

HER SECRET.

BY FANNIE HODGSON, AUTHOR OF "KATHLEEN'S LOVE-STORY," ETC.

"I NEVER see her, madam, without thinking of me first cousin, Sir Phelim O'Dowdleston, of Castle Dowdleroon, county Antrim. I dare say ye've heard of him often enough. Faith he was a fine ould fellow, Sir Phelim; an' it was at his house I met her. She's a pretty woman now; but she has altered a power since then—grown paler and quieter than she was in those days, when she and Darrel Barnegat used to make the big rooms ring with their fun and laughing."

"She and who?" suddenly condescended Mrs. Col. Powler, with unaccountable unmajestic sharpness. She had not been noticing her military companion at all. She rarely deigned to notice him at any time, in fact; but his last words roused her.

"Barnegat," answered Ogilvie. "Barnegat, of King's Eagle; and it's a queer thing to me that it isn't Barnegat, of King's Eagle, who is here with her to-day, instead of that fire-eating Cuban."

"Oh!" ejaculated Mrs. Col. Powler. "Soshe was engaged to him?"

"Me cousin, Sir Phelim," the little, old major was beginning, when his eye caught an expression on the countenance of the relict of the military Powler, which checked him. The sharp face of that estimable, but rigid, matron, was turned toward the unsuspecting subject of discussion, and the black fan in the black-gloved hands was waving slowly, but ominously.

The major stopped at once. It suddenly dawned upon his mind that he had made a trifling blunder. He knew Mrs. Col. Powler, and, it may be added, was not one of her most fervent admirers.

"It's mischief she means," was his inward comment; "and its mischief against me pretty little Yorke there. She's never forgiven her for cutting out Cordelia, the stiff-necked ould hypocrite in petticoats!"

The ominous waving of the black fan went on majestically.

"You were saying something about Mrs. Yorke's former engagement to a visitor of your cousins," suggested Mrs. Col. Powler.

"On my sowl, there's Jarnegan!" exclaimed the major, enthusiastically. "Jernegan, of Turftop. When did he come? I must speak to him. You'll excuse, madam." And, before Mrs.

Colonel had time to wave her fan, she found herself alone.

It was rather exasperating to be so bereft of a choice bit of scandal, which might have been used hereafter to such an advantage against her pet animosity, that pretty, unpleasantly well-behaved little Mrs. Yorke. Nothing on earth would have so exalted the august relict of Powler, as to have found something to cavil at in the demeanor of poor Gertie Yorke; and yet, surely, if ever youthful matron was a model wife and mother, Gertrude Yorke was. But, as Major Ogilvie had said, Mrs. Powler had never forgiven her for her triumph over Cordelia.

Cordelia was the eldest Miss Powler, and had inherited all her mother's graces of mind and person; and rumor said, that if Cordelia was not Mrs. Manuel Yorke, it was not Cordelia's fault; and the fact was by no means to be adduced to a lack of industry on the part of that resplendent, but somewhat raw-boned maiden. Consequently, added rumor, this was why Mrs. Colonel was so stony in her carriage toward the winning side; this was why she had so cordially detested pretty Gertrude, in the winter that had ended with her marriage; and this also was why, encountering her now at Carlsbad, among the summer flock of idlers and invalids, she considered it her special mission to crush her into humility, with much frosty courtesy, and majestic waving of the stiff-jointed, but marvelously genteel, mourning fan.

The hotel parlors were rather full this evening. There were several new arrivals; but Gertrude Yorke had taken her place apart from the rest, as she often did. Just now, as she sat talking to her little boy, she looked so singularly youthful, that it seemed almost impossible to believe that she was the child's mother. That she was an American, one could see at the first glance; her delicate face, girlish figure, and black-lashed, agate-gray eyes, were the attributes of no other type; but it had been years since she had visited her mother country. At fourteen her travels had begun; at eighteen she had married; and, since that time, had wandered from place to place, with her husband, in true American fashion, until the present summer, when, her health failing somewhat, they had lingered at Carlsbad.

