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## Poetry.

### Mischief Makers.

Oh, could there in the world be found  
Some little spot of happy ground  
Where village pleasures might go round,  
Without the village tattling!

How doubly best that place would be,  
Where all might dwell in liberty,  
Free from the bitter misery,  
Of gossip's endless prattling.

If such a spot were really known,  
Dame Peace might claim it as her own;  
And in it she might fix her throne,  
For ever and for ever.

There like a queen might reign and live,  
While every one would soon forgive  
The little slights they might receive,  
And be offend'd no never.

'Tis mischief makers that remove  
Far from our hearts the warmth of love,  
And lead us all to disapprove  
What gives another pleasure.

They seem to take one's part—but when  
They've heard our cares—unkindly then,  
They soon retail them out again,  
Mix'd with their poisonous measure.

And then they're such a cunning way,  
Of telling their ill-meant tales—they say  
"Don't mention what I said, I pray,  
I would not tell another!"

Straight to their neighbors hence they go  
Narrating every thing they know;  
And break the peace of high and low,  
Wife, husband, friend and brother.

Oh! that the mischief-making crew  
Were all reduced to one or two,  
And they were painted red and blue,  
That every one might know them!

Then would our villagers forget  
To rage and quarrel, fume and fret,  
And fall into an angry pet  
With things so much below them.

For 'tis a sad degrading part  
To make another's loom smart,  
And plant a dagger in the heart  
We ought to love and cherish!

Then let us evermore be found  
In quietness with all around,  
While friendship, joy and peace abound,  
And angry feelings perish!

## Select Tales.

### Flora Blanchard; OR, DELICATE HEALTH.

The father despatched, Henry next turned to one who always received him with such smiles, that it was wonderful he was so long in learning to understand them. For her he had always the last novelty in the literary or musical world. As they were not formal, recognized lovers, they could not talk by the hour of themselves—that is to say, the stereotyped protestations of undying affection and all that could not be introduced to fill up a gap or while away the time. What a pity that ladies cannot, in certain cases, be allowed to open a negotiation themselves, instead of waiting for bashful swains like Henry Wentworth! However, the couple never lacked subjects for converse. Their reading was the same, and as Flora had only wanted direction in the right paths of literature to store her mind with useful as well as elegant information, she improved rapidly under Wentworth's tuition. Loving her teacher, she was a docile scholar, and wherever she found herself deficient, or unable to cope with him on subjects which a lady should understand, that discovery was enough to induce her to seek the requisite information. Thus was this what might reasonably be termed an intellectual courtship—for this complexion the delicate attentions of Wentworth were every giving it. To Flora it opened a new existence: Ever emulous of learning, her only drawback had been indolence, occasioned by a lack of inducement or excitement to learn. To the reading required for such society as ladies generally meet, she had attended. Friendship—or we may as well say love, though the word has been so often taken in vain that it almost disgusts one—love required something more. To appreciate the man she loved, she must understand him. To understand him she must read, and she did read for him and with him. The inducement she lacked before she had now found. Existence was a joy to her—and if the early partiality of parents had not taught her she was in delicate health, she never would have learned it of Henry Wentworth.

Wine is a mocker—and what a mocker! It mocks our hopes and our fears—our joys and our griefs—our repose and our excitement. In the hour of ennuï we fly to it for relief—in the hour of excitement we appeal to it for more. In grief we claim it as a comforter—in joy no less as a com-

panion. Poor Flora's delicate health required more potations and more frequently now than when life was almost a burthen. Henry knew nothing of the kind—he suspected nothing. He had seen Flora take a glass of wine; she had taken many at his invitation. What man could make a bugbear of that? Happy for many would it be, if a lady drinking seemed to them a fright—to be pitied but avoided.

Fanny Kemble had just reached the city—justly celebrated as the best living representative of the creations of the dramatic poets. The theatre had become fashionable and more. Old men and women who had not for years visited a playhouse, departed from their usual course of life to pay court and to pay dollars to the histrionic and intellectual prodigy. The town was theatre mad, and the Blanchards partook of the enthusiasm before they had seen the cause of it. Henry had been absent an evening, and when he next reported himself, he was full of the stage. Scene after scene of the preceding night's performance he described and criticised—no commended. He spoke in raptures, and Flora was half jealous. The result of that evening's discussion was a resolution, passed unanimously, that Wentworth should on the next day secure seats for the four—the expense of which Mr. Blanchard insisted upon bearing, with true mercantile independence.

