THE TWO BELLS.

Long years ago, so runs the ancient story,
Two bells were sent from Spain to that fair shrine,
New hoisted, beyond the sea, that to God's glory
And Its His house together they might chime.

And to this day one bell is subtly swinging
Within its misty ring tower, near to shore, clear and free,
It hallows each day with its mellow ring
Over the sea.

The other bell, the mate, was lost at sea.
And lies, in gentle chiming, the bell is pealing,
The people listen; for they say they hear
An echo from the distant ocean stealing—
It is the lost one's answer, faint yet clear.
Ah, how like those two bells we sailed together,
And you have reached your holy work before me,
But stormy was the way and rude the weather,
And I was lost beneath the wave's white crest.

Over my buried heart the waters glisten,
Across my breast the sea-weeds wave and twine,
Dead is my soul's best life, save when I listen
And hear your spirit calling unto mine.
Then the old longing wakes; I start, I shiver;
I try to break the bonds which hold me dumb;
I turn, I strive with many a throe and quiver—
I resolve, but I can not come.
—Bessie Chandler in June Century.

A FUGUE.

From Household Words.

The sun blazes high, for it is 5 o'clock, and mid June. The roses are out in the rectory garden, and their luscious scent floats in on the drowsy air from the old round bed in the centre, which one cannot see because the red and white awning is let down over the study window.

Mr. Lascelles is out on parish work and the study is the chosen resort of Catherine and Evelyn Lascelles, his daughters. Catherine, or Cathie, is a girl with fleecy golden hair; Evelyn wears her brown locks in a crop. Nature has given them a persistent wave, and the barber cuts them short. No fanciful dressing does she give to her head beyond the care of seeing that there is no order, or rather always a picturesque disorder in her locks.

The girls have been talking—one does not do much steady work on June afternoons. Their conversation has left a light of decision in Cathie's gray eyes, and a filmy haze, perhaps a voluptuous fire, in the deep-brown orbs of Evelyn. She throws herself full length on the bamboo reclining chair by the window, and here are the last words of each sister:

Evelyn aloud: "It is wholly inimatrial to me!" She is 18, and some indescribable expression on her face gives the lie to her haughty words. "I shall not move an inch! He comes, he goes—it is all one. And it is not all one to you!"

Here the soft fire in her brown eyes takes a flash, and becomes a sparkling fire.

"In the sense you would put it, it is all one," replies Cathie, the elder by one year; "but it is not all one if you look at it from my point of view. It may be very fine for young Gerald Wickham to come here, but it is not very fine that he should come to see both the rector's daughters at once. That is what people say—"

"Indeed! they make no mark between the two daughters!"

Evelyn would be careless but she cannot act the part.

"How can they? They only see us all in public. I wish aunt would send over for me!"

"As if you need wait for the sending! Gerald can follow you there."

"Fan? Yes! Will— No."

"Take care!" cries Evelyn.

And at the instant there comes, mingling with the scent of the roses, another perfume, that of—tobacco.

Gerald Wickham, the rector's son, from the priory, lifts the red striped awning.

And Evelyn lies languid, playing with a huge red Japanese fan; the colour has all gone for a moment out of her face, while he lazily leans against the frame of the French window at which he has come in. Cathie's color heightens one degree—the smallest degree. She is wondering her face is not angry that he will make love to her, he for whom Evelyn is wearing out her fiery soul.

He is quite honest; he does not know yet which girl he likes best. He plays with both, but his nature—his lighter nature—wants the prize of ambition, the fiery purposing of Evelyn's to make him a successful man. Will he find this out, or will he play on, and spend the days and nights in "best," simply because he will have stung Evelyn into some bitter revolt against him?

He has nearly an hour of flirtation, if you please to call it by such an ugly word. But he is so bright and gay, he is taking the world by the best of good thing indeed, his future squireship is such a comfortable one, he is the very incarnation of optimism—why not talk for an hour with two such nice girls as the rector's daughters?

Cathie thinks she knows why not. She slips out of the room, and puts some needful gear into a black bag, and goes down to the lawn at the front house for the rector. Then she signifies her intention of going over to Aunt Mary's for a day or two.

"Mrs. Symons knows that Mary always wants the girl, and both girls always do just as they like, so she merely says: 'Very well, dear.'"

And now we see Cathie standing at the rectory gate. Better, far better, to go for a few days, for a week, even, if only Gerald will in the interval come to his senses.

Something strikes the girl that she is doing a fine thing. Her visit is not strange—no, that might happen any day, because Aunt Mary, who is a wife to the doctor in Pucklesleigh village, hall an hour's walk along by the canal and the meadows, is more truly mother-like to these girls than is the other aunt, who lives in town, and only for so many years. No, there is no strangeness in going over there for a day or two, but there is not a vague mastering or commanding of fate in what she has taken for the reason of her visit.