Notwithstanding the quietness of her life, she was the subject of a great deal of comment among lookers-on. People, who found it their duty to inquire into such matters, were a trifle puzzled as to the exact state of her feelings toward her husband. He was fond of her, but he was jealous, nervous, and excitable; his fiery Cuban blood asserting itself strongly in the smallest traits of his character. Nothing was more probable, said the discussing party, than that the girl was afraid of him; and that from this cause arose the occasional shade of sadness that touched her pretty, delicate young face. Accordingly, the best-natured pitied her a little, and there were very few who did not agree in admiring her youthful beauty, and her tender care for the welfare of her child. Among the best-natured, the little, old Irish major ranked first. He was persistently gallant, and persistently admiring; he was continually "on duty," in her behalf, warding off gossip and interference; and, in time, the girl grew grateful, and fond of him. She listened to his stories of Sir Phelim of Castle O'Dowdleroon, and encouraged her little boy's childish confidence in him; and what delighted the major more than all else, she always relied upon him for advice and assistance during her husband's absences. So the major was not at all surprised, this evening, during his conference with Jarnegan, a few minutes after he left Mrs. Col. Fowler, to hear the sweet voice call to him, suddenly, a few feet from his standpoint.

"Major—if you please."

I should say, rather, that he would not have been at all surprised, if, on this occasion, there had not been a strange alteration in the voice—a strange, wild tremor, as if the speaker had been terrified.

He turned round on an instant, and, turning, was stricken at once with anxious astonishment. Pretty Gertrude Yorke had slipped from the divan, upon which she had been seated, and lay upon the carpet, in a dead faint!

There was a hurried movement among the surrounding group; but, before even the major could reach her, some one had raised her up, and laid her upon the cushions, and this individual was a gentleman, at the sight of whom the major started back in such astonishment, that he was actually pale, exclaiming aloud,

"Barnegat, by the soul of me lady!"

She was carried to her room, of course, and left to the care of the feminine body-guard, detailed from the dozen of lady visitors, who made a general rush to the scene of action, ready to bustle, and sympathize, and assist, and prescribe after true female fashion.

The major was not so busy as usual. He seemed to be in a bewildered mood. He was grave and silent, and, when he came into the parlor again, his manner was so changed, that one might have fancied him under the influence of an unexpected shock.

Out on one of the long verandas, the man who had laid Gertrude Yorke upon the divan, was standing, leaning against a pillar, smoking a segar; and this man being sought by the major, and found thus, was addressed by him, after the manner of an old acquaintance, though with some latent excitement or anxiety showing itself in his tone.

"By the powers, Barnegat!" he said, "this is a bad move."

Barnegat—a handsome fellow this Barnegat—long, shapely limbed, and of tawney-bearded face. Barnegat stirred uneasily, and seemed to find it necessary to give himself time in which to recover his self-control.

"I did not know she was here," he said, huskily, at length.

The major shook his head.

"A bad move," he said, "if I am not mistaken. Am I mistaken?" anxiously.

"How?" said Barnegat, heavily. "What do you mean?"

The major cast a cautious glance around him, and then, coming to his companion's side, laid a finger upon his folded arms.

"Am I mistaken in thinking it isn't quite over?" he asked, in a dropped voice, "the ould boy and girl love scrape. Have you forgotten it, and has she, or do yez both remember it too well? It looks like it, me boy; this fainting the minute she claps eyes on yez. Be open an' above-board, Barnegat; let me have the God's truth, for I'm fond of the young creature, an' she's too pretty an' young to be left to fight her own battles."

Barnegat's segar went whizzing out into the long grass, sent there by a desperate fling. The poor fellow's eyes were filled with wretched fire, and he broke into a little groan, checked in its birth.

