Select Poetry.

The Rock.

BY L. CHARLOTTA MOORE.

Upward I'm trying to climb to a mount I
Whose shining summit has been kindled two soon.
Pilgrim and stranger, and yearly so sad,
I look for a Rock that is higher than I.

My mother and sister, with heart-love and zeal,
Journeyed by my side, and strengthened my faith as they said:
"Daughter, sister, dearest, I WILL help thee! I try!
We'll point out the Rock that is higher than I."

But they have awaken, and kindred are dead;
And I am all lonely—no sister to lead;
My future of life is an agonized sigh—
O the rock that is higher than I!

Good Shepherd, hast at my mother's own knee
I learned to love Thee with childlike devotion to Thee;
Now my heart questions—I cannot tell why—
Is there a rock that is higher than I?

A mem'ry of blithesome smiles sins to sleep—
I pray to the Lord my child soul to keep:
And if I should die before I awake,
I pray to the Lord my Lord soul to take.

There are the words that my mother said,
As she kissed me to rest in my infantile bed;
They have come to me now, and in their last cry
I am led to the Rock that is higher than I.

Lost in the shadow. It seems like a hill;
And Calvary's cross is standing there still;
Repenting and wearied, I cry to Thy side,
I have found the Rock that is higher than I.

Whither and whether thy blest truths are shown!
Clinging to earth, yet I long to be gone;
Standing my vision I look to the sky,
And go to the Rock that is higher than I.

Miscellaneous.

How I made a Fool of Myself.

As I sat alone at breakfast, I was somewhat surprised on receiving a most cordial and pressing invitation from my uncle Jeremy to spend a short time, with himself and family at his seat in Warwickshire, previous to my leaving England. The old gentleman and my father had been estranged from each other for many years through some slight family quarrel, so that I had not seen my uncle Jeremy, save on one occasion, since my boyhood.

In consequence of my father's death, I had been summoned from America, where I had been pushing my fortune with success for a considerable time, and now, having settled my affairs, I was preparing to re-cross the Atlantic, when my uncle's letter reached me.

My mother and elder brother, with whom she now resides, were the only near relatives I had in London. Fred had long since settled down in the world with a good and kind wife; and well knowing that my mother would be sure to receive every attention under his happy roof, I cared little to remain in England a homeless bachelor, whilst anything in the shape of marriage was still further from my rambling thoughts. Of course my brother was extremely obliging, would do anything he could to serve me, and expressed himself upon at any moment to stake a handsome wager that he could introduce me to at least half a dozen angelic creatures, the possession of any one of whom would prove a fortune in herself; but to all these generous offers I turned a deaf ear. Liberty was sweet, I felt no haste to sacrifice it on the altar of Hymen. Not that I was a wild young gentleman, who did not care for the comforts and attractions of home, but I didn't wish to have the onus of a household thrust upon me so long as I felt happy and contented alone.

Six and twenty and alone! Ha, ha! No one to bother and worry you—no shopping—no Midsummer and Christmas bills to meet, Short reckonings and long friends—free as the air—capital!

I rose from my chair, put my back to the mantle-piece, lighted a cigar, and smoked away for a couple of minutes most seriously; then I consulted my watch, rang the bell, ordered a hansom, resolving to see my brother Fred, before accepting my uncle's invitation.

"There's an unexpected epistle I've received at the hotel this morning, Fred, and I want your advice upon it," said I, on entering his office.

"What, are you going to get married after all?" he asked.

"Are you going to drown yourself, sir," said I;

"No, thank you," replied Fred, laughing.

"Well, then," said I, "don't ask nonsensical questions. Uncle Jeremy has sent a very polite invitation to spend a week or two with him, in Warwickshire before I leave England. and I thought I would just run down and ask you what I should do in the matter."

"Why—accept it of course," said Fred.

"Well, but does it not seem strange!" I asked; for I always thought that he and our father were never on very good terms."

"No, they were not for many years," replied Fred, "but matters were put right between them some time ago by Uncle Jeremy's apologising and otherwise behaving like a gentleman."

"You never told me of that, Fred," said I,

"No, because I thought you would come to know all about it in due time. But I see here, Tom," continued my brother, returning the letter, "he even offers you his friendship, should you ever settle in England, and that would be something worth having, I can tell you."

"Yes, doubtless it would," said I, "but I've got a fabulous at my banker's, and I am mixings very well over the water. Besides, I don't think I should like to remain in England now that I've got used to the Yankee fashions."

"Bosh, all bosh, Tom; you'd become an Englishman again in no time," rejoined Fred, smiling.

"Perhaps so," said I, "but I doubt it. However, I'll follow your advice and telegraph to Uncle Jeremy, saying I will be at Marston Hall to-morrow."

"But won't you dine with me this evening, dear Fred—"

"Oh, certainly," said I; "at six o'clock as usual?"

