THE WEDDING GUEST:

A FRIEND OF THE BRIDE AND BRIDEGROOM

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H.C. Peck and Theo. Bliss, 1859

THERE is no relation in life so important—none involving so much of happiness or misery, as that of husband and wife. Yet, how rarely is it, that the parties when contracting this relation, have large experience, clear insight into character, or truly know themselves! In each other, they may have the tenderest confidence, and for each other the warmest love; but, only a brief time can pass ere they will discover that the harmonious progression of two minds, each of which has gained an individual and independent movement is not always a thing of easy attainment. Too soon, alas! is felt a jar of discord—too soon self-will claims an individual freedom of action that is not fully accorded; and unless there is wisdom and forbearance, temporary or permanent unhappiness is sure to follow.

Much has been written on the true relation of married partners, and we cannot do a better service to the bride and bridegroom, than by gathering words of wisdom on this subject from all sources within our reach, and presenting them in as attractive a form as possible. And this we have done in the present volume, to which, as the title-page indicates, we bear only the relation of editor. In it will be found pictures of life, serious counsel, earnest admonition, and hints and suggestions, which, if wisely followed, will keep the sky bright with sunshine, or scatter the gathering clouds ere they break in angry storms. May this “WEDDING GUEST” receive as warm a welcome as we desire.

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THE EVENING BEFORE MARRIAGE.

“WE shall certainly be very happy together!” said Louise to her aunt on the evening before her marriage, and her cheeks glowed with a deeper red, and her eyes shone with delight. When a bride says *we*, it may easily be guessed whom of all persons in the world she means thereby.

“I do not doubt it, dear Louise,” replied her aunt. “See only that you *continue* happy together.”

“Oh, who can doubt that we shall continue so! I know myself. I have faults, indeed, but my love for him will correct them. And so long as we love each other, we cannot be unhappy. Our love will never grow old.”

“Alas!” sighed her aunt, “thou dost speak like a maiden of nineteen, on the day before her marriage, in the intoxication of wishes fulfilled, of fair hopes and happy omens. Dear child, remember this—*even the heart in time grows cold.* Days will come when the magic of the senses shall fade. And when this enchantment has fled, then it first becomes evident whether we are truly worthy of love. When custom has made familiar the charms that are most attractive, when youthful freshness has died away, and with the brightness of domestic life, more and more shadows have mingled, then, Louise, and not till then, can the wife say of the husband, ‘He is worthy of love;’ then, first, the husband say of the wife, ‘She blooms in imperishable beauty.’ But, truly, on the day before marriage, such assertions sound laughable to me.”

“I understand you, dear aunt. You would say that our mutual virtues alone can in later years give us worth for each other. But is not he to whom I am to belong—for of myself I can boast nothing but the best intentions—is he not the worthiest, noblest of all the young men of the city? Blooms not in his soul, every virtue that tends to make life happy?”

“My child,” replied her aunt, “I grant it. Virtues bloom in thee as well as in him; I can say this to thee without flattery. But, dear heart, they bloom only, and are not yet ripened beneath the sun’s heat and the shower. No blossoms deceive the expectations more than these. We can never tell in what soil they have taken root. Who knows the concealed depths of the heart?”

“Ah, dear aunt, you really frighten me.”

“So much the better Louise. Such fear is right; such fear is as it should be on the evening before marriage. I love thee tenderly, and will, therefore, declare all my thoughts on this subject without disguise. I am not as yet an old aunt. At seven-and-twenty years, one still looks forward into life with pleasure, the world still presents a bright side to us. I have an excellent husband. I am happy. Therefore, I have the right to speak thus to thee, and to call thy attention to a secret which perhaps thou dost not yet know, one which is not often spoken of to a young and pretty maiden, one, indeed, which does not greatly occupy the thoughts of a young man, and still is of the utmost importance in every household: a secret

from which alone spring lasting love and unalterable happiness.”

Louise seized the hand of her aunt in both of hers. “Dear aunt! you know I believe you in everything. You mean, that enduring happiness and lasting love are not insured to us by accidental qualities, by fleeting charms, but only by those virtues of the mind which bring to each other. These are the best dowry which we can possess; these never become old.”

“As it happens, Louise. The virtues also, like the beauties of the body, can grow old, and become repulsive and hateful with age.”

“How, dearest aunt! what is it you say? Name me a virtue which can become hateful with years.”

“When they have become so, we no longer call them virtues, as a beautiful maiden can no longer be called beautiful, when time has changed her to an old and wrinkled woman.”

“But, aunt, the virtues are nothing earthly.”

“Perhaps.”

“How can gentleness and mildness ever become hateful?”

“So soon as they degenerate into insipid indolence and listlessness.”

“And manly courage?”

“Becomes imperious rudeness.”

“And modest diffidence?”

“Turns to fawning humility.”

“And noble pride?”

“To vulgar haughtiness.”

“And readiness to oblige?”

“Becomes a habit of too ready friendship and servility.”

“Dear aunt, you make me almost angry. My future husband can never degenerate thus. He has one virtue which will preserve him as he is for ever. A deep sense, an indestructible feeling for everything that is great and good and noble, dwells in his bosom. And this delicate susceptibility to all that is noble dwells in me also, I hope, as well as in him. This is the innate pledge and security for our happiness.”

“But if it should grow old with you; if it should change to hateful excitability; and excitability is the worst enemy of matrimony. You both possess sensibility. That I do not deny; but beware lest this grace should degenerate into an irritable and quarrelsome mortal.”

“Ah, Dearest aunt, if I might never become old! I could then be sure that my husband would never cease to love me.”

“Thou art greatly in error, dear child! Wert thou always as fresh and beautiful as to-day, still thy husband’s eye would by custom of years become indifferent to these advantages. Custom is the greatest enchantress in the world, and in the house one of the most

benevolent of fairies. She render's that which is the most beautiful, as well as the ugliest, familiar. A wife is young, and becomes old; it is custom which hinders the husband from perceiving the change. On the contrary, did she remain young, while he became old, it might bring consequences, and render the man in years jealous. It is better as kind Providence has ordered it. Imagine that thou hadst grown to be an old woman, and thy husband were a blooming youth; how wouldst thou then feel?"

Louise rubbed her chin, and said, "I cannot tell."

Her aunt continued: "But I will call thy attention to at secret which—"

"That is it," interrupted Louise, hastily, "that is it which I long so much to hear."

Her aunt said: "Listen to me attentively. What I now tell thee, I have proved. It consists of *two parts*. The *first part*, of the means to render a marriage happy, of itself prevents every possibility of dissension; and would even at last make the spider and the fly the best of friends with each other. The *second part* is the best and surest method of preserving feminine attractions."

"Ah!" exclaimed Louise.

"The former half of the means, then: In the first solitary hour after the ceremony, take thy bridegroom, and demand a solemn vow of him, and give him a solemn vow in return. Promise one another sacredly, *never, not even in mere jest, to wrangle with each other*; never to bandy words or indulge in the least ill-humour. *Never!* I say; never. Wrangling, even in jest, and putting on an air of ill-humour merely to tease, becomes earnest by practice. Mark that! Next promise each other, sincerely and solemnly, *never to have a secret from each other* under whatever pretext, with whatever excuse it may be. You must, continually and every moment, see clearly into each other's bosom. Even when one of you has committed a fault, wait not an instant, but confess it freely—let it cost tears, but confess it. And as you keep *nothing secret from each other*, so, on the contrary, preserve the privacies of your house, marriage state and heart, from *father, mother, sister, brother, aunt, and all the world.* You two, with God's help, build your own quiet world. Every third or fourth one whom you draw into it with you, will form a party, and stand between you two! That should never be. Promise this to each other. Renew the vow at each temptation. You will find your account in it. Your souls will grow as it were together, and at last will become as one. Ah, if many a young pair had on their wedding day known this simple secret, and straightway practised it, how many marriages were happier than, alas, they are!"

Louise kissed her aunt's hand with ardour. "I feel that it must be so. Where this confidence is absent, the married, even after wedlock, are two strangers who do not know each other. It should be so; without this, there can be no happiness. And now, aunt, the best preservative of female beauty?"

Her aunt smiled, and said: "We may not conceal from ourselves that a handsome man pleases us a hundred times more than an ill-looking one, and the men are pleased with us when we are pretty. But what we call beautiful, what in the men pleases us, and in us pleases the men, is not skin and hair and shape and colour, as in a picture or a statue; but it is the character, it is the soul that is within these, which enchants us by looks and words, earnestness, and joy, and sorrow. The men admire us the more they suppose those virtues

of the mind to exist in us which the outside promises; and we think a malicious man disagreeable, however graceful and handsome he may be. Let a young maiden, then, who would preserve her beauty, preserve but that purity of soul, those sweet qualities of the mind, those virtues, in short, by which she first drew her lover to her feet. And the best preservative of virtue, to render it unchanging and keep it ever young, is *religion*, that inward union with the Deity and eternity and faith—is piety, that walking with God, so pure, so peaceful, so beneficent to mortals.

"See, dear heart," continued the aunt, "there are virtues which arise out of mere experience. These grow old with time, and alter, because, by change of circumstances and inclination, prudence alters her means of action, and became her growth does not always keep pace with that of our years and passions. But religious virtues can never change; these remain eternally the same, because our good is always the same, and that eternity the same, which we and those who love us are hastening to enter. Preserve, then, a mind innocent and pure, looking for everything from God; thus will that beauty of soul remain, for which thy bridegroom to-day adores thee. I am no bigot, no fanatic; I am thy aunt of seven-and-twenty. I love all in innocent and rational amusements. But for this very reason I say to thee—be a dear, good Christian, and thou wilt as a mother, yes, as a grandmother, be still beautiful."

Louise threw her arms about her neck, and wept in silence, and whispered, "I thank thee, angel!"

THE WIFE.

ROSA LEE was dressed in her bridal garments, and as she knelt in all the bloom of her maidenly beauty, angels must have rejoiced over her; for the spirit of the maiden was in a heaven of love, and she knelt in the fulness of her joy, to pour out her gratitude to the Heavenly Father, that “seeth in secret.” Yes, alone in her chamber, the young girl bowed herself for the last time, and as the thought flashed over her mind, that when next she should kneel in that consecrated place, it would not be alone, but that manly arms would bear up her drooping form, and two voices would mingle as one in the holy prayer, a gushing tenderness flooded the heart of the beautiful bride, and light as from Heaven pervaded her whole being, and she could only murmur, “Oh, how beautiful it is to love!”

But bustling steps and voices approach; and Rosa hears one step that sends at thrill to her heart. In the next moment, the maiden, with the rosy glow of love upon her cheek, and the heaven-light yet beaming in her eyes, stood face to face with her lover. Her eyes met his, in that calm, confiding look of an unbounded affection, and, as her hand rested on his arm, strength seemed to flow into her from him, and she looked serene and placid as pure water, that reflects the moonbeams of heaven; and yet, her smiles came and went like these same waters when the ripples sparkle in the glad sunshine.

The bridal party moved forward to the festive hall, where sympathizing friends were gathered to greet them, as a married pair, and the heart of Rosa opened to the holy marriage ceremony with a sense of heavenly rapture.

To her it was as a new and beautiful revelation, when she heard the oft-repeated words, “In the beginning created He them male and female.” Ah, yes. It was beautiful to realize that she was created for her beloved Paul, and that in all the vast peopled universe of God, there was not another being so adapted to him as she was.

Ah, this was the beautiful marriage joy, that earth so seldom witnesses. These were of “those whom God hath joined together.” And Paul Cleves felt it in his inmost soul, as he turned towards his congratulating friends with his delicate and beautiful bride leaning upon his arm.

Ah, how he watched every vibration of her feelings! suddenly she had become the pulse of his own soul. As a maiden, he had loved her with a wondrous tenderness and devotion. But now, as a wife! There was at once a new and quite different relation established between them.

Paul was so filled with this new perception of blessedness, that he would fain have left the gay company, that he might pour out the beautiful thought that possessed him, to gladden the heart of Rosa; and when he looked his wish to her, she smiled, and whispered to him, “Eternity is ours, and we are not to live for ourselves alone.” And here was a new mystery to him. She was revealed to him as another self, with power to read his every thought. And yet it was it better self, for she prompted him to disinterested acts; and away went the glad Paul to shower his attentions upon all those to whom life came not so joyously. And an aged grandmother, and a palsied aunt, almost feared that the handsome bridegroom had forgotten his fair bride, in his warm and kindly interest for them.

Happy Paul! he had found an angel clothed in flesh and blood, who was for ever to stand between him and his old hard, selfish nature. Something of this thought passed through his mind, as his eye glanced over the crowd in search of his beloved and beautiful one. But she, on the other side, was quite near. He felt her soft presence, and as he turned he caught the light of her loving smile.

Yes, she appreciated his self-sacrifice, and as he gazed upon her, his delighted mind and satisfied heart felt a delicious sense of the coming joy of the eternal future.

And the gay bridal passed away, but its light and its joy seemed to overflow all the coming days. And Paul Cleves at length found himself in that reality of which he had so often dreamed, and for which he had so passionately yearned. Yes, he was in his own quiet home, with Rosa by his side.

Months had passed; he had settled into the routine of his business, and she in that of her domestic life; and now it was evening. Paul had come to his home from the labours of the day, with a beautiful hope in his heart; for to him his *home* was the open door of Heaven. He carried into it no hard, selfish thought, but entered it with the certainty of blessedness, and peace, and love.

Rosa's heart was in her eyes, when it was time for Paul to come. How carefully she foresaw his every want! And when she had prepared everything that her active love could suggest to promote his pleasure and comfort, then she took her place at the window to watch for his coming. This evening watch was a beautiful time to the young wife, for she said "Now, will I think of God, who made for me a being to love." And at this time, it was always as if the great sun of Heaven shone upon her.

And now, Paul passes the bridge, to which Rosa's eye can but just reach. And—is it not wonderful?—Paul's figure is distinguished, even if there be many others, in the dim twilight, crossing that bridge. Ah! how well she knows his figure; to her it is the very form of her love. She sees her whole thoughts and desires embodied in him. And now, he passes the corner of a projecting building, which for a time partially conceals him from her sight.

And how her delight increases as he approaches; the nearer he comes, the more her heart opens to the Divine sun of Heaven. She feels as if she could draw its radiations down upon him. She waits at the window to catch his first glad look of recognition, then she flies to the door, and no sooner is it opened and closed again, than Paul clasps her to his heart, and presses upon her warm lips such kisses as can join heart to heart.

The evening meal being over, then Paul turns to his peculiar delight—to listening to Rosa's thoughts and feelings. All day, he hears of worldly things; but with Rosa he hears of heavenly things. Her heart feeds upon his thoughts, and assimilates them into new and graceful forms of feminine beauty, and Paul sits and listens, full of love and wonder, to his own thoughts, reproduced by the vivid perceptive powers of his wife. For instance, this morning Paul was reading in the Bible, as he always does to Rosa, before he leaves for his business, and he paused on the words, "then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, and full of years, and was gathered to his people;" and he remarked that in this verse there was a most striking affirmation of a future existence; for that Abraham being gathered to "his people," must imply that these people yet lived, or why should mention be made of that fact? And now, in this beautiful evening hour, when Paul asked

Rosa what she had been thinking of all day, behold she had a whole Heaven-world to open before him. With her arms clasped around his neck, and her clear, bright eyes looking into his, she answered—

“Oh, Paul, I have been so happy all day. Do you remember what you told me about Abraham being gathered to ‘his people’ this morning? Well, I have been thinking about it, with such a delight in the thought of those living people, to whom we will be gathered after death. You left me with a beautiful thought, dear Paul, and it seemed as if the angels gathered around me, and told me so many more things, that I have written all my thoughts down.”

“Where are they?” said Paul, feeling such a delight in the possession of these written thoughts. And Rosa, drawing a paper from her pocket, leans her cheek upon his head, and reads:—

“‘Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, and full of years, and was gathered to his people.’ How beautiful is this verse of the holy Word of God! It seems to open to us a glimpse of Heaven.

“After death, we are told, that he was ‘gathered to his people.’ What a blessed rest and enjoyment comes over us, even in this world, when we find ourselves with ‘*our* people!’

“When congenial spirits meet, all strife and contention ceases; and how each hastens to give to the other of the fulness of his thought and feeling! Such moments in our life are as if Heaven had come down to us, and fleeting and transient as the moment may be, its memory lives with us as a heavenly light, fed from above; and when we realize a continued existence of the harmony of thought and feeling of an ever-flowing communication of pure sentiments, of kindly affections, and of that delight in perceiving good and truth in others, which makes them one with us,—then we have a glimpse of that Heaven to which Abraham ascended, and in which he was ‘gathered to his people.’

“I love to read this verse, and imagine what the angels would think if they could hear the words as I read them. And, truly, although angels do not hear through our gross material atmosphere, can they not *see* the image of what we read in our minds? It is beautiful to think that they can; and it is pleasant to conceive how an angelic, perfectly spiritual mind would understand these words, ‘And Abraham gave up the ghost.’ The angels would see that the spirit of Abraham had laid off that gross material covering, which was not the real man—only the appearance of a man. To angels, this body, which appears to us so tangible, must be but the *ghost* of a reality, for to them the spirit is the reality.

“With us, in this outer existence, the laying off of the body is death, that symbol of annihilation; it is as if our life ceased, because we no longer grasp coarse material nature. But with the angels, the laying off of the body is birth; it is the beginning of a beautiful, new existence. The spirit then moves and acts in a spiritual world of light and beauty. It no longer moves dimly in that dark, material world which is as but a lifeless, ghostly counterpart of the living, eternal spirit-world.

“Thus, it seems to me, the angels would understand the words ‘And Abraham gave up the ghost.’ And the words which follow would have for them a far different signification than to us. For with us ‘old age’ presents the idea of the gradual wasting away and deterioration of the powers of the body it is the shadow from the darkened future, foretelling the end of

life. But angels see the spirit advancing from one state of wisdom to another, and to grow old in Heaven must be altogether different from growing old on earth; and we can only conceive of a spirit as growing for ever more active, intelligent, and beautiful, from the heavenly wisdom and love in which it develops. Imagine an angel, who has lived a thousand years in Heaven; his faculties must have all this time been perfecting and expanding in new powers and activities; whereas, on earth, the material body, in 'threescore years and ten,' becomes so cumbrous and heavy, so disorganized and worn out, that the spiritual body can no longer act in it; hence 'an old man, full of years,' appears to the angels as one whose spirit has passed through so many changes of state; consequently has thought and loved so much that it has increased in activity, life, and power, and thus spiritual progression must be onward to an eternal youth.

"Does it not thrill the soul with the joy of a beautiful hope to imagine Abraham, or any loving spirit, as rising from the material to the spiritual world, 'full of years,' or states of wisdom and love, for ever to grow young among his 'own people?'

"What to Abraham, now, were all of those flocks, and herds, and men servants, and maid servants, that had made his earthly riches? They were nothing more to him, in his new heavenly life, than that ghost of a body 'he gave up.' The only riches he could carry with him were his spiritual riches—his powers of thinking and feeling. All of his outer life was given to him to develop these powers. All of his natural surroundings were as a body to his natural thoughts and feelings, in which they might grow to the full stature of a man, that he might become 'full of years,' or states.

"And thus to us is given a natural world; and its duties and ties are all important, for within the natural thought and feeling the spiritual thought and feeling grows, as does the soul in its material body. And like as the soul ever feels within itself a separate existence, higher, and above that of its material organization, so also does the spiritual thought and feeling realize itself in its world of natural thoughts and affections; it sighs to be gathered to its 'own people,' even while it loves its natural ties. And, now and then, it has beautiful glimpses of the consociation of spirits according to spiritual affinities.

"The love of the spirit, thus warmed into life, should descend into its natural ties. Uncongenial brothers and sisters are often thrown together and bound by the most indissoluble natural ties. We should cultivate these natural affections and family ties as types of the beautiful spiritual consociations of Heaven.

"Our spirit must grow in the constant exercise of natural affections, or we can have no capacity for the spiritual. If in this world we live morose, ungenial lives, crushing down the budding affections, and the active thoughts springing from them, can we ever be angels? No, assuredly not; for the angels are like the Heavenly Father, in whose light of love they live. They delight to do good to every created being, whether good or evil. They would not, and could not recognise an evil person as a congenial spirit, but for the sake of awakening in him some spark of a beautiful love, a disinterested thought and affection; they would crown his whole life with loving kindness and tender compassion. A true, heavenly angel could be happy in the effort to do good to the most fallen human spirit; and should not we imitate them, that we may be as one of them, one in thought and feeling with them?

“To love!—love with our every power of being—is the only eternal reality. From love springs thought; and thought and affection are the flesh and blood of the spirit. The spirit grows upon what it feeds, as does the body upon its material food; and to stint the spirit of its food is a sad detriment to our after-life.

“A perception of the heavenly life should arouse us to a power of loving every human being that we come in contact with, and make us realize that to love and serve is the happiness of angels, and the principle which conjoins men and angels to God.”

When the last word was breathed, as it were, in a soft, holy brightness, from Rosa’s lips, Paul sealed them with a kiss. How much he had learned from the perception of a mind that was so wholly gentle and feminine, that its substance seemed all of love; of a love that received the impression only of heavenly things!—while he, with all of his brilliant talents and masculine understanding, felt that his contact was with this hard outer world of material facts and realities; and that oftentimes the very density of the atmosphere in which his mind dwelt obscured and clouded the delicate moral perceptions of his being.

But Rosa saw above him, and revealed to him those beautiful inner truths that were to give form and character to his outer life. Yes; Paul had uncongenial brothers and sisters, and his more refined tastes and pursuits would have led him away from them. But Rosa, with her womanly tact, and grace, and lovingness, led him out from the mists of selfishness into the halo of a more genial and beautiful light, and he felt his heart grow warm with an inexpressible love.

“Ah, Rosa,” he said, “there comes over me a new and more beautiful perception of the holy marriage relation; and, like another Adam, I realize that an Eve is created for me from my own breast. My thought grows so *living* in you, Rosa,—this morning, so unconsciously, was taken from me but a dry rib, and now God grants to me this beautiful Eve! Ah, Rosa, my heart is so full of gratitude for the beautiful gift of your thoughts to me,—I realize so fully that you are a ‘help meet for me.’”

Happy Rosa! She gazed into Paul’s eyes, and caressed him with her soft touches, and said —

“Oh, Paul, Paul! when I look at you, and think that some day you will be an angel of Heaven, and that I will see your glorious, spirit-beauty, my heart is so happy; for then I can feel, dear Paul, that our love stretches far away beyond this world and this life; and if I love you so much here, what will it be when I see you in the beautiful heavenly light?”

Paul smiled.

“Your fancy is dreaming of what I will be; and can you not dream for me of how bright and beautiful my Rosa will be in that heavenly light?”

“Ah, yes,” said Rosa, “that too is pleasant, for I love to be beautiful, dear Paul, for your sake; and today I was thinking of how happy I should make you—not I, but the Lord will make you happy, dear Paul, through me; and is not that a beautiful thought—that it is God loving us through each other?”

How holy love grew at once to Paul! though at first he did not see this beautiful truth as clearly as did Rosa. But she went on, in her loving way, and very soon she raised him into that inner sunshine in which she dwelt, and then he saw it all clearly, for she said—

“You know, dear Paul, that we read in the Bible that ‘God is a sun, and that He is the fountain of life,’ and thus all life flows from Him into us, just as in the tiny flowers upon the earth comes the warm living ray of the material sun, developing in them beautiful colours and odours—so the life-ray from God fills us with warm affections. We are but dead forms—the power and the life is in Him, and if we were cut off from Him, how could we love each other?”

Paul was convinced, and did not fail to make Rosa realize the Heaven-derived life and power that was in him. And as they kneeled together in their evening devotions, and Paul clasped his wife in his arms, how clearly he felt the influence of that Divine sun upon his soul, filling it with a gushing, yearning tenderness for his beloved and beautiful one; and how fervently he prayed that the light might grow in her, and through her descend to him! Beautiful are the prayers of such loving hearts, for the inner door of their existence then opens, and the great King of Glory enters in, and they are in the Lord, and the Lord is in them.

Yes, Paul had found a wife—not an external type or shadow of one to mock and vex his soul with an unsatisfactory pretence, but a most blessed and eternal reality. He was married not only in the sight of men, but before God and the angels. And the heart of Rosa responded to his mind as truly and unfailingly as his heart beat to the breath of his lungs. She was as his inner life, and he felt himself strong to guard and protect her as he would his own existence. She had become one with him, and henceforth there was no separate existence for these two.

So serenely and lovingly flowed their life in its interior light and beauty, that cares and anxieties seemed scarce to touch their states. True, these came to them in the guise of those calamities and disappointments, that so often sweep as the destructive tornado over the lower lives of the earth-loving children of men. But as their affections were spiritual, they were not wounded by the earth-sorrows. Their treasures were laid up *above*, where “moth and rust doth not corrupt.” Paul realized this when he saw Rosa hold her dead baby in her arms and smile through her tears. And yet this was her “little Paul” that she loved with such an intense delight and devotion; because in him, all the day long, she saw that wonderful life of God manifested in such a heavenly innocence and purity, as in a tiny image of her own Paul. Yet, when the spirit of the child was gone, she adorned the clay form in which it had dwelt, with such loving care, and laid it in its little coffin, that her hand might serve it to the very last, and then turned and rested her head in the bosom of her husband as a wounded bird in its downy nest.

Paul’s love seemed to lift her to the Heaven to which her baby had gone; and when, after a few days, she urged him to leave her and go to his office where his duties called him, Paul feared that she would feel lonely, and would fain have stayed beside her. But she said—

“No, dear Paul; I shall never be alone again; the spirit of the child will be with me: it is so beautiful to have loved him on earth, for now I can love him in Heaven.” And so Paul left her, not as one in a dark land of sorrow, but floating in a world of light and love. And how eagerly he hastened back to his gentle, stricken dove, and folded her to his heart, as though he would shield her from all sorrow! But he scarce found a sorrow; she was all light and joy, and said—

“Oh, Paul, I am so happy, for I have been thinking all day how happy the angels must be to have my little Paul with them! It seemed to me that I could see them adorning him with heavenly garments, and I could see his happy smile; and I was glad that he was no longer oppressed by his weak, earthly body. Yes, he is now a blessed angel in Heaven, and is it not beautiful, dear Paul, that we have given an angel to Heaven?”

Thus was the earth-sorrow turned to a heavenly joy. And though other children were born to Paul and Rosa, yet their chief delight in them was, that they were to be angels in Heaven. How often Rosa said, “Paul, they are the children of the Lord—not ours; only we have the loving work to teach them for Heaven.”

Through Rosa, Paul realized this beautiful truth, and earnestly strove to impart truth to the tender and impressible minds of his children; he presented it to them in the most beautiful and attractive forms. But it was Rosa that made them love it and live in it; it was the teachings of the father that fell like “golden grains” in the earth of their minds; but it was the gentle, never-ceasing culture of the mother, that caused it to spring up into the sunshine of Heaven, and bear the fruit of kind and loving actions. When Paul saw this, he felt himself a man in the true sense of the word; one, who could perform the highest uses in life, without being clogged and thwarted by the want of concert in action by his partner in life. Thus it is that a harmony of thought and feeling produces a harmony in action.

And how elevated and noble became all the ends of Paul’s life! It was Rosa that elevated and refined them, and directed them Heavenward. It was beautiful to see how she could draw down the light of Heaven into all the outer life. Everything on earth seemed to her but the symbol of something in Heaven. And when Paul once gave her money, she thanked him with such a grateful warmth of affection, that he laughingly asked her, if she loved money, that she was so grateful for it. She answered, “Yes, Paul; I love your money, because you have worked for it; and when you give it to me, it seems to our outer life what truth is to our inner life. If you gave me no truth, I could not adorn your inner life with love; and if you gave me no money, I could not adorn your outer life with good. I could not alone attain either money or truth. I should be very poor, dear Paul, both spiritually and naturally, without you. But you, as a husband, bring me truth and money. With the first I call the angels around you; with the second I call earthly friends around you; and thus, both your inner and outer life are made glad and warm and genial.”

And Paul knew this; for his home was beautiful,—a feminine taste and tact reigned through it, and Rosa’s diffusive charity made him the centre of a circle to whom he dispensed not only earthly goods, but the noble thoughts of his large understanding. And Paul realized that while he guided all things by his wisdom, given to him of God, Rosa was as the motive power to his existence. Her influence pervaded his every thought and feeling, and while it made his life upon earth so full and perfect, it allied him to Heaven; and thus he held her in his house and heart as the Holy of holies.

Happy is the earth if it have one pair of such married ones, for through such, the Spirit and life of God descend upon the earth, and bind it to Heaven. But blessed, yea most blessed will be the earth when it has many such, for then the heavenly sunshine will flood the whole earth with its light and glory, and the Lord, who is the centre and source of this glorious Sun, will see His image reflected, in its mercy and tender beauty, in the lives of the dwellers upon earth, even as it now is seen by Him in those of the dwellers in Heaven,

and thus will the “kingdom of God” come upon earth “as it is in Heaven.”

MARRIAGE.

IN the truest sense of the word, woman was created to be man's comforter, a joyous helpmate in hours of sunshine, a soother, when the clouds darken and the tempests howl around his head; then, indeed, we perceive the divinely beautiful arrangement which marriage enforces. Man in his wisdom, his rare mental endowments, is little fitted to bear adversity. He bows before the blast, like the sturdy pine which the wintry storm, sweeping past, cracks to its very centre; while woman, as the frail reed, sways to and fro with the fierce gust, then rises again triumphant towards the blackening sky. Her affection, pure and steadfast, her unswerving faith and devotion, sustain man in the hour of darkness, even as the trailing weed supports and binds together the mighty walls of some mouldering ruin.

Would you know why so many unhappy marriages seem to falsify the truth that they are made in Heaven? Why we see daily diversity of interests, and terrible contentions, eating the very life away, like the ghoul in the Arabian tales, that prayed on human flesh? It is that women are wrongly educated. Instructed, trained, to consider matrimony the sole aim, the end of their existence, it matters not to whom the Gordian knot is tied, so that the trousseau, wedding, and eclat of bridehood follow. Soon the brightness of this false aurora borealis fades from the conjugal horizon; and the truths of life, divested of all romance, in bitterness and pain rise before them. Unfitted for duties which must be fulfilled, physically incapacitated for the responsibilities of life—mere school-girls in many instances—the chains they have assumed become cables of iron, whose heavy weight crushes into the heart, erasing for ever the footprints of affection, and leaving instead the black marks of deadly hate. Then comes the struggle for supremacy. Man in his might and power asserts his will, while woman, unknowing her sin, unguided by the divine light of love, neglects, abandons her home; then come ruin, despair, and death. God help those mistaken ones, who have thus hurried into union, ignorant of each other's prejudices, opinions, and dispositions, when too late they discover there is not, nor ever can be, affinity between souls wide as the poles asunder.

Notwithstanding these miserable unions, we must consider marriage divine in its origin, and alone calculated to make life blessed. Who can imagine a more blissful state of existence than two united by the law of God and love, mutually sustaining each other in the jostlings of life; together weathering its storms, or basking beneath its clear skies; hand in hand, lovingly, truthfully, they pass onward. This is marriage as God instituted it, as it ever should be, as Moore beautifully says—

"There's a bliss beyond all that the minstrel has told,
When two that are linked in one heavenly tie,
With heart never changing and brow never cold,
Love on through all ills, and love on till they die!"

To attain this bliss, this union of the soul, as well as of hands, it is necessary that much should be changed. Girls must not think, as soon as emancipated from nursery control, that they are qualified to become wives and mothers. If woman would become the true companion of man, she must not only cultivate her intellect, but strive to control her

impulses and subdue her temper, so that while yielding gently, gracefully, to what appears, at the time, perhaps, a harsh requirement, she may feel within the “calm which passeth all understanding.” There must be a mutual forbearance, no fierce wrestling to rule. If there is to be submission, let the wife show how meekly Omnipotent love suffereth all things. Purity, innocence, and holy beauty invest such a love with a halo of glory.

Man, mistake not then thy mate, and hereafter, bitterly repenting, exclaim at the curse of marriage. No, no, with prudent foresight, avoid the ball-room belle—seek thy twin soul among the pure-hearted, the meek, the true. Like must mate with like; the kingly eagle pairs not with the owl, nor the lion with the jackal. Neither must woman rush blindly, heedlessly, into the noose, fancying the sunny hues, the lightning glances of her first admirer, true prismatic colours. She must first chemically analyze them to be sure they are not reflected light alone, from her own imagination. That frightsome word to many, “old maid,” ought not to exercise any influence over her firmly balanced mind; better far, however, lead a single life, than form a sinful alliance, that can only result in misery and wretchedness. Some of the purest and best women that ever lived, have belonged to that much decried, contemned sisterhood.

Wed not, merely to fly from an opprobrious epithet; assume not the holy name of wife, to one who brings trueness of heart, wealth of affection, whilst you have nought to offer in return but cold respect. Your first love already lavished on another: believe me, respect, esteem, are but poor, weak talismans to ward off life’s trials. Rise superior to all puerile fancies; bear nobly the odium of old maidism, if such be thy fate, and if, like Sir Walter Scott’s lovely creation, Rebecca, you are separated by an impassable gulf from your heart’s chosen, or have met and suffered by the false and treacherous, take not any chance Waverley who may cross your path. Like the high-souled Jewess, resolve to live on singly, and strive with the means God has given you, to benefit, to comfort your suffering sisters.

Would man and woman give to this all-important subject, so vital to their life-long happiness, the consideration it requires, we should not so often meet with men broken in spirit—*memento mori* legibly written on their countenances; with women prematurely old—unloving wives, careless husbands. Meditate long before you assume ties to endure to your life’s end, mayhaps to eternity. Pause even on the altar-stone, if only there thou seest thy error; for a union of hands, without hearts, is a sin against high heaven. Remember,

> “There are two angels that attend, unseen; Each one of us; and in great books record Our good and evil deeds. He who writes down The good ones, after every action, closes His volume; and ascends with it to God; *The other keeps his dreadful day-book open Till sunset, that we may repent; which doing, The record of the action fades away, And leaves a line of white across the page.*”

THE BRIDE’S SISTER.

OH, sister, darling, though I smile, the tears are in my heart,
And I will strive to keep them there, or hide them if they start;
I know you’ve seen our mother’s glance ofttimes so full of woe,
The grief-sob rises to the lips that bid her first-born go.

It is not that she doubts his love to whom thou’st given thine,—
The fear that he may coldly look upon his clasping vine;
But, oh, she feels however loved and cherished as his wife,
Though calm her lily may float down upon the stream of life;

Yet, by her own glad married years, she knows that clouds will stray,
And tears will sometimes fill thy cup, though kissed by love away;
And she will not be near her flower to lay it on her breast—
‘Tis thus—‘tis thus the young birds fly, and leave the lonely nest!

Oh, sister, darling, I shall miss thy footfall on the stair,
Beside my own, when good-words have followed good-night prayer;
And miss thee from our pleasant room, and miss thee when I sleep,
And feel no more thy twining arms and soft breath on my cheek.

And I shall gaze with tearful eyes upon thy vacant chair—
Sweet sister, wherefore, wherefore go, ‘tis more than I can bear!
Forgive me, Lizzie, do not weep—I’m strong again, and calm,
“Our Father” for my aching heart will send a spirit-balm.

Now let me bind this snowy veil amid thy silken hair,
The white moss-rose and orange buds upon thy bosom fair;
How beautiful you are to-night! Does love such charms impart?
An angel’s wing methinks has stirred the waters of your heart;

So holy seem its outlets blue where sparkle yet the tears,
Like stars that tremble in the sky when not a cloud appears.
Art ready now? The evening wanes; the guests will soon be here,
And the glad bridegroom waits his own. God bless thee, sister dear!

LOVE vs. HEALTH.

ABOUT a mile from one of the Berkshire villages, and separated from it by the Housatonic, is one of the loveliest sites in all our old county. It is on an exhausted farm of rocky, irregular, grazing ground, with a meadow of rich alluvial soil. The river, which so nearly surrounds it as to make it a peninsula “in little,” doubles around a narrow tongue of land, called the “ox-bow”—a bit of the meadow so smooth, so fantastic in its shape, so secluded, so adorned by its fringe of willows, clematises, grape-vines, and all our water-loving shrubs, that it suggests to every one, who ever read a fairy tale, a scene for the revels of elves and fairies. Yet no Oberon—no Titania dwelt there; but long ago, where there are now some ruinous remains of old houses, and an uncouth new one, stood the first frame house of the lower valley of the Housatonic. It was inhabited by the last Indian who

maintained the dignity of a Chief, and from him passed to the first missionary to the tribe. There Kirkland, the late honoured President of Harvard College, was born, and there his genial and generous nature received its first and ineffaceable impressions. Tenants, unknown to fame, succeeded the missionary.

The Indian dwelling fell to decay; and the property has now passed into the bands of a poet, who, rumour says, purposes transforming it to a villa, and whose occupancy will give to it a new consecration.

Just before its final high destiny was revealed, there dwelt there a rustic pair, who found out, rather late in life, that Heaven had decreed they should wear together the conjugal yoke. That Heaven had decreed it no one could doubt who saw how well it fitted, and how well they drew together.

They had one child—a late blossom, and cherished as such. Little Mary Marvel would have been spoiled, but there was nothing to spoil her. Love is the element of life, and in an atmosphere of love she lived. Her parents were people of good sense—upright and simple in their habits, with no theories, nor prejudices, ambitions, or corruptions, to turn the child from the inspirations of Heaven, with which she began her innocent life.

When little Mary Marvel came to be seven years old, it was a matter of serious consideration how she was to be got to the district school on “the plain” (the common designation of the broad village street), full a mile from the Marvels secluded residence. Mrs. Marvel was far better qualified than the teachers of the said school, to direct the literary training of her child. She was a strong-minded woman, and a reader of all the books she could compass. But she had the in-door farm-work to do—cheese to make, butter to churn, &c. and after little Mary had learned to read and spell, she must be sent to school for the more elaborate processes of learning—arithmetic, geography, &c.

“Now, Julius Hasen,” said Marvel to his only neighbour’s son, “don’t you want to call, as you go by, days, with your little sister, and take our Mary to school? I guess she won’t be a trouble. She could go alone; but, somehow, mother and I shall feel easier—as the river is to pass, &c.—if you are willing.”

A kind boy was Julius; and, without hesitation, he promised to take Marvel’s treasure under his convoy. And, for the two years following, whenever the district school was in operation, Julius might be seen conducting the two little girls down the hill that leads to the bridge. At the bridge they loitered. Its charm was felt, but indefinable. It was a spell upon their senses; they would look up and down the sparkling stream till it winded far away from sight, and at their own pretty faces, that smiled again to them, and at Julius skittering the stones along the water, (a magical rustic art!) That old bridge was a point of sight for pictures, lovelier than Claude painted. For many a year, the old lingered there, to recall the poetry of their earlier days; lovers, to watch the rising and setting of many a star, and children to play out their “noon-times” and twilights. Heaven forgive those who replaced it with a dark, dirty, covered, barn-like thing of bad odour in every sense! The worst kind of barbarians, those, who make war—not upon life, but upon the life of life—its innocent pleasures!

But, we loiter with the children, when we should go on with them through the narrow lane intersecting broad, rich meadows, and shaded by pollard willows, which form living and

growing posts for the prettiest of our northern fences, and round the turn by the old Indian burying-ground. Now, having come to "*the plain*," they pass the solemn precincts of the village Church, and that burying-ground where, since the Indian left his dead with us, generations of their successors are already lain. And now they enter the wide village street, wide as it is, shaded and embowered by dense maples and wide-stretching elms; and enlivened with neatly-trimmed court-yards and flower-gardens, It was a pleasant walk, and its sweet influences bound these young people's hearts together. We are not telling a love-story, and do not mean to intimate that this was the beginning of one—though we have heard of the seeds nature implants germinating at as early a period as this, and we remember a boy of six years old who, on being reproved by his mother for having kept his book open at one place, and his eye fixed on it for half an hour, replied, with touching frankness—

"Mother, I can see nothing there but Caroline Mitchell! Caroline Mitchell!"

Little Mary Marvel had no other sentiment for Julius than his sister had. She thought him the kindest and the best; and much as she reverenced the village pedagogues, she thought Julius's learning profounder than theirs, for he told them stories from the Arabian Nights—taught them the traditions of Monument Mountain—made them learn by heart the poetry that has immortalized them, and performed other miracles of learning and teaching, to which the schoolmaster didn't approach!

Children's judgments are formed on singular premises, but they are usually just conclusions. Julius was an extraordinary boy, and, fortunately, he was selected on that account, and not because he was sickly and could do nothing else (not uncommon grounds for this election), for a liberal education. Strong of heart and strong in body, he succeeded in everything, and without being a charge to his father. He went through college—was graduated with honour—studied law—and, when Mary Marvel was about nineteen, he came home from his residence in one of our thriving Western cities, for a vacation in his full legal business.

His first visit was to the Marvels, where he was received with as much warmth as in his father's home. As he left the house, he said to his sister Anne, who was with him—

"How shockingly poor Mary is looking!"

"Shockingly! Why, I expected you would say she was so pretty!"

"Pretty! My dear Anne, the roses on your cheek are worth all the beauty that is left in her pale face. What have they done to her? When you were children, she was at robust, round little thing—and so strong and cheerful—you could hear her voice half a mile, ringing like a bell; and now it's 'Hark from the tomb a doleful sound!' When I last saw her—let me see—four years ago—she was—not perhaps a Hebe—but a wholesome-looking girl."

"Julius!—what an expression!"

"Well, my dear, it conveys my meaning, and, therefore, is a good expression. What has been the matter? Has she had a fever? Is she diseased?"

"Julius! No! Is that the way the Western people talk about young ladies?—Mary is in poor health—rather delicate; but she does not look so different from the rest of our girls—I, you

know, am an exception."

"Thank Heaven, you are, my dear Anne, and thank our dear, sensible mother, who understands the agents and means of health."

"But Mary's mother is a sensible woman too."

"Not in her treatment of Mary, I am sure. Tell me how she lives.
What has she been about since I was here?"

"Why, soon after you went away, you know, I wrote to you that she had gone to the—School. You know her parents are willing to do everything for her—and Mary was very ambitious. They are hard students at that school. Mary told me she studied from eight to ten hours a day. She always got sick before examination, and had to send home for lots of pills. I remember Mrs. Marvel once sending her four boxes of Brandreth's at a time. But she took the first honours. At the end of her first term, she came home, looking, as you say, as if she had had a fever."

"And they sent her back?"

"Why, yes, certainly—term after term—for two years. You know Mary was always persevering; and so was her mother. And now they have their reward. There is not a girl anywhere who surpasses Mary for scholarship."

"Truly, they have their reward—infatuated people!" murmured Hasen.
"Have they taken any measures to restore her health, Anne?"