"It's not over with me," he said. "It never will be over. I can say nothing for her. I don't understand women, who can play fast and loose with an honest man's honest love. Women! I should say girls. What was she but a girl, a child of seventeen, when she led me on with her pretty whims at Dowdleroon? What did she throw me off for? What had I done to deserve to be jilted?" Then he turned on Major Ogilvie, all at once, with a pitiful touch of appeal in his voice. "What has that husband of hers been

doing to alter her so? Where have her pretty, bright, childish ways gone? She's as pale as a white rose, and there's a look in her eye that would never have been there, if she would have trusted me, and been my wife."

The major's hand was laid upon his stalwart shoulder, with a touch as gentle as a woman's.

"Hush!" he said, kindly. "This won't do, me boy. It isn't safe. Sure, I scarcely know what to say to ye. I'm thinking, that, perhaps you had better leave here, before her husband comes back. He went to Berlin a week or so ago."

"The devil take her husband!" broke out Barnegat, flaming with wrath and jealousy. "I tell you I shall stay, now I have come. She shall tell me why she jilted me, yet. She must have had a reason; women scarcely do such things without one. When our regiment was ordered back to Dublin, and I went to Dowdleroon to bid her good-by, she clung to me, and cried like a tender-hearted child, on my arm? The next thing I heard was, that she was gone, with that meddling old mother of hers: gone without leaving me a word; and here she is to-day, another man's wife, and the mother of another man's child; and the minute she sees me she faints dead at my feet. What does it all mean, I say?" his voice ringing out passionately. "I don't know. God help me!"

The major could not say. He looked at the excited man with a pale, troubled face. It was even worse than he had expected; and he feared for the end of a story so wretched and mysterious; but he knew that it was worse than useless to contend against Darrel Barnegat in such a mood. He knew him of old, generous, impulsive, and truly Irish in his high spirit and lightness of heart; but there had never yet been a Barnegat who was not a whirlwind when driven to desperation. In his good-natured anxiety for his favorite, the poor little major felt terribly nervous. Perhaps, odd as it may seem, his nervousness arose quite as much from an inward fear of Mrs. Col. Powler, as from weightier causes. Such is the inconsistency of human nature. He felt that it would be infinitely safer for pretty Gertrude to face her husband, than to encounter Mrs. Col. Powler. The thought of it fairly made him gasp for breath.

"For heaven's sake, me boy," he said, "be a trifle reasonable. Think of the poor girl, an' think of the tabbies watching her. Did ye see the ould cormorant, with the black fan? If ye didn't, just look out for her. She will be on the watch for ye, from first to last."

Gertrude Yorke did not return to the parlor

during the rest of the day; but, the next morning, as the major was drinking his morning dose of the waters with the rest, he felt a light touch upon his arm, and, turning round, found the girl's pretty, pale face, quite close to his shoulder.

"Good-morning," she said, in a voice so pathetically sweet, that it thrilled him to the heart. "Please to fill my glass for me, major."

She thanked him, when he handed it to her, and, as she took it, he noticed that the shadow in her sad, young eyes, was deeper than ever, and that under the black lashes lay faint rings of purple.

"I am glad that ye are well enough to be out," he ventured to say.

"Thank you," she answered. "I am much better. The rooms must have been too warm, or—or I was not as well as usual, major," slightly hesitating. "Please don't alarm Mr. Yorke about it."

"Of course not," said the major, bending down to fill his glass again, and trying to speak with good-natured indifference. "Where would be the use of the frightening the senses out of him for a bit of a faint?"

She said nothing more, until he had emptied his glass again. While he drank the contents, she stood near the railing, looking away dreamily; but, when he had finished, she spoke to him again.

"Will you walk back to the house with me?" she said; and then, all at once, the eyes she had uplifted to his faltered, and filled with a pleading desperate light. It seemed as if she knew he had read her heart.

"Give me your arm," she said; and he gave it to her; and she walked away with him, holding it with a curious strength, in her slight, clinging hand.

Beyond the hearing of the group, near the water, there was a line of linden trees, with rustic seats beneath their shade; and, feeling that she was trembling, he led her to one of these benches, and made her sit down. He stood before her then, to shield her from observation, her pallor was so great, and the shrinking terror and grief in her large eyes so strong. She stretched out her unsteady hands to him with the imploring gesture of a frightened child; and he saw that she was in tears.

