM AND SAVANNAH.

Mary Ashworth was very unhappy. Her dislike and distrust of Savannah Morbyn grew with every day that the latter was at Walkden Bridge. Tom had once or twice expressed some vague wishes that the two should be friends; but after a few days he scarcely ever spoke to Mary about Savannah. Mary knew, however, that they were together.

Savannah made no attempt to look for other lodgings, remaining with Mary, much to the latter's secret annoyance. It was difficult, however, to tell her to go away; because none of the women whose husbands were out on strike would have her for a lodger, whilst among those with whom she worked Savannah was unpopular.

But in the little circle she was all kindness and gentleness, and especially was she attentive to Tom's father. She would sit with the old man by the hour together, reading to him or talking to him about his favorite subject, his son, and doing all in her power to win the old man's affection.

Tom himself, too, grew into a habit of coming into the room where the two were, and staying there until Savannah left, when he declared that he had better walk back with her, for fear of her being molested by the strikers.

When they were alone they rarely spoke, and Tom tried to persuade himself that he was doing as he did from a sense of nothing but duty.

When the mill closed he would go as usual to Mary, either to her cottage or for a walk with her, and showed more affection towards her than before Savannah had come to Walkden Bridge.

He told himself a hundred times a day how good a girl she was; and how much she cared for him and he for her; and how happy they would be together, and how entirely she trusted him, and what a brute he would be if he betrayed her in anything.

And more than once he determined that he would ask her to hurry on their marriage.

He thought that if once everything were settled, and no turning back were possible, it would be all as it had been before. He would not indeed admit that anything was changed; but, buried right at the bottom of his thoughts, he knew there was a feeling of which he was ashamed and afraid; and it was that which led him to go on repeating to himself the assurances about his fidelity and love for Mary. He was fighting a hard battle, and the odds against him were many.

Mary divined only a very little of the struggle that was going on, but it was enough to make her miserable. Apart from the fear that Tom's love was slipping away—a fear that was infinite pain to her—she had the firmest conviction that her instinctive distrust of Savannah Morbyn was well founded, but she could not breathe a word of this to her lover; neither could she find any means of ascertaining the truth.

Another source of great anxiety to Mary was the growing animosity shown toward Tom by several of the men who were out on strike.

"Is there anything fresh about the strike, Tom?" she asked him one evening, when the hands had been out about three weeks.

"No. The men are fools," exclaimed Tom, somewhat petulantly. "I can't think how they can be such idiots to make so much of such a fellow as Gibeon."

"No chance of a settlement, I fear, is there?"

"Not the least. The whole business seems to have fitted into Gorringe's hands as if he had planned it. Things have been a bit slack, and if he'd kept the concern going full work he might have had the stuff on his hands. But now the slackness just fits him. He told me to-day he had enough applications on hand from really good workers to fill up the vacancies twice or three times over. And he'll do it if he has to turn out more work, and then these fools who have been duped by Gibeon will see what they've lost."

"There'd be trouble if he were to do that," said Mary. "We don't want to see all new faces turning out the old

ones in the village." She was thinking of Savannah.

"He'll do it rather than be beaten," answered Tom. "Besides, now the men who are out demand that anyone who has been taken on shall be sent away, even if they do give in about Gibeon!"

"I wish they were, for there's been little but trouble since they came," said Mary, speaking out of the fullness of her thoughts.

"It would be a downright meanness to cast them adrift in such a way,"

answer Tom, warmly, also thinking of Savannah. Then, remembering that perhaps Mary might see this, he flushed slightly and said: "Well, in one way you're right. I wish the trouble was over, Mary; we two should be more settled, shouldn't we?"

"Would you like to be settled, Tom?"

she asked, gently. She loved him and, womanlike, hungered for words of love from him—despite all her doubts.

"Yes," he answered, kissing her. "I wish all were settled. I wish it with all my heart. How would you like to go away and leave all the worry and trouble behind, and be married away?" He asked the question suddenly, breaking in upon a little thought that had followed his previous sentence.

The girl looked at him curiously and questioningly, and then, with a sigh which she concealed by a smile, answered:

"My love knows no limits," he said, almost wildly. "I am yours body and soul; I swear it."

"Can you wait for me? Supposing there are the old folks. I can't leave mother. And, beside, you are doing so well now at the mill. Why, there are fifty things now to tie us more than ever to the Bridge. What made you think of such a thing?"