"Oh, yes. Mrs. Marvel does not permit her to do any hard work. She does not even let her sweep her own room; they keep a domestic, you know; and, last winter, she had an air-tight stove in her room, and it was kept constantly warm, day and night. The draft was opened early; and Mrs. Marvel let Mary remain in bed as long as she pleased; and, feeling weak, she seldom was inclined to rise before nine or ten."

"Go on, Anne. What other sanitary measures were pursued?"

"Just such as we all take, when we are ill. She doctors, if she is more unwell than usual; and she rides out almost every pleasant day. There is nothing they won't do for her. There is no kind of pie or cake, sweetmeat or custard, that Mrs. Marvel does not make to tempt her appetite. If she wants to go to 'the plain,' Mr. Marvel harnesses, and drives over. You know, father would think it ridiculous to do it for me."

"Worse than ridiculous, Anne!—What does the poor girl do? How does she amuse herself?"

"I do believe, Julius, you are interested in Mary Marvel!"

"I am. I was always curious as to the different modes of suicide people adopt. Has she any occupation—any pleasure?"

"Oh, yes; she reads for ever, and studies; she is studying German now."

"Poor Mary!"

"What in the world makes you pity Mary, Julius?"

"Because, Anne, she hag been deprived of nature's best gift—defrauded of her

inheritance: a sound constitution from temperate, active parents. One may have all the gifts, graces, charms, accomplishments, under Heaven, and, if they have not health, of what use or enjoyment are they? If that little, frail body of Mary Marvel's contained all that I have enumerated, it would be just the reverse of Pandora's box—having every good, but one curse that infected all."

"Dear Julius, I cannot bear to hear you talk so of Mary. I expected you would like her so much. I—I—hoped—. She is so pretty, so Lovely—she is fit for Heaven."

"She may be, Anne,—I do not doubt it; but she is very unfit for earth. What has her good, devoted, sensible, well-informed mother been about? If Mary had been taught the laws of health, and obeyed them, it would have been worth infinitely more to her than all she has got at your famous boarding-school, Ignorance of these laws is culpable in the mothers—disastrous, fatal to the daughters. It is a *disgrace* to our people. The young women now coming on, will be as nervous, as weak, as wretched, as their unhappy mothers—languishing embodiments of diseases—mementos of doctors and pill-boxes, dragging out life in air-tight rooms, religiously struggling to perform their duties, and dying before they have half finished the allotted term of life. They have no life—no true enjoyment of life!"

"What a tirade, Julius! Any one would think you were a cross old bachelor!"

"On the contrary, my dear Anne, it is because I am a young bachelor and desire not to be a much older one, that I am so earnest on this subject. I have been travelling now for two months in rail-cars and steamers, and I could fill a medical journal with cases of young women, married and single, whom I have met from town and country, with every ill that flesh is heir to. I have been an involuntary auditor of their charming little confidences of 'chronic headaches,' nervous feelings,' 'weak-backs,' 'neuralgia,' and Heaven knows what all!"

"Oh, Julius! Julius!"

"It is true, Anne. And their whole care is, gentle and simple, to avoid the air; never to walk when they can ride; never to use cold water when they can get warm; never to eat bread when they can get cake, and so on, and so on, through the chapter. In the matter of eating and drinking, and such little garnitures as smoking and chewing, the men are worse. Fortunately, their occupations save most of them from the invalidism of the women. You think Mary Marvel beautiful?"

"No—not beautiful, perhaps,—but very, very pretty, and so loveable!"

"Well," rejoined Julius, coldly, after some hesitation, "Mary is pretty; her eye is beautiful; her whole face intelligent, but so pale, so thin—her lips so colourless—her hands so transparent, that I cannot look at her with any pleasure. I declare to you, Anne, when I see a woman with a lively eye, a clear, healthy skin, that shows the air of Heaven visits it daily—it may be, roughly—if it pleases, Heaven to roughen the day,—an elastic, vigorous step, and a strong, cheerful voice, I am ready to fall down and do her homage!"

Julius Hasen was sincere and zealous in his theory, but he is not the first man whose theories Love has overthrown. "Love laughs at locksmiths." and mischievously mocks at the stoutest bars and bolts of resolution.

Hasen passed the summer in his native town. He renewed his intimacy with his old

neighbours. He perceived in Mary graces and qualities that made him feel the heavenly and forget the earthly; and, in spite of his wise, well-considered resolution, in three months he had impressed on her “pale cheek” the kiss of betrothal, and slipt an the third finger of her “transparent hand,” the “engagement ring!”

But, we must do Julius Hasen justice. When his laughing sister rallied him on his inconsistency, he said—

“You are right, Anne; but I adhere to my text, though I must now uphold it as a beacon—not as an example. I must say with the Turk—‘It was written.’”

He was true to himself and true to his wife; and, at the risk of shocking our young lady readers, we must betray that, after the wedding-ring, Hasen’s first gift to Mary was—“The Principles of Physiology applied to the Preservation of Health, and the Improvement of Physical and Mental Education; by Andrew Combe, M. D.” This book (which should be studied by every Mother in the United States) he accompanied by a solemn adjuration, that she would study and apply it. He did not stop here. After his marriage, he bought two riding-horses—mounted his bride on one and himself on the other, and thus performed the greater part of the journey to Indiana—only taking a rail-car for convenience, or a steamer for repose!

And, arrived at his Western home, and with the hearty acquiescence of his wife, who only needed to know the right, to pursue it, she began a physical life in obedience to the laws laid down by the said oracle, Andrew Combe.

Last fall, six years since his marriage, he brought his wife and two children to visit his Eastern friends. In reply to compliments on all hands, on his wife’s improved health and beauty, he laughingly proposed to build, on the site of the old Indian dwelling, a quadrangular Temple, dedicated to the Four Ministers to Health—Air, Water, Exercise, and Regimen!

THE YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER.

“I HOPE, Emily, that you don’t think I expect you to work—to spend the bright morning hours in the kitchen, when we commence keeping house,” said George Brenton to his young wife.

This remark was made as he left the room, in reply to something which Emily had been saying relative to their projected plan of housekeeping. Mrs. Anderson, her mother, entered the parlour at one door, as her son-in-law left it by another. “And I hope,” said she, “that, for your own sake as well as your husband’s, you will not think of fulfilling his expectations—that is, strictly speaking.”

“And why not? George is always pleased to have any suggestion of his attended to, however indirectly it may be made.”

“He would not be pleased, if on trial it should compromise any of his customary enjoyments. George’s income, as yet, is not sufficient to authorize you to keep more than one girl, who must be the maid-of-all-work; and even if you should be so fortunate as to procure one who understands the different kinds of household labour, there will be times when it will be necessary for you to perform some part of it yourself—much more to superintend it.”

“But, mother, you know how I always hated the kitchen.”

“This is a dislike which necessity will, or at least ought to overcome. You have never felt that there was much responsibility attached to the performance of such household tasks as I have always required of you, and in truth there never has been, as I could always have very well dispensed with them. I required them for your own good, rather than my own. Before habits of industry are formed, necessity is the only thing which will overcome our natural propensity to indulge in indolence.”

“I am sure that I am not indolent. I always have my music, embroidery, or reading to attend to. As to being chained down to household drudgery, I cannot think of it, and I am certain that it would be as much against George’s wishes as mine.”

“It would undoubtedly be gratifying to him, whenever he had an hour or two, which he could spend at home, to see you tastefully dressed, and to have you at leisure so as to devote your time wholly to him.”

“You make George out to be extremely selfish, which I am sure he is not.”

“No, not more so than we all are.”

“Why, mother, I am sure you are not selfish. You are always ready to sacrifice your own enjoyment for the sake of promoting that of others.”

“I have been subjected to a longer course of discipline, than either you or George. I have lived long enough to know, that the true secret of making ourselves happy is to endeavour to make others so. This is, at least, the case with all those whose finer sensibilities have not been blunted, or, more properly speaking, have been rightly cultivated. But it will do no good to enter into a metaphysical discussion of the subject. The course proper to be pursued by a woman, whose husband’s income is rather limited, appears to me perfectly plain.”

“The course proper for me to pursue, is that which will best please George.”

“Certainly, and that is precisely what I would advise you to do; but I don’t think that literally acting upon this suggestion of his, respecting domestic duties, will please him for any great length of time.”

Emily made no reply to this. She had decided in her own mind to obey the wishes of George, more especially as they exactly accorded with her own.

A few weeks from the time of the foregoing conversation, George and Emily Brenton commenced housekeeping. Their house was neatly and handsomely furnished, and through the influence of Emily’s mother, Experience Breck, a girl thirty-five years old, who well understood domestic, labour, undertook to perform the duties of chambermaid, laundress, and cook, for what all concerned considered a reasonable compensation.

Their home, to make use of George’s words, the first time he saw Emily’s parents after everything was satisfactorily arranged, “was a little paradise.” Pedy (the diminutive for Experience) was the best of cooks and clear-starchers, and never had he tasted such savory soups, and meat roasted so exactly to a turn, or such puddings and such pastry; and never had it been his fortune to wear shirt-bosoms and collars, which so completely emulated the drifted snow.

“And Emily too—she was the dearest and most cheerful of wives, and so bright an atmosphere always surrounded her, that one might almost imagine that she was a bundle of animated sunbeams. She was always ready to sing and play to him, or to listen while he read to her from some favourite author.”

This eulogy was succeeded by an invitation to Mr. and Mrs. Anderson to dine with them the ensuing day, that they might judge for themselves that he did not colour the picture of their domestic bliss too highly.

The invitation was accepted; and Emily could not help taking her mother aside to tell her that since they saw each other, she had done nothing but read and play on the beautiful harp her uncle gave her, except that when she grew tired of these, she sewed a little; “and yet,” she added, with a bright smile, “George has never given me, an unkind look—much more an unkind word.”

“And you have been housekeeping four whole days.”

“Eight days, mother!”

“It is only four days since everything was arranged, and you commenced talking your meals regularly at home.”

“I know, but then if we can live happily four days, we can four years.”

“Yes, if Pedy could always live with you.”

“She appears to be quite well satisfied with her situation,” was Emily’s answer.

There was one at work, however, though neither he nor they realized it, who was sapping their happiness at its very foundation. This was an honest, intelligent farmer, by the name of Simon Lundley, who one day, when in the city, happened to overhear the praises bestowed on Pedy Breck by George Brenton, touching her excellence as a cook and clear-starcher.

“If,” thought he, “she could do these well, the same good judgment would direct her how to excel in making butter and cheese; and as his mother, who kept his house, was growing old and infirm, it appeared to him that it would be convenient for her to have some person to assist her in the performance of these and other onerous duties belonging to the in-door work of a farm. He had seen Pedy a few months previous, when on a visit to a sister who resided in the neighbourhood of his home, and remembered of having thought it strange that she had never married as well as her sister, as she was remarkably good-looking.” Simon Lundley, therefore, the next Sunday, about sunset, arrayed in a suit of substantial blue broadcloth, boldly presented himself at George Brenton’s front door, and inquired if Miss Breck was at home. It proved to be a fortunate, as well as a bold step. Pedy recognised him at once, and had a kind of a vague prescience as to the object of his visit, or such might have been the inference drawn from the deep crimson which suddenly suffused her cheeks.

From that time he visited her regularly every Sunday, and it was soon decided that they should be married in season to enable her to pack the fall butter. This decision she, for sometime, delayed to communicate to Emily, from sheer bashfulness. She could not, she said, when she at last had wrought herself up to what appeared to her the very pinnacle of boldness, make up her mind to tell her before, for the life of her, but then, she did suppose that Simon kind of had her promise that she would be married to him in just three weeks from the next Sunday.

Emily immediately called on her mother to communicate to her the melancholy information. Mrs. Anderson saw that these were what might be termed “minor trials,” for her daughter in prospective. She hoped that she would be discreet enough not to allow them to be magnified into what might appropriately be called major trials.

“Don’t you think, mother,” said Emily, “that you can manage to find, me a girl as good as Pedy?”

“I think it will be impossible. Pedy is a kind of *rara avis* in all that appertains to housekeeping. She excels in everything. You will be obliged now to limit your expectations. If you can obtain a girl who knows how to cook well, it is the best you can hope to do. Even that, I am afraid, will prove very difficult.”

“It appears to me that if girls who are obliged to work for a living understood what was for their good, they would be at more pains to inform themselves relative to what is expected of them.”

“A great difficulty lies in the want of competent teachers. Such things are not known by instinct; and experience, though a good, is a slow teacher.”

“If I have got to stay in the kitchen all the time to teach a girl,
I may as well do the work myself.”

“I will do the best I can for you, but you must not expect me to find you a girl who will fill Pedy’s place, and do not, for your own sake—leaving George out of the question—be too afraid of the kitchen.”

Mrs. Anderson fulfilled the promise she made her daughter. She did her best, and felt tolerably well satisfied at being able to find a girl who had done the cooking in a large family in the country for more than a year.

Pedy Breck left Mrs. Brenton on Saturday after tea, and Deborah Leach took her place on Monday morning. Emily gave her a few general directions and as usual, seated herself in the parlour with her books, her music, and her embroidery, as resources against ennui. Deborah, also, was abundantly provided with the means to keep her out of idleness. She said to herself, after receiving the directions from Emily, that she “guessed there wouldn’t be time for much grass to grow under her feet that day.”

Deborah did not possess Pedy’s “sleight” at doing housework, and she felt a little discouraged when she found that, besides washing and preparing the dinner, she would be obliged to wash the dishes and do the chamber-work.

“I should think that she might take care of her own chamber,” she said to herself; “and I don’t think it would hurt her delicate hands a great deal, even if she should wash the dishes.”

In consideration of its being washing-day, George had sent home beefsteak for dinner, and Pedy, the same as she always did, had made some pies on Saturday, and placed them in the refrigerator for Sunday and Monday. Deborah had not been much accustomed to broiling steaks, as the family where she had been living considered it more economical, when butter brought such a high price, to fry them with slices of pork; but knowing the celebrity of her predecessor in everything pertaining to the culinary art, she exerted her skill to the utmost, and succeeded in doing them very well, and in tolerable season, so that George, after he came home, had to wait for dinner only ten minutes, which passed away very quickly, as time always did when he was with Emily.

Deborah’s first attempt at pastry was a decided failure. It was plain that she had never been initiated into the mysteries of making puff paste, nor did she, when telling over what she called her grievances to a friend, think it worth while, she said, “to *pomper* the appetite by making pies sweet as sugar itself, when there were thousands of poor souls in the world that would jump at a piece of pie a good deal sourer than what Mr. Brenton and his idle, delicate wife pretended wasn’t fit to eat. She was sure that she put two heapin’ spoonfuls of sugar into the gooseberry pie, and half as much into the apple pie, and Miss Brenton might make her fruit pies, as she called ‘em, herself the next time, for ‘twas a privilege she didn’t covet by no means.”

But Mrs. Brenton did not covet the privilege more than she did, and after a great show of firmness on the subject, declaring to herself and her intimate friend that she never would

give up, and that there was no use talkin' about it, she concluded she would try again, if Mrs. Brenton would stand right at her elbow and tell her the exact quantity of *ingredences* she must put into each pie.

"I s'pose you calc'late to do the ironing?" she said to Emily, on Saturday morning.

"No, I am sure I don't," was Emily's reply. "I thought you had done it."

"Well, I havn't—I expected that you were agoing to do it. Miss Hodges, the woman I lived with before I came here, always did it, and she was the richest and genteelest woman in the place. She used to say there wasn't that girl on the face of the earth, that she would trust to starch and iron her fine linens and muslins, and laces."

Emily merely said that she was not in the habit of doing such things herself, and that she should expect her to do them.

Deborah went about her task very unwillingly. She told Emily that she knew she should sp'ile the whole lot, and she proved a true prophetess. The shirt-bosoms and collars bore indisputable evidence that she was not stinted for fuel, the hot flat-iron having left its full impress upon some, while "Charcoal Sketches," of a kind never dreamed of by Neal, were conspicuous on others. As for the muslins and laces, being of a frailer fabric, they gave way beneath the vigorous treatment to which they were subjected, and exhibited mere wrecks of their former selves. Not a single article was wearable which had passed through the severe ordeal of being starched and ironed by Deborah, and what was still more lamentable, many of them could not even, like an antique painting or statue, be restored.

"This is too bad," said George, as he contemplated his soiled and scorched linen. "It appears to me, Emily, that you might have seen what the girl was about before she spoiled the whole."

"How could I," said Emily, "when she was in the kitchen and I was in the parlour—hem-stitching your linen handkerchiefs? Pedy never needed any overseeing."

Some linen of a coarser texture which had passed through Pedy's hands, was obliged to be resorted to on the present occasion, while Emily concealed her chagrin from George on account of the destruction of some Brussels lace, the gift of the same generous uncle who gave her the harp. She silently made up her mind that for the future she would not trust such articles to the unskilful Deborah.

Hitherto George, who probably had recalled to mind what he had said to Emily previous to commencing housekeeping, had never, except in a playful manner, alluded to the ill-dressed food which daily made its appearance on the table. To-day, however, when they returned from church and sat down to dinner, probably owing to being a little sore on the subject of the soiled linen, Emily saw him knit his brows in rather a portentous manner, while, in no very amiable tone of voice, he said—

"It appears to me that this girl don't understand how to do anything as it ought to be done—not even to boil a piece of corned beef. This is as salt as the ocean, and hard as a flint. If the girl has common sense, I am sure she could do better if you would give her a few directions. I confess that I am tired of eating ill-cooked meat, half-done vegetables, and heavy bread, and of drinking a certain muddy decoction, dignified by the name of coffee."

“Such food is, of course, no more palatable to me than to you; but I thought, by what I have heard you stay, that you would not be pleased when you came home to dinner to see me with a flushed face and in an unbecoming dress, which must be the case if I undertake to do the principal part of the cooking myself, and to superintend the whole.”

“We must try and get some one that will do better,” said George.

“I don’t think that it will be of any use,” replied Emily. “We may as well try her another week.”

The truth was, she had had, for several days, a dim perception that the indolence she had indulged in since released from her mother’s influence, was not half so delightful as she had anticipated. Her physical and mental energies had remained so entirely quiescent, that she began to think it would be rather a luxury to be a little fatigued. She moreover half suspected that Deborah might, and would do better, if not embarrassed with that feeling of hurry and perplexity, which so many of what in colloquial phrase are sometimes termed slow-moulded people, experience when obliged to divide their attention among a variety of objects.

Monday morning, Emily determined that she would turn over a new leaf: and a bright leaf it proved to be. She told Deborah, that for the future she should take care of her own room, prepare the dessert, and starch and iron all the nicer articles.

“I am glad to hear you say so, ma’am, I am sure,” said Deborah, “for when I have to keep going from one thing to another, my head spins around like a top, and I can’t do a single thing as it ought to be done. How Pedy Breck got along so smooth and slick with the work, I don’t know, nor never shall. I can make as good light bread as ever was—I won’t give up to anybody—but when I made the last, my mind was all stirred up with a puddin’-stick as ‘twere, and I couldn’t remember whether I put any yeast into it or not.”

From this time all went well. Deborah, in her slow way, proved to be a treasure. She told Emily that, “Give her time, nobody could beat her at a boiled dish, apple-dumplings, or a loaf of bread,” and the result proved that her words were no vain boast.

“I have concluded to follow your advice,” said Emily, the next time she saw her mother, “and look into the kitchen occasionally.”

“I am glad to hear it, and I have no doubt that you will enjoy yourself much better for it.”

“I am certain that I shall—I do already. You can’t imagine what queer, fretful-looking lines were beginning to show themselves on George’s brow. He would have looked old enough for a grandfather in a few years, if I had gone on trying to realize the hope he expressed, that I would abstain from the performance of all household tasks. And I should have looked quite as old as he, I suspect, for I believe that the consciousness of neglected duties is one of the heaviest burdens which can be borne.”

TO AN ABSENT WIFE.

‘TIS Morn:—the sea breeze seems to bring
Joy, health, and freshness on its wing;
Bright flowers, to me all strange and new,
Are glittering in the early dew,
And perfumes rise from every grove,
As incense to the clouds that move
Like spirits o’er yon welkin clear,—
But I am sad—thou are not here!

‘Tis Noon:—a calm, unbroken sleep
Is on the blue waves of the deep;
A soft haze, like a fairy dream,
Is floating over wood and stream;
And many a broad magnolia flower,
Within its shadowy woodland bower,
Is gleaming like a lovely star,—
But I am sad—*thou art afar!*

‘Tis Eve:—on earth the sunset skies
Are painting their own Eden dyes;
The stars come down and trembling glow,
Like blossoms in the waves below;
And like an unseen sprite, the breeze
Seems lingering midst these orange trees,
Breathing its music round the spot,—
But I am sad—*I see thee not!*

‘Tis Midnight:—with a soothing spell
The far-off tones of ocean swell—
Soft as a mother’s cadence mild,
Low bending o’er her sleeping child;
And on each wandering breeze are heard
The rich notes of the mocking bird,
In many a wild and wondrous lay,—
But I am sad—*thou art away!*

I sink in dreams:—low, sweet, and clear,
Thy own dear voice is in my ear:—
Around my cheek thy tresses twine—
Thy own loved hand is clasped in mine,
Thy own soft lip to mine is pressed—
Thy head is pillowed on my breast;
Oh, I have all my heart holds dear,
And I am happy—thou art here!

THE WORD OF PRAISE.

A LITTLE thing is a sunbeam—a very little thing. It streams through our casement, making the cheerful room still more cheerful; and yet so accustomed are we to its presence, that we notice it not, and heed not its exhilarating effect.

But its absence would be quickly seen and felt. The unfortunate prisoner in his dimly-lighted cell would hail with rapture that blessed stream of light; and the scarcely less imprisoned inmates of the more obscure streets of our crowded cities would welcome it as a messenger from Heaven.

It is even thus with the sunbeams of the human heart. Trifling things they are in themselves, for the heart is wonderfully constituted, and it vibrates to the slightest touch; but without them life is a blank—all seems cold and lifeless as the marble slab which marks the spot where the departed loved one lies.

A gloomy home was that of Henry Howard, and yet all the elements of human happiness seemed to be there. Wealth sufficient to secure all the comforts and many of the luxuries of life, was theirs, and both husband and wife were regarded by their numerous acquaintances as exceedingly intelligent and estimable people—and so indeed they were. The light tread of childhood was not wanting in their home, although its merry laugh was seldom heard, for the little children seemed to possess a gravity beyond their years, and that glad joyousness which it is so delightful to witness in infancy, was with them seldom or never visible.

Life’s sunbeams seemed strangely wanting, yet the why and wherefore was to the casual observer an unfathomable mystery.

Years before, that wife and mother had left the home of her childhood a happy and trusting bride. Scarcely seventeen, the love which she had bestowed upon him who was now her husband, was the first pure affections of her virgin heart, and in many respects he was worthy of her love, and, as far as was in his nature, returned it. Her senior by many years, he was possessed of high moral principles, good intellectual endowments, and an unblemished reputation among his fellow men.

But there was a cold, repulsive manner, at variance sometimes with his more interior feelings, which could ill meet the warm, affectionate disposition of his young wife, who, cherished and petted in her father’s house, looked for the same fond endearments from him to whom she had given all.

Proud of her beauty and intelligence, charmed with her sprightliness and wit, the man was for a time lost in the lover, and enough of fondness and affection were manifested to satisfy the confiding Mary, who had invested her earthly idol with every attribute of perfection. But as months passed on, and he again became immersed in his business, his true character, or, more properly speaking, his habitual manners, were again resumed, and the heart of the wife was often pained by an appearance of coldness and indifference, which seemed to chill and repulse the best affections of her nature.

Tears and remonstrance were useless, for the husband was himself unaware of the change.

Was not every comfort amply provided, every request complied with? What more could any reasonable woman desire?

Alas! he knew but little of a woman's heart; of that fountain of love which is perpetually gushing forth toward him who first caused its waters to flow: and still less did he know of the fearful effect of the constant repressing of each warm affection. He dreamed not that the loving heart could become cold and dead, and that his own icy nature would soon be rejected in the devoted being who now clung to him so fondly.

It was but in little things that he was deficient, mere trifles, but still they constituted the happiness or woe of the wife of his bosom.

The loving glance was seldom returned, the affectionate pressure of the hand seemed unfelt, the constant effort to please remained unnoticed. One word of praise, one kindly look, was all that was desired, but these were withheld, and the charm of life was gone.

Gradual was the change. Bitter tears were shed, and earnest endeavours to produce a happier state of things were sometimes made, but in vain. Oh! could the husband but have known how wistfully that young creature often gazed upon him as he sat at the evening meal upon his return from business, and partook of luxuries which her hand had prepared in the hope of eliciting some token of approbation—could he have seen the anxious care with which domestic duties were superintended, the attention paid to the toilette, the constant regard to his most casually expressed wishes, surely, surely he would have renounced for ever that cold, repulsive manner, and clasped to his bosom the gentle being whom he had so lately vowed to love and cherish.

But he saw it not—felt it not. Still proud of her beauty and talents, he loved to exhibit her to an admiring world, but the fond endearments of home were wanting. He knew nothing of the yearnings of that devoted heart; and while the slightest deviation from his wishes was noticed and reprimanded, the eager and intense desire to please was unheeded—the earnestly desired word of praise was never spoken.

The first year of wedded life passed away, and a new chord was awakened. Mary had become a mother; and as she pressed the babe to her bosom, new hopes were aroused. The clouds which had gathered around her seemed passing away, and the cheering sunbeams again broke forth. The manifest solicitude of her husband in the hour of danger, the affection with which he had gazed on the countenance of his first-born, were promises of happy days to come.

But, alas! these hopes were but illusory. All that a father could do for the welfare of an infant was scrupulously performed, but its expanding intellect, its innocent playfulness, soon remained unmarked—apparently uncared for.

"Is he not lovely?" exclaimed the fond mother, as the babe stretched his little hands and crowed a welcome as the father entered.

"He seems to be a good, healthy child," was the quiet reply. "I see nothing, particularly lovely in an infant six months old, and if I did I would not tell it so. Praise is very injurious to children, and you should school yourself from the first, Mary, to restrain your feelings, and utter no expressions which will have a tendency to foster the self-esteem common to us all. Teach your children to perform their duties from a higher motive than

the hope of praise.”

A chill like that of mid-winter came over the heart of the wife as she listened to the grave rebuke.

There was truth in the words. Our duties should be performed from higher motives than the approbation of our fellow men; but that little word of praise from those we love—surely, surely it cannot be hurtful. It is one of life’s brightest sunbeams, encouraging the weak, soothing the long-suffering, bringing rest to the weary and hope to the desponding.

Something of this Mary longed to urge, but her husband had already turned away, and the words died on her lips.

Time passed on. Another and another child had been added to the number, until four bright little faces were seen around the family table. The father seemed unchanged. Increasing years had altered neither the outer nor the inner man, but in the wife and mother few would have recognized the warm-hearted, impulsive girl, who ten years before had left her fathers home, with bright visions of the future floating before her youthful mind.

Whence came that perfect calmness of demeanour, that almost stoical indifference to all that was passing around her? To husband, children, and servants she was the same. Their comfort was cared for, the routine of daily duties strictly performed, but always with that cold, lifeless manner, strangely at variance with her natural disposition.

But the change had come gradually, and the husband noticed it not. To him, Mary had only grown more matronly, and, wisely laying aside the frivolity of girlhood, had acquired the sedateness of riper years. True, there were moments when his indifference was somewhat annoying. Although he never praised, he often blamed, and his lightest word of rebuke was at first always met with a gush of tears, but now there was no sign of emotion; the placid countenance remained unchanged, and quietly he was told that his wishes should be attended to. Certainly this was all that he could desire, but he would have liked to feel that his pleasure or displeasure was a matter of more consequence than it now appeared to be.

And yet the warm affections of the heart were not all dead. They slumbered—were chilled, paralyzed, starving for want of their proper and natural nourishment, but there was still life, and there were times when the spirit again thrilled with rapture, as the loving arms of childhood were twined around the mother’s neck, or the curly head rested upon her bosom.

But to the little ones, as to others, there was the same cold uniformity of manner, a want of that endearing tenderness which forms so close a tie between mother and child. Their health, and the cultivation of their minds, were never neglected, but the education of the heart remained uncared for, and the spot which should have bloomed with good and true affection, was but a wilderness of weeds.

The two eldest children were promising boys of seven and nine years old. Full of health, and buoyant, although constantly repressed spirits, they thought not and cared not for aught save the supply of their bodily wants; but with the third child, the gentle Eva, it was far otherwise. From infancy her little frame had been so frail and delicate, that it seemed as if the spirit was constantly struggling to leave its earthly tenement; but her fifth year was rapidly approaching, and still she lingered a blessed minister of love in that cheerless

home.

How wistfully she gazed upon the mother's face as she unweariedly performed the many little offices necessary for her comfort, but ever with the same frigid, unchanging manner! How earnestly she longed for that manifestation of tenderness which she had never felt! Even the stern father spoke to her in gentler and more subdued tones than was his wont, and would sometimes stroke the silky hair from her white forehead, and call her his "poor child."

But it was the fondness of a mother's love for which the little one yearned, and with unerring instinct she felt that beneath that calm and cold exterior, the waters of the fountain were still gushing. Once, when after a day of restless pain she had sunk into an uneasy slumber, she was aroused by the fervent pressure of that mother's kiss, and through her half-opening eyelids she perceived the tears which were flowing over her pale face. In an instant the arms of the affectionate child were clasped about her neck, and the soft voice whispered,—

"Dearest mother, do you not love your little Eva?"

But all emotion was instantly repressed, and quietly as ever came the answer—

"Certainly, my child, I love you all. But lie down now, and take some rest. You have been dreaming."

"'Twas such a happy dream," murmured the patient little sufferer, as obedient to her mother's words she again closed her eyes, and lay motionless upon her pillow. Once more she slept, and a sweet smile beamed upon her countenance, and her lips moved as if about to speak. The watchful mother bent over her.

"Kiss me again, dear mother," lisped the slumberer. "Call me your dear little Eva."

None could tell the workings of that stricken heart, as hour after hour the mother watched by her sleeping child; but the dawn of morning found her still the same; statue-like as marble, that once speaking face reflected not the fires within.

Day after day passed on, and it was evident that the spirit of the innocent child would soon rejoice in its heavenly home.

She could no longer raise her wasted little form from the bed of pain, but still her deep blue eyes gazed lovingly upon those around her, and her soft voice spoke of patience and submission.

The last hour drew near, and the little sufferer lay in her mother's arms. The destroyer claimed but the frail earthly covering, and even now the immortal soul shone forth in its heavenly brightness.

"Am I not going to my Father in Heaven?" she whispered, as she gazed earnestly upon her mother's face.

"Yes, dearest, yes," was the almost inaudible reply.

"And will the good angels watch over me, and be to me as a mother?" again asked the child.

"Far, far better than any earthly parent, my dear one."

A radiant smile illumined the countenance of the dying child. The fond words of her mother were sweet music to her ear.

The father approached, and bent over her.

“My little Eva,” he whispered, “will you not speak to me?”

“I love you, dear father,” was the earnest answer, “and when I am in Heaven I will pray for you, and for my poor mother;” and again those speaking eyes were riveted upon the mother’s face, as if she would read her inmost griefs.

The physician entered, and, in the vain hope of prolonging life, judged it necessary to make some external applications to relieve the difficulty of breathing, which was fast increasing. The pain was borne without a murmur.

“Do I not try to be patient, mother?” whispered that little voice.

“Yes, darling, you are a dear, patient, good little girl.”

An expression of happiness, amounting almost to rapture, beamed in Eva’s face, at these words of unqualified praise.

“Oh, mother! dear, dear mother,” she exclaimed, “will you not always call your little Eva your dear, good little girl? Oh, I will try to be so very good if you will. My heart is so glad now,” and with the strength produced by the sudden excitement, she clasped her feeble arms about her mother’s neck.

“Her mind begins to wander,” whispered the physician to the father; but there was no reply. A sudden light had broken upon that stern man, and motionless he stood, and listened to the words of his dying child.

But she had already sunk back in an apparent slumber, and hour after hour those calm but agonized parents sat watching by her side, at times almost believing that the spirit had indeed gone, so deep was the repose of that last earthly slumber.

At length she aroused, and with the same beautiful smile which had played upon her features when she sunk to rest, again exclaimed,

“I am so very happy, dear mother; will you call me your good little Eva once more?”

In a voice almost suffocated with emotion, the desired words were again breathed forth, and long and fervent kisses imprinted upon the child’s pale cheek.

“My heart is so glad!” she murmured. “Oh, mother, kiss my brothers when I am gone, and smile upon them and call them good. It is like the sunlight on a cloudy day.

“Put your face close to mine, dear father, and let me whisper in your ear. Call poor mother good, sometimes, and kiss her as you do me, now that I am dying, and she will never look so sad any more.”

“I will, my precious child! I will!” And the head of the strong man bowed upon his breast, and he wept.

A change passed over the countenance of the little one.

“The angels will take me now,” she whispered. The eyelids closed, there was no struggle, but the parents saw that her mission on earth was ended. Henceforth she would rejoice in the world where all is light and love.

The mother wept not as she gazed upon that lifeless clay. She wept not as she laid the little form upon the bed, and straightened the limbs already stiffening in the embrace of death; but when her husband clasped her to his bosom, and uttered words of endearing affection, a wild scream burst from her lips, and she sunk back in his arms, apparently as unconscious as the child who lay before them.

A long and alarming state of insensibility was succeeded by weeks of fever and delirium.

How many bitter but useful lessons did the husband learn as he watched by her bed-side! Often in the still hours of the night, when all save himself slumbered, she would gaze upon him with that earnest, loving, but reproachful look, which he well remembered to have seen in years gone by, and murmur,

“Just one kind glance, Henry, one little kiss, one word of love and praise.”

And then as he bent fondly over her, that cold, fixed expression, which she had so long worn, would again steal over her countenance, and mournfully she added,

“Too late, too late. The heart is seared and dead. See, little Eva stands and beckons me to the land of love. Yes, dear one, I come.”

But the crisis came, and though feeble as an infant, the physicians declared the danger past. Careful nursing, and freedom from excitement, would restore the wife and mother to her family.

With unequalled tenderness did her husband watch over her, but with returning health returned also that unnatural frigidity of manner. There was no response to his words or looks of love.

Was it, indeed, too late? Had his knowledge of the wants of a woman’s heart come only when the heart, which once beat for him alone, had become as stone?

It was the anniversary of their marriage. Eleven years before they had stood at the altar and taken those holy vows. Well did Henry Howard recollect that bridal morning. And how had he fulfilled the trust reposed in him? With bitter remorse he gazed upon the wreck before him, and thought of that gentle being once so full of love and joy.

An earnest prayer broke from his lips, and his arms were clasped around her.

“Mary, dear Mary,” he whispered, “may not the past be forgotten? Grievously have I erred, but believe me, it has been partly through ignorance. An orphan from my earliest childhood, I knew not the blessing of a mother’s love. Cold and stern in my nature, I comprehended not the wants of your gentle spirit. I see it all now: your constant self-denial, your untiring efforts to please, until, wearied and discouraged, your very heart’s-blood seemed chilled within you, and you became the living image of that cold heartlessness which had caused the fearful change.

“But may we not forget the past? Will you not be once more my loving, joyous bride, and the remainder of my life shall be devoted to your happiness?”

Almost fearful was the agitation which shook that feeble frame, and it was long before there was a reply.

At length, in the words of little Eva, she whispered, “Oh my husband! My own dear husband! My heart is so glad! I had thought it cold and dead, but now it again beats responsive to your words of love. The prayers of my angel-child have been answered, and happiness will yet be ours. My dear, dear Eva, how often have I wept as I thought of my coldness toward her, and yet all power to show my earnest love seemed gone for ever.”

“It slumbered, dearest, but it is not gone. The breath of affection will again revive your warm-hearted, generous nature, and our remaining little ones will rejoice in the sunshine of a mother’s love. Our Eva, from her heavenly home, will gaze with joy upon those she held so dear.”

Another year, and few would have recognised that once dreary home.

Life’s sunbeams shone brightly now. Those little messengers to the human heart,—the look of love, the gentle touch, the word of praise,—all, all were there. Trifles in themselves, but ah, how essential to the spirit’s Life!

LETTERS TO A YOUNG WIFE

FROM A MARRIED LADY.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR LIZZIE,

I have just received the pleasing intelligence of your marriage with one so worthy of your trust and affection. Of course, you are very happy; for there is no more perfect happiness for a young and loving woman than to centre her heart's best feelings upon one being—to feel her destiny bound up in his—to become, as it were, a very part of his life. Perhaps, at such a time, my dear girl, it may seem unkind to throw the least shadow over the bright sky of your happiness; but I cannot refrain from giving you some little advice now, at the outset of your new life.

You are looking forward—are you not?—with perfect confidence to the future. You think that the sea upon which you are launched, will ever remain calm and untroubled as now; that you will go on for ever thus, joyous and happy—thus, free from care and sorrow; but, Oh, remember, there is no sunshine that is not clouded over sometimes; no stream so smooth as to be always undisturbed. Then, make up your mind to have cares, perplexities, and trials, such as have never troubled you before; and be prepared to meet them.

As yet, you are to your husband the same perfect being that you were before marriage, free from all that is wrong—your follies even regarded as delightful. You are now placed upon a pedestal—a very goddess; but, believe me, you must soon descend to take your place among mortals, and well for you if you can do it gracefully. Believe me, dearest, I have no wish to sadden your spirit—only to prepare it for the trials which *must* come to perplex it.

You must learn to have your faults commented upon, one by one, and yet be meek and patient under reproach. You must learn to have those sayings which you have heard praised as witticisms, regarded as mere nonsense, You must learn to yield even when you seem to be in the right; to give up your will even when your husband seems obstinate and unreasonable; to be chided when you expected praise, and have your utmost endeavours to do rightly regarded as mere duties. But, be not cast down by this dark side of the picture. You will be happier, spite of all these trials, than you have ever been, if you only resolve to be firm in the path of duty; to strive to do well always; to return a kind answer for a harsh word, and, above all, to control your temper. There may be times when this may seem impossible; but always remember that one angry word provokes another, and that thus the beautiful gem of wedded affection is tarnished, until what seemed to be the purest gold is found only gilded brass. Amiability is the most necessary of all virtues in a wife, and perhaps the most difficult of all others to retain.

Pray fervently for a meek forbearing spirit; cherish your kindly impulses, and leave the rest to your Father in Heaven.

I shall, if you like, write you again upon this subject. You know I have been wedded long enough to have had some little experience, and if it can benefit you, you are welcome to it.

Adieu for awhile. Ever your friend.

LETTER II.

MY DEAR LIZZIE,

I hardly know whether pleasure or pain was the uppermost feeling of my mind, while reading your reply to my last letter. You have some secret disappointment preying upon your young and thus far happy heart; and although you speak favourably of your new duties: as a wife, still there is not that *couleur de rose* about your descriptions of the present which used to tinge those of the future.

You have felt already, have you not, that the world has interests for your husband other than those connected with yourself—that he can be very happy even when you are not present to share his happiness? You are not the first, dear Lizzie, who has been thus awakened from an exquisite dream of love; yet do not repine nor fret, for that will only increase your sorrow, but reason with yourself. Think how many claims there are upon your husband's time and society—claims to which he must bow if he wish to retain the position he now holds. Before your marriage, you were the all engrossing object of his thoughts—all that he depended upon for happiness. There was all the excitement of winning you for his wife, which caused him for a time to forego every other pleasure which might interfere with this one great object. But now that is all over. Like all others, he must proceed onward, and ever look forward to something yet to be attained.

You say that he has left you alone one whole evening, and that you punished him for it by appearing very much offended when he returned. Now, dear Lizzie, was that the way to cure him of not appreciating your society? By making yourself thus disagreeable upon his return, would he not rather delay that return another time?

Think over what I have written, and when he is obliged to leave you again, wear no sullen frowns, nor gloomy looks, but part from him with smiles and pleasant words; amuse yourself during his absence with your books, your music, your work; make everything around you wear a cheerful look to welcome him home; and believe me, he will appreciate the kindness which is thus free from selfishness.

A man's home must ever be a sunny place to him, and it should be a wife's most pleasant duty to drive for ever from his hearth-side those hideous sister spirits, discontent and gloomy peevishness.

This way that young wives have of punishing their husbands, always comes back upon themselves with double force. Any man, however unreasonable he appears, may be influenced by kindly words and happy smiles, and there is not one, however affectionate and domestic, that will not be driven away by sullen frowns and discontented looks.

Do not allow, my dear girl, these feelings of gloom and sadness to grow upon you. Believe me, you can overcome them if you will, and now is the time for you to exert all your power of self-control.

I know there is much to make a young married woman sad. Ere many days of wedded life

are past she begins to feel the difference between the lover and the husband. She misses that entire devotion to her every whim and caprice which is so delightful that all absorbed attention to her every trifling word; that *impressiveness* of manner which is flattering and pleasing; and she almost fancies that she is a most miserable, neglected personage.

This is a trying moment for a young and sensitive woman, but if she only reason with herself, and resolve to yield no place in her spirits to feelings of repining, she will be happier—far happier with her husband as he is, than were he to retain all the devotion of the lover.

I know this seems difficult to believe: but reflect a moment. Suppose your husband should remain just the same as he was before marriage, should give up all other society for you, should be constantly repeating his protestations of love, constantly hanging around you, watching your every step, living upon your very breath as it were; do you not agree with me in thinking that all this would after awhile become very tiresome? Would you not get weary of such a perpetual display of affection, and would you feel any pride in a husband who made no advancement in the world, even though it were given up for you? No, no! Think this all over, and you will see that it is just as well for you to relinquish his society sometimes; that is, if you welcome his return with a happy face.

Try my experiment, dear, when next he leaves you, and write me the result. Adieu for awhile.

LETTER III.

MY DEAR LIZZIE,

A severe illness has prevented my answering your kind letter for some weeks, but now I am quite well again, and hope to continue without further interruption our pleasant correspondence.

Your last letter I have read and re-read, not without, I must confess, some little secret misgiving as to whether you have not taken one step to mar the happiness of your married life, now so perfect in its beauty.

You speak, in your own whole-souled affectionate manner, of a *friend* with whom you have met, and whose kindness has so won your affection and gratitude, that you have opened your whole heart to her. Now, my dear Lizzie, that same little heart of yours is quite too precious a volume to be thus shown to every new comer who wins upon you by a few kindly words. You have given it to your husband; let it be kept, then, only for his gaze; open every page of it for his inspection, and let him correct whatever errors he may find traced thereupon. Believe me, dear, you will find no truer or more disinterested confidant than him to whom you have pledged your marriage vows.