"Oh, major," she cried out, "please stay with me; please stay near me, as much as you can; please help me until—until Mr. Yorke comes."

He soothed her to the best of his ability—an ability by no means limited, by the way—promising all that she asked, without referring,

ever so distantly, to the cause of her trouble. There was a great deal of tact about this rusty little major, despite his slight brogue, and his genuine Irish pride in his titled relations. Mystified as he was, he would no more have asked her to explain the matter to him, than he would have struck her a blow. He talked to her until she had recovered herself, and then he gave her his arm again, and they promenaded the quieter walks, until the soft morning air had swept away the traces of her tears, even if it could not bring the color to her cheeks.

Returning to the house, they encountered Mrs. Col. Fowler, who was much astonished to see them after a frosty manner. Was it possible that Mrs. Yorke had so far recovered as to be able to walk out alone? She had observed that she left the hotel alone? Was it not, perhaps, somewhat indiscreet to venture out unattended, after so severe an indisposition. She had imagined Mrs. Yorke's swoon had arisen from some serious cause. She had heard a number of the guests inquiring as to the state of her health; among the rest, a late arrival, a Mr. Barnegat; in fact, the gentleman who had been near her when she fainted, and who had been the first to assist her.

It cost the major a great deal of diplomatic effort, in the avoidance of too close an encounter with Darrei Barnegat that morning; but somehow or other, by indefatigable industry, he managed to keep a group about Gertrude's chair until evening, and then the enemy was too much for him. Seeing the two alone for a moment, Barnegat strode across the room deliberately, and, with evident purpose, to where they were seated.

The major was slight protection then. Having been held aloof so long had roused the poor fellow to rebellion, and his first words, when Gertrude started slightly at the intrusion, showed that he was not to be trifled with, or put off.

"Don't be afraid of me, Gertrude," he said, with bitter sadness. "I don't mean to harm you." And, flinging himself into a chair, he held out his hands to the boy, who was clinging to his mother's dress.

"Come here to me," he said.

"Go to him," Eustace," said Gertrude, faintly; and the boy obeyed her.

For a moment, or so, Barnegat held him, looking down into his dark eyes with a working face. Then he loosened his hold upon him.

"Your child is not like you," he said.

Gertrude turned her pretty, pallid face to the window, trembling.

"He is like Mr. Yorke," she answered.

It seemed that she was afraid of him, the major thought; afraid to trust herself to look at him, or speak to him. What was it that she was afraid of?

It must have been her evident tremor, which caused a silence to fall upon them, even here, in the beginning. For a few seconds no one spoke, and the nervous shrinking in the girl's eyes was almost pitiable. The little major grew restless under it, and was actually glad when Barnegat put an end to the pause.

"I scarcely expected to see you down stairs, to-day," he said. "I was afraid that your indisposition was a serious matter."

"No," answered Gertrude, quickly. "It was nothing. I often faint. I have not been strong for a year." And the flutter of swift-changing red and white on her cheek attested to the truth of her words.

Her very timidity held her farther aloof from him than any stern effort of will could have done. He could no more have forced his passion of wrath and pain upon her, than he could have forced it upon a panting, frightened child. She shrank away from his gaze, clinging to her child's hand, as to a safeguard against him. Four years ago, she had been a bright, fearless, happy young creature, every hour of whose existence seemed warm with the sunshine of youth. Surely there was some wrong in the mystery that had wrought so great a change in her?

As he held his place, pallid, and tortured with the inward sense of injustice done to him; Barnegat felt that his pain and jealous wrath were thrust back upon him; and feeling thus, his determination to read the riddle grew stronger than it had ever been before.

