

**REVERIES OF A
BACHELOR. OR A
BOOK OF THE HEART**

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Reveries of a bachelor. Or a book of the heart by Ik Marvel

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OF
A BACHELOR.

OR
A BOOK OF THE HEART.

BY IK. MARVEL.

It is worth the labor — saith Plotinus — to consider well of Love, whether it be a God, or a divell, or passion of the minde, or partly God, partly divell, partly passion. — BURTON'S ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY, Part III. Sec. 1.

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TO
ONE AT HOME,
IN WHOM ARE MET SO MANY OF THE GRACES AND
THE VIRTUES, OF WHICH AS BACHELOR
I DREAMED,
THIS NEW EDITION OF MY BOOK
IS DEDICATED.

A NEW PREFACE.

MY publisher has written me that the old type of this book of the *Reveries* are so far worn and battered, that they will bear no further usage ; and, in view of a new edition, he asks for such revision of the text as I may deem judicious, and for a few lines in way of preface.

I began the revision. I scored out word after word ; presently I came to the scoring out of paragraphs ; and before I had done, I was making my scores by the page.

It would never do. It might be the better, but it would not be the same. I cannot lop away those twelve swift, changeful years that are gone.

Middle age does not look on life like youth ; we cannot make it. And why mix the years and the thoughts ? Let the young carry their own burdens, and banner ; and we — ours.

I have determined not to touch the book. A race has grown up which may welcome its youngness, and find a spirit or a sentiment in it that cleaves to them, and cheers them, and is true. I hope they will.

For me those young years are gone. I cannot go

back to that tide. I hear the rush of it in quiet hours, like the murmur of lost music. The companions who discussed with me these little fantasies as they came reeking from the press, — and suggested how I might have mended matters by throwing in a new light here, or deepening the shadows there, — are no longer within ear-shot. If living, they are widely scattered; — heads of young families, maybe, who will bring now to the re-reading of passages they thought too sombre, the light of such bitter experience as, ten years since, neither they nor I had fathomed. Others are dapper, elderly bachelors, — coquetting with the world in the world's great cities, — brisk in their step, — coaxing all the features of youth to stay by them, — brushing their hair with needless and nervous frequency over the growing spot of baldness, — perversely reckoning themselves still proper mates for girlhood, — dreaming yet (as we once dreamed together) of an Elysium in store, and of a fairy future, where only roses shall bloom.

The houses where I was accustomed to linger show other faces at the windows, — bright and cheery faces, it is true, — but they are looking over at a young fellow upon the other side of the way.

The children who sat for my pictures are grown; the boys I watched at their game of taw, and who clapped their hands gleefully at a good shot, are buttoned into natty blue frocks, and wear little lace-bordered bands upon their shoulders; and over and over, as I read my morning paper, I am brought to sudden pause,

and a strange electric current thrills me, as I come upon their boy-names printed in the dead-roll of the war.

The girls who wore the charming white pinafores, and a wild tangle of flaxen curls, have now netted up all those clustering tresses into a stately Pompadour head-dress; and they rustle past me in silks, and do not know me.

The elderly friends who cheered me with kindly expressions of look and tongue — I am compelled to say — now trip in their speech; and I observe a little morocco case at their elbows — for eye-glasses.

And as they put them on, to read what I may be saying now, let them keep their old charity, and think as well of me as they can.

ENGWOOD, 1863.