Do not think I wish to discourage all friendships with your own sex. Oh, no; they possess too great a charm to be thus rudely thrown aside. To me, there is hardly a more lovely

sight in the world than the union of two congenial spirits in the tie of sincere and unselfish affection. But I do not dignify with the name of friendship those caprices of the moment, which so often assume its title and usurp its place. A young girl meets another at an assembly—she is pleased with her manners; thinks her amiable, because she smiles frequently; intellectual, because she converses easily; winning and fascinating, because she receives some kind attentions from her. Forthwith they become devoted *friends*. In a few weeks they discover that they are not so congenial as they imagined, and the *friendship* is broken off. Away with such desecration! One might as well compare the scenes of forest, grove, and field in a theatre, to those painted by nature's own hand, as this momentary impulse to that noble, unwavering affection which gives such beauty and dignity to the female character. There are many imitations of the precious gem, but although they are equally bright and beautiful at first, they soon tarnish and show themselves in their true and ungilded state.

There is another part of your letter, dear Lizzie, which gives me much uneasiness. After your *piquant* description of the soiree you attended, you say that you were quite a belle there, and that you met again Frank H—, your former admirer, who was very devoted to you. Lizzie, dear Lizzie, do not think thus, do not act thus, do not write thus a second time. Remember you are a wife. A sacred, solemn duty is yours, which will require all your powers to perform with unwavering fidelity. Let me be frank with you, darling, and tell you that love of admiration has ever been your greatest fault, and is one of the most dangerous that a young wife can have. Check it, control it now, before it has led you farther into a snare which may involve your everlasting happiness. If you find it impossible to drive it away from you entirely, endeavour to centre it upon your husband. Think of your personal appearance only so far as it will please him; your dress, so far as it will gratify his taste; your intellect, as it will make his home agreeable; your musical powers, as they will enable you to give him pleasure; learn to view all your charms and powers of pleasing in this light; improve them with this view, and all will go well with you and your married life.

I was quite charmed with your description of your sweet little home, dear Lizzie! What a lovely place it must be, and what a beautiful prospect of happiness there is before you!

You must be very watchful, dear, of your husband's tastes and peculiarities. Always continue to have his favourite seat ready when he comes home wearied with the day's business; his favourite slippers ready for immediate use; his favourite dishes set before him. There is much influence to be gained over a man by thus proving to him that he has been thought of while absent, and his particular fancies remembered. Always have a cheerful home, a bright fire, a happy welcoming smile, and, believe me, you will have a domestic husband.

I was very happy to learn that you tried the experiment I recommended, and met with so pleasant a result. Cultivate the cheerfulness you seem to have regained; do not allow a shadow to rest upon your spirit, and you will be doubly rewarded in the devoted affection of your husband, and the approval of your own conscience. Adieu for awhile.

LETTER IV.

My DEAR LIZZIE,

I have thought many, many times of your last beautiful, *wife-like* letter. It was so full of tenderness—so full of a spirit of humility—so free from all selfishness, that it called from my heart a gush of the warmest emotion. I have read it again and again, and each time with an increased feeling of interest and pleasure.

You are in the right path, now, darling—God grant that you may never be induced to deviate from it! Go on as you have commenced, and, believe me, more happiness will be yours than you have ever dreamed of. There is no richer treasure in this world—no greater blessing—no more unalloyed happiness to a woman than the perfect trust and love of a good husband. The tie that binds the wedded is one that must be guarded well, or it may become partially unloosed, and it is almost impossible ever to fasten it as at first.

Cherish that all-absorbing love for your husband, which now so fills your breast; regard nothing as beneath your watchful attention which adds to his happiness; consult his wishes, his tastes, in all your actions, your habits, your dress. Above all, *never deceive* him. Be able ever to meet him with an unflinching eye, a true and honest heart.

Ever be guided by the lovely light of principle; let this direct you in all your paths; keep your eye fixed upon it; lose not sight of it a moment, for it beams from a beautiful home of peaceful happiness, whither it would lead you, and where all arrive who follow its guidance.

Cultivate in your heart a love of *home* and home duties. Strive to make that place as attractive as possible, and do everything in your power to render it an agreeable resting-place for your husband. The daily routine of home duties, when performed in the right spirit, diffuse a feeling of cheerfulness over one’s heart that can never be found in the applause of the world, or the gratification of any favourite desire.

Endeavour to make your husband’s evenings at home as pleasant as you are able; call forth your powers of pleasing; bring up his favourite topics of conversation; amuse him with music; do all that you can to convince him that he has a most delightful wife, and trust me, dear girl, you will never fail to make his own “ingle side” the happiest spot in the world to him.

I once knew a wife who complained to me, with many tears, that her husband left her, evening after evening, to pass his time in the reading-room of a hotel. Rallying the husband upon his desertion of so pleasant a wife, he replied to me, that he had commenced his married life with the determination to be a kind, domestic husband, but that he had actually been driven from his home and for what, do you imagine, my dear Lizzie? Why, because he had not the simple privilege of enjoying a cigar! Yes, his wife actually would not allow him to smoke in the parlour where their evenings were passed, because, forsooth, she was afraid of spoiling her new curtains! They, it seems, were of more importance to her than the comfort of her husband. He had been confirmed in the habit of smoking for years, and could not pass an evening without it. He did not feel inclined to sit alone in a cold, cheerless room, so he went to a neighbouring hotel, which he found so lively and pleasant that he came to the conclusion, for the future, to enjoy his cigars there.

You may smile, and look upon this as a trifle, and so it was; yet was it of sufficient importance to drive a man from his own fireside, and render a woman lonely and unhappy.

Life is made up of trifles, and it is by paying attention to opportunities of winning love by *little things* that a wife makes her husband and herself happy. Are such means, then, to be neglected when they lead to such results?

I must bid you adieu now for a while, dear Lizzie. I think of you very, very often, and pray most fervently that you may be enabled so to perform your duties as a wife as to be a blessing to your husband and an example to all womankind.

Ever your friend.

THE WIFE.

BEHOLD, how fair of eye, and mild of mien
Walks forth of marriage yonder gentle queen;
What chaste sobriety whene’er she speaks,
What glad content sits smiling on her cheeks,
What plans of goodness in that bosom glow,
What prudent care is throned upon her brow,
What tender truth in all she does or says,
What pleasantness and peace in all her ways!
For ever blooming on that cheerful face,
Home’s best affections grow divine in grace;
Her eyes are rayed with love, serene and bright;
Charity wreathes her lips with smiles of light;
Her kindly voice hath music in its notes;
And Heaven’s own atmosphere around her floats!

BE GENTLE WITH THY WIFE.

BE gentle! for you little know
How many trials rise;
Although to thee they may be small,
To her, of giant size.

Be gentle! though perchance that lip
May speak a murmuring tone,
The heart may beat with kindness yet,
And joy to be thine own.

Be gentle! weary hours of pain
‘Tis woman’s lot to bear;
Then yield her what support thou canst,
And all her sorrows share.

Be gentle! for the noblest hearts
At times may have some grief,
And even in a pettish word
May seek to find relief.

Be gentle! none are perfect here—
Thou’rt dearer far than life,
Then husband, bear and still forbear—
Be gentle to thy wife.

A TRUE TALE OF LIFE.

IN one of the New England States, the little church-bell in Chester village rung merrily in the clear morning air of a bright summer's day. It was to call the people together, and they all obeyed its summons—for who among the aged, middle-aged, or the young, did not wish to fitness the marriage ceremonies of their favourite, Ellen Lawton? Ere the tolling of the bell had ceased, the gray-haired man was leaning on the finger-worn ball of his staff, in the corner of his antiquated pew; the hale, healthy farmer came next; and then the seat was filled with rosy-cheeked boys and girls, till the dignified matron brought up the rear at the honourable head. The church became quiet, eager eyes were fastened upon the door. Presently a tall form entered, that of a handsome man, apparently about thirty years of age, on whose arm was leaning, in sweet childlike smiling trust, the young and loved Ellen Lawton, whose rose-cheek delicately shaded the pale face, and who looked more beautiful in her angel loveliness than ever before, even to the eyes of the humble villagers, to whom she ever was but a "thing of beauty" and "a joy for ever." If thus she looked to familiar eyes, how transcendently beautiful must she have appeared to him, who this hour was to make her his own chosen bride, the wife of his bosom, the pride, the priceless jewel of his heart. They stood before the altar; he cast his dark eye upon her—she raised hers, beaming in their blue depths, all full of love and tenderness, and as they met his, the orange blossoms trembled slightly in her auburn tresses, and the rose-tint, deepened on her cheek. The voice of the man of God was heard, and soon Frederic Gorton had promised to "love, cherish, and protect," and Ellen Lawton to "love, honour, and obey." As it ever is, so it was *there*, an interesting occasion—one that might well cause the eye to fill with tears, the heart to hope, fearfully but earnestly hope, that that young girl's dreams may not too soon fade, that in him to whom she has given her heart she may ever find a firm friend, a ready counsellor, a kind and forbearing spirit, a sympathizing interest in all her thoughts and emotions. On this occasion many criticising glances were thrown upon the handsome stranger, and many whispers were circulated.

"I fear," said one of the deacon's good ladies, "that he is too proud and self-willed for our gentle Ellen;" and she took off her spectacles, which she wiped with her silk handkerchief, as if she thought they were wearied of the long scrutiny as her own very eyes.

Is there truth in the good lady's suspicion? Look at Frederic Gorton, as he stands there in his stateliness, towering above his bride, like the oak of the forest above the flower at its foot. His eye is very dark and very piercing, but how full of tenderness as he casts it upon Ellen's up-turned face! His brow is lofty, and pale, and stern, but partially covered with long dark hair, with which lady's finger had never toyed. His cheek was as if chiselled from marble, so perfect had the hand of nature formed it. His mouth—another space of Ellen's unpenetrating discernment, would have been reminded of Shakspeare's

"O, what a deal of scorn looks beautiful
In the contempt and anger of his lip."

There was about it that compression, so indicative of firmness, which, while it commands respect, as often wins love.

A perfect contrast to him, was the fairy thing at his side; gentle as the floating breeze of evening, trusting as true-hearted woman ever is, lovely, amiable, and beautiful, she was just one to win a strong man's love; for there is something grateful to a proud man in having a delicate, gentle, confiding girl place all her love and trust in him and making all her happiness derivable from his will and wish. Heaven's blessing rest upon him who fulfils faithfully that trust reposed in him, but woe be unto him who remembers not his vows to love and to cherish!

The marriage service over, the friends of Ellen pressed eagerly around her, offering their many wishes for her long life and happiness. The gray-haired man, and aged mother in Israel, laid their hands on the young bride's fair head, and fervently prayed "God bless thee;" and not a few there were who gave glances upward to Frederic Gorton, and impressively said,

"Love as we have loved the treasure God transfers to thee."

The widowed mother of Ellen gazed upon the scene with mingled emotions. Ellen was her eldest child, and had been her pride, her joy, and delight since the death of her husband, many years before. She was giving her to a stranger, whose reputation as a man of talent, of worth, and honourable position in the world was unquestioned; but of whose private character she had no means of acquiring a knowledge. It was all uncertainty if a stern, business man of the world, should supply the tenderness and devoted love of a fond mother, to her whose wish had been hitherto scarcely ever disregarded. Yet it might be—she could only hope, and her trust was in "Him who doeth all things well."

For the two previous years Ellen had been at a female boarding school in a neighbouring state, on the anniversaries of which she had taken an active part in the examinatory exercises. Frederic Gorton, who was one of the board, was so much pleased with her, that he made of the teachers minute inquiries in regard to her character, which were answered entirely satisfactorily—for Ellen had been a general favourite at school, as well as in her own village. Afterward he called on her frequently, and on her final return home, Frederic Gorton, who had ever been so confident in his eternal old bachelorship, accompanied her, and sought her from her mother as his bride. Seldom does one so gifted seek favour of lady in vain; and Ellen Lawton, hitherto unsought and unwon, yielded up in silent worship her whole heart, that had involuntarily bowed itself in his presence, and became as a child in reverence.

But Frederic Gorton had lived nearly thirty-five years of his life among men. His mother had died in his infancy, his father soon after, and he, an only child, had been educated in the family of an old bachelor uncle.

The influence of woman had never been exerted on his heart. In his boyhood he had formed, from reading works of fiction, an idea of woman as perfection in all things; but as he grew in years and in wisdom, and learned the falsity of many youthful ideas and dreams, he discarded that which he had entertained of woman, and knowing nothing of her, but by her general appearance of vanity and love of pleasure, he cherished for her not much respect, and regarded her as an inferior, to whom, he thought in his pride, he at least would never level himself by marriage. He smiled scornfully, on learning his appointment as trustee of the female school, and laughingly said to an old bachelor companion:—

“They will make me to have care of the gentle weak ones, whether I will or no.”

“O, yes,” replied his friend, who was somewhat disposed to be satiric, “classically speaking, ‘*pulchra faciant te prole parentum*.’ Depend upon it this will be your initiation; you will surely, upon attendance there, be caught by the smiling graces of some pretty Venus—but, be careful; remember there is no escape when once caught. Ah, my friend, I consider you quite gone. I shall soon see in the morning daily—‘Married, on the 12th, Hon. Frederic Gorton, of M—, to Miss Isabella, Mary, or Ellen Somebody, and then, be assured, my best friend, Fred, that I shall heave a sigh *imo pectore*, not for myself only, but for you.”

Some prophecies, jestfully uttered, are fulfilled—so were those of Frederic’s friend; and when they next met, only one was a bachelor.

But we will return to that bright morning when the bell had rung merrily—when Ellen Lawton had returned from the village church to her childhood home as Ellen Gorton, and was to leave it for a new home. After entering the parlour, Mr. Gorton said,

“Now, Ellen, we will be ready to start in as few moments as possible.”

“Yes,” answered Ellen, “but I wish to go over to Aunt Mary’s, just to bid her good-bye.”

“But my dear,” answered Frederic, “there is not time;” looking at his watch.

“Just a moment,” persisted Ellen, “I will hurry. I promised Aunt Mary; she is sick and cannot leave her room.”

And, as Frederic answered not, and as Ellen’s eyes were brimful of tears, she could but half see the impatience expressed on his countenance, and hastily departed.

But, Aunt Mary had innumerable kisses to bestow upon her favourite, and many words and wishes to utter, brokenly, in a voice choked with tears; and it was many minutes ere she could tear herself away, and on her return she met several loiterers from the church, who stopped her to look, as they said, upon her sweet face once more, and list to her sweet voice again. She hurried on—Mr. Gorton met her at the door, and taking her hand, said, sternly,

“Ellen, I wish you not to delay a moment in bidding adieu to your friends—you have already kept me waiting too long.”

There was no tenderness in his voice as he uttered this, and it fell as a weight upon Ellen’s heart, already saddened at the thought of the parting with her mother and home friends, which must be now, and which was soon over.

As the carriage rolled away, Ellen grieved bitterly. Mr. Gorton, who really loved Ellen sincerely and fondly, encircled her waist with his arm, and said, kindly,

“Do you feel, Ellen, that you have made too great a sacrifice in leaving home and friends for me?”

“O, no,” answered Ellen, raising to his her love-lit countenance, “no sacrifice could be too great to make for you; but do you not know I have left all I had to love before I loved you? And they will miss me too at home, and will think of me, how often, too, when I shall be thinking of you only! Think it not strange that I weep.”

Nevertheless, Mr. Gorton did think it strange. He had no idea of the tender associations clustering around one’s home. He had no idea of the depth and richness and sweetness of a mother’s love, of a sister’s yearning fondness, for they ever had been denied him; consequently the emotions that thrilled the heart of his bride could find no response and met with no sympathy in his own. It was rather with wonder, than with any other sensation, that he regarded her sorrow. Was she not entering upon a newer and higher sphere of life? Was she not to be the mistress of a splendid mansion? Was she not to be the envied of many and many a one who had feigned every attraction and exerted every effort for the station, she was to assume; and should she weep with this in view?

Thus Mr. Gorton thought—as man often reasons.

After having proceeded a little distance, they came within view of an humble cottage, when Ellen said,

“I must stop here, Mr. Gorton, and see Grandma Nichols (she was an elderly member of the church of which Ellen was a member), and when I was last to see her, she said, as she should not be able to walk to to see me married, I must call on her, or she should think me proud. I will stop for a moment—just a moment,” she added, after a pause, observing he did not answer.

They were just opposite the cottage at that moment, yet he gave no orders to stop. With a fresh burst of tears, Ellen exclaimed,

“Please, Mr. Gorton, let me see her. I may never see her again, and she will think I did not care to bid her a last farewell.”

But Mr. Gorton said,

“Really, Ellen, I am very much surprised at the apparent necessity of trifles to make your happiness. You went to see your aunt after I had assured you there was not time. I wish you to remember that your little wishes and whims, however important they may scene to you, cannot seem of such importance to me as to interfere with my arrangements. What matters it if my bride do not say farewell to an old woman whom I never heard of, and shall never think of again, and who will soon probably die and cease to remember that you slighted her?”

And he laid Ellen’s head upon his shoulder, and wiping the tears from her face, wondered of what nature incomprehensible she was.

But, it *did* matter to her in more respects than one, that she was not permitted to call at the cottage. A mind so sensitive as Ellen’s feels the least neglect and the slightest reproof, and is equally pained by giving cause for pain, as receiving. Besides, how much was expressed in that last sentence of Mr. Gorton’s, accompanying the denial of her simple request! How much contained in that denial, too! How plainly she read in it the future—how fully did it reveal the disposition of him by whose will she saw she was herself to be hereafter

governed! Though her mind was full of these thoughts, there was no less of love for him—love in Ellen Lawton could never change, though she wondered, too, how he could refuse what seemed to her so easy to grant. And so they both silently pursued their way, wondering in their hearts as to the nature of each other. This, however, did not continue long; and soon Ellen's tears ceased to flow, and she listened, delighted, to the eloquent words of her gifted husband, spoken in the most musical and rich of all voices.

Woman will have love for her husband so long as she has admiration, and Ellen knew she would never cease to admire the talents and brilliant acquirements of Frederic Gorton.

After several days travel through a delightfully romantic country, they reached the town of M—, where was the residence of Mr. Gorton. It was an elegant mansion, the exterior planned and finished in the most tasteful and handsome style—the interior equally so—and furnished with all that a young bride of most cultivated taste could desire. The eye of Ellen was delighted and surprised, even to tears, and inaudibly, but fervently in her heart she murmured, "how devotedly will I love him who has provided for me so much comfort and splendour, and how cheerfully will I make sacrifices of my feelings, 'my wishes and my whims,' for him who has loved me so much as to make me his wife!" and she gazed into her husband's face through her tears, and kissed reverently his hand.

"Why weep you, my Ellen? Are you not pleased?"

"O, yes; but you have done too much for me. I can never repay you, only in my love, which is so boundless I have not dared to breathe it all to you, nor could I."

Gorton looked upon her in greater astonishment than before. Tears he had ever associated with sorrow; and surely, thought he, here is no occasion for tears, and he said,

"Well, if you love me, you will hasten to wipe away those tears, and let me see you in smiles. I do not often smile myself, therefore the more need for my lady to do so. Moreover, we may expect a multitude of callers; and think, Ellen, of the effect of any one's seeing the bride in tears."

Calling a servant to conduct her to her dressing-room, and expressing his wish for her to dress in her most becoming manner, he left her.

It is unnecessary to say that Ellen was admired and loved by all the friends of her husband, even by his brother judges and politicians. Herbert Lester, the particular friend of Mr. Gorton, whose prophecy had thus soon been verified, came many miles to express personally his sympathy and condolence. These he changed to congratulations, when he felt the influence of the grace and beauty of the wife of his friend—and he declared that he would make an offer of his hand and heart, could he find another Ellen.

Meanwhile time passed, and though Ellen was daily called upon to yield her own particular preferences to Mr. Gorton's, as she had done even on her bridal day, she was comparatively happy. Had she possessed less keenness of sensibility, she might have been happier; or had Mr. Gorton possessed more, that he could have understood her, many tears would have been spared her. Oftentimes, things comparatively trifling to him would wound the sensitive nature of Ellen most painfully, and he of course would have no conception *why* they should thus affect her.

Occupied as he was mostly with worldly transactions and political affairs, Ellen's mind

often, in his absence, reverted to the scenes of her youth, and her childhood home, her mother, and the bright band of her young sisters; and longings would come up in her heart to behold them once more.

Two years having passed without her having seen one member of her family, she one day asked Mr. Gorton if it would not be convenient soon to make a visit to Chester. He answered that his arrangements would not admit of it at present—and coldly and cruelly asked her if she had yet heard of Grandma Nichols' decease. Ellen answered not, and bent her head over the face of her little Frederic, who was sleeping, to hide her tears. Perceiving her emotion, however, he added,

"Ellen, I assure you it is impossible for me to comply with your wish, but I will write to your mother, and urge her to visit us—will not that do?"

Ellen's face brightened, as with a beam of sunshine, and springing to her husband's side, she laid her glowing cheek upon his, and then smiled upon him so sweetly that even the cold heart of Frederic Gorton glowed with a warmth unusual.

Seven years passed away, leaving their shadows as the sun does. And Ellen—

"But matron care, or lurking woe,
Her thoughtless, sinless look had banished,
And from her cheek the roseate glow
Of girlhood's balmy morn had vanished;
Within her eyes, upon her brow,
Lay something softer, fonder, deeper,
As if in dreams some visioned woe
Has broke the Elysium of the sleeper."

Never yet, since that bright bridal morn, had Ellen looked upon her native village, though scarcely three hundred miles separated her from it. Now her heart beat quick and joyfully, for her husband had told her that business would call him to that vicinity in a few days, and she might accompany him. With all the willful eagerness of a child she set her heart on that visit, and from morning till night she would talk with her little boys of the journey to what seemed to her the brightest, most sacred spot on earth, next to her present home. And the home of one's childhood! no matter how sweet, how-dear and beloved the home the heart afterwards loves, it never forgets, it never ceases most fondly to turn back to the memories, and the scenes, and the friends of its early years.

One fault, if fault it might be called, among so many excellencies in Ellen's character, was that of putting off "till to-morrow what should be done today." This had troubled Mr. Gorton exceedingly, who, prompt himself, would naturally wish others to be so also, and notwithstanding his constant complaints, and Ellen's desire to please him, she had not yet overcome her nature in that respect, though she had greatly improved. The evening preceding the intended departure, Mr. Gorton said to his wife,

"Now, Ellen, I hope you will have everything in readiness for an early departure in the morning. Have the boys and yourself all ready the moment the carriage is at the door, for you know I do not like to be obliged to wait."

Almost before the stars had disappeared in the sky, Ellen was busy in her final preparations. She was sure she should have everything in season, and wondered how her husband could suppose otherwise, upon an occasion in which she had so much interest. Several minutes before the appointed time, Ellen had all in readiness for departure, the trunks all packed and locked, the children in their riding dresses and caps; and proceeding from her dressing-room to the front hall door, she was thinking that this time, certainly, she should not hear the so oft repeated complaint—

“Ellen, you are always too late!”—when, to her dismay, she met Georgie, her youngest boy, dripping with mud and water from the brook, whence he had just issued, where, he said, he had ventured in chase of a goose, which had impudently hissed at him, which insult the young boy, in his own conception a spirited knight of the regular order, could not brook, and in his wrath had pursued the offender to his place of retreat, much to the detriment of his dress.

Ellen was in consternation; but one thing was evident—Georgie’s dress must be changed. With trembling hands she unlocked a trunk, and sought for a change of dress, while the waiting-maid proceeded to disrobe the child.

Just at this moment Mr. Gorton entered, saying the carriage was at the door. Various things had occurred that morning to perplex him, and he was in a bad humour. Seeing Ellen thus engaged with the trunk, as he thought, not half packed, various articles being upon the carpet, and Georgie in no wise ready, the cloud came over his brow, and he said, harshly,

“I knew it would be thus, Ellen—I have never known you to be in readiness yet; but you must know I am not to be trifled with.”

And with this, not heeding the explanation she attempted to make, he seized his valise and left the room. Jumping into the carriage, he commanded the driver to proceed.

Ellen heard the carriage rolling away in astonishment. She ran to the door, and watched it in the distance. But she thought it could not be possible he had gone without her—he would return: and she hastened the maid, and still kept watching at the door. She waited in vain, for he returned not.

The excitement into which Ellen was thrown by the anticipation of meeting her friends once more, may be readily imagined by those similarly constituted with her, and the reaction occasioned by her disappointment, also. Her heart had been entirely fixed upon it, and what but cruelty was it in her husband to deprive her thus so unreasonably of so great an enjoyment—to her so exquisite a pleasure?

In the sudden rush of her feelings, she recalled the last seven years of her life, and could recollect no instance in which she had failed doing all in her power to contribute to her husband’s happiness. On the other hand, had he not often wounded her feelings unnecessarily? Had he ever denied himself anything for her sake, but required of her sacrifice of her own wishes to his?

The day wore away, and the night found Ellen in a burning fever. The servant who went for the physician in the early morning, said she had raved during the latter part of the night. As the family physician entered the room, she said, mildly,

“O, do not go and, leave me! I am all ready—all ready. Do not go—it will kill me if you

go.”

The doctor took her hand; it was very hot; and her brow was terribly throbbing and burning. He remained with her the greater part of the day, but the attack of fever on the brain had been so violent that no attempt for relief was of avail.

She grew worse and about midnight, with the words—

“O, do not go, Mr. Gorton,—do not go and leave me!”—her spirit took its flight.

And the morning dawned on Ellen in her death-sleep—dawned as beautiful as that bright one, when the bell rang merrily for her bridal. Now the dismal death-note’s pealed forth the departure of her spirit to a brighter world. Would not even an angel weep to look upon one morning, and then upon the other?

The birds, from the cage in the window, poured forth their songs; but they fell unheeded on the ears they had so often delighted. The voices of Fred and Georgie, ever as music to the loving heart of the young mother, would fall thrillingly on her ear no more. She lay there, still and cold—her dreams over—her hopes all passed by—the sun of her young life set—and *how*?

People came in, one after another, to look upon her—and wept that one so young and good should die. They closed her eyes—they laid her in her grave-clothes, and folded her pale hands—and there she lay!

And now we leave that chamber of the too-early dead. Mr. Gorton’s feelings of anger soon subsided. In a few hours he felt oppressed with a sense of the grief Ellen would experience. His feelings prompted him to return for her. Several times he put his head out of the window to order the driver to return, but, his, pride intervening, he as often desisted. Yet his mind was ill at ease. He, also, involuntarily, reviewed the period of his wedded life. He recalled the goodness, and patience, and sweetness, which Ellen had ever shown him—the warm love she had ever evinced for him: and his heart seemed to appreciate, for the first time, the value and character of Ellen. He felt how unjust and unkind he had often been to her—he wondered he could have been so,—and resolved that, henceforth, he would show her more tenderness.

As he stopped for the night, at a public-house, his resolution was to return early in the morning. Yet, his business must be attended to. It was a case of emergency. He finally resolved to intrust it with a lawyer acquaintance, who lived a half day’s ride distant from where he then was. Thus he did; and, about noon of the following day, returned homeward. He was surprised at his own uneasiness and impatience. He had never so longed to meet Ellen. He fancied his meeting with her—her joy at his return—her tears for her disappointment—his happiness in restoring *her* heart to happiness, by an increasing tenderness of manner, and by instantly gratifying her wish of a return home.

All day and night he travelled. It was early morning when he arrived at his own door. He was surprised at the trembling emotions and quickened beating of his heart, as he descended the steps of his carriage, and ascended those to his own door. He passed on to the room of his wife. The light gleamed through the small opening over the door, and he thought he heard whispers. Softly he opened the door. O! what a terrible, heart-rending scene was before him!—The watchers left the room; and Mr. Gorton stood alone, in

speechless agony, before the being made voiceless by himself.

The sensibility so long slumbering within his worldly, hardened heart, was aroused to the very keenness of torture. And Ellen, gentle spirit that she was,—how would she have grieved to have seen the heart she had loved so overwhelmed with grief, regret, remorse, despair!

“Ellen! my own Ellen!”

But she could not hear!

“I have killed thee, gentlest and best!”

But the kindness of her heart was not open *now*!

“I forgive thee,” could not fall from those lips so pale!

“I love thee,” could never come upon his ear again—*never*—“NEVER!” thrilled his soul, every chord of which was strung to its intensity!

If anything could have added to the grief inconsolable of the man stricken in his sternness and pride, it was the grief of his two motherless boys, as they called on their mother’s name in vain, and asked him why she *slept* so long!

Few knew why Ellen died so suddenly and so young; but, while Mr. Gorton preserved in his heart her memory and her virtues, he remembered, and mourned in bitterness and unavailing anguish, that it was him own thoughtless; but not the less cruel, unkindness, that laid her in her early grave.

Never came the smile again upon his face; and never, though fond mammas manoeuvred and insinuated, and fair daughters flattered and praised, did he wed again; for his heart was buried with his Ellen, whom he too late loved as he should have loved. His love—“It came a sunbeam on a blasted flower.”

Washington Irving, in his beautiful “Affection for the Dead,” says: “Go to the grave of buried love, and meditate. There settle the account with thy conscience, for every past benefit unrequited, every past endearment unregarded. Console thyself, if thou canst, with this simple, yet futile tribute of regret, and take warning by this, thine unavailing sorrow for the dead, and henceforward be more faithful and affectionate in the discharge of thy duties to the living!”

MAN AND WOMAN.

AN eloquent, true, and beautiful article from the pen of a woman and a wife (and no woman not a *wife*, do we believe fully competent to write on this subject), recently met our eyes in the pages of a periodical. Its title was “Conjugial Love.” The Latin word conjugial was used by the writer to indicate the true spiritual union of man and wife in contradistinction to the mere natural union as expressed in the word conjugal. From this article let us make an extract—

“Man is an angular mathematical form, exactly *true*, but not beautiful. Woman seizes this form, and from the crucible of her warm love she moulds the truth into grace and beauty. For man’s understanding deals in outermost truths. But the Lord has blessed woman with perceptive faculties above the sphere of man’s reason, and while he looks to the outermost relations of things she at a glance perceives the inmost. Hence she becomes, as it were, the soul of his *thought*; she is the will and he the intellectual principle; she is governed and guided by him, while he in all things is modified by her will, and scarce recognises his own crude thought in her plastic feminine representation of it; hence he thinks oftentimes that he acts from her wisdom, forgetting that she has no wisdom except through him.

“Thus woman dwells in the heart of man, as in some fair and stately palace, and she looks forth into his garden of Eden, his whole spirit world of thought; she knows every lofty tree, every blooming flower and odorous plant and herb for the use of man, and every singing bird that soars heavenward in her beautiful domain, and she culls the fairest of flowers and weaves bright garlands, and adorns the brow of her beloved with his own thoughts, while he even thinks that she is bestowing treasures out of herself upon him. This gives to woman a sportive grace, a gentle lovingness, an apparent wilfulness, a delight in the power which she has through man, while she knows that he is the link that binds her to Heaven, and thus she is humble and grateful and yielding in the height of her power. How beautiful is the life of conjugial partners! The woman flows into the thought of man like influent life; she knows all things that are in him, hence she can adapt herself to his every variation; she calms him when excited, elevates him when he is depressed, regulates him by her heaven-given power, as a good heart regulates the judgment. The Lord loves the man through the woman, and loves the woman through the man, and these two distinct and separate confluent streams, from the fountain of Divine life, rejoice in their blessed and beautiful union, as like ever does when it meets its like. And it is only when the two streams unite that they can reflect the Divine image; they are noisy, turbulent, and turbid; until the meeting of the waters of life, and then in a calm, serene, deep, and beautiful blessedness they flow on so softly and smoothly that the holy heavens and the Divine sun mirror themselves in the clear waters; and if night, chill and drear, draws its darkening curtain around them, soon the silver moon of a trusting faith floods them with a gentle radiance, and bright stars of intelligence gild the night’s darkness, and they patiently await the dawn of an eternal day, when their joyous waters will again flow in the *sunshine* of heaven.”

“When the Lord in His Divine Providence brings the *two* together, in this life, that were created the one for the other, their union is wrought out by slow degrees. The false and

evil is to be put off before the Divine life can ultimate itself—an unceasing regeneration is going on—a purifying from self-love is the daily life of two partners. The wisdom which the man has from the Lord, and the love which the woman has from Him, are ever seeking conjunction. But the false and the evil that clings to every earthly being is constantly warring against this Heavenly union; in conjugial partners, hell is opposed to heaven, and it is only by a steady looking to the Lord, that Heavenly love can be preserved. The Lord opens the inmost degree of thought and feeling in the two, and elevates their love to higher planes, and thus increases their joys and felicities; and when it is a true spiritual love, an entire union of heart and mind, then the two have entered heaven, and enjoy its beautiful blessedness even while their material bodies yet dwell upon this coarse outer world.

"How wonderful is the wisdom of the Lord! How blessed is His love, in thus creating two that they may become a *one*! The sympathy, the gentle affection, the loving tender confidence, that, like magnetic thrills, makes one conscious of the inmost life of the other, gives a charm—a fulness of satisfaction—a serene blessedness to existence, that no isolated being can possibly conceive of, let external circumstances be what they may.

"Conjugial love is independent of external circumstances; it is heaven-derived, and receives nothing from the earth. It gives heavenly joy to all of its surroundings. It is that glorious inner sunshine of life, that blesses the poor man as boundlessly as the rich. And how beautiful it is for *two* to realize that time and space have nothing to do with their union. In each other they see eternity; they know from whence their emotions flow, and know that the fountain is Infinite. The Lord is the beginning and end; to them, the first and the last. They live *in* Him, *from* Him, and *to* Him. They love only His Divine image in each other; they seek to do good to others, as organs of His Divine life. He is the glory and blessedness of their whole being.

"And if such blissful emotions can be realized in this cold, hard, ungenial, outer life, what must it be when the two pass into the conscious presence of the Divine Father, and behold each other not in angular material forms, and dead material light, but in the Divine light of Heaven, in Heavenly forms,—radiant in intelligence glowing in the rosy love of eternal youth—beautiful in the 'beauty of the Lord?'"

How pure, how wise, how beautiful! Here is the true doctrine, that man and woman are not equal in the sense so often asserted in these modern times; that they are created with radical differences, and that the life of neither is perfect until they unite in marriage union —one man with one wife.

THE FAIRY WIFE.

AN APOLOGUE.

A MERCHANT married a Fairy. He was so manly, so earnest, so energetic, and so loving, that her heart was constrained toward him, and she gave up her heritage in Fairyland to accept the lot of woman.

They were married; they were happy; and the early months glided away like the vanishing pageantry of a dream.

Before the year was over he had returned to his affairs; they were important and pressing, and occupied more and more of his time. But every evening as he hastened back to her side she felt the weariness of absence more than repaid by the delight of his presence. She sat at his feet, and sang to him, and prattled away the remnant of care that lingered in his mind.

But his cares multiplied. The happiness of many families depended on him. His affairs were vast and complicated, and they kept him longer away from her. All the day, while he was amidst his bales of merchandise, she roamed along the banks of a sequestered stream, weaving bright fancy pageantries, or devising airy gayeties with which to charm his troubled spirit. A bright and sunny being, she comprehended nothing of care. Life was abounding in her. She knew not the disease of reflection; she felt not the perplexities of life. To sing and to laugh—to leap the stream and beckon him to leap after her, as he used in the old lover-days, when she would conceal herself from him in the folds of a water-lily—to tantalize and enchant him with a thousand coquetries—this was her idea of how they should live; and when he gently refused to join her in these childlike gambols, and told her of the serious work that awaited him, she raised her soft blue eyes to him in a baby wonderment, not comprehending what he meant, but acquiescing, with a sigh, because he said it.

She acquiesced, but a soft sadness fell upon her. Life to her was Love, and nothing more. A soft sadness also fell upon him. Life to him was Love, and something more; and he saw with regret that she did not comprehend it. The wall of Care, raised by busy hands, was gradually shutting him out from her. If she visited him during the day, she found herself a hindrance and retired. When he came to her at sunset he was preoccupied. She sat at his feet, loving his anxious face. He raised tenderly the golden ripple of loveliness that fell in ringlets on her neck, and kissed her soft beseeching eyes; but there was a something in his eyes, a remote look, as if his soul were afar, busy with other things which made her little heart almost burst with uncomprehended jealousy.

She would steal up to him at times when he was absorbed in calculations, and throwing her arms around his neck, woo him from his thought. A smile, revealing love in its very depths, would brighten his anxious face, as for a moment he pushed aside the world, and concentrated all his being in one happy feeling.

She could win moments from him, she could not win his life; she could charm, she could not occupy him! The painful truth came slowly over her, as the deepening shadows fall

upon a sunny Day, until at last it is Night: Night with her stars of infinite beauty, but without the lustre and warmth of Day.

She drooped; and on her couch of sickness her keen-sighted love perceived, through all his ineffable tenderness, that same remoteness in his eyes, which proved that, even as he sat there grieving and apparently absorbed in her, there still came dim remembrances of Care to vex and occupy his soul.

“It were better I were dead,” she thought; “I am not good enough for him.”

Poor child! Not good enough, because her simple nature knew not the manifold perplexities, the hindrances of *incomplete* life! Not good enough, because her whole life was scattered!

And so she breathed herself away, and left her husband to all his gloom of Care, made tenfold darker by the absence of those gleams of tenderness which before had fitfully irradiated life. The night was starless, and he alone.

A BRIEF HISTORY, IN THREE PARTS, WITH A SEQUEL.

PART I.—LOVE.

A GLANCE—a thought—a blow—
It stings him to the core.
A question—will it lay him low?
Or will time heal it o’er?

He kindles at the name—
He sits and thinks apart;
Time blows and blows it to a flame,
Burning within his heart.

He loves it though it burns,
And nurses it with care;
He feels the blissful pain by turns
With hope, and with despair.

PART II.—COURTSHIP.

Sonnets and serenades,
Sighs, glances, tears, and vows,
Gifts, tokens, souvenirs, parades,
And courtesies and bows.

A purpose and a prayer;
The stars are in the sky—
He wonders how e’en hope should dare
To let him aim so high!

Still hope allures and flatters,
And doubt just makes him bold;
And so, with passion all in tatters,
The trembling tale is told.

Apologies and blushes,
Soft looks, averted eyes,
Each heart into the other rushes,
Each yields, and wins a prize.

A gathering of fond friends,—
Brief, solemn words, and prayer,—
A trembling to the fingers’ ends,

As hand in hand, they swear.

Sweet cake, sweet wine; sweet kisses,
And so the deed is done;
Now for life’s waves and blisses,
The wedded two are one.

And down the shining stream,
They launch their buoyant skiff,
Bless’d, if they may but trust hope’s dream,
But ah! Truth echoes—“If!”

THE SEQUEL.—“IF.”

If health be firm—if friend be true—
If self be well-controlled,
If tastes be pure—if wants be few—
And not too often told—

If reason always rule the heart—
If passion own its sway—
If love—for aye—to life impart
The zest it does to-day—

If Providence, with parent care,
Mete out the varying lot—
While meek contentment bows to share,
The palace, or the cot—

And oh! if Faith, sublime and clear,
The spirit upwards guide—
Then bless’d indeed, and bless’d for ever,
The bridegroom and the bride!

ELMA’S MISSION.

“EVER, evermore!” repeated a young man, bending with a smile over the fair face that rested on his breast.

“Yes! evermore!” softly breathed the smiling lips upon which he gazed, and evermore shone from the melting, heavenly eyes.

“And you believe all these bright fancies you have been telling me of, darling?” asked the young man.

“Ah! yes—they are truth to me; they dwell in my heart of hearts—they belong to the deepest and sweetest mysteries of my being. I gaze out through the glory upon life, and I see no coldness, no darkness—everything is coloured with bright radiance from the eternal world. It is happiness that gives me this beautiful view. I have known that the world was filled, with love, but I have never so clearly seen it before. And sure I am that if I were to die now, this same splendour of love would still be poured through my soul; for it is myself, and I cannot lose it. If you were next week in Europe, far from me, would not your inner world be illumined with love and hope?”

“It certainly would!

“And can you doubt the durability, the truth and reality of this inner-life? Can this clay instrument be of any moment farther than it serves to develop life, in this, our first school?—we should not confound the earthly dwelling with the free man who makes it his temporary home. Ah! Horace, I feel, I am, sure, you will some day enjoy all these ennobling thoughts with me, and then existence will also be to you sublime.”

An expression of radiant hope flitted over the young man’s face, and he kissed the soft lips and eyes of his betrothed, while he murmured, “I would suffer the loss of all happiness on earth, I would bear every stroke the Almighty might inflict, if I *could* believe as you do, of a life beyond this. I am no unbeliever, you know. I read my Bible daily, but beyond this world everything to me is misty and dark. I shudder at the ghastliness of the grave, and would forget that I cannot always clasp your warm heart to my own. You were surely sent to be my good angel, to teach me all that is gentlest and best in my nature, and this holy love *must* last evermore. I have always smiled at the idea of love, at first sight, but when I first saw your face, Elma, none ever was so welcome; yet if you had not proved all that your face and manner promised, I should not have fallen in love. I half-believe matches are made in Heaven—ours will be Heaven-made, if any are. You think human beings are made for each other, as the saying is, do you not?”

“Yes!” returned Elma, smiling, “I *hope* we are made to be partners in this world, and a better one, but how can I know it? When my happy womanhood first dawned, I had wild, sweet dreams that here on earth I and many others would surely meet the true half that belonged to us—one with whom every thought would find a response. I have met many whose views are like mine, and yet whose natures are so different that we could not see each other’s souls; perhaps if they had loved me, I could have seen more clearly—but my rebellious heart went forth to meet you, although I tried so long to turn away—although I

trembled to think the religion of our natures was so unlike."

"I once thought, love, that I should never win you—it was your pale lips and the mournful intensity of your look, when we met after a long absence, that gave me new hope; and I have often wondered, Elma, why you gave so unhesitating an assent, when you had for months at a time avoided me at every opportunity."

"It was because my views had changed in a manner—although still believing in the fitness of two out of the whole universe for each other, I began to think that on earth these very two might each have a mission to others, and others to them, which would more fully call out their characters, and perhaps develop the dark traits necessary to be conquered—so that perfect harmony might be evolved from chaos. It once seemed to me, with the views I held, that it would be a sin for me to unite my destiny with one who did not sympathize with me on all points. But the sad fate of Augusta Atwood made me reflect deeply. She was my bosom friend, and never did mortal go to the altar with brighter hopes—never did human being love more unreservedly. She whispered to me as I arranged her hair on the morning of her bridal:—'This seems to me like the beginning of my heavenly life—there is not a height or depth of my soul that Charles's nature does not respond to—I *know* that we two are truly one." And so it seemed for two happy years—his character took every one by surprise, perhaps himself, and now Augusta is a miserably neglected wife, toiling on like an angel to reap good from her desolated earth-life. Yet we see that her mighty love was not a true interpreter. No doubt her lover was sincere at the time in believing that they not only felt, but thought alike. I have known many instances, very many, where two, perhaps equally good and true, have thought themselves fitted for each other and none else; yet on the death of one, they have found a companion who was still more especially made for them. Thus we see that this is a matter where there appears to be little certainty and many mistakes. Doubtless, there are some few blessed ones who truly find their better—half; but in this sinful, imperfect state of life, we cannot believe that we are in an order sufficiently harmonious to have this a sure thing. Perhaps one-third of the women in the world never even loved half as well as they felt themselves capable of loving, simply because no object presented himself who could call forth all the music of a high and noble nature.

