

MARIA ROSEWELL.

A few years since, business of a mercantile nature called me to Boston, the metropolis of New England. There is an air of quiet neatness and unostentatious elegance in this place, which I have never seen in any other place of such extensive wealth and prosperous trade.—New York may, without condemnation, be proud of her hundred spires—the thousand flags in her harbor—the immensity of her commerce—the revenue she pays to the treasury of the nation, and the just title of the "London of America;" yet, although not prejudiced in favor of what are termed "Boston nations," I should prefer residence in that city to any I have ever visited. Elegant retirement—friendly hospitality—unassuming benevolence—and literary taste and refinement exists in their most fascinating forms, and the state of society is evidently considerably in advance of any other place on the continent. In regulating my mercantile affairs, it became necessary to call frequently at the house of Mr. M—, a person who combined all the qualities that constitute the gentleman. I frequently dined with him and family, which consisted only of his wife, one of the most charming and lovely women I have ever seen, and three fresh blooming, and beautiful children, the culture of whose budding, promising powers, formed their chief and most delightful recreation.—There was an ease and familiarity which can exist only in the most cultivated minds—a frankness which can only be the result of confidence, and a harmony and sympathy in our sentiments which endeared them to me, and I do not recollect an acquaintance in any family that appeared to enjoy such unalloyed happiness. On one of these visits, I observed on the table a plate of most delicious strawberries, which were the first I had that season seen, and made a remark to that effect.

"These berries," said Mr. M—, "are my peculiar favorites, as he significantly put his finger to his forehead, where, on its broad and smooth surface, I had often noticed a small, red protuberance, not widely differing in appearance from the fine fruit before us.

"Your predilection," answered I, smiling, "is sufficiently accounted for, but it must have been a fortunate hit indeed, which placed it on a spot where it is so plainly discernable."

"It was not altogether accident," he replied; "I have often heard my mother relate the circumstances; I was their oldest child; but a short time before I was born, my father and mother walked into a field where there was an abundance of strawberries, and while my mother seated herself on a mossy bank in the shade of a wide spreading ash, my father had selected a number of stems of the finest fruit, and throwing himself by her side, tossed them into her lap. They were just what she wished, and while eating them, a large and beautiful red one attracted her notice."

"See what a delicious strawberry I have found," said she, holding it up by the stem to my father.

"That, my dear, is mine," he replied, playfully snatching it from her and putting it in his mouth. A slight flush passed over her countenance, as she endeavored in vain to recover it.

"I will mark my child with that strawberry," said she, laughing as she spoke, and placing the tip of her white finger on the center of her forehead—the berry was fixed, but it was the most fortunate moment of my existence, for to that strawberry I owe all my happiness!"

A look which denoted a deep feeling of mutual satisfaction, of happiness which could not be mistaken, passed between Mr. M— and his wife, and the deep flush which accompanied it, excited my curiosity to obtain an explanation of the hint thrown out. Accordingly, when, after dinner, we were seated in the counting room, I made known my wishes without reserve.

"I shall willingly gratify you," he replied, "for I love to recall the incidents to my imagination. You have seen Mrs. M—; you admire her—I adore her; for she is the same fond, confiding, affectionate creature as when first I became acquainted with her, and it was the happiness I receive from her society and friendship that I alluded. She is indeed a treasure; and an accident singular enough threw her into my possession. I was seventeen years of age, possessed, as I supposed, of every thing that could make a person happy; health, wealth, friends were mine, and I lived caressed and admired. Although in the almost daily habit of meeting with some of the first young ladies of the city, I had seen them come and go without any impression being made upon my heart, or a single wish excited to call them mine. I loved their company, I admired their beauty and grace, and was never more happy than when in the society of the lovely and the gay.—One fine morning, I was in my father's store, chatting and laughing with a young gentleman on the common topics of the day; when he turned to leave the store, I heard him address some person in the street with—"Young woman, do you wish to sell those strawberries?"

"I do," was the answer.

"Then walk in!"

"Edmund," said he, as he again entered the store, "I send all the strawberries I can find to you," playfully placing his finger on his forehead.

"But before I had time to answer, he was called, and hastily left the store. I was glad he did, for when I cast my eyes upon the person he had thus introduced, I felt such a crowd of indescribable sensations pressing upon me at once, that I was confused in the extreme; and had any one been present, I am certain I should have appeared bordering on the ridiculous. I believe the lovely girl saw it, for she colored as deeply as the fine berries she carried in her basket. I stammered something about the beauty of the morning, and then handed her a chair. She sat down, and I ventured to look at her again. She dressed perfectly plain, but scrupulously neat; and her fine figure, though evidently undesigned, was, by her dress, exhibited in the most bewitching manner. I would attempt to describe her, but you have seen her, and it is needless. She was about fourteen, and the thought involuntarily forced itself upon my mind, 'if such the bud, what will be the flower.' There was a modest unassuming manner about her, which made it evident she was unused to the business she had undertaken. The strawberries were as neat in their appearance as she herself, and when she inquired whether I wished for them, there was a silver-toned sweetnes in her voice which charmed me.

"Have you often brought strawberries to the city?" I inquired.

"Never before," she answered; "my aunt with whom I live, is unwell; she is poor; she wished for some cordial, and without the means of obtaining these things, I could not bear to see her suffer, but obtained her leave to make the attempt of relieving her wants in this manner; and you will oblige me by letting me return to my aunt's as soon as possible."

