Poets' Corner.

MORAL OF THE GOLDEN CIBORIUM.

BY ELEANOR C. DONNELLY IN THE AVE MARIA.

Once in dark and troubled days
When France was filled with woe,
And sacrilegious hands, blood stained,
The holiest of spots profaned,
And laid the altars low;

A saintly *curé*, full of fear,
His trembling taper lit,
And drew the Sacred Host divine
(Alone at midnight) from Its shrine
Where angels worshipped it.

And in a glass ciborium,
An humble crystal vase,
With reverential hands concealed
The hidden God; then safely sealed
The fragile resting-place.

Deep in a dark sequestered nook
Behind the chapel gray,
The holy priest in grief profound,
Buried the Treasure in the ground,
And went, in tears, away.

The days rolled on; and with them fled
The clouds of sin and sorrow;
On desecrated altars shone
The light of Peace; a roseate dawn
Bespoke a bright to-morrow.

Then stole the humble *curé* forth,
With heaven in his eyes,
And, where the grass grew thick and tall,
Concealed behind the old church wall,
He sought his buried Prize.

With eager, trembling hands he casts
The precious earth about;
The joyous tears run down his face—
He stoops above the holy place—
And draws the Treasure out.

Oh! moving miracle of love!
(Praise to the Holy Ghost!)
The glass ciborium of old
Is changed to one of shining gold
And blood-red is the Host!

The living touch of Christ's pure Flesh
Hath wrought this marvel strange!
Oh! come, my soul, and humbly bow
Before thy God, and weep that thou
Hast felt no kindred change.

How oft thy heart hath been a closed
Ciborium wherein reposed
The same Almighty Lord;
Alas! poor thing, as frail and weak
As was that crystal cup antique
That held th' Incarnate Word.

And have I carried fire here
Deep in my frozen breast,
Nor felt my garments burn and glow?
—Ah! let it be no longer so,
My sweet, celestial Guest!

Give me a faith so strong and fresh
That at the touch of Thy pure Flesh,
My soul may be transformed;
My heart no longer cold and numb,
Changed to a fair ciborium
By Thy dear Presence warmed!

And when Thy mighty Hand shall snatch
My ashes from the mould,
Ah! may the Sacred Host outshine
From this glad risen heart of mine,
And change its dust to gold!

HAWTHORNDEAN.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MARRIED IN HASTE.

Mr. Benton was seated under the stoop of the cottage at Inglewood in the early spring twilight, when he read this letter; he groaned aloud as he finished it, starting Sobriety out of a nap she was comfortably taking in her chair by the kitchen fire. The girl ran to the inner room, where her mistress was quietly penning a letter to her dear absent Harold.

"Mr. groaned a heap like a fit?" she said, coldly. "I think you better stir."

The wife was by his side instantly, inquiring, "Are you ill, Philip?" placing her hand on his forehead, which bore marks of deep distress. The look from his dark piercing eyes almost terrified her as he pointed to the letter, placing at the same time his hands over her face, he burst into an agony of tearless grief, exclaiming, "O, my child, my child! my lost Marion, why did I suffer you to leave me!"

"Is it too late to hope?" inquired Mrs. Benton, after reading the epistle through without pause or exclamation; "this tells nothing decided, only gives reason to fear; it is not too late to warn, certainly."

"It is all plain to me, Lucy," he replied, in a voice scarcely audible from strong emotion, which he was in vain endeavoring to control. (Philip Benton was not as proud and self-contained as of erst.) "Perfidious girl! this accounts for the last letter from her; how bitter is to be her punishment!"

"But is it too late?" again inquired her mother.

"God knows," he said; "if Marion with her powerful will has become entangled with this man, she would hardly be influenced by the judgment or advice of a parent. I can use authority—I can separate them—but you know well what that means."