"So many a soul o'er life's drear desert faring,
Love's pure congenial spring unfound, unquaffed,
Suffers, recoils, then thirsty and despairing
Of what it would, descends and sips the nearest draught."

But, Elma, my child, it is not pleasant to me that you should have a single doubt that *we* are not dearer to each other than any other mortals could ever be in this world, or the beautiful one you love to dream of."

"I am telling you, Horace, the thoughts that have been in my mind—I only feel now that you are good and gifted, and I love you more than I ever dreamed of loving."

"And you, sweet, are the breath of my life. It is heavenly to know that God has given you, and you alone, to be the angel ministrant of my oft tempestuous life: you have risen like a star over my cloudy horizon—may the light of the gentle star shine on my path, until it leads me unto the perfect day!"

“Only the light of the Sun of Righteousness can do that,” returned Elma; then, with a tear glistening on her lash, she added, “I hope God will help me to be good and pure, that I may be a medium of good, and not evil to you.”

Most blessedly passed the days to that hopeful maiden; it was a treasure full of all promise to have, not only the happiness of her lover, but as she trusted, his best good committed to her charge, next to God. When she knelt in the morning hour, her prayer was ever a thanksgiving—she lifted up the gates of her soul that the King of Glory might come in, and His radiant presence permeated her whole being—she left to Him the control of her life, all the strange mysteries of heavenly policy, which she felt and knew would ultimate in perfecting her too worldly nature; and she went forth, angel-attended, to her duties, fusing into them this effluent life that dwelt so richly within her. Every word of kindness and love that dropped from her soft, coral lips, bore with it a portion of the smiling life that overflowed her spirit. When she arose, her constant thought was, “Another day is coming, in which the work of progress may go on: I may perhaps this day conquer some evil, or do some humble good, that will fit me to be a still better angel to Horace, and which shall beautify my mansion in the Heavens.”

At length the bridal day came, and fled also like other days, save that a sweeter brightness enwrapped the soul of Elma; so six months or more flitted away in delicious dream-life, for outward things made comparatively slight impression; Elma lived and loved more than she thought. But one morning reflection and pain came together; the latter led in the former, a long-forgotten friend, and the young wife asked herself how far she had travelled onward and upward since the bridal days, since her path had been all sunshine;—she bowed her head and wept bitterly. “Not for me, at least,” she sighed, “is constant happiness a friend,—not yet am I fitted to enjoy the highest harmony of life. ‘Therefore, burn, thou holy pain, thou purifying fire!’ It is meet I should be wounded where my deepest joys are lodged. I see that it is the lash of pain which must drive me through the golden gates. Yes! I will arise, and thank my Father that He has not been as unmindful of my eternal well-being as I would be myself, if left to wander only among flowers of love and gladness.”

And what was this grief that awoke the bride from her blissful dream? It would seem the merest nothing to the strong man of the world, to the gay woman who glides, superficially through existence. But many a young bride will understand how it might be more sorrowful than the loss of houses and lands. It was the husband’s first frown, his first petulant word; it was the key that opened Elma’s understanding to the true estate of the past. She could no longer blind her eyes, as she had done, to a certain worldliness in her husband, and which had also reached her through him. This morning, that revealed so much, Horace had impatiently exclaimed as Elma held forth her Bible to him, as usual,—

“I have not time for that now, child!” and hastily kissing her, he put on his hat, and went forth to his business.

A pale anguish settled on Elma’s face as she sunk upon a chair.

“Is this the beginning of sorrows?” she murmured; “he never spoke to me so before, perhaps he will often do so again. If it had been about anything else, I think I could have

borne it better! Oh God! is the angel leaving our Paradise?”

And she thought over and over again of this worldliness in her husband, and his want of the high standard in religion that was so dear to her; she felt that she was, in a measure, deceived in him,—surely once he seemed to dwell in an atmosphere that was more spiritual. Yes! Elma was deceived in him, but Horace had not deceived her. In the happy glow of his successful love, he had caught the warmth of Elma’s thoughts; they had charmed his imagination, in a measure commended themselves to his understanding, and made a temporary impression upon him heart, so that he went out among men with a more benevolent spirit than he had ever done before. But truth, to be abiding, must be sought after with an eager thirst; and it came to Horace crowned with flowers; he condescended to take the charmer in, and obeyed her for awhile, then she was forgotten, he thought not why, and he imperceptibly returned to the real self, which Elma had never before had an opportunity to become acquainted with.

Three years went by. Horace was a devoted husband, no being on earth was to him so perfect as his wife—no human being had ever exerted over him the quiet, holy influence that belonged to Elma. She had gradually accomplished infinitely more than she suspected, yet many a time, and oft, had he caused her grieved tears to fall like rain. Many a time had despairing prayers risen from her soul for him, while she breathed out to her God a cry for strength. She felt that she saw through a glass darkly; but she sought with most earnest heart for every duty, knowing that thus her pathway would lead continually to a more sure and steady light.

Elma often wondered that so much joy was given to her earthly life; but she understood the true philosophy, for her every grief was regarded as a special messenger from the spirit-land, and amid her tears she looked up, and resolutely answered to the call, “Excelsior!” She was ever receiving with gratitude the blessings that clustered about her lot, and, as it were, transmuting all common things into pleasures, by seeking out a brightness in them.

But a heavier trial was in store for the wife than she had anticipated. Horace had been very unfortunate in business; he bore it with more gentleness than Elma had expected, but it wore upon his spirits; day after day he was busied in settling up, and came home with a look of sadness and anxiety. One evening he came in with a brighter look.

“What is the news?” asked his wife, as she read his face.

“I have an offer of a clerkship, at a very good salary, eighteen hundred dollars a year!”

“We can get along admirably with that!” said Elma, with a bright smile. “You know we are retrenching our expenses so much, that we can live on half that, and the rest can go towards your debts. In a few years you will be able to pay all you owe, will you not?”

“Perhaps so, by exerting every faculty, and living on less than you propose!”

“Oh! well, we can!” was the eager response. “I’ll manage to get along on almost nothing; as small a sum as you choose to name. Every trifling deprivation will be an actual delight, that helps to discharge those debts. It will, indeed!” she added, as Horace smiled at her enthusiasm.

“I believe you, little one, every word you say!” and, with an air of cheerful affection, such

as he had not shown for weeks, the husband drew his wife's head upon his breast, and, forgetful of cold business cares and the world, they were gay, tender, and happy.

It was with a different look that Horace entered his home the next evening; a shadow fell on Elma's heart when she saw him, and the evening meal passed in silence.

"What are you thinking of, Horace?" she timidly asked, some time after, approaching him as he stood by the window, gazing out gloomily into the star-lighted street.

"I have received a better offer, and have determined to accept it." It must be known that Horace came quickly to a decision, and then persevered in it; none knew the vanity of striving to change him, when fairly resolved, better than Elma; but in small matters he was yielding as Elma herself. She stood in a fearful silence, looking into his face, which he had turned towards her.

"I am going to California!" he said, almost sternly, for he feared
Elma's tenderness might unman him.

"Not without me?" she asked, with pleading eyes.

"Yes! Elma, I cannot take you, for I shall be constantly travelling, and subject to the greatest hardships,—you could not bear it! I shall be back in a year and a half."

"I could bear anything better than to be left behind—you do not know as well as I what would be the greatest hardship for me. Ah! Horace, do not put me to this dreadful trial. Let me go with you, and you will find that I will not utter a complaint. You can leave me at some place, while you travel over the roughest country—you may be sick, and need me. I fear men grow hard and selfish there, and what you gain in purse, you may lose in what is dearest to me. 'It is not good for man to be alone.'"

"Hush, darling; every word is vain!" answered Horace, clasping her to his breast, and kissing her with passionate vehemence. For the first time in his life he wept without any restraint over her. "Do you think anything but duty would tear me from you? It is my duty to be just to all men, and to pay what I owe as soon as I can."

"But take me!" sobbed Elma.

"Dear child! you must be reasonable. I know that you fear the influence about me will not be as angelically pure as your own, and I love you for that fear. I shall go where no man will care for my soul as you do; but I shall not forget you, Elma. Now, cheer up, and show me the ready resolution you have always had at hand."

"I never had such a cruel blow as this before!" returned Elma, in an entire abandonment of grief. "Oh! take me with you, Horace, and nothing in the world will be hard for me."

The wife's pleadings were vain, and in a week she parted from her husband. After he had gone, she won back a spirit of resignation; indeed, as soon as she found her doom was sealed, she gathered up her strength, and strove to cheer Horace, whose spirits sunk miserably when he had no longer to support Elma. She laid out a plan for her life during her widowhood, as she called it, and this plan was after the example of One who went about doing good. The weary time passed slowly, but each day added a little gem to Elma's heavenly life, and when, at length, she received her husband's last letter before his return, her thanks gushed forth in gladness, as they had so often before done, in holy

confidence. Part of his letter ran thus:—

And now, dear love, having told you of the outward success which has met my efforts, let me tell you a little of the heart that belongs to you—which you have won from darkness to light. It is filled with images of hope and love, and a light from your spirit shines through all—have been ever with me, ever leading me to that ‘true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.’ I often gave you pain, my darling, when we were together; it was unintentional, and sprang from the evil of my nature; and a thousand times, when you did not suspect it, your gentle look and touch brought to my spirit better thoughts, and the thoughts brought better words and deeds. You have been the angel of my life still more during our separation; for my soul has yearned for your dear presence constantly, and every day I have said to myself, ‘Would this please Elma?’ and when I have been enabled to do a kindness, my heart glowed at the thought of Elma’s approval. Your blessed spirit never seems so near to me as when I lift up my soul in prayer. I sometimes fancy your prayers, beloved, have unlocked the Kingdom of Heaven for me. Good bye, dearest life, we shall soon meet.

HORACE.”

And when they met, the joy of their first wedding days seemed doubled. Elma rejoiced at the discipline she had been through, for it had better fitted her for the joyful existence that was before her. It had now become more of a habit for her soul to dwell in a heavenly atmosphere—she had learned to rely steadfastly upon her God for the good gifts of her life, and they were showered upon her abundantly; doubly beautiful, they were shared by a heart in unison.

LIVING LIKE A LADY.

MR. HAMILTON BURGESS was a man of limited means, but having married a beautiful and amiable woman, he resolved to spare no expense in surrounding her with comforts, and in supporting her, as he said, “like a lady.”

“My dear Ammy,” said Mrs. Burgess, to her indulgent husband, about a year after their marriage—“My dear Ammy”—this was the name she called him by *at home*—“you are too kind to me, altogether. You are unwilling that I should work, or do anything towards our support, when I actually think that a little exertion on my part would not only serve to lighten your expenses, but be quite as good for my health and spirits as the occupations to which my time is now devoted.”

“Oh, you industrious little bee!” exclaimed Mr. Burgess, “you have great notions of making yourself useful, I declare! But, Lizzie, I shall never consent to your propositions. I did not marry you to make you my slave. When you gave me this dear hand, I resolved that it should never be soiled and made rough by labour—and it never shall, as long as I am able to attend to my business.”

Mrs. Burgess would not have done anything to displease her husband for the world, and she accordingly allowed him to have his way without offering farther remonstrance.

But Hamilton’s business was dull, and it required the greatest exertion on his part, and the severest application, to raise sufficient money to meet the daily expenses of his family.

“My affairs will be in a better state next year,” he said to himself, “and I must manage to struggle through this dull season some way or another. I will venture to run in debt a little, I think; for any way is preferable to reducing our household expenditures, which are by no means extravagant. At all events, Lizzie must not know what my circumstances are, for she would insist upon a change in our style of living, and revive the subject of doing something towards our support.”

Mr. Burgess then ventured to run in debt a little; he did not attempt to reduce the expenses of his housekeeping; he never gave his wife a hint respecting the true state of his business matters, but insisted upon her accepting, as usual, a liberal allowance of funds to meet her private expenses.

Lizzie seemed quite happy in her ignorance of her husband’s circumstances, never spoke again of assisting to support the establishment, but seemed to devote herself to the pursuit of quiet pleasures, and to procuring Hamilton’s happiness. But Mr. Burgess’s circumstances, instead of improving, grew continually worse. His venture of “running in debt a little,” resulted in running in debt a great deal. Thus the second year of his married life passed, and the dark shadows of disappointed hope and the traces of corroding care began to change the aspect of his brow.

One day a friend said to Hamilton—

“I am surprised at your conduct! Here you are, making a slave of yourself, while your wife is playing the lady. She is not to blame; it is *you*. She would gladly do something for her

own support, if you would permit her; and it would be better for her and for you. Remember the true saying—

‘Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do!’”

“What do you mean?” demanded Hamilton, reddening.

“I mean that, *generally speaking*, young wives of an ardent temperament, when left to themselves, with nothing but their pleasures to occupy their minds, are apt to forget their husbands, and find enjoyment in such society as he might not altogether approve.”

“Sir, you do not know my wife,” exclaimed Hamilton. “She, thank Heaven, is not one of those.”

“I hope not,” was the quiet reply.

Although Hamilton Burgess had not a jealous nature, and would never have entertained unjust suspicions of his wife, these words of his friend set him to thinking. He remembered that Lizzie was always happy, however he might be oppressed with cares; and now he wondered how it was that she could be so unmindful of everything except pleasure, while he was so constantly harassed. The consistent Mr. Hamilton Burgess undoubtedly forgot that he had taken the utmost pains to conceal his circumstances from his wife.

It was in this state of mind that Mr. Burgess one day left his business, and went home unexpectedly. It was at an hour when Lizzie least thought of seeing him, and on this occasion she appeared considerably embarrassed; nor did Mr. Burgess fail to observe that she was very tardy in making her appearance in the sitting-room.

On another occasion, Mr. Burgess returned home under similar circumstances, and going directly to his wife’s room, found, to his astonishment, that he could not gain admittance. After some delay, however, during which Hamilton heard footsteps hurrying to and fro within, and whispering, Mrs. Burgess opened the door, and, blushing very red, attempted to apologize for not admitting him before.

“Who was with you?” demanded Hamilton.

“With *me*?” cried Lizzie, much confused.

“Yes, madam. I heard whispering, and I am sure somebody just passed through that side door.”

“Oh, that was nobody but Margaret!” exclaimed Mrs. Burgess, hastily.

Hamilton could ill conceal his vexation; but he did not intimate to his wife that he suspected her of equivocation, nor did she see fit to attempt a full exposition of the matter.

Nothing was said of this incident afterwards; but for many weeks it occupied Hamilton’s mind. All this time he was harassed with cares of business, and his brow became more darkly shrouded in gloom as his perplexities thickened. At last the crisis came! Mr. Burgess saw the utter impossibility of longer continuing his almost profitless trade, under heavy expenses, which not only absorbed his small capital, but actually plunged him into debt. But one honest course was left for him to pursue; and he resolved to close up his

affairs, and sell off what stock he had to pay his debts.

It was at this time that Mr. Burgess saw in its true light the error of which he had been guilty, in opposing his wife's desire to economize, and devote a portion of her time to useful occupation.

"Had I allowed her to lighten our expenses in this way," thought he, "I might not have been driven to such extremities. And what has been the result of my folly? Why, I have kept her ignorant of our poverty until the very last, and now the sudden intelligence that we are beggars, will well nigh kill her!"

Satisfied of the danger, if not the impossibility, of keeping the secret longer from his wife, Mr. Burgess went home one day, resolved to break the intelligence to her without hesitation. Entering the house with his latch-key, he went directly to Lizzie's room, which he entered unceremoniously. To his surprise, he found on the table a gentleman's cap, of that peculiar fashion which he had seen worn by postmen and dandies about town. Anxious for an explanation, he looked around for his wife; but Lizzie was not in the room. Then hearing voices in another part of the house, he left the room by a different door from that by which he had entered, and hastened to the parlour, where he expected to find Mrs. Burgess in company with the owner of *that cap*. To his surprise, he found the parlour vacant, and meeting Margaret in the hall a moment after, he impatiently demanded his wife.

"She is in the room, sir," said the domestic.

Without saying a word, Hamilton again hastened to Lizzie's room, where he found her reading a late magazine with affected indifference!

"Madam," cried he, angrily, "what does this mean? Here I have been chasing you all over the house, without being able to catch you. What company have you just dismissed?"

"What company?" asked Lizzie.

"Yes, madam, what company?"

"Do not speak so angrily, dear Ammy. Why are you so impatient?"

"Because I wish to know what gentleman has been favouring you with such a confidential visit!"

Hamilton remembered other occasions when, on his coming home unexpectedly, his wife had shown signs of embarrassment; and, added to this, her present equivocation rendered him violently jealous. She appeared to shrink from him in fear, and became alternately red and pale, as she answered—

"There has been no gentleman here to see me!"

"No one?"

"No one, dear Ammy!"

Mr. Burgess was on the point of demanding to know who was the owner of the cap which he had seen on his wife's table, and which had now mysteriously disappeared; but emotion checked him, and he paced the floor in silence.

“This is too much!” he muttered, at length, in the bitterness of his heart. “I could endure poverty, without uttering a complaint for myself; I could endure anything but this!”

“Why, Ammy, what is the matter?” cried Mrs. Burgess, in alarm.

“Nothing—only we are beggars!” answered Hamilton, abruptly.

“Have you been unfortunate?” calmly asked his wife, affectionately taking him by the arm.

“Yes—the most unfortunate of men! I am ruined—we are beggars—but”—

“Dear Ammy, you must not let this cast you down. Business failures frequently happen, but they ought never to destroy domestic happiness. Come, how bad off are we? Are we really beggars?”

“My creditors will take everything,” answered Hamilton, gloomily.

“They will not take us from each other,” said Lizzie.

Mr. Burgess looked at his young wife with a bitter smile.

“Are you such a deceiver?” he muttered through his teeth. “Can you talk thus when you have just dismissed a lover?”

“Sir!” cried Mrs. Burgess, a glow of indignation lighting her fair face. “What do you mean?”

“Don’t deny what I say!” replied Hamilton. “You were having an interview with a gentleman when I came in.”

Lizzie trembled with indignation.

“I saw his cap on the table!”

Lizzie laughed outright. “Come here,” she said, leading her husband away.

Hamilton followed her, and she went to a bureau, unlocked a deep drawer, and opening it, called her husband’s attention to its contents.

It was half full of caps!

Hamilton looked at Lizzie in perplexity. Lizzie looked at Hamilton, and smiled.

“I suppose that you will now declare that there are twenty gentlemen in the house,” said Mrs. Burgess.

“Lizzie!”’ cried her husband, clasping her hands, “I am already ashamed of my suspicions. I ask your forgiveness. But explain this matter to me. I am dying in perplexity.”

“Well”, replied Lizzie, archly, “*I* made those caps.”

“*You*!”

“Certainly; that is, I and Margaret. I kept my work a secret from you, because you were opposed to my exerting myself, and although you have come near surprising me more than once, I have carried on my treasonable designs pretty successfully until to-day.”

“But, dear Lizzie, how could you?”

“I can answer that question. I saw pretty clearly into your business affairs, and I knew that we could not live in this style long. So I thought I would disobey you. My cousin George, the hat manufacturer, seconded my designs, and privately sent me caps to make, nearly a year ago.”

Hamilton opened his eyes in astonishment.

“Surprising, isn’t it? But this isn’t all. You insisted on my keeping Margaret, when I might just as well have done my housework myself; I thought I would make her useful, and made her help me work on the caps. Besides, you were not satisfied if I neglected to use all the spending money you allowed me, and I pretended to use that, just to please you. Now, before you scold me for my disobedience, witness the results of my industry and economy.”

Lizzie opened her desk, and displayed to Hamilton’s bewildered sight, a pile of gold which filled him with greater astonishment than anything else.

“There,” continued Lizzie, without allowing him to speak—“there are three hundred dollars. Of course, this little sum wouldn’t make anybody rich, but I hope it will convince you that a wife’s economy and industry are not to be despised.”

“Lizzie! dear Lizzie!”

“Oh, this is nothing—only a sample of what I can do. Come, now, acknowledge your error, and say that I may have my own way in future.”

Hamilton replied by clasping his wife in his arms.

“There, say nothing more about it,” she continued. “Don’t think of your misfortunes, but remember that we can be happy even if we both have to work hard. Poverty cannot crush us; and I hope I have already convinced you that work will not make me lose attraction in your sight.”

The young husband’s heart overflowed with gratitude and joy.

“How have I misunderstood you, dear Lizzie!” he exclaimed. “You are worth more to me than southern riches; and now that I know poverty cannot crush you my mind is at ease. Lizzie, I am so happy!”

“And I may have my way?”

“Yes, always.”

“Remember this!” cried Mrs. Burgess, archly.

With a lighter heart than he had felt for many months before,
Hamilton went about the settlement of his business affairs, while
Lizzie devoted herself to perfecting a new system of housekeeping.

When Mr. Burgess came home at night, he was surprised at the wonderful change which had taken place during his absence.

“Don’t scold,” said his wife, regarding him with a smile; “you said
I might have my way.”

“True—but what have you done?”

“I have been making arrangements to let half the house to Mr. Smith’s family, who will move in next week. They are pleasant people, and as we had twice as much room as we actually needed, I thought it best to take them. Then again, we shan’t need so much furniture, and if you like, you can sell Mr. Smith some of what we have, at a fair price.”

Mr. Burgess neither frowned nor looked displeased, nor did he ever afterwards oppose his wife’s designs. He soon found his expenses so reduced, that, with the fruits of his wife’s industry added to his own, they were able to live quite comfortably and happily; and, although he soon became engaged in more profitable business, he never again urged her to indulge in the folly of “living like a lady.”

LADY LUCY’S SECRET.

MR. FERRARS, who sat reading the morning paper, suddenly started with an exclamation of grief and astonishment that completely roused his absent-minded wife.

“My dear Walter, what has happened?” she asked, with real anxiety.

“A man a bankrupt, whom I thought as safe as the Bank of England! Though it is true, people talked about him months ago—spoke suspiciously of his personal extravagance, and, above all, said that his wife was ruining him.”

“His wife!”

“Yes; but I cannot understand that sort of thing. A few hundreds a year more or less could be of little moment to a man like Beaufort, and I don’t suppose she spent more than you do, my darling. At any rate she was never better dressed. Yet I believe the truth was, that she got frightfully into debt unknown to him; and debt is a sort of thing that multiplies itself in a most astonishing manner, and sows by the wayside the seeds of all sorts of misery. Then people say that when payday came at last, bickerings ensued, their domestic happiness was broken up, Beaufort grew reckless, and plunged into the excitement of the maddest speculations.”

“How dreadful!” murmured Lady Lucy.

“Dreadful indeed! I don’t know what I should do with such a wife.”

“Would not you forgive her if you loved her very much?” asked Lady Lucy, and she spoke in a singularly calm tone of suppressed emotion.

“Once, perhaps, once; and if her fault were the fault of youthful inexperience,—but so much falseness, mean deception, and mental deterioration must have accompanied such transactions, that—in short, I thank Heaven that I have never been put to the trial.”

As he spoke, the eyes of Mr. Ferrars were fixed on the leading article of the Times, not on his wife. Presently Lady Lucy glided from the room, without her absence being at the moment observed. Once in her dressing-room, she turned the key, and sinking into a low chair, gave vent to her grief in some of the bitterest tears she had ever shed. She, too, was in debt; “frightfully” her husband had used the right word; “hopelessly” so far as satisfying her creditors, even out of the large allowance Mr. Ferrars made her; and still she had not the courage voluntarily to tell the truth, which yet she knew must burst upon him ere long. From what small beginnings had this Upas shadow come upon her! And what “falseness, mean deception, and mental deterioration” had truly been hers!

Even the fancied relief of weeping was a luxury denied to her, for she feared to show the evidence of tears; thus after a little while she strove to drive them back, and by bathing her

face before the glass, and drawing the braids of her soft hair a little nearer her eyes, she was tolerably successful in hiding their trace. Never, when dressing for court or gala, had she consulted her mirror so closely; and now, though the tears were dried, she was shocked at the lines of anguish—those delvers of the wrinkles of age—which marked her countenance. She sat before her looking-glass, one hand supporting her head, the other clutching the hidden letters which she had not yet the courage to open. There was a light tap at the door.

“Who is there?” inquired Lady Lucy.

“It is I, my lady,” replied Harris, her faithful maid. “Madame Dalmas is here.”

Lady Lucy unlocked the door and gave orders that the visiter should be shown up. With the name had come a flush of hope that some trifling temporary help would be hers. Madame Dalmas called herself a Frenchwoman, and signed herself “Antoinette” but she was really an English Jewess of low extraction, whose true name was Sarah Solomons. Her “profession” was to purchase—and sell—the cast-off apparel of ladies of fashion; and few of the sisterhood have carried the art of double cheating to so great a proficiency. With always a roll of bank-notes in her old leather pocket-book, and always a dirty canvass bag full of bright sovereigns in her pocket, she had ever the subtle temptation for her victims ready.

Madame Dalmas—for she must be called according to the name engraved on her card—was a little meanly-dressed woman of about forty, with bright eyes and a hooked nose, a restless shuffling manner, and an ill-pitched voice. Her jargon was a mixture of bad French and worse English.

“Bon jour, miladi Lucy,” she exclaimed as she entered Lady Lucy’s sanctum; “need not inquire of health, you look si charmante. Oh, si belle!—that make you wear old clothes so longer dan oder ladies, and have so leetel for me to buy. Milady Lucy Ferrars know she look well in anyting, but yet she should not wear old clothes: no right—for example—for de trade, and de hoosband always like de wife well dressed—ha—ha!”

Poor Lady Lucy! Too sick at heart to have any relish for Madame Dalmas’ nauseous compliments, and more than half aware of her cheats and falsehoods, she yet tolerated the creature from her own dire necessities.

“Sit down, Madame Dalmas,” she said, “I am dreadfully in want of money; but I really don’t know what I have for you.”

“De green velvet, which you not let me have before Easter, I still give you four pounds for it, though perhaps you worn it very much since then.”

“Only twice—only seven times in all—and it cost me twenty guineas,” sighed Lady Lucy.

“Ah, but so old-fashioned—I do believe I not see my money for it. Voyez-vous, de Lady Lucy is one petite lady—si jolie, mais tres petite. If she were de tall grand lady, you see de great dresses could fit small lady, but de leetle dresses fit but ver few.”

“If I sell the green velvet I must have another next winter!” murmured Lady Lucy.

“Ah!—vous avez raison—when de season nouveautes come in. I tell you what—you let

me have also de white lace robe you show me once, the same time I bought from you one little old pearl brooch."

"My wedding-dress? Oh, no, I cannot sell my wedding-dress!" exclaimed poor Lady Lucy, pressing her hands conclusively together.

"What for not?—you not want to marry over again—I give you twenty-two pounds for it."

"Twenty-two pounds!—why, it is Brussels point, and cost a hundred and twenty."

"Ah, I know—but you forget I perhaps keep it ten years and not sell—and besides you buy dear; great lady often buy ver dear!" and Madame Dalmas shook her head with the solemnity of a sage.

"No, no; I cannot sell my wedding-dress," again murmured the wife. And be it recorded, the temptress, for once, was baffled; but, at the expiration of an hour, Madame Dalmas left the house, with a huge bundle under her arm, and a quiet satisfaction revealed in her countenance, had any one thought it worth while to study the expression of her disagreeable face.

Again Lady Lucy locked her door; and placing a bank note and some sovereigns on the table, she sank into a low chair, and while a few large silent tears flowed down her cheeks, she at last found courage to open the three letters which had hitherto remained, unread, in her apron pocket. The first, the second, seemed to contain nothing to surprise her, however much there might be to annoy; but it was different with the last; here was a gross overcharge, and perhaps it was not with quite a disagreeable feeling that Lady Lucy found something of which she could justly complain. She rose hurriedly and unlocked a small writing-desk, which had long been used as a receptacle for old letters and accounts.

To tell the truth, the interior of the desk did not present a very orderly arrangement. Cards of address, bills paid and unpaid, copies of verses, and papers of many descriptions, were huddled together, and it was not by any means surprising that Lady Lucy failed in her search for the original account by which to rectify the error in her shoemaker's bill. In the hurry and nervous trepidation, which had latterly become almost a constitutional ailment with her, she turned out the contents of the writing-desk into an easy-chair, and then kneeling before it, she set herself to the task of carefully examining the papers. Soon she came to one letter which had been little expected in that place, and which still bore the marks of a rose, whose withered leaves also remained, that had been put away in its folds. The rose Walter Ferrars had given her on the eve of their marriage, and the letter was in his handwriting, and bore but a few days earlier date. With quickened pulses she opened the envelope; and though a mist rose before her eyes, it seemed to form into a mirror in which she saw the by-gone hours. And so she read—and read.

It is the fashion to laugh at love-letters, perhaps because only the silly ones ever come to light. With the noblest of both sexes such effusions are sacred, and would be profaned by the perusal of a third person: but when a warm and true heart is joined to a manly intellect; when reason sanctions and constancy maintains the choice which has been made, there is little doubt that much of simple, truthful, touching eloquence is often to be found in a "lover's" letter. That which the wife now perused with strange and mingled feelings was evidently a reply to some girlish depreciation, of herself, and contained these words:—

“You tell me that in the scanty years of your past life, you already look back on a hundred follies, and that you have unnumbered faults of character at which I do not even guess. Making some allowance for a figurative expression, I will answer ‘it may be so.’ What then? I have never called you an angel, and never desired you to be perfect. The weaknesses which cling, tendril-like, to a fine nature, not unfrequently bind us to it by ties we do not seek to sever. I know you for a true-hearted girl, but with the bitter lessons of life still unlearned; let it be my part to shield you from their sad knowledge,—yet whatever sorrow or evil falls upon you, I must or ought to share. Let us have no secrets; and while the Truth which gives its purest lustre to your eye, and its richest rose to your cheek, still reigns in your soul, I cannot dream of a fault grave enough to deserve harsher rebuke than the kiss of forgiveness.”

What lines to read at such a moment! No wonder their meaning reached her mind far differently than it had done when they were first received. Then she could have little heeded it; witness how carelessly the letter had been put away—how forgotten had been its contents.

Her tears flowed in torrents, but Lucy Ferrars no longer strove to check them. And yet there gleamed through them a brighter smile than had visited her countenance for many a month, A resolve approved by all her better nature was growing firm within her heart; and that which an hour before would have seemed too dreadful to contemplate was losing half its terrors. How often an ascent, which looks in the distance a bare precipice, shows us, when we approach its face, the notches by which we may climb!—and not a few of the difficulties of life yield to our will when we bravely encounter them.

“Why did I fear him so much?” murmured Lady Lucy to herself. “I ought not to have needed such an assurance as this to throw myself at his feet, and bear even scorn and rebuke, rather than prolong the reign of falsehood and deceit. Yes—yes,” and gathering a heap of papers in her hand with the “love-letter” beneath them, she descended the stairs.

There is no denying that Lady Lucy paused at the library door—no denying that her heart beat quickly, and her breath seemed well-nigh spent; but she was right to act on the good impulse, and not wait until the new-born courage should sink.

Mr. Ferrars had finished the newspaper, and was writing an unimportant note; his back was to the door, and hearing the rustle of his wife’s dress, and knowing her step, he did not turn his head sufficiently to observe her countenance, but he said, good-humouredly,

“At last! What have you been about? I thought we were to go out before luncheon to look at the bracelet I mentioned to you.”

“No, Walter—no bracelet—you must never give me any jewels again;” and as Lady Lucy spoke she leaned against a chair for support. At such words her husband turned quickly round, started up, and exclaimed,

“Lucy, my love!—in tears—what has happened?” and finding that even when he wound his arm round her she still was mute, he continued, “Speak—this silence breaks my heart —what have I done to lose your confidence?”

“Not you—I—” gasped the wife. “Your words at breakfast—this letter—have rolled the stone from my heart—I must confess—the truth—I am like Mrs. Beaufort—in debt—

frightfully in debt.” And with a gesture, as if she would crush herself into the earth, she slipped from his arms and sank literally on the floor.

Whatever pang Mr. Ferrars felt at the knowledge of her fault, it seemed overpowered by the sense of her present anguish—an anguish that proved how bitter had been the expiation; and he lifted his wife to a sofa, bent over her with fondness, called her by all the dear pet names to which her ear was accustomed, and nearer twenty times than once gave her the “kiss of forgiveness.”

“And it is of you I have been afraid!” cried Lady Lucy clinging to his hand. “You who I thought would never make any excuses for faults you yourself could not have committed!”

“I have never been tempted.”

“Have I? I dare not say so.”

“Tell me how it all came about,” said Mr. Ferrars, drawing her to him; “tell me from the beginning.”

But his gentleness unnerved her—she felt choking—loosened the collar of her dress for breathing space—and gave him the knowledge he asked in broken exclamations.

“Before I was married—it—began. They persuaded me so many—oh, so many—unnecessary things were—needed. Then they would not send the bills—and I—for a long time—never knew—what I owed—and then—and then—I thought I should have the power—but—”

“Your allowance was not sufficient?”’ asked Mr. Ferrars, pressing her hand as he spoke.

“Oh, yes, yes, yes! most generous, and yet it was always forestalled to pay old bills; and then—and then my wants were so many. I was so weak. Madame Dalmas has had dresses I could have worn when I had new ones on credit instead, and—and Harris has had double wages to compensate for what a lady’s maid thinks her perquisites; even articles I might have given to poor gentlewoman I have been mean enough to sell. Oh, Walter! I have been very wrong; but I have been miserable for at least three years. I have felt as if an iron cage were rising round me—from which you only could free me—and yet, till to-day, I think I could have died rather than confess to you.”

“My poor girl! Why should you have feared me? Have I ever been harsh?”

“Oh, no!—no—but you are so just—so strict in all these things—”

“I hope I am; and yet not the less do I understand how all this has come about. Now, Lucy—now that you have ceased to fear me—tell me the amount.”

She strove to speak, but could not.

“Three figures or four? tell me.”

“I am afraid—yes, I am afraid four,” murmured Lady Lucy, and hiding her face from his view; “yes, four figures, and my quarter received last week gone every penny.”

“Lucy, every bill shall be paid this day; but you must reward me by being happy.”

“Generous! dearest! But, Walter, if you had been a poor man, what then?”

“Ah, Lucy, that would have been a very different and an infinitely sadder story. Instead of the relinquishment of some indulgence hardly to be missed, there might have been ruin and poverty and disgrace. You have one excuse,—at least you knew that I could pay at last.”

“Ah, but at what a price! The price of your love and confidence.”

“No, Lucy—for your confession has been voluntary; and I will not ask myself what I should have felt had the knowledge come from another. After all, you have fallen to a temptation which besets the wives of the rich far more than those of poor or struggling gentlemen. Tradespeople are shrewd enough in one respect: they do not press their commodities and long credit in quarters where ultimate payment seems doubtful—though —”

“They care not what domestic misery they create among the rich,” interrupted Lady Lucy, bitterly.

“Stay: there are faults on both sides, not the least of them being that girls in your station are too rarely taught the value of money, or that integrity in money matters should be to them a point of honour second only to one other. Now listen, my darling, before we dismiss this painful subject for ever. You have the greatest confidence in your maid, and *entre nous* she must be a good deal in the secret. We shall bribe her to discretion, however, by dismissing Madame Dalmas at once and for ever. As soon as you can spare Harris, I will send her to change a check at Coutts’s, and then, for expedition and security, she shall take on the brougham and make a round to these tradespeople. Meanwhile, I will drive you in the phaeton to look at the bracelet.”

“Oh, no—no, dear Walter, not the bracelet.”

“Yes—yes—I say yes. Though not a quarrel, this is a sorrow which has come between us, and there must be a peace-offering. Besides, I would not have you think that you had reached the limits of my will, and of my means to gratify you.”

“To think that I could have doubted—that I could have feared you!” sobbed Lady Lucy, as tears of joy coursed down her cheeks. “But, Walter, it is not every husband who would have shown such generosity.”

“I think there are few husbands, Lucy, who do not estimate truth and candour as among the chief of conjugal virtues:—ah, had you confided in me when first you felt the bondage of debt, how much anguish would have been spared you!”

A WORD FOR WIVES.

WHAT is it? A little pencil note, crumpled and worn, as if carried for a long time in one's pocket. I found it in a box of precious things that Fanny's mother had hoarded so choicely, because Fanny had been choice of them. I must read it, for everything of Fanny's is dear to us now. Ah! 'tis a note from a gentleman who was at school with us at F—, whom Fanny esteemed so much, whom we both esteemed for his sterling integrity and his gentleness. It is precious, too, as a reminder of him. I love the remembrance of old schoolfellows,—of frolicsome, foolish, frivolous, *loving* schooldays. But let me read. 'Tis mostly rubbed out, but here is a place.

"You know full well that long since, 'that *dear cousin*' permitted me to call her by the endearing name of sister; and may I not, when far away, thinking of bygones, add your name to hers in the sisterly list? You asked me when I had heard from *the dear one:* she was down here a short *hour* last week, but what was that among so many who wished to see her?"

Ah! that means me! If I had only known it then! And just now I was wondering if he *really* loved me, and perhaps felt almost in my secret heart to grieve a bit—to murmur at him. I fear I spoke as he little dreamed then the "*dear one*" would ever do. What shall I do? I remember him now, in all his young loveliness, in all the excitability of a first love, and my heart kindles too warmly to write what I wished.

What if one had told me then that my home would be in his heart—that my beautiful Alma would be his child! My Alma, my beautiful babe! how sweetly she nestles her little face in his neck. She has stolen her mother's place; little thief! I wonder she does not steal his whole heart to the clear shutting out of her mother!

Little wives! if ever a half suppressed sigh finds place with you, or a half unloving word escapes you to the husband whom you love, let your heart go back to some tender word in those first love—days; remember how you loved him then, how tenderly he wooed you, how timidly you responded, and if you can feel that *you* have not grown unworthy, trust him for the same fond love now. If you *do* feel that through many cares and trials of life, you have become less lovable and attractive than then, turn—by all that you love on earth, or hope for in Heaven, turn back, and *be* the pattern of loveliness that won him; be the "dear one" your attractions made you then. Be the gentle, loving, winning maiden still, and doubt not, the lover you admired will live for ever in your husband. Nestle by his side, cling to his love, and let his confidence in you never fail, and, my word for it, the husband will be dearer than the lover ever was. Above all things, do not forget the love he gave you first. Do not seek to "emancipate" yourself—do not strive to unsex yourself and become a Lucy Stone, or a Rev. Miss Brown, but love the higher honour ordained by our Saviour, of old—that of a loving wife. A happy wife, a blessed mother, can have no higher station, needs no greater honour.

Little wives, remember your first love. As for me, I see again the little crumpled note about the "dear one," and I must go to find love and forgiveness in his arms.

NO JEWELLED BEAUTY.

No jewelled Beauty is my Love,
Yet in her earnest face
There’s such a world of tenderness,
She needs no other grace.
Her smiles, and voice, around my life
In light and music twine,
And dear, oh very dear to me,
Is this sweet Love of mine.

Oh, joy! to know there’s one fond heart
Beats ever true to me:
It sets mine leaping like a lyre,
In sweetest melody;
My soul up-springs, a Deity!
To hear her voice divine,
And dear, oh! very dear to me,
Is this sweet Love of mine.

If ever I have sigh’d for wealth,
‘Twas all for her, I trow;
And if I win Fame’s victor-wreath,
I’ll twine it on her brow.
There may be forms more beautiful,
And souls of sunnier shine,
But none, oh! none so dear to me,
As this sweet Love of mine.

THE FIRST MARRIAGE IN THE FAMILY.

"HOME!" How that little word strikes upon the heart strings, awakening all the sweet memories that had slept in memory's chamber! *Our* home was a "pearl of price" among homes; not for its architectural elegance—for it was only a four gabled, brown country house, shaded by two antediluvian oak trees; nor was its interior crowded with luxuries that charm every sense and come from every clime. Its furniture had grown old with us, for we remembered no other; and though polished as highly as furniture could be, by daily scrubbing, was somewhat the worse for wear, it must be confessed.

But neither the house nor its furnishing makes the *home*; and the charm of *ours* lay in the sympathy that linked the nine that called it "home" to one another. Father, mother, and seven children—five of them gay-hearted girls, and two boys, petted just enough to be spoiled—not one link had ever dropped from the chain of love, or one corroding drop fallen, upon its brightness.

"One star differeth from another in glory," even in the firmament of home. Thus—though we could not have told a stranger which sister or brother was dearest—from our gentlest "eldest," an invalid herself, but the comforter and counsellor of all beside, to the curly-haired boy, who romped and rejoiced in the appellation of "baby," given five years before—still an observing eye would soon have singled out sister Ellen as the sunbeam of our heaven, the "morning star" of our constellation. She was the second in age, but the first in the inheritance of that load of responsibility, which in such a household falls naturally upon the eldest daughter. Eliza, as I have said, was ill from early girlhood; and Ellen had shouldered all her burden of care and kindness, with a light heart and a lighter step. Up stairs and down cellar, in the parlour, nursery, or kitchen—at the piano or the wash-tub—with pen, pencil, needle, or ladle—sister Ellen was always busy, always with a smile on her cheek and a warble on her lip.

Quietly, happily, the months and years went by. We never realized that change was to come over our band. To be sure, when mother would look in upon us, seated together with our books, paintings, and needle-work, and say, in her gentle way, with only a half-sigh, "Ah, girls, you are living your happiest days!" we would glance into each other's eyes, and wonder who would go first. But it was a wonder that passed away with the hour, and ruffled not even the surface of our sisterly hearts. It could not be always so—and the change came at last!

Sister Ellen was to be married!

It was like the crash of a thunderbolt in a clear summer sky! Sister Ellen—the fairy of the hearthstone, the darling of every heart—which of us *could* spare her? *Who* had been so presumptuous as to find out her worth? For the first moment, *this* question burst from each surprised, half-angry sister of the blushing, tearful, Ellen! It was only for a moment; for our hearts told us that nobody could help loving her, who had looked through her loving blue eyes, into the clear well-spring of the heart beneath. So we threw our arms around her and sobbed without a word!

We knew very well that the young clergyman, whose Sunday sermons and gentle

admonitions had won all hearts, had been for months a weekly visiter to our fireside circle. With baby Georgie on his knee, and Georgie's brothers and sisters clustered about him, he had sat through many an evening charming the hours away, until the clock startled us with its unwelcome nine o'clock warning; and the softly spoken reminder, "Girls, it is bed-time!" woke more than one stifled sigh of regret. Then sister Ellen must always go with us to lay Georgie in his little bed; to hear him and Annette repeat the evening prayer and hymn her lips had taught them; to comb out the long brown braids of Emily's head; to rob Arthur of the story book, over which he would have squandered the "midnight oil;" and to breathe a kiss and a blessing over the pillow of each other sister, as she tucked the warm blankets tenderly about them.