"Yes, at six," he replied.

And we did dine at six, and a jolly evening we had; but, strange to say, not the least allusion was made to my intended visit to Uncle Jeremy's until I broached the subject myself by asking my brother if he thought I should enjoy the excursion, and what sort of people I might expect to meet there.

"Well, not many of any sort," he replied, "for I don't think they keep much company; but you will have a kind host and hostess, and their daughter Agnes (who will, I suppose, have to do duty) as your companion-in-chief."

"Daughter Agnes!" I exclaimed;—"why she was a mere child when I left England."

"Quite true, Tom," continued my brother, "but she is a woman now; and, if I dare hazard an opinion, a very fine one too;" then glancing mischievously across the table, he added, "but of course we take you to be proof against even feminine perfection itself."

"At any rate, Fred," I observed, rather snappishly, "I am proof against every insult from that quarter."

"All right, Tom, only don't make a fool of yourself, that's all," said my brother."

"No fear about that," I replied, now almost wishing I had declined the invitation.

Nothing more was said on the subject during the evening; and when I took leave of my brother and his family, I immediately determined not to afford my fair cousin the least reason to suppose that I had come to Marston Hall with the intention of falling in love with her.

On my arrival at the railway station, where my uncle promised to join me, I was disappointed at not finding him and was about to hire a conveyance to carry me to my destination, when up dashed a park phaeton, driven by a remarkably handsome young lady. She drew up hastily and beckoned me towards her.

"Mr. Lawson, I presume?" said the lady.

"Yes, that is my name," I replied, bowing.

She at once introduced herself in the most unaffected manner, excused the absence of her father on account of indisposition, hoped I had enjoyed my journey, was very glad I had come, because they saw so little company; and, in fact behaved herself just as if we had been long familiar with each other.

At length, after seeing my baggage all right, I took my seat, and then asked in the politest manner for permission to take the reins.

"Oh no, thank you, cousin," she replied; with a provoking smile about her well-formed mouth. "I am rather fond of driving, besides, you do not know the way so well as I do, and these parties are apt to become restive sometimes; so I think I had better keep my post till we get home."

I merely loaned my acquiescence, though I did not exactly like her little speech, and the next moment we were going at a terrible speed along a broad winding path, which led through an extensive park, beyond which, on a slight eminence, stood Marston Hall.

"See, there's our house, through the trees, right in front of us! It stands on a lovely spot does it not?" asked my fair companion.

"Very secluded," I replied, laconically, remembering the determination I had made about falling in love.

"Well, we'll be there in a very few minutes," said she; "and I rejoice to think that, however fatiguing our drive may prove, you will not have exhausted yourself with conversation."

"Hang it," thought I, "this is downright impertinence! though I dare say I deserve it. By Jove! she takes things exquisitely cool. However, I said and said that I had been trying to take stolen glances at the splendid scenery.

She gave a low, short, merry laugh, as she replied—"That's exactly what I've been doing, for want of other occupation, but at this speed one cannot observe much."

"There, you are right," said I; and if we were in any other place we should certainly be fined for furious driving."

"By the way, are you fond of riding?" asked my cousin, abruptly.

"Well—yes," said I, with some hesitation, "but I am not a bold horseman."

"I am sorry to hear that," she continued, with evident interest, "for it is an exercise of which I am passionately fond. I delight in a good light run across the country, for nothing raises my spirits half so much. But see, papa is looking at us through the dining-room window, and John is waiting to take care of the ponies, so you must be ready to alight the instant I stop."

In another minute my eccentric, not to say my incomprehensible, cousin did stop, and I alighted as quickly as possible, but not without nearly losing my balance, and wondering what could be the meaning of such unseemly haste.

Throwing the reins to the servant, my cousin followed me, but with such agility that I scarcely noticed the glance which fell upon me from her laughing eyes, but stood before the entrance to the fine old mansion, expecting to have the pleasure of giving her my hand.

"Why did you not permit me to assist you?" I asked.

"Simply because I made up my mind some time ago never to give a gentleman more trouble than I could help," she replied, with a peculiar smile.

As she finished speaking the door opened, and uncle Jeremy, his venerable physiognomy beaming with kindness and good humor, came forward to meet us, giving me a hearty welcome to Marston Hall. Feeling, however, dissatisfied with myself, and not over-pleased with my cousin, I took the earliest opportunity of retiring to my room, on pretext to collect my scattered thoughts so as to dress for dinner.

"She's a strange, unaccountable girl," thought I, surveying the neat and elegant chamber which had been prepared for my reception; "but I am astonished at finding her so masculine and unladylike in her manners and behaviour. Why, upon my conscience, she deports herself more like a young fox hunter than a gentleman's daughter." Then I stood gazing at the beautiful view before me, stretching far away as the eye could reach, and finally dismissed my cousin from my thoughts with the consolatory reflection that the chances were very remote of my ever falling in love with one who appeared to delight more in manly sports than womanly duties.