"I don't know," he answered. "Of course there's no reason to do anything of the kind. But at times—well, what with this bother with the men and one thing and another, I suppose one gets worried sometimes. But of course it can't be. It would be silly." And he kissed her again, and then got up and began to walk up and down the little room.

Mary watched him, looking up from the sewing she had in her hand; and her face dropped a little when she saw his glance at the clock and reach for his hat. It was earlier than usual.

"I must go," he said, and when she did not answer he added: "I—I want to get in. Father's not so well tonight." Then with an effort, as if the little deceit tried him, he asked: "Where's Savannah?"

He knew she was with his father, and Mary knew that he knew it.

"She went out soon after we came from the mill," she said. And when he had left her she let her work fall on her lap and sat buried in troubled thought.

"You know better than that, Savannah," he said. "I am yours now, for good or ill, better or worse. And you are mine. By God, you are mine!" and at the words his passion broke out again, and he showered his kisses upon her.

"Can you wait?" she asked again.

"I can do aught that you ask," he said.

"Listen, then. I will have no one know of this yet. You must tell no one till I wish it. It must be our secret."

"Nay, that cannot be. Why, I am not ashamed."

She drew away from him.

"Be it so," she said. "Then I will never be more to you than I was before I came here. We part now."

"It shall be as you wish, Savannah," he said, instantly, humbled directly by the great power she had over him. "I have no thought but to do as you wish."

"You will make no sign to anyone, nor tell anyone."

"I must tell poor Mary," he said, his heart smiting him as he thought of her and what she might feel.

"No, Mary least of all," cried Savannah, imperiously. "I will not have it. Do as I will, all in all; or we will forget this—this madness."

And again he yielded, though reluctantly.

Suddenly, they both started as the sound of approaching footsteps reached them, and on the soft night air Tom heard his own name spoken in a man's voice.

"There's no need for you to go with me," said Savannah.

"I'm going," was all Tom said; and the look which she shot out of her eyes at him made him thrill with secret, guilty, shaming, yet glorious pleasure.

The two cottages were some distance apart, lying in different ends of the long village; and there was a back way, a footpath, leading at the rear of the cottages; not so near as by the road, but much less frequented.

"Let us go by the footpath," said Tom, when they reached the corner of the little cross street that led to it.

"It is not so near; and Mary is alone," answered his companion, but, as if to answer to his look, she turned that way at once.

Tom walked by her side in silence. He seemed almost afraid to speak; afraid lest he should break the spell which seemed to hold him. Merely to be with her, to feel the wondrous charm which she exerted over him, to touch her as now and then he did as they walked together, filled him with too great emotion to let him speak.

They walked thus silently for nearly half the distance, till they came to a spot where the path ran between high hedges and a stile divided two of the fields one from the other. It was a very secluded place, and in the deep dusk of the evening everything was still and silent. Savannah paused a moment before crossing the stile, and, by stopping, caused Tom to come against her, when she put her hands out and touched him.

In a moment—how it happened he knew not—his arms were round her. Carried away by the mad impulses that drove him and sent the blood rushing through his veins, he pressed her to him, and, drawing down her face to his, rained kisses upon her eyes and cheeks and lips.

She lay in his arms at first, letting him do as he would with her, her eyes half closed, her head resting upon his shoulder, and her face pressed to his. Next, with a sudden burst of passion, she clasped him half convulsively in her embrace and kissed him to the full as wildly and passionately as he had kissed her. Then she drew back and with a deep sigh buried her face in her hands and leant upon the stile.

All the time no word had been spoken between them, save an occasional term of passionate endearment. When at length she looked up, the tears were in her voice.

"Why have you done this?"

"I love you, Savannah," was Tom's answer. "I love you. There is no one in the world like you to me."

The tone in which he spoke seemed to frighten her.

"You have no right to love me." Her voice was very soft and caressing. "I know nothing of right. You force me; you know it. There is none in the world like you."

She laughed a soft, musical, rippling laugh; and the next minute sighed heavily.

"Ah, you do not know me. You do not know."

"I know enough to love you, Savannah," and he went to her again and placed his hand on hers. "I want to know no more."