We do not know how often of late she had stolen down again, from these sisterly duties, after our senses were locked in sleep; or if our eyes and ears had ever been open to the fact, we could never have suspected the *minister* to be guilty of such a plot against our peace! That name was associated, in our minds, with all that was superhuman. The gray-haired pastor, who had gone to his grave six months previous, had sat as frequently on that same oaken arm-chair, and talked with us. We had loved him as a father and friend, and had almost worshipped him as the embodiment of all attainable goodness. And when Mr. Neville came among us, with his high, pale forehead, and soul-kindled eye, we had thought his face also "the face of an angel"—too glorious for the print of mortal passion! Especially after, in answer to an urgent call from the people among whom he was labouring, he had frankly told them that his purpose was not to remain among them, or anywhere on his native shore; that he only waited the guidance of Providence to a home in a foreign clime. After this much—bewailed disclosure of his plans, we placed our favourite preacher on a higher pinnacle of saintship!

But sister Ellen was to be married—and married to Mr. Neville. And then—"Oh, sister, you are not going away, to India!" burst from our lips, with a fresh gush of sobs.

I was the first to look up into Ellen's troubled face. It was heaving with emotions that ruffled its calmness, as the tide-waves ruffle the sea. Her lips were firmly compressed; her eyes were fixed on some distant dream, glassed with two tears, that stood still in their chalices, forbidden to fall. I almost trembled as I caught her glance.

"Sister! Agnes—Emily!" she exclaimed, in a husky whisper. "Hush! be calm! *Don't* break my heart! Do I love home less than—"

The effort was too much; the words died on her lips. We lifted her to bed, frightened into forgetfulness of her own grief. We soothed her until she, too, wept freely and passionately, and, in weeping, grew strong for the sacrifice to which she had pledged her heart.

We never spoke another word of remonstrance to her tender heart, though often, in the few months that flitted by us together, we used to choke with sobbing, in some speech that hinted of the coming separation, and hurry from her presence to cry alone.

Our mother has told us the tidings with white lips that quivered tenderly and sadly. No love is so uniformly unselfish as a mother's, surely; for though she leaned on Ellen as the strong staff of her declining years, she sorrowed not as we did, that she was going. She, to, was happy in the thought that her child had found that "pearl of price" in a cold and evil world—a true, noble, loving heart to guide and protect her.

Father sat silently in the chimney-corner, reading in the family Bible. *He* was looking farther than any of us—to the perils that would environ his dearest daughter, and the privations that might come upon her young life, in that unhealthy, uncivilized corner of the globe, whither she was going. Both our parents had dedicated their children to God; and they would not cast even a shadow on the path of self-sacrifice and duty their darling had chosen.

To come down to the unromantic little details of wedding preparations; how we stitched and trimmed, packed and prepared—stoned raisins with tears in our eyes, and seasoned the wedding cake with sighs. But there is little use in thinking over these things. Ellen was first and foremost in all, as she had always been in every emergency, great or small. Nothing could be made without her. Even the bride's cake was taken from the oven by her own fair hands, because no one—servant, sister, or even mother—was willing to run the risk of burning sister Ellen's bride's cake; and "*she* knew *just* how to bake it."

We were not left alone in our labours: for Ellen had been loved by more than the home-roof sheltered. Old and young, poor and rich, united in bringing their gifts, regrets, and blessings to the chosen companion of the pastor they were soon to lose. There is something in the idea of missionary life that touches the sympathy of every heart which mammon has not too long seared. To see one, with sympathies and refinements like our own, rend the strong ties that bind to country and home, comfort and civilization, for the good of the lost and degraded heathen, brings too strongly into relief, by contrast, the selfishness of most human lives led among the gayeties and luxuries of time.

The day, the hour came. The ship was to sail from B. on the ensuing week; and it must take away an idol.

She stood up in the village church, that all who loved her, and longed for another sight of her sweet face, might look upon her, and speak the simple words that should link hearts for eternity. We sisters stood all around her, but not too near; for our hearts were overflowing, and we could not wear the happy faces that should grace a train of bridesmaids. She had cheered us through the day with sunshine from her own heart, and even while we are arraying her in her simple white muslin, like a lamb for sacrifice, she had charmed our thoughts into cheerfulness. It seemed like some dream of fairy land, and she the embodiment of grace and loveliness, acting the part of some Queen Titania for little while. The dream changed to a far different reality, when, at the door of her mother's room, she put her hand into that of Henry Neville, and lifted her eye with a look that said, "Where thou goest will I go," even from all beside!

Tears fell fast in that assembly; though the good old matrons tried to smile, as they passed around the bride, to bless her, and bid her good—bye. A little girl, in a patched but clean frock, pushed forward, with a bouquet of violets and strawberry-blossoms in her hand.

"Here, Miss Nelly—please, Miss Nelly," she cried, half-laughing, half-sobbing, "I picked them on purpose for you!"

Ellen stooped and kissed the little eager face. The child burst into tears, and caught the folds of her dress, as though she would have buried her face there. But a strong-armed woman, mindful of the bride's attire, snatched the child away.

"And for what would ye be whimpering in that style, as if *you* had any right to Miss

Ellen?”

“She was always good to me, and she’s my Sunday-school teacher,” pleaded the little girl, in a subdued undertone.

Agnes drew her to her side, and silently comforted her.

“Step aside—Father Herrick is here!” said one, just then.

The crowd about the bridal pair opened, to admit a white-haired, half-blind old man, who came leaning on the arm of his rosy grand-daughter. Farther Herrick was a superannuated deacon, whose good words and works had won for him a place in every heart of that assembly.

“They told me she was going,” he murmured to himself; “they say ‘tis her wedding. I want to see my little girl again—bless her!”

Ellen sprang forward, and laid both her white trembling hands in the large hand of the good old man. He drew her near his failing eyes; and looked searchingly into her young, soul-lit countenance.

“I can just see you, darling; and they tell me I shall never see you again! Well, well, if we go in God’s way we shall all get to Heaven, and it’s all light *there*!” He raised his hand over her head, and added, solemnly, “The blessing of blessings be upon thee, my child. Amen!”

“Amen!” echoed the voice of Henry Neville.

And Ellen looked up with the look of an angel.

So she went from us! Oh! the last moment of that parting hour has burnt itself into my being for ever! *Could* the human heart endure the agony of parting like that, *realized* to be indeed the last—lighted by no ray of hope for eternity! Would not reason reel under the pressure?

It was hard to bear; but I have no words to tell of its bitterness. She went to her missionary life, and we learned at last to live without her, though it was many a month before the little ones could forget to call on “Sister Ellen” in any impulse of joy, grief, or childish want. Then the start and the sigh, “Oh, dear, she’s gone—sister is gone!” And fresh tears would flow.

Gone, but not lost; for that First Marriage in the family opened to us a fountain of happiness, pure as the spring of self-sacrifice could make it. Our household darling has linked us to a world of needy and perishing spirits—a world that asks for the energy and the aid of those who go from us, and those who remain in the dear country of their birth. God bless her and her charge! Dear sister Ellen! there may be many another breach in the family—we may all be scattered to the four winds of heaven-but no change can come over us like that which marked the FIRST MARRIAGE.

ONLY A FEW WORDS.

MR. JAMES WINKLEMAN shut the door with a jar, as he left the house, and moved down the street, in the direction of his office, with a quick, firm step, and the air of a man slightly disturbed in mind.

“Things are getting better fast,” said he, with a touch of irony in his voice, as he almost flung himself into his leather-cushioned chair. “It’s rather hard when a man has to pick his words in his own house, as carefully as if he were picking diamonds, and tread as softly as if he was stepping on eggs. I don’t like it. Mary gets weaker and more foolish every day, and puts a breadth of meaning on my words that I never intended them to have. I’ve not been used to this conning over of sentences and picking out of all doubtful expressions ere venturing to speak, and I’m too old to begin now. Mary took me for what I am, and she must make the most of her bargain. I’m past the age for learning new tricks.”

With these and many other justifying sentences, did Mr. Winkleman seek to obtain a feeling of self-approval. But, for all this, he could not shut out the image of a tearful face, nor get rid of an annoying conviction that he had acted thoughtlessly, to say the least of it, in speaking to his wife as he had done.

But what was all this trouble about? Clouds were in the sky that bent over the home of Mr. Winkleman, and it is plain that Mr. Winkleman himself had his own share in the work of producing these clouds. Only a few unguarded words had been spoken. Only words! And was that all?

Words are little things, but they sometimes strike hard. We wield them so easily that we are apt to forget their hidden power. Fitly spoken, they fall like the sunshine, the dew, and the fertilizing rain; but, when unfitly, like the frost, the hail, and the desolating tempest. Some men speak as they feel or think, without calculating the force of what they say; and then seem very much surprised if any one is hurt or offended. To this class belonged Mr. Winkleman. His wife was a loving, sincere woman, quick to feel. Words, to her, were indeed things. They never fell upon her ears as idle sounds. How often was her poor heart bruised by them!

On this particular morning, Mrs. Winkleman, whose health was feeble, found herself in a weak, nervous state. It was only by an effort that she could rise above the morbid irritability that afflicted her. Earnestly did she strive to repress the disturbed beatings of her heart, but she strove in vain. And it seemed to her, as it often does in such cases, that everything went wrong. The children were fretful, the cook dilatory and cross, and Mr. Winkleman impatient, because sundry little matters pertaining to his wardrobe were not just to his mind.

“Eight o’clock, and no breakfast yet,” said Mr. Winkleman, as he drew out his watch, on completing his own toilet. Mrs. Winkleman was in the act of dressing the last of five children, all of whom had passed under her hands. Each had been captious, cross, or unruly, sorely trying the mother’s patience. Twice had she been in the kitchen, to see how breakfast was progressing, and to enjoin the careful preparation of a favourite dish with which she had purposed to surprise her husband.

“It will be ready in a few minutes,” said Mrs. Winkleman. “The fire hasn’t burned freely this morning.”

“If it isn’t one thing, it is another,” growled the husband. “I’m getting tired of this irregularity. There’d soon be no breakfast to get, if I were always behind time in business matters.”

Mrs. Winkleman bent lower over the child she was dressing, to conceal the expression of her face. What a sharp pain now throbbed through her temples! Mr. Winkleman commenced walking the floor impatiently, little imagining that every jarring footfall was like a blow on the sensitive, aching brain of his wife.

“Too bad! too bad!” he had just ejaculated when the bell rung.

“At last!” he muttered, and strode towards the breakfast-room. The children followed in considerable disorder, and Mrs. Winkleman, after hastily arranging her hair, and putting on a morning cap, joined them at the table. It took some moments to restore order among the little ones.

The dish that Mrs. Winkleman had been at considerable pains to provide for her husband, was set beside his plate. It was his favourite among many, and his wife looked for a pleased recognition thereof, and a lighting up of his clouded brow. But he did not seem even to notice it. After supplying the children, Mr. Winkleman helped himself in silence. At the first mouthful he threw down his knife and fork, and pushed his plate from him.

“What’s the matter?” inquired his wife.

“You didn’t trust Bridget to cook this, I hope?” was the response.

“What ails it?” Mrs. Winkleman’s eyes were filling with tears.

“Oh! it’s of no consequence,” answered Mr. Winkleman, coldly; “anything will do for me.”

“James!” There was a touching sadness blended with rebuke in the tones of his wife; and, as she uttered his name, tears gushed over her cheeks.

Mr. Winkleman didn’t like tears. They always annoyed him. At the present time, he was in no mood to bear with them. So, on the impulse of the moment, he arose from the table, and taking up his hat, left the house.

Self-justification was tried, though not, as has been seen, with complete success. The calmer grew the mind of Mr. Winkleman, and the clearer his thoughts, the less satisfied did he feel with the part he had taken in the morning’s drama. By an inversion of thought, not usual among men of his temperament, he had been presented with a vivid realization of his wife’s side of the question. The consequence was, that, by dinner-time, he felt a good deal ashamed of himself, and grieved for the pain he knew his hasty words had occasioned.

It was in this better state of mind that Mr. Winkleman returned home. The house seemed still as he entered. As he proceeded up stairs, he heard the children’s voices, pitched to a low key, in the nursery. He listened, but could not hear the tones of his wife. So he passed into the front chamber, which was darkened. As soon as he could see clearly in the feeble

light, he perceived that his wife was lying on the bed. Her eyes were closed, and her thin face looked so pale and death-like, that Mr. Winkleman felt a cold shudder creep through his heart. Coming to the bed-side, he leaned over and gazed down upon her. At first, he was in doubt whether she really breathed or not; and he felt a heavy weight removed when he saw that her chest rose and fell in feeble respiration.

“Mary!” He spoke in a low, tender voice.

Instantly the fringed eyelids parted, and Mrs. Winkleman gazed up into her husband’s face in partial bewilderment.

Obeying the moment’s impulse, Mr. Winkleman bent down and left a kiss upon her pale lips. As if moved by an electric thrill, the wife’s arms were flung around the husband’s neck.

“I am sorry to find you so ill,” said Mr. Winkleman, in a voice of sympathy. “What is the matter?”

“Only a sick-headache,” replied Mrs. Winkleman. “But I’ve had a good sleep, and feel better now. I didn’t know it was so late,” she added, her tone changing slightly, and a look of concern coming into her countenance. “I’m afraid your dinner is not ready;” and she attempted to rise. But her husband bore her gently back with his hand, saying,

“Never mind about dinner. It will come in good time. If you feel better, lie perfectly quiet. Have you suffered much pain?”

“Yes.” The word did not part her lips sadly, but came with a softly wreathing smile. Already the wan hue of her cheeks was giving place to a warmer tint, and the dull eyes brightening. What a healing power was in his tender tones and considerate words! And that kiss—it had thrilled along every nerve—it had been as nectar to the drooping spirit. “But I feel so much better, that I will get up,” she added, now rising from her pillow.

And Mrs. Winkleman was entirely free from pain. As she stepped upon the carpet, and moved across the room, it was with a firm tread. Every muscle was elastic, and the blood leaped along her veins with a new and healthier impulse.

No trial of Mr. Winkleman’s patience, in a late dinner, was in store for him. In a few minutes the bell summoned the family; and he took his place at the table so tranquil in mind, that he almost wondered at the change in, his feelings. How different was the scene from that presented at the morning meal!

And was there power in a few simple words to effect so great a change as this! Yes, in simple words, fragrant with the odours of kindness.

A few gleams of light shone into the mind of Mr. Winkleman, as he returned musing to his office, and he saw that he was often to blame for the clouds that darkened so often over the sky of home.

“Mary is foolish,” he said, in partial self-justification, “to take my hasty words so much to heart. I speak often without meaning half what I say. She ought to know me better. And yet,” he added, as his step became slower, for he was thinking closer than usual, “it may be easier for me to choose my words more carefully, and to repress the unkindness of tone that gives them a double force, than for her to help feeling pain at their utterance.”

Right, Mr. Winkleman! That is the common sense of the whole matter. It is easier to strike, than to help feeling or showing signs of pain, under the infliction of a blow. Look well to your words, all ye members of a home circle. And especially look well to your words, ye whose words have the most weight, and fall, if dealt in passion, with the heaviest force.

THE TWO HOMES.

TWO men, on their way home, met at a street crossing, and then walked on together. They were neighbours, and friends.

“This has been a very hard day,” said Mr. Freeman in a gloomy voice.

“A very hard day,” echoed almost sepulchrally, Mr. Walcott. “Little or no cash coming in —payments Heavy—money scarce, and at ruinous rates. What is to become of us?”

“Heaven only knows,” answered Mr. Freeman. “For my part, I see no light ahead. Every day come new reports of failures; every day confidence diminishes; every day some prop that we leaned upon is taken away.”

“Many think we are at the worst,” said Mr. Walcott.

“And others, that we have scarcely seen the beginning of the end,” returned the neighbour.

And so, as they walked homeward, they discouraged each other, and made darker the clouds that obscured their whole horizon.

“Good evening,” was at last said, hurriedly; and the two men passed into their homes.

Mr. Walcott entered the room, where his wife and children were gathered, and without speaking to any one, seated himself in a chair, and leaning his head back, closed his eyes. His countenance wore a sad, weary, exhausted look. He had been seated thus for only a few minutes, when his wife said, in a fretful voice,

“More trouble again.”

“What’s the matter now?” asked Mr. Walcott, almost starting.

“John has been sent home from school.”

“What!” Mr. Walcott partly arose from his chair.

“He’s been suspended for bad conduct.”

“O dear!” groaned Mr. Walcott—“Where is he?”

“Up in his room. I sent him there as soon as he came home. You’ll have to do something with him. He’ll be ruined if he goes on in this way. I’m out of all heart with him.”

Mr. Walcott, excited as much by the manner in which his wife conveyed unpleasant information, as by the information itself, started up, under the blind impulse of the moment, and going to the room where John had been sent on coming home from school, punished the boy severely, and this without listening to the explanations which the poor child; tried to make him hear.

“Father,” said the boy, with forced calmness, after the cruel stripes had ceased—“I wasn’t to blame; and if you will go with me to the teacher, I can prove myself innocent.”

Mr. Walcott had never known his son to tell an untruth; and the words smote with rebuke upon his heart.

“Very well—we will see about that,” he answered, with forced sternness, and leaving the room he went down stairs, feeling much worse than when he went up. Again he seated himself in his large chair and again leaned back his weary head, and closed his heavy eyelids. Sadder was his face than before. As he sat thus, his oldest daughter, in her sixteenth year, came and stood by him. She held a paper in her hand—

“Father,—” he opened his eyes.

“Here’s my quarter bill. It’s twenty dollars. Can’t I have the money to take to school with me in the morning?”

“I’m afraid not,” answered Mr. Walcott, half sadly.

“Nearly all the girls will bring in their money tomorrow; and it mortifies me to be behind the others.” The daughter spoke fretfully. Mr. Walcott waved her aside with his hand, and she went off muttering and pouting.

“It is mortifying,” spoke up Mrs. Walcott, a little sharply; “and I don’t wonder that Helen feels unpleasantly about it. The bill has to be paid, and I don’t see why it may not be done as well first as last.”

To this Mr. Walcott made no answer. The words but added another pressure to this heavy burden under which he was already staggering. After a silence of some moments, Mrs. Walcott said,

“The coal is all gone.”

“Impossible!” Mr. Walcott raised his head, and looked incredulous.
“I laid in sixteen tons.”

“I can’t help it, if there were sixty tons instead of sixteen; it’s all gone. The girls had a time of it to-day, to scrape up enough to keep the fire going.”

“There’s been a shameful waste somewhere,” said Mr. Walcott with strong emphasis, starting up, and moving about the room with a very disturbed manner.

“So you always say, when anything is out,” answered Mrs. Walcott rather tartly. “The barrel of flour is gone also; but I suppose you have done your part, with the rest, in using it up.”

Mr. Walcott returned to his chair, and again seating himself, leaned back his head and closed his eyes, as at first. How sad, and weary, and hopeless he felt! The burdens of the day had seemed almost too heavy for him; but he had borne up bravely. To gather strength for a renewed struggle with adverse circumstances, he had come home. Alas! that the process of exhaustion should still go on. That where only strength could be looked for, no strength was given.

When the tea bell rung, Mr. Walcott made no movement to obey the summons.

“Come to supper,” said his wife, coldly.

But he did not stir.

“Ain’t you coming to supper?” she called to him, as she was leaving the room.

“I don’t wish anything this evening. My head aches badly,” he answered.

“In the dumps again,” muttered Mrs. Walcott to herself. “It’s as much as one’s life is worth to ask for money, or to say that anything is wanted.” And she kept on her way to the dining-room. When she returned, her husband was still sitting where she had left him.

“Shall I bring you a cup of tea?” she asked.

“No; I don’t wish anything.”

“What’s the matter, Mr. Walcott? What do you look so troubled about, as if you hadn’t a friend in the world? What have I done to you?”

There was no answer, for there was not a shade of real sympathy in the voice that made the queries—but rather a querulous dissatisfaction. A few moments Mrs. Walcott stood near her husband; but as he did Not seem inclined to answer her questions, she turned off from him, and resumed the employment which had been interrupted by the ringing of the tea bell.

The whole evening passed without the occurrence of a single incident that gave a healthful pulsation to the sick heart of Mr. Walcott. No thoughtful kindness was manifested by any member of the family; but, on the contrary, a narrow regard for self, and a looking to him only to supply the means of self-gratification.

No wonder, from the pressure which was on him, that Mr. Walcott felt utterly discouraged. He retired early, and sought to find that relief from mental disquietude, in sleep, which he had vainly hoped for in the bosom of his family. But the whole night passed in broken slumber, and disturbing dreams. From the cheerless morning meal, at which he was reminded of the quarter bill that must be paid, of the coal and flour that were out, and of the necessity of supplying Mrs. Walcott’s empty purse, he went forth to meet the difficulties of another day, faint at heart, and almost hopeless of success. A confident spirit, sustained by home affections, would have carried him through; but, unsupported as he was, the burden was too heavy for him, and he sunk under it. The day that opened so unpropitiously, closed upon him, a ruined man!

Let us look in, for a few moments, upon Mr. Freeman, the friend and neighbour of Mr. Walcott. He, also, had come home; weary, dispirited, and almost sick. The trials of the day had been unusually severe; and when he looked anxiously forward to scan the future, not even a gleam of light was seen along the black horizon.

As he stepped across the threshold of his dwelling, a pang shot through his heart; for the thought came, “How slight the present hold upon all these comforts!” Not for himself, but for his wife and children, was the pain.

“Father’s come!” cried a glad little voice on the stairs, the moment his foot-fall, sounded in the passage; then quick, pattering feet were heard—and then a tiny form was springing into his arms. Before reaching the sitting-room above, Alice, the oldest daughter, was by his side, her arm drawn fondly within his, and her loving eyes lifted to his face.

“Are you not late, dear?” It was the gentle voice of Mrs. Freeman.

Mr. Freeman could not trust himself to answer. He was too deeply troubled in spirit to assume at the moment a cheerful tone, and he had no wish to sadden the hearts that loved him, by letting the depression from which he was suffering, become too clearly apparent.

But the eyes of Mrs. Freeman saw quickly below the surface.

“Are you not well, Robert?” she inquired, tenderly, as she drew his large arm-chair towards the centre of the room.

“A little headache,” he answered, with slight evasion.

Scarcely was Mr. Freeman seated, ere a pair of little hands were busy with each foot, removing gaiter and shoe, and supplying their place with a soft slipper. There was not one in the household who did not feel happier for his return, nor one who did not seek to render him some kind office.

It was impossible under such a burst of heart-sunshine, for the spirit of Mr. Freeman long to remain shrouded. Almost imperceptibly to himself, gloomy thoughts gave place to more cheerful ones, and by the time tea was ready, he had half forgotten the fears which had so haunted him through the day. But they could not be held back altogether, and their existence was marked, during the evening, by an unusual silence and abstraction of mind. This was observed by Mrs. Freeman, who, more than half suspecting the cause, kept back from her husband the knowledge of certain matters about which she had intended to speak with him—for she feared they would add to his mental disquietude. During the evening, she gleaned from something he said, the real cause of his changed aspect. At once her thoughts commenced running in a new channel. By a few leading remarks, she drew her husband into conversation on the subject of home expenses, and the propriety of restriction at various points. Many things were mutually pronounced superfluous, and easily to be dispensed with; and before sleep fell soothingly on the heavy eyelids of Mr. Freeman that night, an entire change in their style of living had been determined upon—a change that would reduce their expenses at least one-half.

“I see light ahead,” were the hopeful words of Mr. Freeman, as he resigned himself to slumber.

With renewed strength of mind and body, and a confident spirit, he went forth on the next day—a day that he had looked forward to with fear and trembling. And it was only through this renewed strength and confident spirit, that he was able to overcome the difficulties that loomed up, mountain high, before him. Weak despondency would have ruined all. Home had proved his tower of strength—his walled city. It had been to him as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Strengthened for the conflict, he had gone forth again into the world, and conquered in the struggle.

“I see light ahead” gave place to “The morning breaketh.”

LOVE’S FAIRY RING.

WHILE Titans war with social Jove,
My own sweet wife and I
We make Elysium in our love,
And let the world go by!
Oh! never hearts beat half so light
With crowned Queen or King!
Oh! never world was half so bright
As is our fairy ring,
Dear love!
Our hallowed fairy ring.

Our world of empire is not large,
But priceless wealth it holds;
A little heaven links marge to marge,
But what rich realms it folds!
And clasping all from outer strife
Sits love with folded wing,
A-brood o’er dearer life in life,
Within our fairy ring,
Dear love!
Our hallowed fairy ring.

Thou leanest thy true heart on mine,
And bravely bearest up!
Aye mingling love’s most precious wine
In life’s most bitter cup!
And evermore the circling hours
New gifts of glory bring;
We live and love like happy flowers
All in our fairy ring,
Dear love!
Our hallowed fairy ring.

We’ve known a many sorrows, sweet!
We’ve wept a many tears,
And often trod with trembling feet
Our pilgrimage of years.
But when our sky grew dark and wild,
All closelier did we cling;
Clouds broke to beauty as you smiled,
Peace crowned our fairy ring,
Dear love!
Our hallowed fairy ring.

Away, grim lords of murderdom;

Away, oh! Hate and Strife!
Hence, revellers, reeling drunken from
Your feast of human life!
Heaven shield our little Goshen round
From ills that with them spring,
And never be their footsteps found
Within our fairy ring,
Dear love!
Our hallowed fairy ring.

FANNIE’S BRIDAL.

PART I.

IT was to be a quiet wedding. Fannie would have it so; only *his* relations. She, poor thing, was an orphan, and only spirit-parents could hover around her on this great era of her life.

The bride entered the large, sunny parlour, leaning upon the arm of her stately husband. Her white lace robe, and the fleecy veil upon her head, floated cloud-like around her fragile, almost child-like form. Peace hovered like a white dove over her pure brow, and a truthful earnestness dwelt in the dark brown eyes.

> On one side of the room nearest the bay-windows,
> Where the sunset kept shining and shining between
> The old hawthorn blossoms and branches so green,

stood the eight brothers of the groom. All tall, dark, stately men, pride in ever black glancing eye; the same curl upon every finely formed lip, harsh upon some, softer upon others, yet still there, tracing the same blood through all; the same inherent qualities of the father transmitted to the sons. One brother was a type of all, differing only as pictures and copies—in the shade and touch.

Upon the opposite aside were seated the five sisters of the groom, not so like one another. One had blue eyes, another auburn curls, one a nose retroussé, a fourth was fresh and rosy, a fifth round-faced; still the same pride had found a resting-place on some fine feature of each face, and stamped it with the seal of sisterhood. The same sap ran in all the branches, and each branch put forth the same leaves.

The thirteen faces had been stern and cold, but when their youngest brother and his fair bride came in, affection and curiosity softened their eyes, as for the first time she appeared before them. Some thought her too delicate, others too young; the sisters, that Harwood could have looked higher; but all felt drawn to that shrinking form and pale countenance; each hand had a warm grasp for hers, each curling lip a sweet smile, and the manly voices softened to welcome her into their proud family. Gracefully she received all, happy and joyful as a child. But the first shadow fell with the sunlight.

“Brothers and sisters,” said Harwood pleadingly, “upon this my wedding day cast aside your bitterness of spirit for ever, and become as one—”

“Harwood!” replied quickly the elder sister, “upon this—this happy day, we hide all feelings called forth by the malice and unbrother-like conduct of our brothers, but only for the present; we, can never become reconciled.”

A silence fell upon all; strange as it may seem, the sisters were colder and sterner than the

brothers. A frown settled upon every brow; the lips curled with contempt. A storm was tossing the waves, but peace breathed upon the waters and all was calm. The presence of the bride restrained angry expressions of feeling.

This was the first knowledge that Fannie had of the family feud; tears stood in her soft eyes, and the rosy lips trembled; but her husband's bright glance, and gentle pressure of her hand, reassured her. There was no more warmth that day—during the ceremony and the brief stay of the newly married. The sisters gathered around the young wife, and the brothers around Harwood. Occasional words were interchanged; but there reigned an invisible barrier, that seemed to say "so far shalt thou come but no farther."

When the carriage stood at the door and Fannie and Harwood stepped in, she stretched out her pretty hand and beckoned to the elder brother and sister; they approached; she took a hand of each, saying in a trembling voice:

"You both breathe the same air; the same beautiful sunlight shines upon you; you pray to the same God, both say 'forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us.' Be examples for those younger—let me join your hands—" But the sister, with a frown, threw aside the little hand rudely, the brother pressed the one he held, but laughed maliciously. The carriage drove on, and the fair head rested sobbing upon the shoulder of her husband. Sadly did he relate to her the family feud, a quarrel of ten years' standing; sisters against brothers, resting on a belief of unfairness in the disposition of the will of a relation. The sisters passed the brothers upon the street without speaking, refused them admittance to their house. Harwood being the youngest, was too young to take part in the quarrel, and had never been expected to do so.

Poor Fannie wept bitterly; but tears more bitter yet were in store for her.

PART II.

Upon her return from the bridal tour, no sooner was Fannie settled in her new home, than the family feud endeavoured to draw her from her quiet course, to take part for or against. Numberless were the grievances related to her. All that could be said or done, to convince her that the sisters were "sinned against instead of sinning," were brought forward.

"Well, Fannie," said the elder brother, one day, "I met my immaculate elder sister, just coming out of your door. Has she been giving you a catalogue of fraternal sins? She would not speak to *me*. She carries her head high. It maddens me to think how contemptuously we are treated, and being food for talk beside."

Fannie hesitated; she could not reply, for Jessie had been venting a fit of ill humour upon him, and it was only adding fuel to the fire, to repeat.

"Say, Fannie, what *did* the old maid say? That it was a pity we were not all dead?"

"Oh! hush," she replied, holding up her hand reprovingly. "I am very unhappy at your continued disagreements. If," she continued, timidly, "you would but take a little advice—I know I am young, but—

“Let us have it,” he returned, quickly, turning away from the pleading eyes.

“You will not be angry with me?”

“No, no; let me hear!”

“You are the eldest; your example, is followed by the seven brothers; your influence with them is great; you give an ‘eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.’ Jessie and the others may have a foundation for their ill-will. You have never endeavoured to discover what this is. Your pride took offence, and you say to yourself *that* can never bend. Was this right?”

Her voice trembled, her head drooped, and in spite of her self-command, she burst into tears.

“Fannie! sister Fannie!”

“Don’t mind me; I am weak, nervous, foolish. I shall soon be better; but it makes me so very unhappy to see you all at enmity. I had hoped, when I came among you, to have been the olive branch, but—”

“Fannie! dear sister Fannie!” he exclaimed, walking up and down the room, “you have been—we are fire-brands plucked from the burning. You have said all that any one could have said; yes, and done all that could be done; never repeated any malicious speech, selected all the wheat that could be culled from the chaff. You have softened my obdurate heart. I have done wrong; you have shown me to the way of return. If Jessie will come forward and forgive and forget, then will I.”

But Fannie knew that it was not so easy to make Jessie be the first to own her errors and forgive. The brothers had done much to make the division wider, in the way of hints and malicious whisperings; and she continued weeping so wildly and hysterically, that the elder brother endeavoured to console her, and was glad when Harwood came, and lifting her in his arms, carried her up to her room.

When he returned, the elder brother still stood by the fire-place.
He turned and spoke.

“Fannie is very fragile and pale. Is she not well?”

“Not very. This family feud troubles her. She has taken it to heart. When we were first married, she told me a dozen plans she had made for your reunion, and made me a party to them, but now—”

He sighed; the elder brother sighed more deeply; both were silent; the fire-light leaped up, lighting the room—a fierce, avenging blaze; then died out, and all was gloom. Where were the thoughts of that elder brother? They were wandering among the graves of the past. In his imagination, new ones were there; the names on the tomb-stones were familiar; the thirteen were all there; twelve sleeping; his the only restless, wandering spirit. Fannie stood before him, her face pale and tearful. She pointed to the graves, and said, sadly, “This is the end of all earthly things.” That night he knocked at the door of his sister’s mansion but gained no admittance.

PART III

The anniversary of Fannie's bridal was the counterpart of the original. Sunny and genial, with here and there a white cloud floating near the horizon, denoting a long and happy married life, with but threatening troubles. How was the prophecy realized? Like all riddles of earthly solution, to the contrary?

The eight brothers, with faces of stern grief in the same old corner, side by side; the five sisters sobbing, tearful and quite overwhelmed with sorrow, sat opposite, Their eyes were fixed upon the same pair. Harwood knelt beside a couch in the middle of the room, and there lay Fannie; but how changed! They had all been summoned there, to see that new sister depart for another world; to see the young breath grow fainter and fainter; the bright eyes close for ever on them and their love. Oh! mystery of Life! thee we can know and understand; but, mystery of Death, dark and fearful, only thy chosen ones can comprehend thee. We walk to the verge of the valley of the shadow of death with those we love; but there our steps are stayed, and we look into the black void with wonder and despair. Oh! faith! if ye come not then to the rescue, that death is eternal.

Thus felt the thirteen; all older, care-worn, world-weary, standing beside the mere child-sister of the family, whose star of life was setting from their view behind an impassable mountain.

The sweet face was calm, but a hectic flush lay upon the cheek, as though some life-chord still bound her to earth.

"My child," said the old white-haired physician, "if you have aught to say, speak now; when you will awaken from the sleep this draught will produce, it may then be too late."

"My darling Fannie," said the kneeling Harwood, "for my sake let no thoughts of earth disturb you; all will be well if—"

His voice was broken. He bowed his head upon the wasted hand he held, and wept.

"All *will* be well," she said, smiling faintly. "I feel it now. Jessie, and you, elder brother, come near; nearer yet. I love you both, love you all. Having no relatives of my own, my husband's are doubly mine. My heart, since our marriage-day, has been living in the hope of your reconciliation. I was too young; I undertook too much. I wept when my health began to fail; I did not then know that God was giving me my wish. I would have died to have seen you all happy. *He* has heard my prayer; the sacrifice is made; I go happy. Jessie, my dying wish is to see you once more the forgiving girl you were, when you knelt with your brothers at your mother's knee. Oh! the chain of family love is never so rudely broken but it can be renewed. Jessie, the young lover, who died in his youth, would counsel you to forgive. The beloved parent would whisper, 'love thy brother as thyself;' He who bore the cross said 'Father forgive them—.' Jessie, a weak, dying girl begs you, for her sake, to be true to yourself."

Jessie fell upon her brother's neck, and wept. One universal sob arose from lip to lip. Brothers and sisters so long estranged, rushed into each other's arms. Some cried aloud, others' tears flowed silently: some there were, whose calm joys betrayed the disquietude of long years of disunion. They were all recalled by Harwood's voice.

“Fannie! Fannie! This excitement will kill her.”

Half raised in the bed, her cheeks scarlet and eyes glowing with perfect delight, the sunlight making a halo around her head, was the young wife. She drank the draught the old physician gave her, with her eyes fixed on her husband. She murmured,

“‘Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.’”

With a sigh she dropped back upon the pillow; the eyes closed, the face became waxen white. Soon, those who watched could not tell her slumber from the sleep of death. Silence stole on tiptoe through the room, with her finger on her lip—

While the sunset kept shining and shining between
The old hawthorn blossoms and branches so green.

PART IV.

Day was dawning in the watch room; the lamp was dying away, the thirteen with pale expectant faces, now shadowed by fear, now lighted with hope, were motionless. With his face bowed upon his arms, Harwood had neither looked up nor spoken since Fannie slept. The old clock had struck each hour from the dial of time into the abyss of the past. Never before had time seemed to them so precious, worth so much.

The physician with his fingers upon the patient’s pulse had sat all night; once he placed his hand over her mouth, and rising with a puzzled look, walked to the window and thrust his head into the vines; then drawing his hand over his eyes, he resumed his place, and all was silent again, save the clock with its monotonous tick, tick, beating as calmly as, though human passions were trifles, and the passing away of a soul from earth, only the falling of the niches of eternity.

The sun arose, and a little bird alighting on a spray near the window, poured a flood of melody into the room. The sleeper smiled; the doctor could have sworn it was so. Her breath comes more quickly, you could see it now, fluttering between her lips; she opened her eyes and fixed them on Harwood; he took her hand and gave her the cordial prepared by the physician.

“She is saved,” was telegraphed through the apartment. The brothers prepared to go to their duties. The sisters divided, part to go home, the rest to stay and watch Fannie. Harwood, with a radiant yet anxious face, could not be persuaded to lie down, but still held the little hand and counted the life beats of her heart.

“Ah! well!” said the old doctor to the elder brother, as he buttoned his coat and pressed his hat down upon his head. “Well; there was one great doubt upon my mind—in spite of all favourable symptoms—*she was too good for earth*;—it says somewhere—and it kept coming into my mind all the night long—‘Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God.’”

THE LOVER AND THE HUSBAND.

IN his “Dream Life,” Ik Marvel thus pleasantly sketches the lover and the husband:—

You grow unusually amiable and kind; you are earnest in your search of friends; you shake hands with your office boy, as if he were your second cousin. You joke cheerfully with the stout washerwoman; and give her a shilling overchange, and insist upon her keeping it; and grow quite merry at the recollection of it. You tap your hackman on the shoulder very familiarly, and tell him he is a capital fellow; and don’t allow him to whip his horses, except when driving to the post-office. You even ask him to take a glass of beer with you upon some chilly evening. You drink to the health of his wife. He says he has no wife—whereupon you think him a very miserable man; and give him a dollar, by way of consolation.

You think all the editorials in the morning papers are remarkably well-written,—whether upon your side or upon another. You think the stock-market has a very cheerful look,—with Erie—of which you are a large holder—down to seventy-five. You wonder why you never admired Mrs. Hemans before, or Stoddart, or any of the rest.

You give a pleasant twirl to your fingers, as you saunter along the street; and say—but not so loud as to be overheard—“She is mine—she is mine!”

You wonder if Frank ever loved Nelly one-half as well as you love Madge? You feel quite sure he never did. You can hardly conceive how it is, that Madge has not been seized before now by scores of enamoured men, and borne off, like the Sabine women in Romish history. You chuckle over your future, like a boy who has found a guinea in groping for sixpences. You read over the marriage service,—thinking of the time when you will take *her* hand, and slip the ring upon her finger; and repeat after the clergyman—“for richer—for poorer, for better—for worse!” A great deal of “worse” there will be about it, you think!

Through all, your heart cleaves to that sweet image of the beloved Madge, as light cleaves to day. The weeks leap with a bound; and the months only grow long when you approach that day which is to make her yours. There are no flowers rare enough to make bouquets for her; diamonds are too dim for her to wear; pearls are tame.—And after marriage, the weeks are even shorter than before; you wonder why on earth all the single men in the world do not rush tumultuously to the altar; you look upon them all, as a travelled man will look upon some conceited Dutch boor, who has never been beyond the limits of his cabbage-garden. Married men, on the contrary, you regard as fellow-voyagers; and look upon their wives—ugly as they may be—as better than none.

You blush a little at first telling your butcher what “your wife” would like; you bargain with the grocer for sugars and teas, and wonder if he *knows* that you are a married man? You practise your new way of talk upon your office boy: you tell him that “your wife” expects you home to dinner; and are astonished that he does not stare to hear you say it!

You wonder if the people in the omnibus know that Madge and you are just married; and if the driver knows that the shilling you hand to him is for “self and wife?” You wonder if

anybody was ever so happy before, or ever will be so happy again?

You enter your name upon the hotel books as “Clarence—and Lady;” and come back to look at it,—wondering if anybody else has noticed it,—and thinking that it looks remarkably well. You cannot help thinking that every third man you meet in the hall, wishes he possessed your wife; nor do you think it very sinful in him to wish it. You fear it is placing temptation in the way of covetous men, to put Madge’s little gaiters outside the chamber-door at night.

Your home, when it is entered, is just what it should be—quiet, small,—with everything she wishes, and nothing more than she wishes. The sun strikes it in the happiest possible way; the piano is the sweetest toned in the world; the library is stocked to a charm; and Madge, that blessed wife, is there—adorning and giving life to it all. To think, even, of her possible death, is a suffering you class with the infernal tortures of the Inquisition. You grow twain of heart and of purpose. Smiles seem made for marriage; and you wonder how you ever wore them before!

NELLIE.

THERE she sat, with both little hands covering her face. It was twilight, and beyond the little finger glanced a watchful eye towards the door, to see if Theodore *would* go. She didn't think he would. He came back.

"Is the little child crying?" he asked, relentingly, as he took the pretty fingers, one by one, away from the youthful face, hard as she tried to keep them there. At last she gave up, and broke into a merry laugh.

"You little hypocrite!" said her husband, in rather an incensed tone of voice—men *do* hate to be gulled into soothing a laughing wife.

"Well! can't I go?" pleaded the enchanting little creature, looking up into his eyes *so* beseechingly.

"Why, Nellie, it isn't becoming for you to go without me."

"Yes, it is!" she answered, in a very low way, as if she hardly dared say it, and at the same time running her forefinger through the hem of her silk apron. "May I go?" and she lifted up her eyes in the same beseeching way again.

"Why are you so anxious to go, to-night?"

"O, because!"

"But that is not a good reason!"

"Well, I want to dance a little!"

"Nellie, I can't possibly go with you, to-night. You are very young—you know nothing of the world and its malice—"

"But I can go with Mr. and Mrs. Williams, next door."

"I can't consent to your going without me, little pet."

Nellie put her apron up to her face, and actually did succeed in squeezing two tears into her eyes. She instantly dropped her apron after this was accomplished, and looked reproachfully into her husband's face. Suddenly a thought darted into her head. "When will you come home?" she asked, with quiet melancholy of manner.

"I fear not before ten or eleven, dear. Good-bye! I am late, now!"
He went away, and Nellie sat down and soliloquized.

"Business! old business! If there is anything I hate, beyond all human expression, it is this business. I know it was never intended there should be such a thing. Adam and Eve were put right in a garden, and that shows that it was meant we should play around, and have fun, and live in the country, and cultivate flowers and vegetables to live on. I have always felt so, and I always shall. I don't know that I'd be so particular about living in the country; but the playing part, that's what I'm particular about. If we lived on a farm, I suppose Theodore would wear cowhide boots, and pants too tight and short for him, and a swallow-tailed coat. I declare! I'm afraid I never should have loved him, if I had seen him

—in such gear, although I have said forty times that I should have known we were created for each other, if we had met under any circumstances; but I didn't think what a difference clothes make! Isn't he a magnificent-looking man! Wouldn't anybody have been glad to have got him? I think it's the most wonderful thing in the world how he ever thought of such a little giddy thing as I am! Such a great man, and so much older than I am! Thirty-two years old! No wonder he knows so much! Well, I must stop thinking of this! 'To be, or not to be, that is the question!' Shall I go, or shall I not? Would he be very mad about it, or would he not? Let me see! He won't be home before ten or eleven. I can dress and go with Mrs. Williams, and then Fred shall bring me home before ten o'clock; and after a few days, some time when Theodore is in a most delicious humour, and perfectly carried away with my bewitchments, I'll gradually disclose the matter to him, and say I'll never do the like again, and it's among the things of the past, an error which repentance or tears cannot efface; but the painful results will never be forgotten, namely, his look of disapprobation. I wonder if that will do!" Nellie broke into a low, gay laugh. She was a spoilt child; from her cradle she had been idolized, and taught that she could not be blamed for anything. But she buried her face in her hands, and reflected. That day she had received a note from a young gentleman, saying,

"DEAR ELLEN:—*Will* you come to the ball to-night? I have not seen Alice yet. I am on the rack, in excruciating torture. Your family and your husband don't fancy me, but you have known me from childhood. You ought to show mercy, rather than cruelty. Will you come?