To-morrow brought the bustle of preparation. The forenoon was spent in vigorous shopping, and in hurried directions to milliners and mantua makers. It was very short notice, and all the milliners visited, were required to tell all they knew about the gresses which Mrs. Brown and Miss Black, Mrs. Green and Miss White, leaders of the ton, had worn at their several "first appearances for the season." This may appear strange to the uninitiated, but let them look at a fashionable house, and then judge whether the actresses, or the ladies in the dress circle have spent most time at the toilet. People cannot see without being seen. The labors of the day were not accomplished by the two ladies of delicate health without an extra visit to Madam Blanks, who furnished them with her best restoratives, as they were more than ordinarily in need.

To every day of preparation there is an end. Flora and her mother at length came down to the drawing-room, where Mr. Blanchard and his young friend awaited them. At a little distance Mrs. Blanchard looked a magnificent young woman, but a nearer approach showed the experienced observer the tell tale traces in her countenance of long continued delicate health. The daughter looked a fairy, elegance and taste setting off surpassing personal beauty. Her eyes too sparkled—all expectation doubtless—for it were ungallant to hint that the brilliance was the effect of preparation against an evening's exposure. But she was beautiful. We might undertake to describe her—if we had never seen her in curl papers. Henry never had—and he started and gazed as if a goddess had suddenly descended, when Flora gave intimation of their presence by saying,—"Come gentlemen, you are unusually busy in talk to-night, and ladies waiting for you."

"Yes my boy said Mr. Blanchard, taking Henry's hand affectionately as they rose from their chairs, "nothing could give me greater pleasure than your proposal—except its consummation. Another of the three I can also answer for, and I know you will find no difficulty with the third. Come, ladies, now we wait."

How Flora's heart beat! What could all that mean? The rattling of the coach over the pavement barred all conversation, and the party were soon set down at the door of the theatre. The play was the Hunchback—then a novelty, and possessing the additional charm of having its heroine personated by her for whom the author in part wrote it—Fanny Kemble. Declining to wait for the Farce, the party rode home at the end of the first piece.—Henry of course stayed to supper. Flora could not avoid being struck with the great familiarity with which her father addressed him. A stickler for old fashioned conventional forms, he had never before descended from Mr. Wentworth, in speaking to him. Now it was "Harry," "Henry," "my boy," and "my son," accompanied with an occasional slap on the back—very indecorous in such an old gentleman. Flora knew

that her father had complained of cramped knees, and small touches of rheumatic pains between every act of the play—and she knew also that this remedy had been a "walk in the lobby" each time. This afforded her some clue, and her maiden sagacity coupled the end of the conversation she had overheard before they left the house, with her father's conduct afterwards. This was enough. Her heart beat more violently than ever; but as every young lady would on the side of the grate opposite her father, applied her handkerchief to her face.

"Have you the tooth-ache, Miss Blanchard?" inquired Mr. Wentworth. Flora blushed, but before she could find time to reply, the old gentleman answered, "Lord, no Harry—you never must ask what ails the woman—they have such delicate health! Here Mr. Blanchard gave Mr. Wentworth a most uncomfortable thrust in the side, and smiled most ridiculously—which smile was intended to look very intelligent. Flora now blushed vermillion, and Henry rejoiced that such a sensitive girl would not always be exposed to continual mortification from her set of a father.

"I shall take mine here," said Mrs. Blanchard, who now entered, and seated herself in a low chair, in a way very decidedly negligent, with her feet on the fender and a glass in her hand. "It is of no use to make strangers of our own family, and after an evening's exposure, ladies of delicate health need some restorative." As she said this,—she sipped something a great deal rosier than rosy wine, and resting both arms upon her knees, looked into the fire, apparently in the highest state of animal enjoyment. Flora blushed scarlet, and Henry pined in more than one way. He rejoiced that he had now a right, admitted by her father, to remove the beautiful girl, if she consented, from the society of parents who, he believed, were unworthy of her. The old gentleman had been partially in a doze, but suddenly waking at the silence, he cried out, "Why bless me! we've all taken something to keep out the cold this evening but Mr. Wentworth," and rung the bell.