But it was not to be read to-day, or for many days to come. He had hardly exchanged a dozen words with her, before he saw a swift change pass over her face: and she turned toward the door, as if moved by some slow, magnetic influence. There was no lighting up of the eyes, no glow of brightness; there was no more than a touch of timid anxiety in her expression; and yet the moment that Barnegat caught sight of the lithe, slender, dark-faced man, who was crossing the threshold, he was stricken with a fierce, jealous pang, knowing him to be her husband, as if by intuition.

The new comer came forward to her with a quick step—a hurried, restless step one might say. There was something restless even in his step, as there was something fiery and restless in his thin, dark, eager face.

He barely gave the two men a greeting gesture. He seemed to assert his right to command

the girl, almost before he had spoken to her. To the child he gave merely a hurried, graceful caress.

"You are not well," Barnegat heard him say, when, a minute later, he led her away. "You have been ill. Don't say 'no.' I should know it not to be true. Your eyes look as if you had shed tears. Why have you suffered. Tell me all."

The little major waited a minute, and then touched his friend on the shoulder.

"Come out into the grounds with me," he said, "and smoke a segar."

Barnegat rose and followed him.

Once in the open air, under the shade of the lindens, Barnegat's passionate misery and raging jealousy burst its bonds. He strode to and fro on the walk like a tiger. He did not know who to blame, so all the fire of his hate fell on the man, who, it seemed, had rivaled him. He could have dealt him his death-blow without a sting of conscience, though the whole of his after life might have been filled with remorse for the deed.

"That is her lord and master, is it?" he said. "By my faith, he is lordly enough. What right has such a fellow to a tender creature like that? She's afraid of him, I tell you." And then, all at once, he broke down, flinging himself on to a bench, and burying his face in his hands with a groan. "Good God!" he cried, "think how I would have worshiped her; think how I would have watched her, and cared for her delicate woman's fancies. I leave her for weeks? Not for an hour. She's dying, it's my belief; dying by inches, as women like her die sometimes."

The major was discreetly silent. The ghost of such a thought had more than once flitted across his own kindly little brain. He had seen times when the pretty favorite had seemed so fair and spiritual, that he had wondered if so much fairness and transparency was exactly the right sort of thing, lovely as it was. The beautiful eyes had looked large and bright, and worn, now and then, as if the wine of life had been too strong for the delicate lady. His august relative had once praised her as the brightest and merriest of his many light-hearted guests; now she was the quietest little woman in the hotel. But he did not say this to Darrel Barnegat. He let him wear out his hopeless rage, without interfering with him, and then soothed him with no inconsiderable tact and delicacy.

"Don't let the world see it, me boy," he said, "for her sake—for her sake. Poor little soul, she has enough to bear. Keep a bowld heart for her sake." And, in saying it, he touched the right chord.

When Gertrude Yorke met them again, she was on her husband's arm, and many a day passed before they caught even a glimpse of her when she was alone. He was at least attentive, this husband. It seemed that he scarcely ever left her side. It was her he cared for, not the child, that was plain enough. Her lightest change of expression never escaped him; and it might almost have been that his constant vigilance wearied her, for she was quieter and more frail-looking than ever. Her mute submissiveness to his will was fairly touching. She obeyed his very glance.

Before he had been there two weeks, Barnegat began to falter in his purpose. He had been determined to demand an explanation of the mystery of the past; but the time came when he would scarcely have done so if he could, and certainly he could not if he would. From the time of her husband's arrival, they exchanged no recognition, beyond the merest gestures of politeness. Even the major was thrown out of employment, and left to himself, though the girl had always a smile and a gentle word for him. The people who noticed her most, began to comment on the sadness and languor of her pretty, pale face; and at last, one evening, a burly German physician burst upon a group, who were thus commenting, with a single guttural sentence, which fell upon them like a thunderbolt.

"Dot bretty woomans, mid her glear gomblexion?" he said. "Ach! Yea. She go into consumption." And he said it with the air of a man, to whom it was no new idea, but a commonplace fact.

Barnegat was not one of the group, but the major was; and when, afterward, she came into the room, leaning upon her husband's arm, and looking in her thin, cloud-like white muslin, like a white flower, the major felt his heart quicken its beating, with a strange sense of discomfort.