FREDERICK ORTON."

Nellie had read the letter, drowned in tears. How would she have felt, if her family had been so unjustly prejudiced against Theodore? Wouldn't she have expected some help from dear sister Alice? And shouldn't she help Alice in her extremity, even if Theodore should be vexed a little about it? Why did Theodore hate Fred Orton? He never said so; but she knew he didn't like him. Nellie wrote to Mr. Orton:

"POOR, DEAR FRED:—I'll come to the ball and speak with you, if I can. I'll always be your friend, even if my own flesh and blood don't do you justice. If you only knew how good father and mother really are, and that they have heard wrong stories about you, you wouldn't mind it. Your devoted sister

ELLEN."

Nellie, dressed in white, looked like a veritable little angel, and went to the ball with Mr. and Mrs. Williams. She spoke with Fred, danced with him, took a letter for Alice, and told him how her precious sister was almost dying of a broken heart. Then, thinking she had spoken rather strongly, she added: "You know she feels so some of the time." When Fred came the second time to ask Nellie to dance, she thought his motion was slightly wavering. She attributed it to the agitation of his heart on hearing about Alice, and he led her out on the floor. His breath was tinctured with brandy. Nellie grew white, and begged

him to take her back to her seat. He laughingly, but positively refused. “Good gracious!” she mentally ejaculated, “I shall die with shame to be dancing with a drunken man, and Theodore not here! I never should have believed the stories about Fred, if I hadn’t been convinced with my own eyes and nose. Oh! what *will* Theodore say to me? Oh! if I had only done as he advised. If I had stayed at home—oh! I am so sorry I came! *Shall* I ever be able to tell Theodore? Suppose it should make trouble between us. Oh! I know now that I am *such* a miserable, wilful, perverse mortal. I was born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward!” Nellie besought Mr. Williams to convey her home, the instant her agonizing dance was over. He did so. She entered the parlour with beating heart, with green veil on her head, with crape shawl thrown around her pretty figure. Theodore sat there.

“Oh!” she exclaimed, clasping her hands with a start, and then standing as motionless as if she had been shot. Theodore glared at her with a pale face, set lips, and flashing eyes. She said, with quivering lip, “I shall die, if you are going to look at me that way long! Oh, dear! I’m so miserable! I’m always getting my own head snapt off to accommodate other people.”

“You have not injured yourself by accommodating me!” responded a deep, ferocious voice.

“It wasn’t for my own gratification that I went, Theodore.”

“For whose gratification was it, madam?”—There was a shade less of ferocity in the tone.

“For my sister’s!”

“Why didn’t you tell me *why* you wanted to go, madam?”

“It was a secret between Alice and me; and I rather thought you liked me, and I might impose on you, as I used to do on the girls at school that liked me. I don’t mean *impose*,”—(Mr. Grenly fairly banged at the fire,)—“I mean—”

“What do you mean, Ellen Grenly?”

“I thought I could do just as I wished, and you’d make up just as the girls used to do.”

“You thought your husband was like a girl, did you—*did* you?”

“Yes! I hoped so!”

“Well, madam, you will soon find out that you are married to a man who is not to be trifled with in this way.”

“Oh, gracious Peter! what’ll you do with me?”

“I’ll send you back to your father’s—to your pinafores—to your nursery—and I’ll leave the country for two or three years, until a divorce can be obtained for separation. You may obtain the divorce, madam. I shall never want to hold one of your perfidious sex in my arms again. Women are one vast bundle of folly.”

“I am a vast bundle of folly,” sobbed Nellie, spasmodically, “but all of them are not—they’re not—I can prove it.”

“I desire no proof from a woman of your—of your—of your calibre.”

“I never was so sorry for anything in my life, Theodore. If you’ll forgive me this time, I’ll

try and make you such a good wife. I won't disregard your advice, nor anything—nor—"

Mrs. Grenly wiped her tears on the corner of her shawl, and took occasion to look at her husband as she did so.

"You may come here, madam!"

Madam went, knowing the victory was won; her tears were dry in a moment.

"Nellie Grenly, look me right in the eyes!"

"Yes! there!"

And she concentrated her glorious laughing eyes upon him, trying very hard not to make a display of rebellious dimples. He began to doubt whether he had made a judicious request.

"Now, promise me," he said, "that as long as you live, you never will do anything I disapprove of; because it's clear you are a perfect baby."

"Oh! I can see myself in your eyes, just as plain as day!"

"Promise me."

"Did you know that your eyes were not all blue, but streaked—and streaked. What's the nature of the eye, tell me? What are its functions? You are always talking about duty, and functions, and all that."

"Ellen!" sternly.

"What?" very sweetly. "Oh! I guess I'll go and get a drink."

"No! you won't stir a step, until you solemnly assure me that you never will go to any place that I advise you against."

"Oh! I hate to make such a promise."

"The reason I ask it, is because thousands of innocent women have been misjudged for innocent actions; and I would not have my little Nellie misjudged, when she is pure as an angel."

"I promise!"

"How did you feel, Nellie, when I threatened a separation?"

"I felt as if you couldn't be coaxed into it."

"Get down, this instant!",

And down went Nellie, with a little delicious peal of laughter. A profound silence of four minutes continuance.

"I don't know that I care if you come back."

And back went Nellie, keeping her bewitching little mouth closed, until she could drop her face upon her husband's shoulder, and laugh to her heart's content.

"Do you know, Nellie, that some men would have sulked a month over your conduct to-night? Haven't you got an indulgent husband?"

"That I have. You don't thrust wrong constructions on my folly; and that is the very reason

I am going to try and be as good and innocent as you think me. I feel as if I have been acting *so* wrongly."

A HOME IN THE HEART.

OH! ask not a home in the mansions of pride,
Where marble shines out in the pillars and walls;
Though the roof be of gold, it is brilliantly cold,
And joy may not be found in its torch-lighted halls.
But seek for a bosom all honest and true,
Where love once awakened will never depart;
Turn, turn to that breast like the dove to its nest,
And you'll find there's no home like a home in the heart.

Oh! link but one spirit that's warmly sincere,
That will heighten your pleasure and solace your care;
Find a soul you may trust as the kind and the just,
And be sure the wide world holds no treasure so rare.
Then the frowns of misfortune may shadow our lot,
The cheek-searing tear-drops, of sorrow may start,
But a star never dim sheds a halo for him
Who can turn for repose to a home in the heart.

A LEAF FROM A FAMILY JOURNAL.

OUR married life had commenced, and this was HOME. As I opened my eyes in our new abode, the rays of the morning sun were penetrating the muslin curtains, the air was, fill with the fragrance of mignionette, and in the adjoining room I heard a loved voice warbling my favourite air.

On the different articles of furniture lay a hundred things to remind me the change which had taken place in mode of life. There lay the bouquet of orange flowers worn by Micelle on our wedding day; here stood her work basket; a little further on, and my eye fell on her small bookcase, ornamented with her school prizes and several other volumes, recent offerings from myself. Thus all my surroundings indicated that I was no longer alone. Till then in my independence I had merely skirted the great army of humanity, measuring all things with regard to my own strength only. I had now entered its ranks; accompanied by a fellow traveller, whose powers and feelings must be consulted, and whose tenderness must be equalled by the protecting love shed around her. A few weeks ago I should have fallen unnoticed and left no void, henceforward my lot lay bound in that of others. I had taken root in life, and for the future must fortify and strengthen myself for the protection of the nests which would in time be formed beneath my shade.

Sweet sense of responsibility, which elevated without alarming me! What had Marcelle and I to fear? Was not our departure on the voyage of life like that of Athenian Theori for the island of Delos, sailing to the sound of harps and songs while crowned with flowers? Did not our hearts beat responsive to the chorus of youth's protecting genii?

Strength said, "What matters the task? Feel you not that to you it will all be easy? It is the weak alone who weigh the burden. Atlas smiled, though he bore the world on his shoulders."

Faith added, "Have confidence, and the mountains which obstruct your path shall vanish like clouds; the sea shall bear you up, and the rainbow shall become a bridge for your feet."

Hope whispered, "Behold, before lies repose after fatigue; plenty will follow after scarcity. On, on, for the desert leads to the promised land."

And lastly, a voice more fascinating than any, added, "Love one another; there is not on earth a surer talisman; it is the 'Open Sesame' which will put you in the possession of all the treasures of creation."

Why not listen to these sweet assurances? "Cherished companions of our opening career, my faith in you is strong; you, who, like unto the military music which animates the soldier's courage, lead us, intoxicated by your melody, on to the battle field of life." What can I fear from a life through which I shall pass with Marcelle's arm entwined in mine? The sun shines on the commencement of our journey; forward over flowery fields, by hedges alive with song, through ever-verdant forests! Let one horizon succeed another! The day is so lovely, and the night yet so distant!

While thus occupied with my newborn happiness, I had risen and joined Marcelle, who

had already taken possession of her domestic kingdom.

Everything must be visited with her; her precocious housewifery must be admired; her arrangements must be applauded. First she showed me the little '*salle à manger*,' dedicated to the meals which would unite us in the intervals of business: to this cause it owed the air of opulence and brightness which Marcelle had carefully striven to impart to it. China, silver, and glass, sparkled on the shelves. Here lay rich fruits half hidden in moss; there, stood freshly-gathered flowers—everything spoke of the reign of grace and plenty. From thence we passed into the salon, the closed curtains of which admitted only a soft and subdued light, which fell on statuettes ornamenting the consoles, and the gilt frames on the walls: on the tables lay scattered in graceful negligence, albums, elegancies of papier mache, and carved ivory; precious nothings which had constituted the young girl's treasures. At the farther end, the folds of a heavy curtain concealed the bower, sacred to the lady of the castle. Here admittance was at first denied me, and I was obliged to have recourse to entreaty before the drapery was raised for our entrance.

The cabinet was lighted by a small window, over which hung a blind, representing a gothic casement of painted glass, the bright colours of which were now rendered more brilliant by the sunlight which streamed through. The principal furniture consisted of a pretty lounging chair and the work table, near which I had so often seen Marcelle seated with her embroidery when I passed under her aunt's window. Her pretty flower-stand, gay with her favourite flowers, occupied the window in which hung a gilt-wire cage, the melodious prison-house of her pet bird; and lastly, there stood fronting the window, the bureau, consecrated since her school-days, to her intimate correspondence.

She showed it to me with an almost tearful gravity. Everything it contained was a relic, or souvenir. That agate inkstand had belonged to her elder sister, who died just when Marcelle was old enough to know and love her; this mother-of-pearl paper-cutter was a present to her from her aunt, before she became her adopted child; this seal had belonged to her father! She half-opened the different drawers, for me to peep at the treasures they contained. In one were the letters of her dearest school-friend, now married, gone abroad, and therefore lost to her; in another, were family papers; lower down, her certificates for the performance of religious obligations, prizes obtained, and examinations passed—the young girl's humble patent of nobility!—and last of all, in the most secret corner, lay some faded flowers, and the correspondence which, with the consent of her Aunt Roubert, we had interchanged when absent from each other.

In the contents of this bureau, were united all the touching and pleasing reminiscences of her former life; they formed Marcelle's poetic archives, whither she often retired in her hours of solitude. Often, on my return from business, I found her here, smiling, and seemingly perfumed by memories of the past.

Ah! thought I, why have not men also some spot thus consecrated to like holy and sweet remembrances, a sanctuary replete with tokens of family affection, and relics of youth's enthusiasm? Our ancestors, in their pride, cut out of the granite rock safe depositories for the proofs of their empty titles and long pedigrees; is it impossible for us to devote some obscure corner to the annals of the heart, to all that recalls to us our former noble aspirations, and generous hopes?

Time has torn from the walls the genealogical trees of noble families, but he has left space for those of the soul. Let us seek the origin of our decisions, our sympathies, our repugnances, and our hopes, and we shall ever find that they spring from some circumstance of by-gone days. The present is rooted in the past. Who has met by chance with some relic of earlier years, and has not been touched by the remembrances called forth? It is by looking back to the starting-point, that we can best calculate the distance traversed; it is in so doing that we feel either pleasure or alarm. Truly happy is the man who, after gazing on the portrait of his youth, can turn towards the original and find it unimpaired by age!

These reflections were interrupted by the sound of my father's voice, which brought us out of Marcelle's retreat to welcome him. He came to see our new abode, and add his satisfaction to our happiness. He was a gentle stoic, whose courage had ever served as a bulwark to the weak, and whose inflexibility was but another name for entire self-abnegation; he was indulgent to all, because he never forgave himself, and ever veiled severity in gentleness. His wisdom partook neither of arrogance nor passion; it descended to the level of your comprehension, and while pointing upwards, led you by the hand, and guided the ascent. It was a mother who instructed, never a judge who condemned.

Though pleased with my choice, and happy at seeing us united, he had nevertheless refused a place at our fireside. "These first hours of youth are especially your own," he had said to me with a paternal embrace; "an old man would throw a shadow over the meridian sunshine of your joy. It is better that you should regret my absence, than for one moment feel my presence a restraint. Besides, solitude is necessary to you, as well as to me—for *you* to talk of your hopes for the future, for *me* to recall remembrances of the past. Some time hence, when my strength is failing, I will come to you, and close my eyes in the shadow of your prosperity."

And all my entreaties had been unavailing: the separation was unavoidable. Now, however, Marcelle sprang forward to meet him, and led him triumphantly across the room, to begin a re-examination of its treasures. My father listened to all, replied to all, and smiled at all. He lent himself to our dreams of happiness, pausing before each new phase, to point out a hope overlooked before, or a joy forgotten. While thus pleasantly occupied, time slipped away unnoticed, until Marcelle's aunt arrived.

Who was there in our native town who did not know Aunt Roubert? The very mention of her name was sufficient to make one gay. Left a widow in early life, and in involved circumstances, she had, by dint of activity, order, and economy, entirely extricated herself from pecuniary difficulty. Of *her* might be said with truth, that "*sa part d'esprit lui avait été donnee en bon sens*." Taking reality for her guide, she had followed in the beaten track of life, carefully avoiding the many sharp flints which caprice scatters in the way. Always on the move, alternately setting people to rights, and grumbling at either them or herself, she yet found time to manage well her own affairs, and to improve those of others—a faculty which had obtained for her the name of "*La Femme de menage de la Providence*." Vulgar in appearance, she was practical in the extreme, and results generally proved her in the right. Her nature was made up of the prose of life, but prose so clear, so consistent, that, but for its simplicity, it would have been profound.

Aunt Roubert arrived, according to custom, a large umbrella in hand, while her arm was

loaded with an immense horsehair bag. She entered the little cabinet, where we were seated, like a shower of hail:—“Here you are at last,” she exclaimed, “I have been into every room, in search of you, Do you know, my dear, that the chests of linen have arrived?”

“Very well, I will go and see after it,” said Marcelle, who, with one hand in my father’s, and the other in mine, seemed in no hurry to stir.

“You will go and see after it,” repeated Aunt Roubert, “that will be very useless, for you will find no place to put it in; I have been over your abode, my poor child, and instead of a home I find a ‘*salon de theatre*.’”

“Why, aunt,” exclaimed Marcelle, “how can you say so? Remi and his father have just been through the rooms, and are delighted with them!”

“Don’t talk of men and housekeeping in the same breath,” replied Madame, in her most peremptory tone; “see that they are provided with a pair of snuffers and a bootjack, and they will not discover the want of anything else; but I, dear friend, know what a house should be. In entering the lobby just now, I looked about for a hook, on which to hang my cloak, and could find nothing, but flowering stocks! My dear, flowers form the principal part of your furniture!”

Marcelle endeavoured to protest against the assertion by enumerating our stock of valuables, but she was interrupted by her aunt.

“I am not talking of what you have, but of what you have not,” she said; “I certainly saw in your salon some little bronze marmozettes.”

“Marmozettes!” I cried, “you mean statuettes of Schiller and Rousseau.”

“Possibly,” Aunt Roubert quietly replied, “they may at a push serve as match holders; but, dear friend, in the fire-place of your office below, I could see neither tongs nor shovel. On opening the sideboard, I found a charming little silver-gilt service, but no soup ladle, so one can only suppose that you mean to live on sweetmeats; and lastly, though the ‘*salle à manger* is ornamented with beautifully gilt porcelain, the kitchen unfortunately is minus both roasting-jack and frying-pan! Good heavens, these are most unromantic details, are they not?” added she, noticing the gesture of annoyance which we were unable altogether to repress; “but as you will be obliged to descend to them whenever you want a roast or an omelette, it would perhaps be as well to provide for them.”

“You are right!” I replied, a little out of humour, for I had noticed Marcelle’s confusion, “but such omissions are easily rectified when their need is felt.”

“That is to say, you will wait until bed-time to order the mattrass,” replied Aunt Roubert; “well, well, my children, as you will, but now your attendance is required on your linen, which awaits you in the lobby; I suppose my niece does not propose to arrange it in her birdcage, or flower-stand; can she show me the place destined for it?”

Marcelle had coloured to the roots of her hair, and stood twisting and untwisting her apron-string.

“Ah well! I see you have not thought of that,” said the old aunt; “but never mind, we will

find some place to put it in after breakfast; you know we are to breakfast together."

This was a point Marcelle had not forgotten, and she forthwith led the way to her breakfast-table.

At the sight of it my father gave a start of pleased surprise. In the centre stood a basket of fruit, flowers, and moss, round which were arranged all our favourite dainties; each could recognize the dish prepared to suit his taste. After having given a rapid glance round, Madame Roubert cried out,

"And the bread, my child?"

Marcelle uttered a cry of consternation.

"You have none," said her aunt, quietly; "send your servant for some." Then lowering her voice, she added, "As she will pass by my door, she can at the same time tell Baptiste to bring the large easy-chair for your father, and I hope you will keep it. Your gothic chairs are very pretty to look at but when one is old or invalided, what one likes best in a chair, is a comfortable seat."

While awaiting the servant's return, Madame Roubert accompanied Marcelle in a tour round our abode. She pointed out what had been forgotten, remedied the inconvenience of several arrangements, or superseded them with better, doing it all with the utmost cheerful simplicity. Her hints never bordered on criticisms; she showed the error without astonishment at its having been committed, and without priding herself on its discovery.

When she had completed her examination, she took her niece aside with her accounts. Marcelle fetched the little rosewood case which served her as a cash box, and sat down to calculate the expenses of the past week. But her efforts to produce a satisfactory balance, seemed useless. It was in vain that she added and subtracted, and counted piece by piece her remaining money, the deficit never varied. Astounded at such a result, and at the amount spent, she began to examine the lock of her box, and to ask herself how its contents could have so rapidly disappeared, when Aunt Roubert interrupted her.

"Take care," she said in one of her most serious tones. "See, how from want of careful account-keeping you already suspect others; before this evening is here you will be ready to accuse them. It always is so. The want of order engenders suspicion, and it is easier to doubt the probity of others than one's own memory. No lock can prevent that, my child, because none can shelter you from the results of your own miscalculations. There is no safeguard for the woman at the head of a household, like a housekeeping-book which serves to warn her day by day, and bears faithful witness at the end of the month. I have brought you such a one as your uncle used to give me."

She drew it from her bag, and presented it to Marcelle.

It was an account-book bound in parchment, the cover of which was separated like a portfolio into three pockets, destined for receipts, bills, and memoranda. The book itself was divided into several parts, distinguished one from the other by markers corresponding to the different species of expenditure, so that a glance was sufficient to form an estimate, not only of the sum total, but also of the amount of expenditure, in each separate branch.

The whole formed a domestic budget as clear as it was complete, in which each portion of

the government service had its open account regulated by the supreme comptroller.

M. Roubert, who had been during his life a species of unknown Franklin, solely occupied in the endeavour to make business and, opinions agree with good sense, had written above, each chapter a borrowed or unpublished maxim to serve as warning to its possessor. At the beginning of the book the following words were traced in red ink:—

“Economy is the true source of independence and liberality.”

Farther on, at the head of the division destined to expenses of the table:—

“A Wise man has always three cooks, who season the simplest food: Sobriety, Exercise, and Content.”

Above the chapter devoted to benevolence:—

“Give as thou hast received”

And lastly, on the page destined to receive the amount of each month’s savings, he had copied this saying of a Chinese philosopher:—

“Time and patience convert the mulberry leaf into satin.”

After having given us time to look over the book, and read its wise counsels, Aunt Roubert explained to Marcelle the particulars of its use, and endeavoured to initiate her in domestic book-keeping.

TRIFLES.

TRULY hath the poet said that, “Trifles swell the sum of human happiness and woe.” Our highest and holiest aspirations, our purest and warmest affections, are frequently called forth by what in itself may be deemed of trivial importance. The fragrant breath of a flower, the passing song of the merry milk-maid, a soothing word from one we love, will often change the whole current of our thoughts and feelings, and, by carrying us back to the days of childhood, or bringing to our remembrance some innocent and happy state which steals over us like a long-forgotten dream, will dissipate the clouds of sorrow, and even the still deeper shades of falsity and evil.

How many of the great events of life have their origin in trifles; how many deep, heart-felt sorrows spring from neglect of what seemed to us a duty of little or no account—something that could be done or left undone as we pleased!

Alas! this is a dangerous doctrine. Let us endeavour to impress upon the minds of our children that no duty is trifling; that nothing which can in any way affect the comfort and happiness of others is unimportant.

The happiness of domestic life, particularly of married life, depends almost wholly upon strict attention to trifles. Between those who are united by the sacred tie of marriage, nothing should be deemed trivial. A word, a glance, a smile, a gentle touch, all speak volumes; and the human heart is so constituted that there is no joy so great, no sorrow so intense, that it may not be increased or mitigated by these trifling acts of sympathy from one we love.

Nearly three months had elapsed since the papers had duly announced to the public that Mary, daughter of Theodore Melville, had become the bride of Arthur Hartwell; and the young couple had returned from a short bridal tour, and were now quietly settled in a pleasant little spot which was endeared to Arthur by having been the home of his youthful days. He had been left an orphan at an early age, and the property had passed into the hands of strangers, but he continued to cherish a strong attachment for the “old place,” as he termed it, and he heard with joy, some few months before his marriage, that it was for sale; and without even waiting to consult his intended bride, he purchased it for their future home. This was a sad disappointment to Mary, for she had fixed her affections upon a pretty romantic little cottage, half hid by trees and shrubbery, which was situated within two minutes’ walk of her father’s house; and which, owing to the death of the owner, was offered for sale upon very favourable terms. In her eyes it possessed every advantage, and as she mentally compared it with the old-fashioned dwelling of which Arthur had become the possessor, she secretly conceived a strong prejudice against the spot where the duties and pleasures of the new sphere which she was about to enter were to commence; particularly as it was five miles distant from her parents, and not very near to any of her early friends.

Some faint attempts were made to induce Arthur to endeavour to get released from his bargain, and to become the purchaser of the pretty cottage, but in vain. He was delighted to have become the owner of what appeared to him one of the loveliest spots on the earth,

and assured Mary that the house was vastly superior to any cottage, advancing so many good reasons for this assertion, and describing in such glowing terms the beauty of the surrounding scenery, and the happiness they should enjoy, that she could not help sympathizing with him, although her dislike to her future home remained unabated.

The first few weeks of her residences there passed pleasantly enough, however. All was new and delightful. The grounds about the house, although little cultivated, were beautiful in the wild luxuriance of nature; the trees were loaded with rich autumnal fruits; and even the old-fashioned mansion, now that it was new painted, and the interior fitted up in modern style, assumed a more favourable aspect. It was a leisure time with Arthur, and he was ever ready to accompany Mary to her father's; so that she became quite reconciled to the distance, and even thought it rather an advantage, as it was such a pleasant little ride.

But as the season advanced, Arthur became more engrossed with business. The rides became less frequent, and Mary, accustomed to the society of her mother and sister, often passed lonely days in her new home, and her dislike to it in some degree returned. Her affection for her husband, however, prevented the expression of these feelings, and she endeavouved to forget her loneliness in attention to household duties; reading, and music; but these resources would sometimes fail.

It was one of those bright afternoons in the latter part of autumn, when the sun shines forth with almost summer-like warmth, and the heart is gladdened with the departing beauty of nature. Mary was seated alone in her pleasant parlour, with her books and her work by her side.

"How I wish Arthur would return early!" she said, aloud, as she gazed from their open window. "It will be such a lovely evening. We could have an early tea, and ride over to father's and return by moonlight; it would be delightful;" and filled with this idea, she really expected her husband, although it still wanted two hours of the usual time of his return; and laying aside her work, began to make some preparations for the evening meal. She was interrupted by a call from an old friend who lived nearly two miles distant, and, intending to pass the afternoon at Mr. Melville's, had called to request Mary to accompany her.

The young wife was in considerable perplexity. She had a great desire to go to her father's, but she was unwilling to have Arthur return home and find her absent; and moreover, she felt a strong impression that he would himself enjoy the ride in the evening, and would, perhaps, be disappointed if she were not at home to go with him. So, with many thanks the invitation was declined, the visiter departed, and Mary returned with a light heart to the employment which the visit had interrupted.

Janet, the assistant in the kitchen, entered into the feelings of her mistress, and hastened to assist her with cheerful alacrity, declaring that she knew "Mr. Hartwell would be home directly,—it was just the evening for a ride," &c.&c.—this ebullition of her feelings being partly caused by sympathy with the wishes of her young mistress, and partly by her own desire to have the house to herself for the reception of some particular friends, who had promised to favour her with their company that evening.

But alas! the hopes of both mistress and maid were destined to be disappointed. The usual time for Arthur's return passed by, and still he did not appear, and it was not until the

deepening twilight had almost given place to the deeper shades of evening, that Mary heard his well known step, and springing from the sofa where she had thrown herself after a weary hour of watching, she flew to the door to greet him.

“Oh, Arthur!” she exclaimed, forgetful that he was quite ignorant of all that had been passing in her mind for the last few hours, “how could you stay so late? I have waited for you so long, and watched so anxiously. It is quite too late for us to go now.”

“Go where, Mary?” was the surprised reply. “I did not recollect that we were to go anywhere this evening. I know I am rather late home, but business must be attended to. I meant to have told you not to expect me at the usual hour.”

This was too bad. To think that she had refused Mrs. Elmore’s kind invitation, and had passed the time in gazing anxiously from the window, when she might have enjoyed the society of father, mother, and all the dear ones at home; and now to find that Arthur actually knew that he should not return till late, and might have saved her this disappointment, it was really very hard; and Mary turned away to hide the starting tears, as she replied,

“You might have remembered to have told me that you should not be home till dark, Arthur, and then I could have gone with Mrs. Elmore. She called to ask me to ride over to father’s with her, but I would not go, because I felt so sure that you would come home early and take me to ride yourself this pleasant evening.”

“You had no reason to expect it,” said Arthur, rather shortly, for he felt irritated at the implied reproach of Mary’s words and manner, and for the first time since their marriage, the husband and wife seated themselves at the table with unkind feelings busy in their hearts. Mary remained quite silent, while Arthur vented his irritation by giving the table an impatient jerk, exclaiming,

“I really wish Janet could learn to set a table straight! I believe her eyes are crooked.”

This was an unfortunate speech, for Mary, in her desire to expedite Janet’s preparations for tea, had herself arranged the table; at another time she would have made a laughing reply, but just now she did not feel like joking, and the remark only increased the weight at her heart.

These grievances may seem very trifling, and indeed they are so; but our subject is trifles, and if the reader will examine his own heart, he will find that even little troubles sometimes produce a state which even the addition of a feather’s weight renders insupportable.

Thus it was with Mary. She made an ineffectual attempt to eat, but the food seemed to choke her; and rising abruptly, she seated herself at the piano and commenced a lively tune in order to hide her real feelings.

There was nothing strange in this. Arthur frequently asked her to play to him when he felt disposed to remain at the table longer than she did, and he had often said that he liked the ancient custom of having music at meals; but this evening music had lost its charm; the lively tune was not in unison with his state of feeling, and he hastily finished his supper and left the room. This was another trial, and the ready tears gushed from Mary’s eyes as she left the piano, and summoning Janet to remove the tea things, she bade her tell Mr.

Hartwell when he came in, that she had a bad headache and had gone to her own room.

Arthur returned from his short walk in less than half an hour, quite restored to good humour by the soothing effects of the lovely evening, and somewhat ashamed that he had been disturbed by so trifling a cause.

“Perhaps Mary would like to take a walk,” he said, to himself, as he entered the house. “It is not too late for that, and to-morrow I will endeavour to take the wished-for ride.”

He was disappointed when Janet delivered the message, and going up stairs opened the door of their sleeping apartment; but Mary’s eyes were closed, and fearful of disturbing her, he quietly returned to the parlour and endeavoured to amuse himself with a book until his usual hour of going to rest.

The next morning all seemed as usual; for sleep has a renovating power on the mind as well as the body, and in little troubles as well as in great.

Husband and wife spoke affectionately to each other, and secretly wondered how such trifles could have disturbed them; but no allusion was made to the subject, for the very reason that the unpleasant feeling which had arisen between them had sprung from so trifling a cause. The trouble could scarcely be defined, and therefore they judged it better to say nothing about it. In some cases this is well, but, generally, it is better to speak openly even of little difficulties; especially those which may arise in the first part of married-life, as this frankness enables husband and wife to gain an insight into all those trifling peculiarities of character which each may possess, and on attention to which, much of their future happiness may depend.

Weeks and months passed on, and, apparently, all was going happily with our young friends. Mary had become more accustomed to passing some hours of each day alone, and her solitude was frequently enlivened by a visit from her mother, sister, or some young friend of her school-girl days. Arthur still appeared devotedly attached to her, and she certainly returned his affection most sincerely, and yet both felt that there was a change. It could scarcely be defined, and no cause could be assigned for it. They would have indignantly rejected the idea, that they loved each other less than formerly, but there was certainly less sympathy between them; they were not so closely united in every thought and feeling as they once had been. No unkind words had passed on either side, at least none which could really be regarded as such, for the trifles which had gradually produced this feeling of separation were almost too insignificant to call forth absolute unkindness; yet still they did their work slowly but surely.

Mary was the petted child of indulgent parents. Arthur had early lost both father and mother, and his childhood had passed with but little of the genial effects of female influence. He had spent most of his time at a school for boys, where, although his intellect was well cultivated, and his morals strictly attended to, there was little done to call forth those warm affections of which every young heart is susceptible. And as he grew to manhood, although his principles were excellent, and his feelings warm and tender, there was a want of that kindliness and gentleness of manner, and above all, of that peculiar faculty of adapting himself to the wants of a female heart, which would not have existed had he been blessed with the care of a mother, or the affectionate sympathy of a sister.

His acquaintance with Mary before their marriage had been of short duration, and these

traits in his character had passed unobserved during the excitement of feeling which generally marks the days of courtship; but as this state passed away, and his usual habits returned, Mary's sensitive heart was often wounded by trifling inattentions, although never by wilful neglect. Arthur was fond of study, and in his leisure hours he would sometimes become so entirely absorbed in some favourite author, that even Mary's presence was forgotten, and the evening passed away without any effort on his part to cheer her evidently drooping spirits. Not that he was really selfish: it was mere thoughtlessness, and ignorance of those attentions which a woman's heart demands. If Mary had requested him to lay aside his graver studies and read aloud in some work interesting to her, or pass an hour in cheerful conversation, or listening to music, he would have complied without hesitation, and, indeed, with pleasure; but she remained silent, secretly yearning for little acts of kindness, which never entered the mind of her husband. Another peculiarity which gave the young wife much pain, was that Arthur never or very rarely uttered words of commendation or approval. If anything was wrong he noticed it at once, and requested a change; but if right, he never praised. This is a common error, and it is a great one. Approval from those we love is as refreshing to the human heart as the dew to the fading flower; and to at woman's heart it is *essential*: without it all kindly affections wither away; the softest, most delicate feelings become blunted and hard; the heart no longer beats with warm, generous emotions—it is cold, palsied, and dead.

Even in the most trifling details of domestic life, approval is encouraging and sweet. The weary wife and mother who has passed through a day of innumerable little vexations and difficulties, is cheered by the pleasant smile with which her husband takes his seat at the tea-and feels new life as she listens to his commendations of some favourite dish which she has placed before him.

True, it is but a trifle, but it speaks to the heart.

We will give our readers a short specimen of the habit to which we allude. Breakfast was on the table, and a part of the hot cakes and smoking ham had been duly transferred to Arthur's plate. He ate sparingly, and his looks plainly showed that something was wrong. Presently he said—"Mary, dear, I think you must look a little more strictly after Janet. She grows very careless; this bread is decidedly sour, the ham is half cooked, and worse than all, breakfast is ten minutes too late."

Mary's quiet reply, that she would "endeavour to have it right another time," was quite satisfactory; pleasant remarks followed, and Arthur left home with a cheerful good morning.

Another breakfast time arrived. Mary's own personal attention had secured sweet bread, and she had risen half an hour earlier than usual to insure that all was done properly and in season.

Punctually the well prepared dishes were placed upon the table, again Arthur's plate was well filled, and, to do him justice, its contents were eaten with keen relish; but no look or word of approval was given to show that he understood and appreciated the effort which had been made to meet his wishes.

All was right, and therefore there was nothing to say. To some this might have been satisfactory, but not to Mary. She longed for a word or smile to show that she had given

pleasure.

But it is not to be supposed that all these petty causes of complaint were on one side. Arthur often felt grieved and somewhat irritated by Mary's altered manner or moody silence, showing that he had offended in ways unknown to himself; and there were also times when her ridicule of his somewhat uncultivated taste granted harshly on his feelings. Her continued dislike to the "dear old place" was another source of regret; and before the first year of married life had expired, feelings had sometimes been busy in both their hearts which they would have shuddered to have confessed even to themselves.

Winter and spring had passed away, and summer was again present with its birds and flowers. Mary was in her garden one lovely afternoon arranging some favourite plants, when her attention was attracted to a small cart laden with some strange old-fashioned-looking furniture, which had stopped at their gate. She at first supposed that the driver wished to inquire the way, but to her surprise he carefully lifted a large easy-chair, covered with leather and thickly studded with brass nails, from the wagon, and brought it toward the house, bowing respectfully as he approached her, and inquiring where she wished to have it put.

"There is some mistake," said Mary; "these things are not for us."

"Mr. Hartwell sent them here, ma'am," was the reply; "and here is a bit of a note for your leddyship."

Mary received the proffered slip of paper, and hastily read the following lines:—

"You will be pleased, dear Mary, to find that I have at length discovered the purchaser of my mother's easy-chair, and the old clock which formerly stood in our family sitting-room, and have bought them of him for a moderate price. They are valuable to me as mementos of my boyish days, and you will value them for my sake."

But Mary had a great dislike to old clocks, and leather-bottomed chairs, and she was little disposed to value them even for Arthur's sake. She, however, directed the man where to place them, and returned to the employment which he had interrupted. Arthur's business demanded his attention until a late hour that evening, and he had said when he left home that he should take tea in the city. Mary retired to rest before his return, and nothing was said concerning the old furniture until the following morning.

Indeed, it seemed so perfectly worthless to Mary, that the recollection of it had passed from her mind; but it was recalled by the sudden inquiry of her husband as he finished dressing and prepared to go down stairs.

"Oh, Mary, dear, where did you have the old chair and clock placed?
Was I not fortunate to find them?"

"Very," replied Mary, with forced interest; "although I hardly know what you will do with them. I had them put in the shed for the present."

"In the shed!" exclaimed Arthur; "but you are right, Mary, they need a little rubbing off; please to let Janet attend to them this morning, and I will show you the very places where they used to stand in the parlour. How delighted I shall be to see the old clock in its accustomed corner, and to seat myself in the very chair where I have so often sat with my dear mother!"

Mary uttered an involuntary, exclamation of horror.

"Why, Arthur, you do not really intend to place those hideous old things in our parlour?"

"Certainly I do. I see nothing hideous in them. They are worth all our fashionable furniture put together. What is your objection to them, Mary?"

"I have every objection to them," was her almost indignant reply. "They would form the most ludicrous contrast to the rest of our furniture."

"I see nothing ludicrous or improper in putting them in their old places," said Arthur, warmly. "They are dear to me as having belonged to my parents and I cannot see why you should wish to deny me the pleasure of having them where I can enjoy the recollections which they recall."

"Put them in the garret, or in your own little room where you keep your books, if you like," answered Mary; "but if you have any regard to my feelings, you will keep them out of my sight. I think the sacrifice which I make in living in this old-fashioned place is enough, without requiring me to ornament my parlour with furniture which was in use before I was born. However, I do not expect much consideration for my opinions and tastes;" and, overpowered with a mixed feeling of indignation and regret for the warmth with which she had spoken, Mary burst into tears.

"You have certainly showed little regard for my feelings," was Arthur's irritated reply; "and perhaps, I may also say with truth, what your words imply; I have little reason to expect regard and consideration;" and hastily leaving the room, he was on his way to his office before Mary had composed herself sufficiently to descend to the breakfast room.

"Has Mr. Hartwell breakfasted?" she inquired, with surprise, as she saw the solitary cup

and plate which Janet had placed for her.

“He took no breakfast, ma’am. I think he was in great haste to reach the office.”

“He has a great deal to attend to, just now,” replied her mistress, unwilling that Janet should suspect the truth; but as soon as the girl left the room, her excited feelings again found vent in tears.

Bitterly did she regret what had passed. It was the first time that harsh words had been uttered by either and they seemed to have lifted the veil which had long been drawn over thoughts and feelings which had tended to dissimilarity and separation.

The year passed in rapid review before her, and she felt that there was a great and fearful change, the cause of which she could not define, for she had no distinct charges to bring against Arthur, and as yet, she attached little blame to herself. The unkind manner in which she had spoken that morning, was indeed regretted; but this seemed the only error. It was certainly unreasonable in Arthur to expect her to yield willingly to such strange whim.

But he no longer loved her, she was sure of this; and proof after proof of his inattention to her wishes, and neglect of her feelings, came to her mind until she was almost overwhelmed with the view of her own misery, which imagination thus placed before her.

And this was the anniversary of their marriage! One short year before and they had exchanged those mutual vows which then appeared unchangeable. How soon happiness had fled! And to think that this climax of their troubles should happen upon this very day, which ought to have been consecrated to tender remembrances!—this was the hardest thought of all; but probably, Arthur did not even remember the day. As these and similar thoughts passed through Mary’s mind, her tears redoubled, and fearful that Janet would surprise her in this situation, she rose hastily to go to her own room. In doing this her eye suddenly rested upon a small parcel addressed to herself, which lay upon her little work-table, and taking it in her hand she passed quickly up the stairs, just in time to avoid the scrutinizing eye of Janet, who, shrewdly suspecting that something was wrong, had resolved to be uncommonly attentive to her young mistress, in the hope of discovering the cause of the trouble.

Mary locked the door of her own apartment, and observing that the address on the package was in Arthur’s handwriting, she hastily tore off the envelope, discovering a beautiful edition of a volume of poems for which she had expressed a wish—unheeded and unheard, as she deemed it—some days before. Her own name and that of her husband were written upon the blank leaf, and the date showed that it was designed as a gift for this very day; a proof that he remembered the anniversary which she had supposed so entirely forgotten.

It was but a trifling attention—one of those pleasant little patches of blue sky which we sometimes see when the remainder of the heavens is covered with clouds—but it produced an entire revulsion of feeling. A flood of gentle and tender emotions filled the heart of the young wife; the faults of her husband now appeared to her as nothing, while his many virtues stood out in bold relief; she, alone, had been to blame in the little difficulties which had sprung up between them, for a playful remonstrance on her part would, no doubt, have dispelled the coldness of manner which had sometimes troubled her, and induced him to

pay those little attentions which her heart craved. He had always, in every important matter, been very, very kind to her, and how often she had opposed his wishes and laughed at his opinions!

But it was not yet too late; she would regain the place in his affections which she still feared she had forfeited; and with the childish, impulsive eagerness which marked her character, Mary hastened to the shed, and summoning Janet to her assistance, was soon busily at work on the old furniture, which, an hour ago, she had so much despised. The old clock-case soon shone with an unequalled polish, and the chair (sic) seeemed to have renewed its youth. But where should they be placed? for Arthur had left the house without designating the spot where they had formerly stood.

“It would be so delightful to have them just where he wished, before he comes home!” thought Mary, and it was with real joy that she turned to receive the greeting of a worthy old lady, who was one of the nearest neighbours, and having lived on the same place for the last forty years, had undoubtedly been well acquainted with the old chair and clock, and could tell the very place where they ought to stand.

This proved to be the case. The lady was quite delighted to meet such old friends, and assisted Mary in arranging them with the utmost pleasure.

“There, dear,” she exclaimed, when all was completed, “that is exactly right. It seems to me I can almost see my old friend, Mrs. Hartwell, in her favourite chair, with her pretty little boy, your husband that is now, by her side. Poor child! it was such a sad loss to him when she died; I am glad he has found such a good wife; it is not every one who thinks so much of their husband’s feelings as you do, my dear.”

Mary blushed a little at this somewhat ill-deserved praise, but thanked her worthy visiter, for her kindness, and exerted herself so successfully to make her long call agreeable, that the good lady went home with the firm impression that “‘Arthur Hartwell had got one of the best wives in the country.”

The hours seemed long until the usual time for Arthur’s arrival; and with almost trembling eagerness Mary heard his step in the entry. Her tremulous but Pleasant “good evening,” met with rather a cold return, but she was prepared for this, and was not discouraged. Tea was on the table, and they sat down. Arthur’s taste had been scrupulously consulted, and the effort to please did not, as was too often the case, pass unnoticed.

From a desire to break the somewhat awkward silence, or from some other motive, he praised each favourite dish, and declared he had seldom eaten so good a supper.

Rising from table, they proceeded as usual to the parlour; and now Mary was amply rewarded for the sacrifice of her own taste, if sacrifice it could be called, by the surprise and pleasure visible in her husband’s countenance as he looked around, and by the affectionate kiss which he imprinted upon her cheek.

“And you will forgive my hasty words, will you not?” Mary whispered softly as he bent his head to hers.

“They will never again be remembered,” was the reply; “and I have also much to ask your forgiveness for, Mary, for I have thought much and deeply, to-day, dearest, and I find that I have been very deficient in many of the most essential qualities of a husband. But let us sit

down together in this old chair, which with me is so strongly associated with the memory of my dear mother, that it seems as if her spirit must be near to bless us; and we will review the past year a little, and you will let me peep into your heart, and give me a clearer insight into its feelings and wants."

A long and free conversation followed, in which the husband and wife gained more real knowledge of each other's characters than they had obtained in the whole of their previous acquaintance. All coldness and doubt was dispelled, and they felt that they loved more tenderly and truly than ever before.