All! and yet Henry did not notice that word. Love is blind. Flora's blush had become a fixed tint and Henry in all innocence handed her the screen. She took it an placed it—not between her face and the fire but between her and Henry.

Wine was brought, which Henry declined. "Perhaps you would like something better?" That Henry declined too. Mr. Blanchard rose, and full of gallantry offered his daughter his arm. Mrs. Blanchard took the arm of Henry, and they adjourned to the supper room. Estates always remove reserve; and as they discussed the cold fowl, champagne and oysters, the play was criticised in a style so original by Mr. and Mrs. Blanchard, that though foreign to the thread of our brief story, we must state the heads. Mrs. Blanchard was clearly of opinion that the poet had omitted a great point in not introducing a mother to take charge of the heroine. Mr. Knowles was not a mother himself or he would not have made such an omission. It was unnatural that Juffa should have grown up so accomplished—here she looked fondly at Flora—without a mother's guidance. For her own part, in her own narrow experience, she had often seen the benefit of a mother's example, and she rejoiced that when she was gone there would be one left to testify to it. Henry smiled—he could not help it—and Flora's face was again suffused with blushes. Hardly allowing his wife to finish, Mr. Blanchard broke in as he pulled a drum-stick from his mouth and speared an oyster on his fork. "For my part," said he, "the most unreasonable thing I noticed, was the unbusiness-like conduct of the Earl of Rochdale. Why, sir, I would not have admitted the validity of that document. I would have stood the Hunchback a suit at law, sir. The assertion, 'I am the Earl of Rochdale,' should not have choused me out of my property. He should have got probate on the will, sir, and proved his identity before I would have resigned my claim." Here the oyster, which had remained suspended to his fork,

during the delivery of this legal opinion, was transferred to his mouth, and another glass of champagne pressed all round. Flora rose from the table, begging to be excused, and Henry followed her. She would gladly have excused that, but could not refuse his arm. He seated her on the sofa in the drawing-room, and seizing the first moment in which he had met her alone that evening, offered her his hand, heart and fortune. This was by no means unexpected by Flora—but she did not dream of hearing it just then. She had no time to rally her thoughts and show off the proper maidenly finesse. Delirious with joy or something else, she accepted at once, and when Henry attempted to steal a kiss, she generously gave him half a dozen. Pressing her lips was in more than one sense like pressing luscious grapes.

Was Henry quite happy, as with his hands thrust to the full depths of his sartout pockets, he stumped home that night from—street, with the step and air of a man who has made a desperate promise, but is resolved to abide by it?

When the father and mother came from the next room Henry was gone. Flora was asleep on the sofa—so sound that they could with difficulty wake her. The excitement of the evening had been too much for her delicate health—she was insensible for a long time to all calls, and when she was at last aroused to half consciousness, declared she was very ill. The mother was frightened—protested that the supper had killed her child, and despatched a messenger for the doctor.

## CHAPTER IV.

### DELICATE AGE.

On the morrow, Henry's own uncertainties and doubts were lost and forgotten in anxiety for the health of a dear sister. A note awaited him in the morning, apprising him of her illness, and he lost no time in going to her residence. She was sick indeed, and he drew the physician aside to make inquiries. The physician was a garulous old man, and although he knew what must have been the doctor's motive in accosting him, chess, before he would give Henry any chance to make inquiries, to go into a long dissertation upon his own personal affairs.

"Can't pronounce it sickly in town, Mr. Wentworth—far from it. But somehow or other, I have always something to do at all seasons. I have not pressed a pillow with my head for twenty-four hours. Just reached home from a visit in—street last night, when my office bell rang again. Constant demands on my time, and on the most frivolous pretences. But the fee is as well earned, and without professional anxiety too—a little laudanum as a sedative—magnesia to correct an acid stomach."