Only a week after this, Barnegat came to his friend, with a haggard, desperate face.

"They are going away," he said.

"When?" asked the major.

"To-morrow," answered Barnegat. "Well, it will be over then."

"All the better for you," said the major. "Better that there should be an end to it. What good is it doing ye? Wearing your life out grieving for another man's wife? It's but little use there is in crying after spilt milk."

Barnegat's head dropped on to his hands.

"It isn't that," he said, doggedly, despite his misery. "It's better that I shouldn't be tormented with the sight of her face, but I want to

be righted. How do I know what she has been made to think of me? But I shall never ask her now."

There was a queer, old-fashioned rose-garden in the grounds of the hotel—a sweet, quaint, old rose-garden, burning with color, and heavy with perfume, that floated above and around the hundred flower-laden bushes; and to this place Darrel Barnegat went, when he left major Ogilvie standing alone under the row of lindens.

It had been a rare treasure once, this square of bloom and fragrance; but it had been somewhat neglected of late years, and the roses had grown into a lovely thicket, stretching long, slender arms here and there, from bed to bed, and outbarring intruders with a profusion of sweet barricades. But there was still room for a ramble down the straight walks, and Barnegat found his way there, chiefly for the sake of its seclusion.

But some one was there before him, it seemed, though at first he was not aware of any presence, other than his own. The fair moonlight made the place as bright as day, and, at last, in turning the corner of an arch of tangled rose-vines, he came suddenly upon a white figure, standing in the path, a figure in a floating, white dress, and with a white face turned upward to the cloudless night sky.

"Gertrude!" he cried out.

She might have been a spirit. She looked like one as she turned slowly toward him, in the white light. Her thin dress might have been moon-lit roses. She was so delicately colorless, that her skin seemed purely transparent.

It was strange that she did not seem startled; but she did not, though she looked at him a little wonderingly, as she might have looked, if his presence had awakened her from a dream.

"Don't think that I followed you," he said. "I did not know you were here."

She made a faint, quiet gesture with her hand.

"No, I did not think so," she said, in a low, calm voice. "I think—I am glad you came."

The sight of her had so amazed him, and she looked so spiritual and unearthly, that he could not have found words to answer her, if she had given him time to speak, which she did not.

"I think I am glad you came," she said, again; and her voice was so clear and sweet, in its mysteriously-sounding, half-wearied tone, that it seemed to him that it floated toward him with the perfume of the roses. "I was thinking about you," she went on. "I came here because it was so quiet, and I wanted to think about you. I have something to say to you, and you know what it is about, though you do not dream of

what the truth is. I have been afraid before; I am not afraid now. I am going away, and I shall never see you again on earth, so I must tell you how it is, that—that I am Mr. Yorke's wife instead of yours. I promise to be yours, you remember, when we were in Ireland.

"Yes," he groaned. "Oh my own—my love!"

"You remember that my mother did not like you," she said. "Don't blame her now—she died long ago. It seems long ago to me, though it is only three years since. It was she who took me away from you. She told me a terrible story of your loving another woman—not a lady, but a woman good people do not speak of; but I did not believe her, Darrel, until you ceased writing to me. It was my love that made me weak and blind, I think; if I had not loved you so, I should have known how easy it was for her to play that poor, glaring, worn-out farce, and keep your letters back. But that is not all. I might even have fought against that, until you came back; but after that, we saw a paragraph in the paper about the duel you fought with an English officer, and it said that you were dead—dead, Darrel." And there she swayed a little, and caught hold of the arch, and leaned against it.

"Oh, my God!" he moaned. "Oh, my God!" But he said no other word.

It flashed across his mind so plainly now. He remembered the blunder, had laughed at it a thousand times, and yet had never thought that it might float to her, as it had floated to other people. Oh, mad fool that he had been! mad, reckless fool! to fling away from his unsteady hand a cup so full of peace and love.

She went on.