Soon after dinner my uncle related the cause of his long estrangement from father, and the manner in which they became reconciled, concluding with an expression of sincere regret that the misunderstanding had not been consigned to oblivion long before; and however much I felt inclined to find fault with the odd ways of my cousin, I could not help admiring my uncle's candour and good feeling. In fact, I dismissed the subject from my mind, under the conviction that like most other family jars, there had been faults on both sides.

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I had now been a guest at Marston Hall nearly three weeks, during which time I had made myself familiar with the surrounding country. Invariably joining my cousin in her long rides, drives and wild rambles, and, strange to say, the first few days sufficed to make us tolerably good friends, for I soon discovered that she by no means answered my first description, but on the contrary, possessed many good qualities, which, in spite of all my [illegible] proceedings, I could not help approving, though I could never find courage enough to indicate such approval in words, until I so far forgot myself as to express my surprise, in a bantering tone, that so accomplished and delightful a companion had not a host of beaux sighing at her feet.

"Sir," she commenced, in a voice and with a glance that made me feel decidedly uncomfortable, "I do not like trifling. It is wrong and foolish in either sex, but in yours it is simply unendurable. Flirting is for, and never can be, acquaintance; but I do not want them. No, cousin, when I acknowledge and admire, the feeling must be mutual."

"If I have offended you, my dear cousin," said I, "surely you will not refuse your forgiveness?"

"You have not offended me," she replied, "only I wish you to understand that I think strongly and feel deeply on the subject of your remark, and do not suffer the advance of lovers which I cannot respect." Then she added, in a whisper, "and now you must be perfectly quiet. To-morrow, perhaps you will be much better, and then you can speak to me, but not now. I have been anxiously watching until you awakened, that your might take some refreshment which I have prepared for you; but I must beg your promise not to think about anything until you are quite well again."

I motioned obedience, and with a faint but grateful smile she withdrew as [illegible] as she came.

Many a long day and weary night elapsed before I recovered from it. A dreadful shock my system had received. Many times I listened eagerly, during that long illness, for my kind and lovely nurse, and every time she came it seemed to require fresh strength and energy to bear the bodily pain I was compelled to suffer.

At length I found myself sufficiently strong enough to read and walk within doors, and the recollection of those happy days I passed as a [illegible] invalid at Marston Hall, [illegible] now a hundred fold for my [illegible] sufferings.

Well, I regained my wonted health at last, but felt no desire to return to London. In short there was something that would keep flashing through my [illegible] with such a [illegible] laughs, [illegible]

"Nonsense!—I was about [illegible] moment."

"Doubtless present in spirit [illegible] some fair but distant object," observed, again laughing louder and more merrily than ever.

This at last roused me thoroughly, and perceiving that my companion was bent upon trying to get me into [illegible] humour with myself, I resolved to retaliate, and hit her in the bud.

"No, you are quite mistaken, cousin," I said, very gravely, "for I was thinking of the advisability of returning to London."

"Well, then, I beg to inform you in the plainest possible terms, that you are extremely unkind in allowing such an idea to enter your mind," she replied, in a half offended, half playful tone; and then, as if desirous of arresting further, she continued: "But come we shall not get back to the house at this pace. Here is a nice little run right before us. Do not be afraid of the leaps; it is not much and your horse has gone at it before."

And away we went at a [illegible] gallop. I followed as she cried—"Ride well up, cousin, you have improved wonderfully."

I did keep as "well up" as I could, but on coming to the fence my horse refused, and I fell. I don't know how long I lay insensible on the ground, but I know that the accident proved a serious one.

Many hours elapsed before I recovered consciousness, and on opening my eyes I found myself at Marston Hall, feeling very weak, with an indistinct recollection in my brain of having had a long but painful dream. As I lay gazing at the various objects around me, I could scarcely believe that I was under my uncle's roof, there seemed [illegible] such an air of death-like stillness reigning over the whole household. I listened for some time, but could hear no sound, not the slightest indication of either voice or motion, and was beginning to [illegible] when a slight rustling noise near the door of the apartment arrested my attention. Then I imagined I could hear the subdued accents of a low sweet voice, and in another moment the door opened slowly, and my cousin Agnes stood before me, fairer and lovelier than ever, her handsome features now saddened with an expression of deepest sympathy, her whole countenance so changed that I looked upon her [illegible] as an attempt to speak, but she raised her hand and motioned me to silence.

"You have been ill, cousin, very ill," she said, in a tone not louder than a whisper, "and now you must lie perfectly quiet. To-morrow, perhaps you will be much better, and then you can speak to me, but not now. I have been anxiously watching until you awakened, that you might take some refreshment which I have prepared for you; but I must beg your promise not to think about anything until you are quite well again."

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