"But my sister, Doctor Morphine?"

"Some danger, but will recover. You should be happy that she is not afflicted with a chronic complaint, like my patient in—street. Have known her from her cradle, and am frequently called in—but it is of little use, sir. It is an affection of the throat—coupled with a sympathetic contraction of the flexors of the right arm—he! he! he! Might go into some astonishing particulars—but our profession must avoid scandal."

Having, by dint of questioning, at length satisfied himself of his sister's present safety, Henry Wentworth took his leave. The Dr. left the house with him, and while their paths continued together talked incessantly. At no time would Henry have paid more attention than bare politeness demanded—and just now he paid none at all. With two such subjects on his mind as his sister's illness and his recent engagement, it is not surprising that the day dragged heavily with him. Form required that he should call that morning in—street—but Henry felt a repugnance to going there, which he would not confess to him self, and he therefore excused himself to himself, with some mental apology. He met Mr. Blanchard on 'Change, and even requested him to make some excuse for his not calling that evening—but the old gentleman would do no such thing.

Accordingly, evening found Henry walking through precisely the same streets that he had coursed regularly in the evening for months. He found Flora supported by pillows on the sofa, and her smiles more than repaid him for being his own messenger. He made tender inquiries, which Flora answered with so much evident wish to allay his anxiety, that he loved her bet-

ter than ever. She inquired in turn as affectionately respecting his sister, as if she had been her own. Henry regarded Flora as a martyr, who would suffer everything, even to the pangs of death, in silence, lest she should cause useless anxiety to her friends. He expressed as much, as he gently pressed her hand.

"Yes," added her mother, "that is precisely Flora's character. She would not have sent for a physician last night, but I insisted upon it, and Dr. Morphine was here from about the time you left until nearly morning. Such a night of anxiety as her father and I passed; while she, dear girl, insisted all the time that she was better."

"Oh yes," said Henry, "now I recollect—" He stopped short, recollecting more than he dared express—more than he wished to acknowledge to himself. The first mention of Dr. Morphine merely re-awaked the idea that he had heard something of this before—a second thought recalled the whole of the Doctor's scandalous insinuations, which, but for this circumstance, would never have been remembered by him. He was puzzled, pained, confused—but still he hoped.

"Recollect what?" said Mrs. Blanchard, and Flora looked up inquiringly.

"That Flora said, last night, she was ill." It was an awkward evasion. He recollected no such thing, and she recollected no such. There was a pause for some moments which nobody could exactly understand. At length Mrs. Blanchard, with the ready dexterity of many old ladies, who get a party out of one dilemma by leading it into a worse, inquired, to turn the conversation, "who is your sister's physician?"

"Dr. Morphine."

"An excellent physician, Mr. Wentworth—we always call him in. He has been poor Flora's physician from her cradle." And the old lady run on in an eulogium upon Dr. Morphine, which it seemed to Henry would be endless, for he loathed to fake his leave. He was very much embarrassed, and stealing a glance at Flora he perceived she was also much confused. This gave a definite character to his suspicions. In a few moments he took his leave, and the accepted lover left the house, for the first time in his life, positively unhappy.

Henry was an affectionate brother. It may seem almost impossible, but it is true that he almost regretted to find his sister so well, that further anxiety on her account was unnecessary and impossible; since, in the cessation of her occupation of his mind, his thoughts must wholly revert to that deeper cause of solicitude—his unwilling suspicions respecting his affianced wife. Circumstances, hitherto passed unnoticed, came up in dreadful review before him.—The whole night was sleepless, and it was no shame to his manhood that his pillow that night was wet with tears. He tried to persuade himself to believe against fact; he appealed to charity—to a stronger emotion—love, to arrest his judgement; but the conviction would remain, that when Flora Blanchard, the belle, the beautiful, accepted his vows, and sealed her own with too willing endearments—she was under the influence of intoxicating drink.—She had in an unexpected sense—"pledged him in wine."