"Until the evening you came into the hotel parlor, I did not know that you were alive. I was tired of life, and hopeless; but it was better then than it is now, because I thought you were dead, and understood perhaps why I had broken down under my grief and despair, and had been weak enough to let myself be sacrificed. I did not love the man I married for my mother's sake. I do not love him now. I cannot, though I try. I have no love left. I am not strong enough to think of love, and his love for me wears me out and wearies me. He does love me, and tries to make me happy; but look at my face, Darrel," and she turned toward him in the moonlight. "Look at my hand," and she held up to his sight the fair, immaterial spirit of hand, slender, and bloodless, and transparent. "I am dying," she said, in an awe-stricken whisper. "He does not believe me, when I tell him so, but it is true. I wanted to tell you this, before

I left here, because I know so well that we shall never meet again. I did not want to die, fearing that you could blame me for seeming false to you. My love has been my secret all these years, and "weight has been too heavy for me. It was chance that brought you here to-night, it was fate. It was fate that brought you here to say farewell to me; and now that I have spoken, we must say it. Good-by." And she held out to him the slight, fair hand, whose touch was as the touch of a pitying spirit.

"Good-by," he cried. "Only good-by; after all these years of hopelessness. Only to meet, and say good-by!"

"The suffering was mine too," she said. "It is not only you who say good-by; but life has been so hard to me that I am thankful even for this parting." And so the slender hand slipped from her grasp, and, as she left him, he flung himself, face downward, in the dew-wet grass, among the roses.

At the breakfast-table, the next morning, her place was empty. She was not well enough to come down, and, in the evening, her husband had taken her away. So Darrel Barnegat was left to wear his passion out through the long, weary summer days. He remained at Carlsbad, because there was some bitter comfort in the thought, that he had borne her secret pain there so long. Only the little, old rusty major understood his silence, and the heavy cloud hanging over his life; and understanding and pitying him, the major came to him, and through his warm, if whimsical affection, afforded him some kindly support.

The major was at his side, too, one autumn day, when an invalid idler, who had spent years at Carlsbad, read aloud, from a London newspaper, the following paragraph, from the list of deaths,

"On the 10th inst., in this city, the wife of Manuel Yorke, Esq., of Matanzas, Cuba."

SPRING-TIME

BY IDA IRVINGTON.

The merry Spring is coming,
With buds and blossoms bright;
And the purple hills and mountains
Are bathed in mellow light;
While the happy little songsters
Are trilling their sweet lays,
At the first approach of Spring-time,
And the thought of sunnier days.

The mossy dells are springing,
Into new life again,
And everything I gaze upon—
Tree, shrub, or grassy plain,
The very murmur of the brook,
As it winds its way along,
Seems to woo thee, gentle Spring-time,
With its sweetest, gladdest song.

The soft and balmy zephyrs,
With odors, sweet and rare,
Of violet blue, and snowdrop,
And of the lily fair,
Come through the hazy twilight,
As we watch the shadows play
Among the grand, and weird old tree-tops,
At the closing of the day.

Then come, oh, gentle Spring-time!
We welcome thee with mirth;
For thou comest but to cheer us,
And to beautify the earth;
Thou comest but to gladden,
The sad and weary heart,
And makest with thy sunshine,
The shadows to depart.

WHAT WAS IT?

BY OCTO.

DEAD, and under the grasses;
Dead, and over the sea;
Dead, while the Summer passes;
Dead, and away from me.
Mignon! Mignon! what was it?
Why found you no soul to greet,
In the morning of life and of pleasure,
Across the ocean wave?
Child? 'Twas the noon of Summer;
Athirst, in such tropical day?

Tired? Your arms bore no burdens,
And mine—they are empty for aye!
Dead, and beyond my caresses;
Dead, and gone to thy rest;
Dead, and the why, no one guesses,
Mignon! my sweetest and best!
Ah! I will not waken thy sleeping,
Whatever the words I say;
Still is the heart once swift leaping,
And mine, it is empty for aye.