I returned her the basket, and put a five dollar bill in her hand—she looked at me with surprise.

"I cannot take it," said the lovely girl; "what would my aunt say? I must not forfeit her good opinion," and she placed the money on the counter.

"You will keep the money," I replied, "tell your aunt it is a present from a friend, and assure her she shall be provided for."

"She hesitated, but took the money with an expression of gratitude on her countenance that made her appear more lovely than ever.

"When she retired, I watched her sylph-like and beautiful form as it receded from my view, with an emotion entirely new, but which will never be forgotten. I had learned her place of residence, and a few days after, under pretence of a morning's ride, I took Miss Emerson, a young lady who was an intimate friend of mine, into the carriage, and visited the spot where the person who had so much interested me lived.

"It was a delightful retreat—embosomed in trees; and so numerous were the flowers, and blossoms around the humble cottage, that the very air breathed of perfumes, and the birds, untrified by our approach, fluttered among the branches which almost obstructed the path. The whole harbor of Boston, with all its islands, its castles, its pellicid waters, and white sails fluttering from the many vessels gilding on its bosom, was in full view, and presented a most magnificent and delightful prospect. We alighted, and were met at the door, and welcomed by the young lady with a cheerfulness and ease which denoted better days. Miss Emerson was no less charmed with her than myself, but we regretted to learn that her aunt was declining rapidly, and to all appearance the last rays of the taper of life were already glimmering in the socket. We soon returned, Miss Emerson having left a substantial proof of her benevolence, and her amiable disposition. My father, to whom Miss Emerson related the occurrences of the morning, was so interested, that he, as soon as it was practicable, made them a visit himself; but he arrived only to witness the funeral obsequies of the kind aunt. While the procession in which my father joined, was moving from the church to the place of burial, he learned from the officiating clergyman, who was an acquaintance of his, many particulars respecting the young lady who had so deeply interested the feelings of us all. Her father, who was a respectable minister, lived in the western part of the state, where he was settled over a small but affectionate congregation. He had been there but three years, and his only child, Maria, was about two years old, when both he and his amiable wife were seized with a fatal disease, and the same grave received their remains on the 5th day after the first attack. The orphan Maria was as soon as possible sent to reside with her only aunt, a maiden lady, in affluent circumstances, by whom, as soon as her age permitted, she was placed in one of the first boarding schools in the city, where she remained until about two years before the death of her aunt. At this time, the failure of a mercantile house, in whose hands nearly the whole of her property had been placed, reduced them to the depths of poverty.—The kindness of their friends, and the needle of Maria prevented their suffering; but

her aunt was unable to sustain the feelings such a change in her circumstances produced, and she gradually sunk to the grave, leaving Maria an unprotected and friendless orphan.

"What will become of her now, God only knows," added the clergyman, as he finished his short narration.

"She shall never want," replied my father as they arrived at the gate of the little city of the dead, where the fresh mound of earth showed the 'appointed habitation.' 'If the girl is what she appears, she shall find at my house a home and a parent.'

"God will bless you," rejoined the minister, 'for befriending the amiable orphan.'

The procession stopped—the coffin was deposited in the sacred earth, and a prayer by the clergyman finished the impressive solemnity. Maria hung over the grave in speechless grief, as she saw the earth heaped upon the remains of her only relative who had been spared in the wide world; and when the last green turf was placed on the little mound, she fainted, and was carried senseless to a neighboring house. When she had sufficiently recovered, the proposal of my father was made known to her by her venerable and esteemed friend, the minister, and accepted with a gratitude more eloquent than words. She left a spot where her morning of life had been spent in youthful happiness and in a short time found herself at my father's house. What was my surprise, my rapture, at beholding him leaving the carriage with the lovely creature, whom of all others I most wished to see, hanging upon his arm, and clinging to him as her only friend and protector. She entered the room and was introduced to my mother as the Miss Rosewell, in whose favor Miss Emerson had so warmly interested herself.

"Edmund," said my father, as I entered the apartment, 'this young lady you are to consider as your sister; you will be to her a brother.'

I took her hand—pressed it to my lips, and while her blushing countenance and eloquent eyes plainly informed me that she remembered our former interview, I assured my father that I should always feel a pleasure in complying with his wishes. Thus did our acquaintance commence. The amiable Maria became the delight of her numerous friends, the joy of my parents, and the admiration of the brilliant circles, in which she moved a splendid star. The impression that was made at our first interview was never obliterated, and the little strawberry girl became the adored mistress of this mansion. Never have I reflected on these singular occurrences without a feeling of gratitude to my Maker, who in this manner bestowed on me a treasure which has made my life one of continued sunshine and unalloyed happiness."

THE MEDDLER.

The largest flower and the largest bird.—In 1818 Dr. Arnold discovered in the island of Sumatra a flower which he named the *Rafflesia Arnoldii*, and which an author has called with much justice "the magnificent Titan of the vegetable kingdom." The human mind indeed had never conceived such a flower; the circumference of the full expanded flower is nine feet—its nectarium calculated to hold nine pints—the pistils are as large as cows' horns, and the blossom computed to be 15lb. Temple, in his recent travels in Peru, states that he shot a candor, and from notes taken on the spot, gives us the following dimensions of its size—"When the wings are spread, they measure 40 feet in extent, from point to point; the feathers are 20 feet in length, and the quill part 8 inches in circumference." This almost realizes the fabled

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