



## A SONNET.

What is a sonnet? 'Tis the pale, soft light  
That trembles on the brow of early dawn;  
The mellow sunset glow when day is gone;  
The silver star within the purple night;  
An April shower; a lily, chaste and white.  
A sonnet? 'Tis the faint, elusive flush  
Within a snow geranium's heart; the blush  
Across a maiden's throat; the tranced delight  
A poet knows; a gush of wild-bird song;  
The opal's soul with passionate fires rife;  
The thought—ah, me! that brings back other times:  
The rushing of the sea, sibilant, strong.  
A sonnet? why, it is a rounded life,  
Whose every deed is set to love's own rhymes.

She walked along a narrow path, smooth and fair, but not bordered with flowers, nor sweet with wild bird notes. By her side one walked always, with firm, even steps and head erect; his grave, stern eyes looked straight before him, never faltering. There were deep lines about his brow and about his pale lips; and his shoulders stooped, as though, perhaps, an invisible burden were lying upon them; but he never paused to rest, nor did he ever swerve from that narrow path. She whom he led was young and full of hope and youth's own peach. She started out bravely in the early morning, laying her hand in his, and smiling as they kept step together. The sweetness of spring was in the air, although the flowers and the birds had not yet come, and her pulses beat full and strong with the gladness of living; there was a quiet joy, too, in the mere companionship of the one who walked with her. But by and by, her feet lagged a little, and it once occurred to her that this was a strange path in which no flowers grew. She looked at her stern companion, sighing, and with troubled eyes. Could it be that he did not miss them? And after a while they came to a place where another way branched off, and glancing down its cool avenue of trees, she saw beautiful flowers; and she heard soft melody of bird notes. Then her little heart beat fast and her light feet twinkled with joy; she flung loose the gold waves of her hair, and she cried: "Ah, let us go down this way! It is so much sweeter. And but see! the flowers!" But he who walked with her only grasped her hand more closely, and hurried on, answering: "This way is not so fair, perhaps, but it is safer—safer." And he looked so sad and so careworn that she went with him for pity's sake, although her wistful eyes turned back to the other path. Then, some one came, very softly, and walked on the other side of her—so softly that at first she did not know that he was there. Only—the sky flushed of a sudden to gold, and violets lifted sweet, wet eyes to be trampled blind by her feet; little brooks chattered over pebbly places, and the mellow air trembled with bird-wings and bird-music. And she—ah, of a sudden, too, she grew radiant with beauty. Her bare arms and innocent bosom were faintly pink as the rose cloud nestling in the dimple of a purple hill, and her uncurled lips were like the innermost, crimson heart of a seashell that has held the kisses of many a sun; and her eyes—they were like sunlight on blue pansies, like stars in a blue sea; and no air wherein wild roses open could be more sweet than her breath. And there came swelling up from her heart a song that broke from her lips sweeter than bird notes; it seemed to her that she had never sung before. And when she turned, she saw him who walked beside her, and she grew strangely still. He looked into her eyes and said, very low: "I am Love." Then said he of the stern brow, who walked at her right: "I am named Duty. You cannot walk with one without neglecting the other. Choose between us." And love said, pleading also with his eyes: "Come with me. Where I walk are flowers, and fluting song notes. I will lead you down sunlit ways, where only south winds come. I will be all in all to you." Then spake Duty: "Flowers wither soon, and birds are dumb when winter comes; clouds darken across the sun, and winds come out of the north. Then Love grows petulant, and wearies—but I—trust me. I will never fail. My shoulders are bent because I bear half the burden myself, and I suffer, too, for those who walk with me. But Love thrives only among rose leaves and sunlight, dreamy music and birds; it cannot bear cold and cruel winds, nor shield you from them; it could not lead you through thorns and up steep places, but would go seeking lovelier climes, leaving you to bear the hurts and the heart aches alone. But I will be true to you. Come, and on the

last day of your life, you will be glad that you chose me." So she turned away from Love, grieving; and the flowers faded by the wayside, and the birds were dumb; the sky was no longer blue, and there was no gladness in the voices of the brooks; the sunlight waned, and lo! she walked always in a kind of gray twilight, looking before her with dull, hopeless eyes, and dragging her weary feet along side by side with Duty. So walked she, never faltering, never swerving, until one day Duty laid her hand, old and trembling now, in the hand of death. But for one moment she turned from him, and with dim eyes that seemed to be looking far back into the past, she murmured—as though to some one far away: "Kind God, let me go down this path a moment—but a moment. For see, dear God—the flowers! and hear the birds—and some one calls me." Then, remembering, she turned, with a sigh, and laid her old heart—worn out in passionate beating against its prison bars of clay—on the kind heart of death.

There is nothing that can be said in favor of vivisection that can make of it anything but the most barbarous and outrageous cruelty, and of those who practice it, monsters without feeling. Let those physicians and surgeons who talk so eloquently and so beautifully about sacrificing their own feelings, and bearing, without complaint, their own mental sufferings as they witness the horrible torture of the dumb thing their knife is probing, all for the "love and the future welfare of humanity"—let them, I say, submit their bodies to the butchery of other noble vivisectionists, and there will be a sacrifice worth something. One can suffer deeply through "the feelings," it is true; but such suffering pales into insignificance before the agony of a dumb brute on the operating table. If vivisection is necessary to the welfare of humanity, then let humanity suffer; humanity can obtain opiates to relieve its suffering, but the helpless thing under the vivisectionist's knife must be conscious of every movement and turn of the knife, lest the "good results to humanity" should be lessened. I know many physicians who shrink from the horror of vivisection as from murder, who yet do more noble, self-sacrificing work for humanity's good in one month than the "most eminent" and red-handed vivisectionists can accomplish in a life time. They find time to relieve the sufferings of the poor as well as the rich; they go as readily into hovels as into palaces; they expose themselves to hardship, disease and danger of death; they keep faithful watch over patients who they know can never pay them—and let me tell you that when a physician does his duty, and even more than his duty, at the sacrifice of dollars and cents, he is working for the love of mankind. Whereas, on the other hand, I believe if you could look into the heart of the "eminent" vivisectionist, you would find that all the noble "sacrifice of his feelings" was made not so much for the sake of suffering humanity as for a paltry distinction to himself in his profession.

It is a pity that America's children should ape the fashions, customs, manners, social etiquette, and even peculiarities of speech, of other nations. We must surely pardon English people for laughing at us and at our frantic imitations of their ways. It must be very amusing to them when an American assumes an expressionless expression—yes, that is precisely the result of an American's attempt to be English—and draws out "Fancy!" to every second remark addressed to her. They would have more respect for us if we had our own code of etiquette, and required that visitors to America should do as Americans do. Our cartoonists love to picture America as a tall, beautiful and noble-browed woman, standing erect in her own dignity, pride and independence, with swelling bosom and dauntless eyes. It will be humiliating, one of these fair days, to find her pictured in a Worth gown and English glasses, ogling some princely rout.

Whenever you read an account of a man's fall, a thousand throats are ready to shout: "There was a woman at the bottom of it!" But when the tide brings in the body of a woman and lays it upon the glistening gold of the sand, does any one ever think to say that her death was due to a man? My brothers, be more just, more tender in your judgment—for all these cases are carried to a higher court.

Miss Virna Woods, of Sacramento, California, is one of the young western poets who "have not knocked at the doors of the eastern magazines in vain." Her name flashes out upon you at the bottom of stirring sonnets in some of the best publications, and she has taken many prizes. Her latest work is the "The Amazons," a lyrical drama, which is highly praised by the critics.