Never before had he referred to their own very early and somewhat imprudent marriage, against the approval of parents, and with at last only a reluctant consent. "The sins of the parents! O, dreadful penance, to see our dear ones visited in this way." Mrs. Benton was silent; all the long years of their marriage were obliterated, and she remembered only the pleadings of her father as he said, "Lucy, I tremble for your happiness with this proud, haughty man." He had used his authority to prevent the union, till he found time and separation did not change their determination, and then his consent was given under protest. "And yet," said Mrs. Benton to herself, "it was from no real evil that he knew of Philip, only an unaccountable dislike he had taken to the man." She wondered within herself, as she stood with her hand resting on her husband's head, that he should have spoken of these things in this connection. He seemed to read her thoughts, and recovering himself, he drew her down by his side and said affectionately, "Don't for a moment think, Lucy, that I mean to compare our courtship and marriage with Marion's proceedings, if I guess the truth concerning her. Ours was the first pure generous affection of youth; I only spoke as I did, to show how little parental authority affects in such matters, even in the most obedient; if Marion intends to put off young Leighton for that scape-grace Stapleton, it is because of a *gilded bait;* she is making haste to be rich, like her father, and like him she will blast her whole life."

"Do you know him?" inquired the wife; "the Colonel speaks of reformed habits."

"I knew him well, fifteen years since, as a good-natured fellow about town, fast in many ways; he then spent the income of a large fortune in drinking and carousing. His respectable friends tried to keep him up, and he was never excluded from society though he was often unfit to appear among ladies. He lost a part of his fortune by me," he continued, struggling with the memory of those days; "but the Colonel thought it would be a good thing for him to lose it, and persuaded him to enter into this East India scheme, in which he has been wonderfully successful, and reformed in his habits also; it is time for that; he must be nearly as old as Colonel Hartland. He is fine-looking, and can be a perfect gentleman, but ah! the golden hook which he holds out to catch my child! What shall I say to Marion? I have yet to answer her letter announcing a change in her toward Horatio."

"I think I should write as if it were impossible she should think of any one else; I tremble for the effect upon Horatio."

"Yes, Lucy, he will stagger under it, but I hope he will not fall; we must do what we can for him; many a girl has the ruin of a man, soul and body, on her conscience. Leighton will bear it better than some men would—Dr. Nelson, for instance. I think it will harden Horatio, lead him to look on ambition as his bride, and make him thoroughly worldly; you can do much for him, my dear."

It was indeed a difficult task to speak to the wounded heart of the young man, when he came to Mrs. Benton's with the lines from Marion in his hand, declaring their engagement at an end, and with a restless and unequitable movement, walked the room, begging Mrs. Benton to tell him what to do. She gave him such comfort as she could, would not allow that all hope for him was lost, and the distressed lover returned to his home, spent the night writing letter after letter to his beloved, and ended by tearing all into a thousand pieces. Seizing his portmanteau, into which he had hastily thrust a few articles of clothing, he surprised Mrs. Benton at the first dawn of day, by appearing at Inglewood, with the intelligence that he was *en route* for the east without delay. Night and day—sleepless nights and wearisome days in those times of slow transportation; but at the end of a week he found himself in a large hotel in the city that contained to him the greatest treasure. He hid not once reflect on his appearance—his haggard look, his disordered garments—he did not even wait for fashionable hours, but took his way at once to Colonel Hartland's mansion, with the look of an anxious speculator on his face. He inquired at the door for "Miss Benton;" the servant looked doubtful, and then replied that Miss Marion was out, but Miss Rosine was in—would he send up his name? He had forgotten the existence of such a little thing as a card, but fortunately for his wits, at that moment the Colonel crossed the hall.

"Bless my heart!" he exclaimed, coming forward and giving his hand cordially to the young man. "Come in, I am glad to see you; come in here," he added, and remembering all that must necessarily follow this visit, he opened the door into his own private parlor. It was a very awkward position, and no one could feel the awkwardness more sensibly than the Colonel, and as usual he made a rush *in medias res* at once.

"I suppose you came, principally to look after Marion," he said after a pause that was terrible to both. "I hope you may be in time to make matters all straight again; she has gone to ride just now with—my cousin, Tom Stapleton; these constant attentions troubled me, but you know I felt she was safe."

The hot blood mounted to the temples of the young man as he heard this, there was more to be feared than he had thought; he had not believed that Marion could already put another in his place. At that moment he heard her ringing voice in the hall, and the tones of her attendant as he followed closely upon her steps.