"And now, dearest, we will sum up the lesson which we are to remember," said Arthur, playfully, as the lateness of the hour reminded them that the evening had passed unheeded away. "*I* am to think *more* of trifles, and you are—"

"To think *less*" added Mary, smilingly. "Let us see who will remember their lesson the best."

DOMESTIC HAPPINESS.

THERE are certain pairs of old-fashioned-looking pictures, in black frames generally, and most commonly glazed with greenish and crooked crown glass, to be occasionally met with in brokers' shops, or more often, perhaps, on cottage walls, and sometimes in the dingy, smoky parlour of a village tavern or ale-house, which said pictures contain and exhibit a lively and impressive moral. Some of our readers, doubtless, have seen and been edified by these ancient engravings; and, for the benefit of those who have not, we will describe them.

The first picture of the pair represents a blooming and blushing damsel, well bedecked in frock of pure white muslin, if memory serves us faithfully, very scanty and very short-waisted, as was the fashion fifty years ago, and may again be the fashion in less than fifty years hence, for aught we can tell. Over this frock is worn a gay spencer, trimmed with lace and ornamented with an unexceptionable frill, while the damsel's auburn curls are surmounted with a hat of straw fluttering with broad, true blue ribbons, which fasten it in a true love-knot, under the dimpled chin.

Her companion (for she has a companion) is a young countryman in glossy boots, tight buckskins, gay flapped waistcoat, blue or brown long-waisted and broad-skirted coat, frilled shirt, and white kerchief, innocent of starch, who smiles most lovingly, as with fond devotion [here, gentle reader, is the moral of the picture], he bends lowlily, and chivalrously places at the disposal of the fair lady, hand, arm, and manly strength, as she pauses before a high-backed stile which crosses the path, leading, if we mistake not, to the village church. Beneath this picture, reader, in Roman capitals, are the words:—"BEFORE MARRIAGE."

We turn to the second picture; and there may be seen the same high-backed stile, the same path, and the same passengers. Painfully and awkwardly is the lady represented as endeavouring, unaided, to climb the rails, while beyond her is the companion of her former walk—her companion still, but not her helper—slowly sauntering on, and looking back with an ominous frown, as though chiding the delay. Beneath this picture are the significant words:—"AFTER MARRIAGE."

One could wish these pictures were only pictures; but, in sober earnest, they are allegories, and too truthfully portray what passes continually before our eyes: the difference, to wit, between the two states there presented. Truly, indeed, has it been said, "Time and possession too frequently lessen our attachment to objects that were once most valued, to enjoy which no difficulties were thought insurmountable, no trials too great, and no pain too severe. Such, also, is the tenure by which we hold all terrestrial happiness, and such the instability of all human estimation! And though the ties of conjugal affection are calculated to promote, as well as to secure permanent felicity, yet many, it is to be feared, have just reason to exclaim,

"'Once to prevent my wishes Philo flew;
But time, that alters all, has altered you.'

"It is, perhaps, not to be expected that a man can retain through life that assiduity by

which he pleases for a day or a month. Care, however, should be taken that he do not so far relax his vigilance as to induce a belief that his affection is diminished. Few disquietudes occur in domestic life which might not have been prevented; and those so frequently witnessed, generally arise from a want of attention to those mutual endearments which all have in their power to perform, and which, as they are essential to the preservation of happiness, should never be intentionally omitted."

This witness, dear reader, is true. The neglect of those little attentions which every married couple have it in their power to show to each other, daily, hourly, is a sure method of undermining domestic happiness. Let every married reader bear this in mind, and reflect upon it; for it is an undeniable truth.

It was a full quarter of a century ago that the writer first saw the pair of engravings which he has described. They were hanging over the fire-place of a newly-married cottager. "There," said she, laughing, as she pointed to the second picture; "you see what I have to expect."

She did not expect it, though! Such an attentive, kind, and self-denying lover, as her "old man," as she called him in sport, had been, would never change into a morose brute, who could suffer his wife to climb over an awkward stile without help, and scold her for her clumsiness.

Reader, not many months since we saw poor Mary, prematurely gray and time-stricken. For years she has been living apart from her husband, her children scattered abroad in the world, and she is sad and solitary. And thus it was:—*He*, the trusted one, tired of being the fond lover of the picture, soon began to show himself the husband. *She*, the confiding one, stunned by some instances of neglect, reproached and taunted. He resented these reproaches as unjust, and to prove them so, redoubled his inattentiveness to her, absented himself from home, and bestowed his attentions elsewhere. *She* copied his example, and by way of punishment in kind, lavished her smiles and kindnesses in other quarters. *He*—but why go on? Years—sad years of crimination and recrimination, of provocation, and bitter reproaches, and suspicion, and mutual jealousy, and dislike, and hatred, wore away. At length they parted. What became of the pair of pictures, we often wonder.

"For about two years after I was married," says Cobbett, in his Advice to a Husband, "I retained some of my military manners, and used to romp most famously with the girls that came in my way; till one day, at Philadelphia, my wife said to me, in a very gentle manner 'Don't do that, *I do not like it.*' That was quite enough; I had never thought on the subject before; one hair of *her* head was more dear to me than all the other women in the world, and this I knew that she knew; but I now saw that this was not all that she had a right to from me; I saw that she had the further claim upon me that I should abstain from everything that might induce others to believe that there was any other woman for whom, even if I were at liberty, I had any affection."

"I beseech young married men," continues he, "to bear this in mind; for, on some trifle of this sort the happiness or misery of a long life frequently turns. If the mind of a wife be disturbed on this score, every possible means ought to be used to restore it to peace; and though her suspicions be perfectly groundless—though they be wild as the dreams of madmen—though they may present a mixture of the furious and the ridiculous, still the are

to be treated with the greatest lenity and tenderness; and if, after all, you fail, the frailty is to be lamented as a misfortune, and not punished as a fault, seeing that it must have its foundation in a feeling towards you, which it would be the basest of ingratitude, and the most ferocious of cruelty, to repay by harshness of any description."

"The truth is," adds the same writer, "that the greatest security of all against jealousy in a wife is to show, to *prove* by your acts, by your words also, but more especially by your *acts*, that you prefer her to all the world; and I know of no act that is, in this respect, equal to spending in her company every moment of your leisure time. Everybody knows, and young wives better than anybody else, that people, who can choose, will be where they like best to be, and that they will be along with those whose company they like best. The matter is very plain; and I do beseech you to bear it in mind. Nor do I see the use, or sense, of keeping a great deal of company as it is called. What company can a man and woman want more than their two selves, and their children, if they have any? If here be not company enough, it is but a sad affair. This hankering after company proves, clearly proves, that you want something beyond the society of your wife; and *that* she is sure to feel most acutely; the bare fact contains an imputation against her, and it is pretty sure to lay the foundation of jealousy, or of something still worse."

Addressed, as these sentiments are, to the husband, they are equally applicable to the wife; and on the part of domestic happiness, we urge upon our readers, all, to prove their constancy of attachment, by mutual kind offices and delicate attentions, in health and in sickness, in joy and in sorrow; by abstinence from all that may wound; and by an honest preference of *home* enjoyments above all other enjoyments.

But to keep alive this honest preference, there must be,—in addition to other good qualifications which have heretofore passed under review,

1. *Constant cheerfulness and good humour.* A wife and mother who is perpetually fretful and peevish; who has nothing to utter to her husband when he returns from his daily occupation, whatever it may be, or to her children when they are assembled around her, but complaints of her hard lot and miserable destiny; who is always brooding over past sorrows, or anticipating future evils; does all she can, unconsciously it may be, to make her hearth desolate, and to mar for ever domestic happiness. And the husband and father who brings to that hearth a morose frown, or a gloomy brow; who silences the prattling tongue of infancy by a stern command; who suffers the annoyances and cares of life to cut into his heart's core, and refuses to be comforted or charmed by the thousand endearments of her whom he has sworn to love and cherish; such a one does not deserve domestic happiness.

Young reader, and expectant of future domestic bliss take a word of advice: Be good-tempered. You have not much to try your patience now; by-and-by your trials will come on. Now, then, is the time to practise good-temper in the little vexations of life, so as to prepare you for future days. No doubt there are many little rubs and jars to fret and shake even you; many small things, not over and above agreeable to put up with. Bear them you must; but do try and bear them without losing your temper. If a man have a stubborn Or skittish horse to manage, he knows that the best way to deal with it is by gentle, good-humoured coaxing. Just so it is in other things: kindness, gentleness, and downright good-humour will do what all the blustering and anger in the world can not accomplish. If a

wagon wheel creaks and works stiff, or if it skids instead of turning round, you know well enough that it wants oiling. Well, always carry a good supply of the oil of good temper about with you, and use it well on every needful occasion; no fear then of creaking wheels as you move along the great highway of life.

Then, on the part, still, of domestic happiness, would we earnestly advise a decent, nay, *a strict regard to personal habits,* so far, at least, as the feelings of others are concerned. “It is seldom.” writes a traveller, “that I find associates in inns who come up to my ideas of what is right and proper in personal habits. The most of them indulge, more or less, in devil’s tattooing, in snapping of fingers, in puffing and blowing, and other noises, anomalous and indescribable, often apparently merely to let the other people in the room know that they are there, and not thinking of anything in particular. Few seem to be under any sense of the propriety of subduing as much as possible all sounds connected with the animal functions, though even breathing might, and ought to be managed in perfect silence.” Now, if it were only in inns that disagreeable personal habits are practised, it would not much interfere with the happiness of nine-tenths of the people in the world; but the misfortune is that *home* is the place where they are to be noticed in full swing—to use a common expression. Indeed, perhaps there are few persons who do not, in a degree at least, mar domestic happiness by persisting in personal peculiarities which they know are unpleasant to those around them. Harmless these habits maybe in themselves, perhaps; but inasmuch as they are teasing, annoying, and irritating to others, they are not harmless. Nay, they are criminal, because they are accompanied by a most unamiable disregard to the feelings of others.

To make home truly happy, *the mind must be cultivated.* It is all very well to say that a man and his wife, and their children, if they have any, ought to be company enough for each other, without seeking society elsewhere; and it is quite right that it should be so: but what if they have nothing to say to each other, as reasonable and thinking beings?—nothing to communicate beyond the veriest common-places—nothing to learn from each other?—nothing but mere animal enjoyments in common? Imagine such a case, reader, where father, mother, and children are sunk in grossest ignorance, without knowledge, without intellectual resources, or even intellectual powers, without books, or any acquaintance with books, or any desire for such acquaintance! What domestic happiness can there be in such a case? As well might we talk of the domestic happiness of a Dog-kennel or sheep-pen, a stable or a pig-stye. And just in proportion as ignorance predominates, so are the chances of domestic happiness diminished. Where there is great ignorance, and contentment with ignorance, there is vice; and vice is not happiness—it cannot be. Therefore, all other things equal, that family will have the greatest chance of the greatest share of domestic happiness where each member of it has the mind to take in, and the heart to give out, a constant succession of fresh ideas, gained from observation, experience, and books. Reader, think of these things.

A SYLVAN MORALITY; OR, A WORD TO WIVES.

"These summer wings
Have borne me in my days of idle pleasure;
I do discard them."

"And, Benedick, love on; I will requite thee,
Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand."

WE have a young relative, about whom we are going to relate a little anecdote connected with insect history, which requires, however, a few prefatory words.

At the age of seventeen Emily S. "came out," gilt and lettered, from the Minerva Press of a fashionable boarding-school, and was two years afterwards bound (in white satin) as a bride. In the short period intervening between these two important epochs, she had had a prodigious run of admiration. Sonnets had been penned on her pencilled brow, and the brows of rival beauties had contracted at the homage paid to hers. All this Emily had liked well enough—perhaps a little better than she ought; but where was the wonder? for besides excuses general (such as early youth and early training) for loving the world and the world's vanities, she had an excuse of her own, in the fact that she had nothing else to love—no mother, no sister, no home—no home at least in its largest and loving sense. She was the orphan but not wealthy ward of a fashionable aunt, in whom the selfish regrets of age had entirely frozen the few sympathies left open by the selfish enjoyments of youth.

When Emily married, and for a few months previous, it was of course to be presumed that she *had* found something better than the world whereon to fix the affection of her warm young heart. At all events, she had found a somebody to love *her*, and one who was worthy to be loved in return. Indeed, a better fellow than our friend F— does not live; but though fairly good-looking, and the perfect gentleman, he was not perhaps exactly the *description* of gentleman to excite any rapid growth of romantic attachment in the bosom of an admired girl of nineteen.

Why did she marry him? Simply because amongst her admirers she liked nobody better, and because her aunt, who was anxious to be relieved of her charge, liked nobody so well; —not because he had much to offer, but because it was little he required.

Soon after their marriage the happy pair set out for Paris. F— though his means were slender and tastes retired, made every effort (as far as bridegroom could so feel it) to gratify his lively young wife by a stay at the capital of pleasure. After subsequent excursion, they returned within a year to England, and settled at a pretty cottage in Berkshire, to which we speedily received a cordial invitation. It was no less readily accepted; for we were anxious to behold the "rural felicity," of which we little doubted our friends were in full possession.

The result, however, of a week's sojourn at their quiet abode, was the reluctant opinion that, somehow or another, the marriage garments of the young couple did not sit quite easy; though to point out the defect in their make, or to discover where they girted, were matters on which it required more time to form a decided judgment. One thing, however,

was pretty obvious. With her matronly title, Emily had not assumed an atom of that seriousness—not sad, but sober—which became her new estate; nor did she, as we shrewdly suspected, pay quite as much attention to the cares of her little *ménage* as was rendered incumbent by the limited amount of her husband's income. She seemed, in short, the same thoughtless pleasure-loving, pleasure-seeking girl as ever; now that she was captured, the same volatile butterfly as when surrounded and chased by butterflies like herself. But her captor? asks some modern Petruchio—had he not, or could he not contrive to clip her pinions?

Poor F—! not he! he would have feared to "brush the dust" from off them; and, from something of this over-tenderness, had been feeding, with the honeyed pleasures of the French capital, those tastes which (without them) might have been reconciled already to the more spare and simple sociabilities of a retired English neighbourhood. He was only now trying the experiment which should have been made a year ago, and that with a reluctant and undecided hand.

Poor Emily! her love of gayety had now, it is true, but little scope for its display; but it was still strongly apparent, in the rapturous regret with which she referred to pleasures past, and the rapturous delight with which she greeted certain occasional breaks in the monotony of a country life. An approaching dinner-party would raise her tide of spirits, and a distant ball or bow-meeting make them swell into a flood. On one or two of such occasions, we fancied that F—, though never stern, looked grave—grave enough to have been set down as an unreasonable fellow; if not by every one, at least by that complex "everybody" who declared that his wife was "one of the prettiest and sweetest little women in the world," and, as everybody must be right, so of course it was.

Rarely, indeed, had our gentle Benedick beheld the face of his "Young May Moon" absolutely obscured; but then it had always been his care to chase away from it every passing or even approaching cloud; and he would certainly have liked, in return, that its very brightest rays should have shone on him direct, instead of reaching him only, as it were, reflected from what in his eyes, certainly, were very inferior objects.

We had passed some weeks at our entertainer's cottage when rumours got afloat, such as had not disturbed for many a year the standing and sometimes stagnant pool of Goslington society. The son of Lord W—was about to come of age, and the event was to be celebrated by grand doings; a varied string of entertainments, to be wound up, so it was whispered, by a great parti-coloured or fancy ball. Rumours were soon silenced by certainty, and our friends were amongst those who received an invitation to meet all the world of Goslington and a fragment of the world of London, about to be brought into strange conjunction at W—Castle. What shapes! grotesque, and gay, and gorgeous—ghosts of things departed—started up before the sparkling eyes of Emily, as she put the reviving talisman into F—'s hand. No wonder that her charmed sight failed to discover what was, however, sufficiently apparent, that her husband's delight at the honour done them by no means equalled hers. Indeed, we were pretty certain that not merely dissatisfaction, but even dissent, was to be read in his compressed lip, and, for once, forbidding eye.

Nothing was said then upon the subject; but we saw the next morning something very like coolness on the part of F— towards his wife, which was returned on hers by something very like petulance. Ah! thought we, it all comes of this unlucky fancy ball! We had often

heard it declared by our friend that he hated every species of masquerade, and would never allow (though this as certainly before his marriage) either sister, wife, or daughter of his to attend one. But, besides this aversion for such entertainments in general, he had reasons, as we afterwards gathered, for disliking, in particular, this fancy ball of Lord W —'s. Amongst the "London World" Emily would be sure to meet several of her quondam acquaintances, perhaps admirers; and though he was no jealous husband, he preferred, on many accounts, that such meetings should be avoided.

The slight estrangement spoken of did not wholly pass away, though so trifling were its tokens that no eye less interested than our own might have noticed their existence. Indeed, neither of the parties seemed really angry with the other, appearing rather to think it incumbent on them to keep up a certain show of coolness; but whenever the sunny smile of Emily broke even partially through the half-transparent cloud, it dissolved in an instant the half-formed ice of her husband's manner. By mutual consent the subject of the fancy ball seemed left in abeyance, and while in every circle, for miles round, it formed the central topic, in ours it was the theme forbid. Thence we tried to infer that it was a matter abandoned, and that Emily's better judgment, if not her good feeling, had determined her to give up her own liking, on this the very first occasion on which, we believe, her husband had ever thwarted it.

Well—whether, as with us, awaited in silence, or, as with the many, harbingered by the music of many voices—the grand event marched on; and a day was only wanted of its expected arrival when business called F— to London, from whence he was not to return till late at night. Soon after his departure, which followed an early breakfast, we left Emily, as we supposed, to the business of her little household, and repaired, as was our wont, to the library,—a small apartment which our friend F— had made the very bijou of his pretty cottage. It was tastefully fitted up in the gothic style, with a window of painted glass,—a window, by the way, especially suited to a book-room, not merely as pleasing to the eye but for a correspondence which has often struck us. The many-coloured panes, through which the light of day finds entrance, form no unfitting symbol of a library's contents, whereby the light of intelligence is poured upon the mind through as many varied mediums, from the deep, cold, black and blue of learned and scientific lore to the glowing flame colour and crimson of poetry and romance. Having taken down a choice copy of the Faery Queen, we committed our person to an ebony arm-chair, and our spirit to the magic guidance of our author's fancy. Obedient to its leading, we were careering somewhere betwixt earth and heaven, when a slight noise brought us down for a moment to our proper sphere; yet hardly,—for on looking up we beheld, standing in the wake of a coloured sun-beam, from which, on wing of gossamer, she seemed to have just descended, an unexpected apparition of surpassing grace and beauty. Titania's self, just stepped upon the moonlit earth, could scarcely have stood poised on an unbroken flower-stalk, in form more airy, in attitude more graceful, with countenance more radiant than those of Emily F —, as, arrayed in likeness of the Faery Queen, she thus burst upon our view, and with an air half-archly playful, half-proudly triumphant, enjoyed our bewildered surprise, and received the involuntary homage of our admiration.

We saw in a moment how the matter stood; Emily was really going to the fancy ball; and this, of the Queen of Fays, was the fantastic and too bewitching costume she had chosen to assume. Knowing her kind heart, and having believed that its best affections had been

gained by her estimable husband, if not bestowed on him at first, we were vexed and disappointed in our young relation, and felt it only right to give, if we could, a check to her buoyant vanity, by letting her feel the weight of our disapproval,—shown, if not expressed. “So I see, Emily,” said I, in the coldest tone, “I see, after all, that you are going to this foolish ball.”

The beaming countenance of the beautiful sylph darkened in a moment, like a cosmoramic landscape. “And why not?” returned she, pettishly; “I suppose, then, you don’t approve.”

“*My* approbation can be of very little import, if you possess that of your own heart, and that of your husband. Under what character, pray, does he attend you? I suppose he plays Oberon to your Titania?”

Emily’s face reddened. Some strong emotion heaved her bosom, and I saw that pride alone kept the starting tears from overflowing. “Charles,” said she, with an attempt at assumed indifference, “will not be there at all; I am to go with Lady Forrester.”

We felt more vexed than ever, and wished to say something which might yet hinder the young wife’s intention; but while considering what that something should be, or whether, indeed, our age and slight relationship gave a sufficient right to say anything, we looked down for a moment on our still open book. Of that moment Emily availed herself to effect an escape, and on raising our eyes we only caught a glimpse of her glittering wings as she glided through the doorway. Our first impulse was to recall her; our next thought, to leave her to herself. If her better nature still struggled, remonstrance of ours, we considered, might only serve to set wounded pride against it; and wounded passions, like wounded bravoes, fight most desperately. We saw no more of our young hostess till the hour of dinner, to which we sat down to a *tête-à-tête*. Emily’s sweet face had regained all its usual expression of good humour, and by almost an excess of attention, and an effort at more than ordinary liveliness, she strove to make amends for the slight ebullition of temper stirred up by the morning’s incident; but her sociability seemed forced, and we felt that our own was much of the same description.

Our after-dinner sitting was soon ended for an evening stroll. It had been a sultry day towards the end of August; the lazy zephyrs had been all asleep since noontide; so, with a view to meet the first of them which should happen to be stirring, we directed our steps towards a high open heath, or common. Its summit was crowned by a magnificent beech, towards which we slowly ascended, under a shower of darts levelled by the declining sun; and, on arriving at the tree, were right glad to seat ourselves on the circular bench which surrounded its smooth and bulky bole.

Here, in addition to the welcome boons of rest and shade, we were presented gratis with the exhibition of a finer panorama, than the Messrs. Barker ever yet produced.

What a scene of tranquil splendour lay before us! one of those glowing pictures of the declining day and declining year, whereon, like a pair of dying painters, they seem to have combined their utmost skill and richest colours in order to exceed, in a last effort, all the productions of their meridian prime.

After a few moments of silent admiration, we were on the point of exclaiming to our young companion, “Oh! who could prefer the most brilliant ball-rooms to a scene like this?” but we checked the impulse; for perhaps, thought we, the “still small voice,” which

speaks from all around us, is even now whispering to her heart. But never, we believe, was adder more deaf to the accents of the "charmer" than was Emily at that moment to those of nature. Her mind, we are pretty sure, was still running, and all the faster as she approached it, on that fancy ball. Perhaps she suspected that ours was following the same turn, and knowing of old our habit of making observations upon insects, she, by a little womanly artifice, availed herself of it to divert their course. Pointing with her parasol to a long procession of brown ants, which were crossing the foot-worn area beneath the tree, —"Look," said she, "I suppose they are going home to bed."

"Or perhaps to a ball," rejoined we, "quite unable to resist the pleasure of taking our fair cousin in her own *ruse*; but let us follow them, and see."

Emily was delighted at having, as she thought, so ingeniously set us on our hobby, and attended us to the spot whither we had traced the little labourers. Their populous settlement bore no appearance of evening repose. Other trains were approaching in various directions, to meet that which we had followed, and a multitude was covering the conical surface of, the ant-hill, as if taking a farewell bask in the glowing sunset. Amidst the congregated many, and distinguished from the common herd by very superior bulk and four resplendent wings, were several individual ants, which Emily (as well she might) mistook for flies, and inquired accordingly what could be their business in such incongruous society. "They are no flies," said we, "but ants themselves—female ants,—though with somewhat of the air, certainly, of being in *masquerade* or *fancy costume*. But say what we will of their attire, we must needs confess that they are in their proper places; for they are the *matrons* of the community, and, as we see, they are *at home*."

Our young companion made no reply; but stooping down, seemed wholly engrossed by examination of the ant-hill. "Look," exclaimed she, presently; "there is one of these portly dames without any wings at all. I suppose some of her neighbours have taken up a spite against her, and combined to strip her of her glittering appendages."

"By no means," we answered, "*she has laid them aside by her own voluntary act.* Only see, my dear Emily, here is one of her sisters even now employed in the business of disrobing."

We both stooped, and watched narrowly the curious operation to which we had directed our young friend's attention. One of the larger insects in question was actively employed in agitating her wings, bringing them before her head, crossing them in every direction, throwing them from side to side, and producing so many singular contortions as to cause them all four to fall off at the same moment, leaving her reduced to the same condition as her wingless sister. Fatigued, apparently, by her late efforts, she reposed awhile, after the accomplishment of her purpose, brushed her denuded corselet with her feet, and then proceeding to burrow in the soft earth of the hillock, was speedily lost to our observation. "How very odd!" said Emily; "what can possibly be the meaning of such a strange, unnatural proceeding?"

"I will tell you," replied we, "that which has been thought fully to explain its intention. This insect female, in common with her sisters, has hitherto been privileged to lead a life of entire indolence and pleasure. A few days since, having risen from her lowly birth-place on those discarded pinions, we might have seen her disporting in the air with some gay

and gallant companions, of inferior size, but winged like herself. But now her career of pleasure, though not of happiness, being at an end, her life of usefulness is about to begin, and, in character of a matron, she is called to the performance of such domestic duties as will henceforth confine her to the precincts of her home.

“Of what use now, therefore, are the glittering wings which adorned and became her in her earlier youth? Their possession might only, perchance, have tempted her to desert the post which Nature, under Divine guidance, has instructed her to fill. Obedient to its teaching, she has thus despoiled herself of the showy pinions which (essential to her enjoyment in the fields of air) would only have encumbered her in the narrower but more important sphere of home.”

Emily listened in silence to our lecture on Entomology, which must have been delivered, we suppose, with peculiar clearness, as she did not, according to her usual custom, follow it up by any further inquiry or comment. We soon afterwards bid adieu to the insect community, and wended our way homewards.

F— returned from London the same evening; but availing ourselves of an old friend’s freedom, we had retired to bed before his arrival.

Next morning ushered in the day, “the great, the important day” of the fancy ball—neither “heavily” nor “in clouds;” yet greatly did we fear that the pleasant sunshine which greeted our opening eyes would be met with no answering beams at the breakfast-table of our friends.

How agreeably, therefore, were we surprised, when, on entering the parlour, we at once perceived an expression of more perfect serenity on the countenances both of F— and his pretty wife, than had been worn by either since the day of that confounded invitation.

“Ah!” thought we, “it’s pretty plain how the matter is ended; that wicked little fairy has wrought her charms for something—has carried her point—and will carry her willing captive to the ball. What poor weak fools fond husbands are! Thank heaven that—Well! perhaps better so than worse.”

Breakfast proceeded; chat in plenty; but not a syllable about the fancy ball; till, bursting to know how the case, so long pending, had really ended, we ventured on a pumping query —“At what hour, Emily,” said we, “does Lady Forrester come to take you to the ball?”

“I have written to prevent her calling.”

“Oh, then, you are going under other escort?” and we looked slyly at F—.

“I am not going at all,” said Emily.

Here she put in ours her little white hand, and looked up archly in our face,—*“I am not going, for I have laid aside my wings!”*

“My good fellow!” said F—, as he took our other hand; “you deserve to be made President of the Entomological Society.”

PASSAGES FROM A YOUNG WIFE'S DIARY.

THE following passages from the diary of a young English wife may be read with profit here. The lesson taught is well worth treasuring in the memory.

May 1.—Just three months to-day since William and I were married. What a happy time it has been, and how quickly it has passed! I am determined to begin and keep a journal again as I used to do before I married, if it be only to mark how the days go by—one happier than the other. How different from the days of our long courtship, when there was always something to be anxious about; whilst now, nothing but death can ever part us, and it seems to me as if all the trials of life must be easy to bear when borne together. Dear William! How kind he has been to me, and how cheerful and good-tempered he always is. He was saying only this morning that he did not think we had had a single *tiff* since we married; and I am sure it would have been my fault if we had. Gratitude alone ought to keep me from quarrelling with William, if nothing else would, considering all he has done for me. How nice he made this place ready for me when we married! I cannot think how he ever contrived to save enough out of his salary to buy such handsome furniture. To be sure he always says that it is my setting it off so well that makes it look better than it is; and yet, except the muslin curtains to the window, and the table-cover, and my work-box, and the flowers, I have not done much. I almost wish he had left me more to do, for time does hang heavy on my hands sometimes when he is away. I wish that some of my neighbours would make acquaintance with me; for I know no one hereabouts. That Mrs. Smith who lives next door, looked towards the window as she passed this morning, and seemed inclined to stop—I only wish she would; it would be so pleasant to have a neighbour occasionally coming in for a chat, and I should pick up a bit of news perhaps to tell William in the evening. Now I think of it, I will just go up stairs and take a look at his shirts; it is just possible that there may be a button off, though they were all new when he married; or perhaps his stockings want running at the heels. I wonder I did not think of that before. There is nothing like preventing holes from coming.

May 2.—Told William last night of my plan of keeping a diary, and he thinks it a good one, and has given me the old ledger, in which he says I can scribble away as much as I like. And really, after writing so much as I used for Aunt Morris, it is easier I believe for me than for most people to write down what happens each day and what passes in my mind. To my great surprise, who should come in this morning but Mrs. Smith, from next door! One would think she had peeped over my shoulder, and seen what I wrote about her yesterday—but she says that she has long been thinking of coming in, only she did not know whether I should be inclined to be sociable. She seems a most respectable and pleasant kind of person, and really quite superior to the other people in the lane. She said she felt sure by my looks as she had seen me going to church on Sunday with William, that I was not a common sort of person, and said moreover that William was a very genteel-looking young man, and remarkably like a nephew of hers who is in quite a large way of business in Manchester. Mrs. Smith admires my room very much, only she says her house has an advantage over ours, in having a passage, instead of the front door opening into the room. She had, in fact, a partition put up after she came, to divide one off, and says it is astonishing how much more comfortable it makes the place, besides looking

more genteel. I have often wondered myself that William did not choose a house that had this convenience, and I am sure it will be cold in winter to have the door opening right into one's room in this way, besides making the chimney smoke. Mrs. Smith has asked me to look in, as often as I can, and says it will be quite a charity to sit with her now and then, she is so lonely.

May 3.—I think William is glad that I am at liberty to have a friendly neighbour—only he says he is afraid that Mrs. Smith is rather above us in the world, and might not suit our humble ways. I do not think this, however; but if it were so, I would rather associate with those who are above me than below me. I mentioned to William what she told me about the alteration she had made in her house, but he did not seem as if he thought it would be so great an improvement. After breakfast I put on my bonnet and shawl, and went in to Mrs. Smith's. She keeps a little maid-servant, I find, which I had no idea of before. I found her sitting at work quite in style, and really it is quite astonishing how snug her house seems in consequence of the alteration she has made. The sitting-room is of course so much smaller, but that is nothing compared to the comfort of the passage; I should not have thought that the houses could ever have been built alike, hers is so superior to ours. To be sure the style of her furniture is perhaps better than ours, and the papering handsomer, and her carpet goes all over her room, and she has a very handsome hearth-rug. Altogether I could not help fancying our place looked quite mean and shabby after I came back. But then I said to myself, that William and I were after all only beginning the world, and who knows what we may not be able to do by-and-by. Nothing is more likely than that William should have his salary raised in a year or two, and perhaps some day go into business himself.

May 4.—William got home nice and early last night, and read aloud to me for more than an hour. It was very kind of him, and the book was very interesting, but somehow or other I think I would rather have talked to him. I wanted to tell him several things that Mrs. Smith had said to me—especially about the putting up of that partition being such a trifling expense. I did get it said at last; but it is astonishing how little he seems to care about what would be such a great improvement to our place. Of course he cannot understand as well as I do how disagreeable it is for people to be coming to the door, and lifting the latch and looking straight in at me as I sit at work—just the same as in any cottage in the country. I think William rather forgets that I never was accustomed to this kind of thing at home. Last night even, when the postman came; if he had not been so anxious to read his letter, he might have noticed how the draught from the open door made the candle flare, and the tallow ran down all over my nice bright candlestick. The letter was from his father, asking him to give a couple of pounds toward's fitting out his brother George for Australia. William means to send it, I see, and really I am very glad that he can assist his relations, and should never think of saying a word against it—only it shows that he has plenty of spare money, and that it is not so much the expense of the thing that makes him seem to dislike the idea of altering our place. He keeps saying, "My dear, I think it is very well as it is," and "My dear, it seems very comfortable to me;" but that is no reason why it should not be better, as I tell him.

May 5.—Mrs. Smith came in this morning and brought her work, to have, as she said, a friendly gossip with me. She is really a most pleasant and sociable person, and says she is sure we shall suit each other uncommonly well. I told her that I had mentioned to William

about the passage she had contrived to her house, but that he did not seem to think it would be so great an improvement. “I dare say not,” said she, laughing; “husbands very often don’t like new plans unless they are themselves the first to propose them; but such a young wife as you ought to have your way in such a matter.” I took care to tell her that William was the kindest and most good-natured creature in the world, and that no husband could be more anxious to please a wife. “Then,” said she, “if that be the case, take my word for it he will end by making the alteration you want.” This quite emboldens me to say a little more to William about our having this partition put up; because I should not like Mrs. Smith to fancy that my wishes have no weight with him. I will see what I can do to-night when he comes home.

May 6.—I am afraid I vexed William last night, and only wish I could unsay two or three things that I said about the making of this passage. I begin to think I was foolish to get such a fancy into my head. After tea, just as he was going to open out his book, I ventured to say, “I wish you would talk to-night, dear William, instead of read, for I have so little of your company.” In a minute he had shut his book, and drawn his chair up to mine, and said so good-naturedly, “Well, little Fanny, and what shall we talk about?” that I felt quite afraid of beginning upon the subject I had in my mind. By-and-by, however, I broached it, and said I really had set my heart upon having our room altered like Mrs. Smith’s, and that I was sure it would be done for very little expense, even supposing our landlord would not do it for us. William said he could not think of even asking him to do it, after having put the house into such complete repair when we came here; and he added, that he had fancied that I was pleased with the place, and thought it comfortable. “So I was, dear William,” said I; “but I had no idea till I tried, how uncomfortable it is to sit in a room with a front door opening into it in this way—it is like sitting in the street.” William looked so vexed as I said this, I did not speak for some time. Then all at once he said, “Well, Fanny, as I wish you to be happy and comfortable, I suppose you must have your way in this matter. I cannot exactly say that I cannot afford it, because you know I do not spend all my salary upon housekeeping; but there were some books that I thought of buying, that, after all, I can wait for very well:—So if you like to speak to John Wilson, I dare say he would do the job as cheaply as any one—he can make an estimate of what it would cost, and let me know.” I thanked William, most heartily, for his consent, and I am sure that when the passage is once made, he will be as pleased as any one with the improvement. And yet I do not feel quite satisfied at the idea of his going without his books, and only wish he had the money for them as well.

May 7.—Happening to see John Wilson passing down the lane on the way to his work, I called him in to consult him about putting up the partition. He made a very careful measurement, and then after calculating wood-work, and paint, and time, he said he thought he could do it for two pounds ten. I thought it would not have been more than two pounds at most; but I had forgotten about the inner door, with its handle and hinges, &c. It seems a great deal of money, I must say. William’s books I know would only have cost thirty shillings, for I have a list of them that he made one evening.

May 8.—Somehow or other I could hardly make up my mind after all, last night, to tell William about John Wilson’s estimate; but when I did get it said, he made me feel quite at ease by the open way in which he talked about it with me, and planned it all just as if he thought it as desirable as I do. This is particularly kind of him, because I know he thinks

all the time that we could do very well without it. Before we went to bed, too, he took out the little purse in which he keeps his savings (the very purse I made him before we married), and taking out the £2 10s., told me to keep the money myself ready to pay John Wilson, as he said he might be spending it perhaps if it was not out of his way. “You know,” said he, laughing, “I pass the book-shop every evening on my way home, and I cannot answer for myself.” I could not help feeling very much this kindness of William’s in giving up his wishes so readily to mine in the matter, and I told him so—and really it quite kept me awake half the night thinking about it. I think the very sight of that purse brought back to my remembrance how I used to say to myself that when once I was William’s wife I would try so hard to make him happy, and sacrifice all my wishes to his. I began to feel that after all it would not make me half as happy to have my own way as for him to be pleased with me; and in spite of his trying not to let me see it, I cannot help fancying that he was a little hurt at my being discontented with my little home, that had given me such satisfaction at first and in which we have been so happy. I begin to think that I was foolish in being persuaded by Mrs. Smith that my snug little house wanted anything to complete my happiness. Happiness! How ridiculous it seems to write that word in connexion with such a trifle as this. As if William and I were not too happy to care about whether our house is as good as our neighbour’s! I am determined after all to give up this affair of the passage altogether. I have half a mind—nay, I am quite, resolved, to spend the money instead upon those books for William. How surprised he will be!

Afternoon of the same day.—After coming to the decision I did this morning, I put on my things, and set off into the town. I don’t think I ever walked faster than I did to that bookseller’s shop. Luckily they had all the books I wanted, or if they are not quite right William has only to change them afterwards. They did not cost as much as I had calculated, too, and with the discount that they gave me I had enough left for the little hanging bookshelves that William took such a fancy to at the cabinet-maker’s the other day. I got them all home this afternoon—books as well as shelves—and in less than an hour after their arrival, the nail was knocked into the wall opposite the fire-place; the shelves hung, and all the books arranged upon them. How nice they look, and how pleased will dear William be when he returns! I declare I would not exchange the happiness I now feel in giving him pleasure for the finest house, with the grandest entrance to it too, that ever was built. Six o’clock: and William will be home at seven!

HINTS AND HELPS FOR MARRIED PARTNERS.

AND first, let us speak to the young husband, in the words of the author of that excellent little volume, “A Whisper to a Newly-Married Pair.”

‘Earnestly endeavour to obtain among your acquaintance the character of a *good husband*; and abhor that *would-be* wit, which I have sometimes seen practised among men of the world—a kind of coarse jesting on the bondage of the *married state*, and a laugh at the shackles which a *wife* imposes. On the contrary, be it your pride to exhibit to the world that sight on which the wise man passes such an encomium: *Beautiful before God and men are a man and his wife that agree together.* (Ecclus. xxv, 10)

Make it an established rule to consult your wife on all occasions. *Your* interest is *hers*: and undertake *no* plan contrary to her advice and approbation. Independent of better motives, what a responsibility does it free you from! for, if the affair turn out ill, you are spared reproaches both from her and from your own feelings. But the fact is, she who ought to have most influence on her husband’s mind, is often precisely the person who has least; and a man will frequently take the advice of a stranger who cares not for him nor his interest, in preference to the cordial and sensible opinion of his wife. A due consideration of the domestic evils such a line of conduct is calculated to produce, might, one would think, of itself be sufficient to prevent its adoption; but, independent of these, policy should influence you; for there is in woman an intuitive quickness, a sagacity, a penetration, and a foresight into the probable consequences of an event, that make her peculiarly calculated to give her opinion and advice.—“If I was making up a plan of consequences,” said the great Lord Bolingbroke, “I should like first to consult with a sensible woman.”

Have you any male acquaintance, whom, on reasonable grounds, your wife wishes you to resign? Why should you hesitate? Of what consequence can be the civilities, or even the friendship, of any one, compared with the wishes of her with whom you have to spend your life—whose comfort you have sworn to attend to; and who has a right to demand, not only such a trifling compliance, but great sacrifices, if necessary?

Never witness a tear from your wife with apathy or indifference. Words, looks, actions—all may be artificial; but a *tear* is unequivocal; it comes direct from the *heart*, and speaks at once the language of truth, nature, and sincerity! Be assured, when, you see a tear on her cheek, her heart is touched; and do not, I again repeat it, do not behold it with coldness or insensibility!

It is very unnecessary to say that contradiction is to be avoided at all times: but when in the presence of others, be most particularly watchful. A look, or word, that perhaps, in *reality*, conveys no angry meaning, may at once lead people to think that their presence alone restrains the eruption of a discord, which probably has no existence whatsoever.

Some men, who are married to women of inferior fortune or connexion, will frequently have the meanness to upbraid them with the disparity. My good sir, allow me to ask what was your motive in marrying? Was it to oblige or please *your wife*? No, truly; it was to oblige and please *yourself*, your own dear self. Had she refused to marry you, you would

have been (in lover's phrase) a very miserable man. Did you never tell her so? Therefore, really, instead of upbraiding her, you should be very grateful to her for rescuing you from such an unhappy fate.

It is particularly painful to a woman, whenever her husband is unkind enough to say a lessening or harsh word of any member of her family: invectives against herself are not half so wounding.

Should illness, or suffering of any kind, assail your wife, your tenderness and attention are then peculiarly called for; and if she be a woman of sensibility, believe me, a look of love, a word of pity or sympathy, will, at times, have a better effect than the prescriptions of her physicians.

Perhaps some calamity, peculiarly her own, may befall her. She may weep over the death of some dear relative or friend; or her spirits and feelings may be affected by various circumstances. Remember that your sympathy, tenderness, and attention, on such occasions, are particularly required.

A man would not, on any account, take up a whip, or a stick, and beat his wife; but he will, without remorse, use to her language which strikes much deeper to her heart than the lash of any whip he could make use of. "He would not, for the world," says an ingenious writer, "cut her with a *knife*, but he will, without the least hesitation, cut her with his *tongue*."

I have known some unfeeling husbands, who have treated their luckless wives with unvaried and unremitting unkindness, till perhaps the arrival of their last illness, and who then became all assiduity and attention. Bat when that period approaches, their remorse, like the remorse of a murderer, is felt too late; the die is cast; and kindness or unkindness can be of little consequence to the poor victim, who only waits to have her eyes closed in the long sleep of death!

Perhaps your wife may be destitute of youth and beauty, or other superficial attractions, which distinguish many of her sex: should this be the case, remember many a plain face conceals a heart of exquisite sensibility and merit; and her consciousness of the defect makes her peculiarly awake to the slightest attention or inattention from you: and just for a moment reflect—

"What is the blooming tincture of the skin,
To peace of mind and harmony within?
What the bright sparkling of the finest eye,
To the soft soothing of a calm reply?
Can loveliness of form, or look, or air,
With loveliness of words or deeds compare?
No: those at first the unwary heart may gain;
But these, these only, can the heart retain."

Your wife, though a gentle, amiable creature, may be deficient in mental endowments, and destitute of fancy or sentiment; and you, perhaps a man of taste and talents, are inclined to think lightly of her. This is unjust, unkind and unwise. It is not, believe me, the woman most gifted by nature, or most stored with literary knowledge, who always makes the most comfortable wife; by no, means: *your* gentle, amiable helpmate may contribute much

more to your happiness, more to the regularity, economy, and discipline of your houses and may make your children a much better mother, than many a brilliant dame who could trace, with Moore, Scott, and Byron, every line on the map of taste and sentiment, and descant on the merits and demerits of poetry, as if she had just arrived fresh from the neighbourhood of Parnassus.