This thought made her grave. She does not feel the sweet evening coolness that comes across the shining canal waters; she does not see the fair white, and blue, and gold mushings of flowery and reedy things that bridge the bank; she does not hear the cheep and twitter of the waterfowl hidden in those rushy nests. No; and when she has walked for the half hour she pays no heed to a whistle that is directly towards her; she feels none of the reddening western light that is pouring over her head, and making of her such a sunny bit of fairness—no, she is simply absorbed in her thoughts.

She certainly does not see Aunt Mary wave back the author of that very pronounced whistle.

Chris or Christopher Landon, the doctor's pupil, or deputy, whichever it is with him, does not keep out of sight so Aunt Mary decrees.

And she is a wise woman! She has the intuitive eyes of motherhood; she sees that Cathie with her bag has not come over to Pucksleigh without a reason. And so, alone, she comes out across the pretty, unkempt, daisy bestarred lawn to greet the girl and to hear her story.

It is sweet talk.

A whole week runs by, and a couple of pressing messages have gone over from Aunt Mary to the brother, the rector, to beg for Cathie a bit longer. What his women folks desire, good Mr. Lascelles also desires, so there is a second week running by with Evelyn alone.

Alone, do we say?

Not at all, not at all.

One cannot go from the Priory to Pucksleigh without passing the rectory, and Gerald Wickham's steps are accustomed to water at the rectory founts.

Perhaps the impassioned eyes—girls cannot always shroud a calm veil over their passion—of Evelyn declare their beauty to Gerald. He always stops there and never gets to Pucksleigh.

Perhaps a little bit thinks he has something like an intention of going there; but days go on, and one day he wakes up to the fact that no one has intention does at last have any influence with him.

He is sure which girl is "best" now. Evelyn is the "best," the most perfect girl, the one woman for him.

And he makes his discovery in no dulcet, dreamy way. He has said some fiery words of scorn about his aimless, pleasure-loving, empty life, and, like a whipped cur, he has come trifling along the honeyed lanes back to dinner at the Priory.

It is a tete-a-tete dinner with his father, and, like a tactful rector's son, he is one to notice and mate, he finds the squire is bent upon hurrying over port wine and strawberries. He is up to the squire's impatience in matrimonial papers to con before the morrow; he has this and that to do. And tellingly it all as by habit to his son, he lets fall that Gerald lights a cheroot and saunters out over the quaint old pleasure with his collie at his heels.

A young man's fancies are various, many as they are. Gerald must be somewhat displeased with the reproving world in which he suddenly finds himself, but he may be content to be satisfied with his own actions, or lack of actions. We do not care to dive into the mystery of his thoughts, for perhaps a thoroughly transparent, honest-souled individual, and as such may not reward our search. However, he seems to exhibit a certain pride in the division of a murderous—

"He will marry Evelyn Lascelles! Then he'll trave- a while, then—how grandly easy it all stands out in the future, that the moonlight gentleman in for him—then he'll put up for the southern division of the county. There must be a general election before the year is out!"

"Hey! Presto!" cries the magician, "and is all of this to be carried out before the end of the year come?"

"Assuredly!" answer Youth and Gerald.

The morning rises, and with it Gerald goes once again to the rectory. He then waits by the little green gate, looking in, he sees a tall man, with grizzled, curly crop, and a face shaped by his flower-beds. His lean hands are loosely clasped together behind his back, the long skirts of his old clerical coat are quaintly opposed to the severe, thin, dry character of his physical self. He is either controlling or watching with a most unbending—a dreading—a girl who wears a dark-hued crimson linen dress, and whose dark head is shaded by a big flapping willow hat.

A lilac bush, full with summer leafage, may screen him, and Gerald chooses not to be screened; it does not enter into his masterful plans that he should see the rector in any way but one that she is.

How the dear rector dallies among the roses! But he goes in at last, and Gerald then clicks the latch of the little gate and—

Enough. By-and-by he walks into the study, and he has that interview with the rector which he had planned to have.

And another evening comes when he and his father, the squire, dine tete-a-tete. The squire, as usual, is mightily tired with his day, and he has his brother-magistrates have had a full time of it, for the squire's temper is not to be angry that he will make love to her, he for whom Evelyn is wearing out her fiery soul.

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Plainly, she is bereft of her senses. She lies awake all night, and in the morning she will fly to Cathie, and fling her gift of a lover back to her!

The morning rises and she goes.

No Gerald, though, has been near Pucksleigh.

Cathie has a "heavenly time," as she says in her hearts of hearts.

Aunt Mary is glad to have the girl under her wing just now, for she knows that the eyes of the rector of Pucksleigh life is getting astir in its deeper nether waters.

Pucksleigh, as a hamlet, drones on as it seems to have droned since prehistoric times, and its future has no apparent scintillations of light darting into the present. Packages go to Aunt Mary, is her own house, the doctor's house, and she knows that a drama of life is near its climax.

Her husband, the doctor, had a pupil, who is no longer a pupil, but works hand-to-hand with the doctor himself. An orphan nephew of the rector of Pucksleigh, and the rector's heir, he has condescended to water at the rectory founts.

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