At that she turned to him gently, and, taking his hand, pressed it in her warm, trembling fingers and kissed it; and then placed it round her waist while she laid her two hands on his shoulders, looking into his face till her warm breath maddened him, as her kisses fell again on his lips. Then she rested her head against his breast and spoke in a low, bewitching, caressing tone, in the softness of which there seemed a faint strain of sadness:

"Do you really love me, Tom?"

He kissed her hotly as he murmured an answer.

"I mean with love that lasts. Could you bear anything for me? Could you trust me—live for me—die for me?"

"My love knows no limits," he said, almost wildly. "I am yours body and soul; I swear it."

"Can you wait for me? Supposing there are the old folks. I can't leave mother. And, beside, you are doing so well now at the mill. Why, there are fifty things now to tie us more than ever to the Bridge. What made you think of such a thing?"

"I don't know," he answered. "Of course there's no reason to do anything of the kind. But at times—well, what with this bother with the men and one

thing and another, I suppose one gets worried sometimes. But of course it can't be. It would be silly." And he kissed her again, and then got up and began to walk up and down the little room.

Mary watched him, looking up from the sewing she had in her hand; and her face dropped a little when she saw his glance at the clock and reach for his hat. It was earlier than usual.

"I must go," he said, and when she did not answer he added: "I—I want to get in. Father's not so well tonight." Then with an effort, as if the little deceit tried him, he asked: "Where's Savannah?"

He knew she was with his father, and Mary knew that he knew it.

"She went out soon after we came from the mill," she said. And when he had left her she let her work fall on her lap and sat buried in troubled thought.

"You know better than that, Savannah," he said. "I am yours now, for good or ill, better or worse. And you are mine. By God, you are mine!" and at the words his passion broke out again, and he showered his kisses upon her.

"Can you wait?" she asked again.

"I can do aught that you ask," he said.

"Listen, then. I will have no one know of this yet. You must tell no one till I wish it. It must be our secret."

"Nay, that cannot be. Why, I am not ashamed."

She drew away from him.

"Be it so," she said. "Then I will never be more to you than I was before I came here. We part now."

"It shall be as you wish, Savannah," he said, instantly, humbled directly by the great power she had over him. "I have no thought but to do as you wish."

"You will make no sign to anyone, nor tell anyone."

"I must tell poor Mary," he said, his heart smiting him as he thought of her and what she might feel.

"No, Mary least of all," cried Savannah, imperiously. "I will not have it. Do as I will, all in all; or we will forget this—this madness."

And again he yielded, though reluctantly.

Suddenly, they both started as the sound of approaching footsteps reached them, and on the soft night air Tom heard his own name spoken in a man's voice.

"There's no need for you to go with me," said Savannah.

"I'm going," was all Tom said; and the look which she shot out of her eyes at him made him thrill with secret, guilty, shaming, yet glorious pleasure.

The two cottages were some distance apart, lying in different ends of the long village; and there was a back way, a footpath, leading at the rear of the cottages; not so near as by the road, but much less frequented.

"Let us go by the footpath," said Tom, when they reached the corner of the little cross street that led to it.

"It is not so near; and Mary is alone," answered his companion, but, as if to answer to his look, she turned that way at once.

Tom walked by her side in silence. He seemed almost afraid to speak; afraid lest he should break the spell which seemed to hold him. Merely to be with her, to feel the wondrous charm which she exerted over him, to touch her as now and then he did as they walked together, filled him with too great emotion to let him speak.

They walked thus silently for nearly half the distance, till they came to a spot where the path ran between high hedges and a stile divided two of the fields one from the other. It was a very secluded place, and in the deep dusk of the evening everything was still and silent. Savannah paused a moment before crossing the stile, and, by stopping, caused Tom to come against her, when she put her hands out and touched him.

In a moment—how it happened he knew not—his arms were round her. Carried away by the mad impulses that drove him and sent the blood rushing through his veins, he pressed her to him, and, drawing down her face to his, rained kisses upon her eyes and cheeks and lips.

She lay in his arms at first, letting him do as he would with her, her eyes half closed, her head resting upon his shoulder, and her face pressed to his. Next, with a sudden burst of passion, she clasped him half convulsively in her embrace and kissed him to the full as wildly and passionately as he had kissed her. Then she drew back and with a deep sigh buried her face in her hands and leant upon the stile.

"You will remember what I said about silence," said Savannah.

"I remember," said Tom. "It shall rest