Driven to this acknowledgment, he next tried to reason that unpleasant fact into an accident. No—no—no That would not do. We may deceive all the world and remain ourselves undecieved. He could not keep down the tyrant memory which dragged forward fact after fact, the unwillingly received proofs that the accident was one of a series—probably "to be continued." In the morning, before he left the house for his counting-room, Dr. Morphine was announced.

"Has my sister relapsed?" asked Henry, anxiously.

"Oh no, sir, ah—ah—the fact is, I have called."

"So I perceive," said Henry, filling up the pause.

"To beg—that is, to assure you that nothing I said yesterday morning had any reference to the Blanchards."

"Who said it had?" inquired Henry.—He knew he had mentioned the conversation to no person, and thence reasoned that his name and relation to the family had been mentioned to the Doctor at the Blanchard house. He knew just how to interpret the Doctor's protestations, and this call supplied the only link wanting in the chain of evidence. It was hard to think that Flora had lowered herself to seek an

explanation of Henry's embarrassment and coldness from the Doctor; but what else could be expected of a woman in the habit of duplicity to conceal a willing infirmity? The Doctor was confused.

"But, my dear sir," at length he began, "my professional reputation"—

"Oh, sir," interrupted Wentworth, "you may cease. You are thoroughly contemptible, selfish, and a tattler. Nothing you can say can make your case any better—nothing you can say can make it any worse." And taking his hat, he left the discomfited physician to make his way out of the house after him. Their paths were in different directions this morning.

That young man is fortunate, indeed, who may have the benefit of a sister's counsel. Disparity of age between the parent and the child may make the admonitions of our father or our mother seem cold, abstract notions of right, and rules of conduct laid down by persons above or past all the emotions which agitate and actuate us.—But one beloved sister, nearer our own age, seems to be one who can comprehend our difficulties, and in whose judgement we may seek relief and guidance, as in that of one who understands us. Henry Wentworth applied to his sister for advice. Shall we expose him? The whole attachment, from its birth and during its progress, had been concealed from her. It was necessary to begin at the beginning and tell the whole story. Weak as she still was, she listened attentively.

Henry began with his first impressions of Flora. With all the enthusiasm of a lover, he described her apparent perfections. His sister smiled incredulously.—He was not slow to perceive her unbelief, but proceeded to narrate the course of events, to the point on which he proposed—first to the father, and then to the daughter. His sister shuddered and sighed.—He went on and detailed his suspicions and their cause, and finally expressed his conviction that his idol was worthless.

"Thank God!" exclaimed his sister, fervently.

"For what?"

"That the scales have fallen from your eyes."

"Then is it all true?" said Henry, dependently, for to the last he had hoped.

"Every word."

Can any one doubt what was a sister's advice under the circumstances?

We met Flora and her mother a few months after these events had occurred. The mother was dressed in widow's weeds—the daughter in deep mourning looked more interesting than ever. An attack of apoplexy, brought on by the discovery of the desertion of his daughter, had removed the father. How fearfully had the hopes been blasted, which he had indulged over the cradle of his first born.

Woman's pride supported the mother and daughter; but, although they could for a time conceal from the world the cause of the rupture of a match which gossip had recorded as certain, they could not conceal it from themselves, nor did the prying eye of envy long remain in ignorance. They thought they met mockers at every turn. That they were "in mourning," absolved their fashionable friends from the duty of calling upon them; and in solitude and sorrow their delicate health became more delicate than ever. The mother applied herself most unremittingly to her cups, and the old disguises of "liquors" were no longer resorted to. She loved alcohol—she had lost shame, and drank it in its "naked truth." Before the year allowed for the administration of her husband's estate had elapsed, Mrs. Blanchard was laid down beside him. The stones at the head of their parallel graves tell the same story, each differing from the other only in the name of the former tenant of the body that reposes beneath. All that was excellent in conjugal love, the stones attributed to each—all that was possible in parental care, and all that was sincere in piety.—The marbles were erected by "their affectionate daughter."

And where is she?

A very few years of disappointment and sorrow make a woman old, particularly a woman of delicate health. Fortunately, upon investigation of her father's affairs, they were found a complete wreck. We say fortunately, because had she been an heiress suitors would not have been wanting, and she might have wedded a husband