Should your wife be a woman of sense, worth, and cultivation, yet not very expert at cutting out a shirt, or making paste, pies, and puddings (though I would not by any means undervalue this necessary part of female knowledge, or tolerate ignorance in my sex respecting them), yet pray, my good sir, do not, on this account *only*, show discontent and ill-humour towards her. If she is qualified to be your bosom friend, to advise, to comfort, and to soothe you;—if she can instruct your children, enliven your fireside by her conversation, and receive and entertain your friends in a manner which pleases and gratifies you;—be satisfied: we cannot expect to meet in a wife, or indeed in any one, exactly all we could wish. “I can easily,” says a sensible friend of mine, “hire a woman to make my linen and dress my dinner, but I cannot so readily procure a *friend* and *companion* for myself, and a preceptress for my children.” The remark was called forth by his mentioning that he had heard a gentleman, the day before, finding fault with his wife, an amiable, sensible well-informed woman, because she was not clever at pies, puddings, and needle-work! On the other hand, should she be sensible, affectionate, amiable, domestic, yet prevented by circumstances in early life from obtaining much knowledge of books, or mental cultivation, do not therefore think lightly of her; still remember she is your companion, the friend in whom you may confide at all times, and from whom you may obtain counsel and comfort.

Few women are insensible of tender treatment; and I believe the number of those is small indeed who would not recompense it with the most grateful returns. They are naturally frank and affectionate; and, in general, there is nothing but austerity of look and distance of behaviour, that can prevent those amiable qualities from being evinced on every occasion. There are, probably, but few men who have not experienced, during the intervals of leisure and reflection, a conviction of this truth. In the hour of absence and of solitude, who has not felt his heart cleaving to the wife of his bosom? who has not been, at some seasons; deeply impressed with a sense of her amiable disposition and demeanour, of her unwearied endeavours to promote and perpetuate his happiness, and of its being his indispensable duty to show, by the most unequivocal expressions of attachment and of tenderness, his full approbation of her assiduity and faithfulness? But lives not he that has often returned to his habitation fully determined to requite the kindness he has constantly experienced, yet, notwithstanding, has beheld the woman of his heart joyful at his approach without even attempting to execute his purpose?—who has still withheld the rewards of esteem and affection; and, from some motive, the cause of which I never could develop, shrunk from the task of duty, and repressed those soft emotions which might have gladdened the breast of her that was ever anxious to please, always prompt to anticipate his desires, and eager to contribute everything that affection could suggest, or diligence perform, in order to promote and perpetuate his felicity?

When absent, let your letters to your wife be warm and affectionate. A woman’s heart is peculiarly formed for tenderness; and every expression of endearment from the man she loves is flattering and pleasing to her. With pride and pleasure does she dwell on each

assurance of his affection: and, surely, it is a cold, unmanly thing to deprive her virtuous heart of such a cheap and easy mode of gratifying it. But, really, a man should endeavour not only for an affectionate, but an agreeable manner of writing to his wife. I remember hearing a lady say, “When my husband writes to me, if he can at all glean out any little piece of good news, or pleasing intelligence, he is sure to mention it.” Another lady used to remark, “My husband does not intend to give me pain, or to say anything unpleasant when he writes; and yet, I don’t know how it is, but I never received a letter from him, that I did not, when I finished it, feel comfortless and dissatisfied.”

I really think a husband, whenever he goes from home, should always endeavour, if possible, to bring back some little present to his wife. If ever so trifling or valueless, still the attention gratifies her; and to call forth a smile of good-humour should be always a matter of importance.

Every one who knows anything of the human mind, agrees in acknowledging the power of *trifles*, in imparting either pain or pleasure. One of our best writers, speaking on this subject, introduces the following sweet lines:—

“Since trifles make the sum of human things,
And half our misery from those trifles springs,
O! let the ungentle spirit learn from thence,
A *small* unkindness is a *great* offence.
To give rich gifts perhaps we wish in vain,
But all may shun the guilt of giving pain.”

So much of happiness and comfort in the wedded life depends upon the wife, that we cannot too often nor too earnestly engage her thoughts on the subject of her duties. Duty, to some, is a cold, repulsive word, but only in the discharge of duties that appertain to each condition in life, is happiness ever secured. From the “Whisper” we copy again:—

‘Endeavour to make your husband’s habitation alluring and delightful to him. Let it be to him a sanctuary to which his heart may always turn from the ills and anxieties of life. Make it a repose from his cares, a shelter from the *world*, a *home* not for his person only, but for his *heart*. He may meet with *pleasure* in other houses, but let him find *happiness* in his *own*. Should he be dejected, soothe him; should he be silent and thoughtful, or even peevish, make allowances for the defects of human nature, and, by your sweetness, gentleness, and good humour, urge him continually to *think*, though he may not *say* it, “This woman is indeed a comfort to me. I cannot but love her, and requite such gentleness and affection as they deserve.”

I know not two female attractions so captivating to men as delicacy and modesty. Let not the familiar intercourse which marriage produces, banish such powerful charms. On the contrary, this very familiarity should be your strongest incitement in endeavouring to preserve them; and, believe, me, the modesty so pleasing in the *bride*, may always, in a great degree, be supported by the *wife*.

“If possible, let your husband suppose you think him a *good* husband and it will be a strong stimulus to his being so. As long as he thinks he possesses the character, he will take some pains to deserve it: but when he has once lost the name, he will be very apt to abandon the reality altogether.” I remember at one time being acquainted with a lady who was married to a very worthy man. Attentive to all her comforts and wishes, he was just what the world calls a very good husband; and yet his manner to his wife was cold and comfortless, and he was constantly giving her *heart*, though never her *reason*, cause to complain of him. But she was a woman of excellent sense, and never upbraided him. On the contrary, he had every cause for supposing she thought him the best husband in the world; and the consequence was, that instead of the jarring and discord which would have been inevitably produced had she been in the habit of finding fault with him, their lives passed on in uninterrupted peace.

I know not any attraction which renders a woman at all times so agreeable to her husband, as cheerfulness or good humour. It possesses the powers ascribed to magic: it gives charms where charms are not; and imparts beauty to the plainest face. Men are naturally more thoughtful and more difficult to amuse and please than women. Full of cares and business, what a relaxation to a man is the cheerful countenance and pleasant voice of the gentle mistress of his home! On the contrary, a gloomy, dissatisfied manner is a poison of affection; and though a man may not seem to notice it, it is chilling and repulsive to his feelings, and he will be very apt to seek elsewhere for those smiles and that cheerfulness which he finds not in his own house.

In the article of dress, study your husband’s taste, and endeavour to wear what he thinks becomes you best. The opinion of others on this subject is of very little consequence, if *he* approves.

Make yourself as useful to him as you can, and let him see you employed as much as possible in *economical* avocations.

At dinner, endeavour to have his favourite dish dressed and served up in the manner he likes best. In, observing such trifles as these, believe me, gentle lady, you study your own comfort just as much as his.

Perhaps your husband may occasionally bring home an unexpected guest to dinner. This is not at all times convenient. But beware, gentle lady, beware of frowns. Your fare at dinner may be scanty, but make up for the deficiency by smiles and good humour. It is an old remark, “Cheerfulness in the *host* is always the surest and most agreeable mode of welcome to the guest.” Perhaps, too, unseasonable visiters may intrude, or some one not particularly welcome may come to spend a few days with you. Trifling as these circumstances may be, they require a command of feeling and temper: but remember, as you journey on, inclination must be continually sacrificed; and recollect also, that the *true* spirit of hospitality lies (as an old writer remarks), not in giving great dinners and sumptuous entertainments, but in receiving with kindness and cheerfulness those who *come* to you, and those who *want* your assistance.

Endeavour to feel pleased with your husband’s bachelor friends. It always vexes and disappoints a man when his wife finds fault with his favourites—the favourites and companions of his youth, and probably those to whom he is bound not only by the ties of

friendship, but by the cords of gratitude.

Encourage in your husband a desire for reading aloud at night. When the window curtains are drawn, the candles lighted, and you are all seated after tea round the fire, how can his time be better employed? *You* have your work to occupy you: *he* has nothing to do but to sit and to think; and perhaps to think too that this family scene is extremely stupid. Give interest to the monotonous hour, by placing in his hand some entertaining but useful work. The pleasure which you derive from it will encourage him to proceed; while remarks on the pages will afford improving and animating topics for conversation.

Is he fond of music? When an appropriate moment occurs, sit down with cheerfulness to your piano or harp; recollect the airs that are wont to please him most, and indulge him by playing those favourite tunes. Tell me, gentle lady, when was your time at this accomplishment so well devoted? While he was your *lover*, with what readiness, and in your very best manner, would you touch the chords; and on every occasion what pains did you take to captivate! And now that he is become your *husband* (me thinks at this moment I see a blush mantling in your cheek), now that he is your husband, has pleasing him become a matter of indifference to you?

Particularly shun what the world calls in ridicule, “Curtain lectures.” When you both enter your room at night, and shut to your door, endeavour to shut out at the same moment all discord and contention, and look on your chamber as a retreat from the vexations of the world, a shelter sacred to peace and affection.

I cannot say I much approve of man and wife at all times opening each other’s letters. There is more, I think, of vulgar familiarity in this than of delicacy or confidence. Besides, a sealed letter is sacred; and every one likes to have the first reading of his or her own letters.

Perhaps your husband may be fond of absenting himself from home, and giving to others that society which you have a right to expect: clubs, taverns, &c., &c., may be his favourite resort. In this case it may perhaps be necessary to have recourse to mild reasoning; but never—I again repeat—never to clamorous dispute. And the fonder he seems of quitting his home, the greater should be your effort to make yourself and your fireside agreeable to him. This may appear a difficult task; but I recommend nothing that I have not myself seen successfully practised. I once knew a lady who particularly studied her husband’s character and disposition; and I have seen her, when he appeared sullen, fretful, and inclined to go out, invite a friend, or perhaps a few friends, to spend the evening, prepare for him at dinner the dish she knew he liked best, and thus, by her kind, cheerful manner, make him forget the peevishness which had taken possession of him. Believe it from me, and let it take deep root, gentle lady, in your mind, that a good-humoured deportment, a comfortable fireside, and a smiling countenance, will do more towards keeping your husband at home than a week’s logic on the subject.

Is he fond of fishing, fowling, &c.? When those amusements do not interfere with business or matters of consequence, what harm can result from them? Strive then to enter into his feelings with regard to the pleasure which they seem to afford him, and endeavour to feel interested in his harmless accounts and chat respecting them. Let his favourite dog be your favourite also; and do not with a surly look, as I have seen some wives put on, say,

in his hearing, “That Cato, or Rover, or Ranger, is the most troublesome dog and the greatest pest in the world.”

If the day he goes out on these rural expeditions be cold or wet, do not omit having his shirt and stockings aired for him at the fireside. Such little attentions never fail to please; and it is well worth your while to obtain good humour by such easy efforts.

Should he be obliged to go to some distant place or foreign land, at once and without indecision, if circumstances render it at all practicable, let your determination be made in the beautiful and expressive language of Scripture: *Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.* (Ruth i. 16, 17.) If his lot be comfortless, why not lessen those discomforts by your society? and if pleasure and gayety await him, why leave him exposed to the temptations which pleasure and gayety produce? A woman never appears in so respectable a light, never to no much advantage, as when under the protection of her husband.

Even occasional separations between man and wife I am no friend to, when they can be avoided. It is not to your advantage, believe me, gentle lady, to let him see how well he can do without you. You may probably say, “Absence is at times unavoidable.” Granted: I only contend such intervals of absence should be short, and occur as seldom as possible.

Perhaps it may be your luckless lot to be united to an unkind husband—a man who cares not whether he pleases or displeases, whether you are happy or unhappy. If this be the case, hard is your fate, gentle lady, very hard! But the die is cast; and you must carefully remember that no neglect of duty on *his* part can give a legitimate sanction to a failure of duty on *yours*. The sacredness of those ties which bind you as a wife remain equally strong and heavy, whatever be the conduct of your husband; and galling as the chain may be, you must only endeavour for resignation to bear it, till the Almighty, by lightening it, pleases to crown your gentleness and efforts with success.

When at the Throne of Grace (I address you as a religious woman), be fervent and persevering in your prayers for your husband; and by your example endeavour to allure him to that heaven towards which you are yourself aspiring: that, if your husband *obey not the word,* as the sacred writer says, *he may, without the word,* be won by the conversation (or conduct) of the wife.

Your husband, perhaps, may be addicted to gambling, horse-racing, drinking, &c. These are serious circumstances; and mild remonstrances must be occasionally used to oppose them; but do not let your argument rise to loud or clamorous disputing. Manage your opponent like a skilful general, and constantly watching the appropriate moment for retreat. To *convince* without *irritating,* is one of the most difficult as well as most desirable points of argument. Perhaps this may not be in your power: at all events, make the attempt, first praying to God for direction, and then leaving to him the result.

Or, gentle lady, you may, perhaps, be united to a man of a most uncongenial mind, who, though a very good sort of husband, differs from you in every sentiment. What of this? You must only make the best of it. Look around. Numbers have the same and infinitely worse complaints to make; and, truly, when we consider what real misery there is in the

world, it seems the height of folly fastidiously and foolishly to refine away our happiness, by allowing such worthless trifles to interfere with our comfort.

There are very few husbands so bad as to be destitute of good qualities, and probably, very decided ones. Let the wife search out and accustom herself to dwell on those good qualities, and let her treat *her own* errors, not *her husband's*, with severity. I have seldom known a dispute between man and wife in which faults *on both sides* were not conspicuous; and really it is no wonder; for we are so quick-sighted to the imperfections of others, so blind and lenient to our own, that in cases of discord and contention, we throw all the blame on the opposite party, and never think of accusing ourselves. In general, at least, this is the case.

I was lately acquainted with a lady, whose manner to her husband often attracted my admiration. Without appearing to do so, she would contrive to lead to those subjects in which he appeared to most advantage. Whenever he spoke, she seemed to listen as if what he was saying was of importance. And if at any time she differed from him in opinion, it was done so gently as scarcely to be perceived even by himself. She was quite as well informed (perhaps more so) and as sensible as himself, and yet she always appeared to think him superior in every point. On all occasions she would refer to him, asking his opinion, and appearing to receive information at the very moment, perhaps, she was herself imparting it. The consequence was, there never was a happier couple, and I am certain he thought her the most superior woman in the world.

I repeat, it is amazing how trifles—the most insignificant trifles—even a word, even a look,—yes, truly, a look, a glance—completely possess the power, at times, of either pleasing, or displeasing. Let this sink deep into your mind: remember, that to endeavour to keep a husband in constant good humour is one of the first duties of a wife.

Perhaps, on some occasion or other, in the frolic of the moment, without in the least degree intending to annoy you, your husband may toy, and laugh, and flirt, while in company, with some pretty girl present. This generally makes a wife look foolish; and it would be as well, nay, much better, if he did not do so. But let not a shade of ill humour cross your brow, nor even by a glance give him or any one present, reason to think his behaviour annoys you. Join in the laugh and chat, and be not outdone in cheerfulness and good humour by any of the party. But remember, gentle lady, there must be no *acting* in this affair: the effort must extend to your *mind* as well as your *manner*; and a moment's reasoning on the subject will at once restore the banished sunshine. The incomparable Leighton says, "The human heart is like a reservoir of clear water, at the bottom of which lies a portion of *mud*: stir the mud, and the water gets all sullied. In like manner does some strong passion or peevish feeling rise in the heart, and stain and darken it as the mud does the water." But should there be a prospect of your husband often meeting with this lady in question, endeavour at once to break off the intimacy by bringing forward some pretext consistent with truth (for to *truth* everything must be sacrificed), such as, You do not like her; The intimacy is not what you would wish, &c. Never, however, avow the *real* reason: it will only produce discord, and make your husband think you prone to jealousy—a suspicion a woman cannot too carefully guard against. And there is often in men an obstinacy which refuses to be conquered of all beings in the world *by a wife*. A jealous wife (such is the erroneous opinion of the ill-judging world) is generally considered a

proper subject for ridicule; and a woman ought assiduously to conceal from her husband, more than from any one else, any feeling of the kind. Besides, after all, gentle lady, your suspicions *may* be totally groundless; and you may possibly be tormenting yourself with a whole train of imaginary evils. As you value your peace, then, keep from you, if possible, all such vexatious apprehensions, and remember, a man can very ill bear the idea of being suspected of inconstancy even when *guilty*; but when *innocent*, it is intolerable to him.'

Dr. Boardman, in his excellent "Hints on Domestic Happiness," has uttered a timely warning against the depraving influence of Clubs, to which some young married men resort, to their own injury and the destruction of domestic peace.

'I have to do, at present,' he says, 'with certain "avocations and habits which contravene the true idea of home, and are prejudicial to domestic happiness." I have spoken at some length, in this view, of a life of fashionable dissipation, particularly in its influence upon the female sex. The whole range of public amusements might fairly be considered as within the sweep of my subject; but there is one topic which it will not do to pass by. Equal justice ought, in a series of lectures like this, to be meted out to both sexes; and I feel bound to say a few words in respect to CLUBS.

One reason why I do this ha's been given. A second is, that in so far as large cities are concerned, one can hardly sever the mental association which links together Clubs and domestic happiness—or unhappiness. I bring against these institutions no wholesale denunciation. I neither say nor believe that all who belong to them are men of profligate character. I cannot doubt that they comprise individuals not only of high social standing, but of great personal worth. But in dealing with the institutions themselves, I must be permitted to express the conviction that they are unfavourable to the culture of the domestic affections, and hurtful to the morals and manners of society. That this is the common opinion respecting them is beyond a question. Of the respectable people who pass by any fashionable Club-House in an evening, the thoughts of a very large proportion are probably directed, for the moment, with the most intensity, to the homes of its tenantry, with the feeling, "Those would be happier homes if this establishment were out of the way."

The mildest conception of these associations which any one can insist upon, is that given by Mr. Addison, who says, "Our modern celebrated Clubs are founded upon eating and drinking, which are points wherein most men agree, and in which the learned and the illiterate, the dull and the airy, the philosopher and the buffoon, can all of them bear a part." They must be greatly scandalized if billiards and cards do not enter as largely into the recreations they supply, as eating and drinking. There must be *some* potent attractions which can draw a set of gentlemen away from all other scenes and engagements, domestic and social, moral and religious, literary and political, and hold them together to a late hour, for many nights in succession. If it is social reading, the authors they read may well be flattered with the honours paid them. If it is conversation,

"The feast of reason and the flow of soul."

the talkers must have rare conversational powers. If it is politics, the country must have zealous patriots among her sons. If it is science, no wonder that under the pressure of this prodigious research, the lightning lends its wings to knowledge, that the subjugated earth

hastens to reveal its deep *arcana* to mortal eyes, and that planet after planet should come forth out of the unfathomable abyss of space, and submit to be measured, and weighed, and chronicled, as their older sisters have been. But this is going too far even for the charity which "believeth all things." Those who have never been initiated into the *penetralia* of these institutions, know enough of them to be satisfied that they are not precisely schools of science—or, if they are, that the sciences they exult in, are not those which soar towards heaven, but those which have to do with the auriferous bowels of the earth, and the full-fed cattle upon its surface.

To come more directly to the point, the allegation made against these Clubs—made in the name of ten thousand injured wives and mothers and children—is, that they become a sort of RIVAL HOME to the home *they* occupy; that the influence they exert over their members, loosens their domestic ties, indisposes them to their domestic duties, and not unfrequently seduces them into habits of intemperance and gambling. The clients I represent in this argument contend that they are an unnecessary institution—that where gentlemen wish to associate together for literary purposes, there are always within their reach lyceums, athenæums, libraries, and societies without number; and that as to a social relaxation, it can be had without setting up a quasi-monastery. They urge with truth that any course of social amusements pursued systematically and earnestly by a combination of gentlemen, to the exclusion of ladies, will as really tend to impair, as the companionship of cultivated women does to refine, the manners, and the sensibilities of the heart; that, as a matter of fact, those who become addicted to these coarser pleasures, lose their relish for the best female society; and that the old home sinks in their esteem, as the new one rises. These charges, which cannot be gainsayed, bear not only upon married men, but young men; for the tastes and habits fostered by the Clubs, are precisely those which go to alienate them from the paternal roof, and to unfit them to become heads of families.

After noting down my own reflections on this subject, I met with some observations upon it by an eminent female writer (the best writer, probably, that sex has produced), which one portion of my hearers, as least, will thank me for quoting: they are graphic, forcible, and suggestive: "The Clubs generate and cherish luxurious habits, from their perfect ease, undress, liberty, and inattention to the distinctions of rank; they promote a love of play, and, in short, every temper and spirit which tends to *undomesticate*; and what adds to the mischief is, all this is attained at a cheap rate compared with what may be procured at home in the same style. A young man in such an artificial state of society, accustomed to the voluptuous ease, refined luxuries, soft accommodations, obsequious attendance, and all the unrestrained indulgences of a fashionable Club, is not to be expected after marriage to take very cordially to a *home*, unless very extraordinary exertions are made to amuse, to attach, and to interest him; and he is not likely to lend a helping hand to the union, whose most laborious exertions have hitherto been little more than a selfish stratagem to reconcile health with pleasure. Excess of gratification has only served to make him irritable and exacting; it will, of course, be no part of his project to make sacrifices—he will expect to receive them; and, what would appear incredible to the *Paladins* of gallant times, and the *Chevaliers Preux* of more heroic days, even in the necessary business of establishing himself for life, he sometimes is more disposed to expect attentions than to make advances." "These indulgences, and this habit of mind, gratify so many passions,

that a woman can never hope successfully to counteract the evil by supplying at home, gratifications which are of the same kind, or which gratify the same habits. Now a passion for gratifying vanity, and a spirit of dissipation, *is* a passion of the same kind; and, therefore, though for a few weeks, a man who has chosen his wife in the public haunts of fashion, and this wife a woman made up of accomplishments, may, from the novelty of the connexion and of the scene, continue domestic; yet, in a little time she will find that those passions to which she has trusted for making pleasant the married life of her husband, will crave the still higher pleasures of the Club; and while these are pursued, she will be consigned over to solitary evenings at home, or driven back to the old dissipations."

If there is any real foundation for these strictures, it cannot excite your surprise that in vindicating the domestic constitution, these associations should be arraigned and condemned as tending to counteract its beneficent operation. The Family is a divine ordinance. It is God's institution for training men. It is vitally connected with the destinies of individuals and nations. Whatever interferes, therefore, with its legitimate influence, must be criminal in God's sight, and a great social evil. On this ground, Clubs are to be reprobated. They are unfavourable to the domestic virtues. They make no man a better husband or father, a better son or brother. If some have mixed in them without being contaminated, this is more than can be said of all. They have inspired many a man with a disrelish for his home; have made many a young wife water her couch with tears; and kept many a widowed mother walking her parlours in lonely anguish till after midnight, awaiting the return of her wayward son from the card-table. Does it become a community, who would guard their homes as they do their altars, because they know their altars will not long be worth guarding if their homes are desecrated to encourage CLUBS?

The following should be read by every woman in the country, married or unmarried—yes, it should be committed to memory and repeated three times a day, for it contains more truth than many volumes that have been written on the subject:—

'How often we hear a man say, I am going to California, Australia, or somewhere else. You ask him the reason of his going away, and the answer is, in nine cases out of ten, I am not happy at home. I have been unfortunate in business, and I have made up my mind to try my luck in California. The world seems to go against me. While fortune favoured me, there were those whom I thought to be my friends, but when the scale turned, they also turned the cold shoulder against me. My wife, she that should have been the first to have stood by me, and encourage me, was first to point the finger of scorn and say, "It is your own fault; why has this or that one been so fortunate? If you had attended to your business as they have, you would not be where you are now." These and other like insinuations, often drive a man to find other society, other pleasures, in consequence of being unhappy at home. He may have children that he loves, he cannot enjoy life with them as he would; he may love them as dearly as ever; yet home is made unpleasant in consequence of that cold indifference of the wife. Now, I would say to all such wives, sisters, and in fact, all females, deal gently with him that is in trouble; remember that he is very easily excited. A little word, carelessly thrown out, may inflict a wound time never can heal. Then be cautious; a man is but human—therefore he is liable to err. If you see him going wrong, ever meet him with a smile, and with the kiss of affection; show that you love him by repeated acts of kindness; let your friendship be unbounded; try to beguile his unhappy hours in pleasant conversation. By so doing, you may save yourself and children from an

unhappy future.

When a man is in trouble, it is but a little word that may ruin him; it is but a little word that may save him.'

Marriage, says Jeremy Taylor, is the proper scene of piety and patience; of the duty of parents and the charity of relations. Here kindness is spread abroad, and love is united and made firm as a centre. Marriage is the nursery of Heaven. The virgin sends prayers to God, but she carries but one soul to him; but the state of marriage fills up the numbers of the elect, and hath in it the labour of love and the delicacies of friendship, the blessing of society, and the union of hands and hearts. It hath in it less of beauty but more of safety than the single life; it hath more ease but less danger; it is more merry and more sad; it is fuller of sorrows and fuller of joys; it lies under more burdens, but is supported by all the strengths of love and charity, and those burdens are delightful. Marriage is the mother of the world, and preserves kingdoms, and fills cities and churches, and Heaven itself. Celibole, like the fly in the heart of an apple, dwells in perpetual sweetness, but sits alone, and is confined and dies in singularity; but marriage, like the useful bee, builds a house, and gathers sweetness from every flower, and labours and unites into societies and republics, and sends out colonies, and feeds the world with delicacies, and obeys their king, and keeps order, and exercises many virtues, and promotes the interest of mankind, and is that state of good things to which God hath designed the present constitution of the world.

The every-day married lady is the inventor of a thing which few foreign nations have as yet adopted either in their houses or languages. This thing is "comfort." The word cannot well be defined; the items that enter into its composition being so numerous, that a description would read like a catalogue. We all understand however what it means, although few of us are sensible of the source of the enjoyment. A widower has very little comfort, and a bachelor, none at all—while a married man, provided his wife be an every-day married lady—enjoys it in perfection. But he enjoys it unconsciously, and therefore ungratefully; it is a thing of course—a necessary, a right, of the want of which he complains without being distinctly sensible of its presence. Even when it acquires sufficient intensity to arrest his attention, when his features and his heart soften, and he looks round with a half smile on his face, and says, "This is comfort!" it never occurs to him to inquire where it all comes from. His every-day wife is sitting quietly in the corner; it was not she who lighted the fire, or dressed the dinner, or drew the curtains; and it never occurs to him to think that all these, and a hundred other circumstances of the moment, owe their virtue to her spiriting; and that the comfort which enriches the atmosphere, which sparkles in the embers, which broods in the shadowy parts of the room, which glows in his own full heart, emanates from her, and encircles her like an aureola.

When once a woman is married, when once she has enlisted among the matrons of the land; let not her fancy dream of perpetual admiration; let her not be sketching out endless mazes of pleasure. The mistress of a family has ceased to be a *girl*. She can no longer be frivolous or childish with impunity. The *angel* of courtship has sunk into a *woman*; and that woman will be valued principally as her fondness lies in retirement, and her pleasures in the nursery of her children. And woe to the mother who is obliged to abandon her children during the greater part of the day to hirelings—no, not obliged; for there is no

duty so imperious, no social convenience or fashionable custom so commanding, as to oblige her to such shameful neglect: *for maternal care, let her remember, supercedes all other duties*.

In the matrimonial character which you have now assumed, gentle lady, no longer let your fancy wander to scenes of pleasure or dissipation. Let *home* be now your *empire*, your *world*! Let *home* be now the sole scene of your wishes, your thoughts, your plans, your exertions. Let *home* be now the stage on which, in the varied character of wife, of mother, and of mistress, you strive to act and shine with splendour. In its sober, quiet scenes, let your heart cast its anchor, let your feelings and pursuits all be centred. And beyond the spreading oaks that shadow and shelter your dwelling, let not your fancy wander. Leave to your husband to distinguish himself by his valour or his talents. Do you seek for fame at *home*; and let the applause of your God, of your husband, of your children, and your servants, weave for your brow a never-fading chaplet.

An ingenious writer says, “If a painter wished to draw the very finest object in the world, it would be the picture of a wife, with eyes expressing the serenity of her mind, and a countenance beaming with benevolence; one hand lulling to rest on her bosom a lovely infant, the other employed in presenting a moral page to a second sweet baby, who stands at her knee, listening to the words of truth and wisdom from its incomparable mother.”

I am a peculiar friend to cheerfulness. Not that kind of cheerfulness which the wise man calls the *mirth of fools*,—always laughing and talking, exhausting itself in jests and puns, and then sinking into silence and gloom when the object that inspired it has disappeared. No—no! The cheerfulness I would recommend must belong to the heart, and be connected with the temper, and even with the principles. Addison says, “I cannot but look on a cheerful state of mind as a constant, habitual gratitude to the great Author of nature. An inward cheerfulness is an implicit praise and thanksgiving to Providence under all its dispensations: it is a kind of acquiescence in the state wherein we are placed, and a secret approval of the Divine Will in his conduct towards us.” I think there is something very lovely in seeing a woman overcoming those little domestic disquiets which every mistress of a family has to contend with; sitting down to her breakfast-table in the morning with a cheerful, smiling countenance, and endeavouring to promote innocent and pleasant conversation among her little circle. But vain will be her amiable efforts at cheerfulness, if she be not assisted by her husband and the other members around; and truly it is an unpleasant sight to see at family when collected together, instead of enlivening the quiet scene with a little good-humoured chat, sitting like so many statues, as if each was unworthy of the attention of the other. And then, when a stranger comes in, O dear! such smiles, and animation, and loquacity! “Let my lot be to please at home,” says the poet; and truly I cannot help feeling a contemptuous opinion of those persons, young or old, male or female, who lavish their good humour and pleasantry in company, and hoard up sullenness and silence for the sincere and loving group which compose their fireside.

They do not behold home with the same eyes as did the writer of the following lines:—

“‘Home’s the resort of love, of joy, of peace;”
So says the bard, and so say truth and grace;
Home is the scene where truth and candour move,
The only scene of *true* and genuine *love*.

‘To balls, and routs for fame let others roam,
Be mine the happier lot to please at home.’
Clear then the stage: no scenery we require,
Save the snug circle round the parlour fire;
And enter, marshall’d in procession fair,
Each happier influence that governs there!
First, Love, by Friendship mellow’d into bliss,
Lights the warm glow, and sanctifies the kiss;
When, fondly welcomed to the accustom’d seat,
In sweet complacence wife and husband meet;
Look mutual pleasure, mutual purpose share,
Repose from labours to unite in care!
Ambition! Does Ambition there reside?
Yes: when the boy, in manly mood astride,
With ruby lip and eyes of sweetest blue,
And flaxen locks, and cheeks of rosy hue,
(Of headstrong prowess innocently vain),
Canters;—the jockey of his father’s cane:
While Emulation in the daughter’s heart
Bears a more mild, though not less powerful, part,
With zeal to shine her little bosom warms,
And in the romp the future housewife forms:
Think how Joy animates, intense though meek,
The fading roses on their grandame’s cheek,
When, proud the frolic children to survey,
She feels and owns an interest in their play;
Tells at each call the story ten times told,
And forwards every wish their whims unfold.”

“To be agreeable, and even entertaining, in our family circle,” says a celebrated writer, “is not only a positive duty, but an absolute morality.”

We cannot help quoting the following passage from Miss H. More, as an admirable illustration of true sweetness of temper, patience, and self-denial—qualities so essential in a wife and mistress of a family:—“Remember, that life is not entirely made up of great evils, or heavy trials, but that the perpetual recurrence of petty evils and small trials is the ordinary and appointed exercise of Christian graces. To bear with the feelings of those about us, with their infirmities, their bad judgments, their ill-breeding, their perverse tempers—to endure neglect where we feel we have deserved attention, and ingratitude where we expected thanks—to bear with the company of disagreeable people, whom Providence has placed in our way, and whom he has perhaps provided on purpose for the trial of our virtue—these are the best exercise; and the better because not chosen by ourselves. To bear with vexations in business, with disappointments in our expectations, with interruptions in our retirement, with folly, intrusion, disturbance, in short, with whatever opposes our will and contradicts our humour—this habitual acquiescence appears to be the very essence of self-denial. These constant, inevitable, but inferior evils, properly improved, furnish a good moral discipline, and might well, in the days of

ignorance, have superseded pilgrimage and penance." Another remark of the same author is also excellent: "To sustain a fit of sickness may exhibit as true a heroism as to lead an army. To bear a deep affliction well, calls for as high exertion of soul as to storm a town; and to meet death with Christian resolution, is an act of courage in which many a woman has triumphed, and many a philosopher, and even some generals, have failed."

THREE WAYS OF MANAGING A WIFE.

"I allude to that false and contemptible kind of decision which we term *obstinacy*;—a stubbornness of temper which can assign no reasons but mere will, for a constancy which acts in the nature of dead weight, rather than strength-resembling less the reaction of a powerful spring, than the gravitation of a big stone."

FOSTER'S ESSAYS.

"I HAVE said, Mrs. Wilson, that it is my will to have it so, and I thought you knew me well enough to know that my will is unalterable. Therefore, if you please, let me hear no more about it."

"But, my dear husband, the boy—"

"*But*, madam, I assure you there is no room for *buts* in the matter. Am I not master of my own house, and fully capable of governing it?"

"Yes, certainly, my dear, only I happen to know something about this school, which I think would influence you in forming a judgment, if you would listen to me for a moment."

"My judgment is already formed, madam, and is not likely to be altered by anything a woman could say. You may be a very good judge of the merits of a pudding, or the size of a stocking, but this is a matter in which I do not wish for any advice."

So Master James Wilson, a little, delicate, backward boy of ten years, was sent to a large public school, in which the amount of study required was so much beyond his ability, and the rules so severe, that the heavy penalties daily incurred, seriously affected both his health and happiness. It was with an aching heart that the fond mother saw him creeping slowly to school in the morning with a pale and dejected countenance, and returning home, fatigued in body, soured in spirit, and rapidly learning to detest the very sight of his books, as the instruments of his wretchedness. The severity of the husband and father had in this instance produced its usual unhappy effect, by tempting Mrs. Wilson to injudicious indulgence of her son in private, and the perpetual oscillations between the extremes of harshness and fondness thus experienced, rendered the poor boy a weak and unprincipled character, anxious only to escape the consequences of wrongdoing, without any regard to the motives of his conduct.

Not many months after his entrance into the public school, he was violently thrown to the ground during recess, by an older boy, and his limb so much injured by the fall, that a long and dangerous illness was the consequence. Mrs. Wilson was extremely desirous to try the effects of the cold water treatment on the diseased limb, but her husband had adopted a system of his own, composed of all the most objectionable features of other systems, and would not relinquish such an opportunity of testing his skill as a physician. The child was accordingly steamed and blistered until the inflammation became frightful; and then cupping, leeching, &c., were resorted to, without any other effect than greatly to reduce the strength of the patient.

“Husband,” Mrs. Wilson ventured at last to say, “the poor child is getting worse every day; and if he lives through it, will, I fear, lose his limb; will you not try what Dr. S. can do with the cold-water treatment?”

“If I could be astonished at any degree of folly on the part of a woman,” was his reply, “I should be surprised at such a question. I am doing what I think best for the boy, and you are well aware that my mind was long since made up about the different systems of medicine. Do you confine yourself to nursing the child, and leave his treatment to me.”

Ah, this domestic “making up one’s mind!” It is a process easily and often rapidly gone through, but its consequences are sometimes so far-reaching and abiding, that we may well tremble as we hear the words carelessly pronounced.

After a period of intense suffering, James Wilson rose from his sick-bed, but he had lost for ever the use of the injured limb; and his mother could not but feel that it was in consequence of the ignorant and barbarous treatment he had received. But remonstrance was vain; the law of the Medes and Persians was not more unalterable than that which regulated the household of Mr. Wilson, not only in matters of consequence, but in the smallest details of domestic economy.

A new cooking apparatus had long been needed in the kitchen of Mr. Wilson, and as this was a matter clearly within her province, his wife hoped she might be able to procure a range which had often been declared indispensable by her domestics. But in this, she was doomed to be disappointed. Her husband remembered the cooking-stove which had been the admiration of his childhood, and resolved, if a change must be made, to have one of that identical pattern in his own house.

“But your mother’s stove, though a good one for those days,” said Mrs. Wilson, “was one of the first invented, and destitute of most of the conveniences which now accompany them. It consumed, beside, double the amount of fuel required in one of the modern stoves.”

“What an absurd idea! A stove is a stove. I take it, and what was good enough for my mother is good enough for my wife. That which answered all the purposes of cooking in so large a family as my father’s, might suffice, I should imagine, in our small one. At any rate, I choose to get this pattern, and therefore no more be said on the subject.”

It was nothing to Mr. Wilson, that the expenditure of fuel, and time, and labour was so greatly increased by his arrangement—it was nothing that his wife was constantly annoyed by complaints, threats, and changes in her kitchen, or that several mortifying failures in her *cuisine* had resulted from the obstinate refusal of the oven to bake—what was all this to the luxury of having his own way in his own house?

But the pleasures of absolutism are not unalloyed. Mr. Wilson, like other despots, was obeyed only from necessity; and whenever an opportunity occurred of cheating him, it was generally improved. His wife was a quiet, timid woman, with no pretensions to brilliancy of intellect, but possessing what is far better, good common sense, a warm heart, and tastes and feelings thoroughly domestic. With a different husband—one who understood her disposition, and would have encouraged her to rely on her own judgment, and to act with energy and efficiency, she would have made a useful and happy wife and mother; but as it was, neglected and regarded as a mere household drudge—with all her

warm affections chilled and driven back upon her own heart—she became a silent schemer, an adroit dissimulator, seeking only (in self-defence as she believed) to carry out her own plans as often as possible, in spite of her lord and master.

Mr. Bennet, the neighbour and friend of Mr. Wilson, was shocked at the petty tyranny he evinced, and thanked his stars that he knew better than to follow such an example. Though so long accustomed to consult only his own inclinations (for Mr. Bennet married late in life), he took pleasure in referring everything to the choice of his amiable companion, only reserving to himself the privilege of the veto, that indispensable requisite to a "proper balance of power." Let us intrude on the conjugal *tête-à-tête*, the first year after marriage, that we may better understand the meaning of this "reserved right." The parties were about to commence housekeeping, and the subject under consideration was the renting of a house.

"Which of those houses do you intend to take?" inquired the wife.

"Just which you prefer, my dear. I wish you to please yourself in the matter."

"Well, then, if I may choose, I shall say the cottage by all means—the other house is sadly out of repair, much larger than we need, and will require so much furniture to make it comfortable."

"I am rather surprised at your choice, my dear—the rooms at the cottage are so small, and those in the other house so large and airy—do as you please, but I must say I am surprised. Such nice airy rooms."

"But they are gloomy and dilapidated, and will require so much expense to make them comfortable. Still, if you prefer them—"

"Oh, that is nothing, you are to choose, you know, but I dislike small, confined rooms, and the cottage is nothing but a bird's-nest."

"Do you not remember how we used to admire it when Mrs. Murray lived there?"

"Oh, certainly, certainly, take it if you like; but the rooms are so small, and I never can breathe in a small room. Those in the large house are just the right size, and not at all gloomy in my eyes; but of course do as you please. I rather wonder at your choice, however."

"Well, then, what do you say to the new house on the hill? That is neither too large nor too small, and it is such a convenient distance from your office; besides the grounds are delightful. I could be very happy there."

"Really, Mrs. Bennet, you have a singular taste. The neighbourhood is, I dare say, detestable, and the dampness of the walls, the smell of new paint, and a hundred other things, would be hard to bear. Notwithstanding, if you choose the new house, we will take it; but the rooms in the other tenement are so large and airy, and I do so like large rooms—well, what do you say?"

With a suppressed sigh, the young wife answered—"I think, on the whole, we had better take the large house."

"I was sure you would come over to my opinion!" was the husband's exulting

exclamation; “see what it is to have a sensible wife, and an accommodating husband.”

The large house was taken, and various were the discomforts experienced by Mrs. Bennet in her new abode. The chimneys smoked, the rain came in through numerous crevices in the roof, and the wide halls, and lofty apartments, many of which were unfurnished, struck a chill to the heart of the lonely wife, who, if she visited them after sunset, trembled at the sound of her own footfalls echoing through the house. But she made few complaints, and Mr. Bennet, even if aware of some trifling annoyances, was happy in the consciousness that he had magnanimously submitted to his wife the choice of a habitation. Fortunately for him, that wife was a woman of sense, firmness, and principle, who studied her husband’s peculiarities that she might as far as possible adapt herself to them; though, it must be confessed, the attempt was often fruitless, and she was compelled to acknowledge to her own heart, that the open assumption of authority is not the only way in which domestic despotism manifests itself.

When Mr. Bennet became a father, in the first gush of parental emotion he forgot even the exercise of the *veto*, in reference to the arrangements for the comfort of the little stranger, so that for a few weeks the happy mother carried out her own plans without any interference.

“Have you decided on a name for this dear little girl?” said Mrs. Bennet, as they sat together, one morning, caressing the object of so many hopes, and of so much affection.

“I wish you to name her, my dear,” he replied; “it is your privilege to do so.”

“I should like to call her Mary, if you have no objection—it is the name of my mother, therefore very dear to me.”

“Is it possible you can like that common name so well? For my part I am tired of the very sight and sound of it. It can be nicknamed, too, and Molly, you must confess, is not very euphonious. I hoped you might choose the name of Ruth: it is a scriptural name, simple and sweet.”

“It happens, unfortunately, to be one I particularly dislike, but as you do not like Mary, perhaps we can select one in which we shall both agree. What do you say to Martha? It is our sister’s name, and a scriptural one also,” she added, with a smile.

“Oh, I should never think of anything but Patty. Surely you could select a better name than that. Ruth is much prettier—what a pity you do not like it! I admire it greatly; but my taste is not much. Well, please yourself, only I am sorry you cannot fancy Ruth.”

“How would you like Lucy? There can be no objection to that on the score of nicknames, and it is easily spoken.”

“Yes, and so is Polly, if that were all. But you must think of some other name beside Lucy. I once knew a girl of that name who was my perfect aversion, and she has spoiled it for me. Ruth is the best name, after all, pity you cannot think so. But choose something else, if you please.”

Various were the names suggested by Mrs. Bennet, and rejected by her husband, some on one ground, and some on another, still with the same ending—“I wish you could like Ruth”—until wearied by the discussion, and hopeless of gaining anything by its

continuance, she replied to his request that she would please herself—

“Let her be called Ruth, if you prefer it.”

“How delighted I am that we are always of the same opinion at last—it quite repays me for the concession some might imagine me to make in submitting these things to the judgment of my wife.”

As years passed on, and matters of greater importance came up for decision, Mrs. Bennet was sometimes compelled from principle to abide by her own opinion, though at an expense of personal comfort which few could appreciate. She had yielded so long and so often to the wearisome pertinacity of her husband, that when she first dared to do what he had always boasted of permitting, he could hardly credit his senses.

“Do you really mean,” he inquired one day, long after the scene we have just described, “to forbid young Barton’s visiting our children?”

“Did you not tell me to do just as I pleased about it?”

“Yes, to be sure—but I thought you would of course take my advice about it, as usual.”

“I could not, because I know, what you do not, that young Barton is a depraved and dangerous character, and Ruth and Harry are just of an age to be attracted by the false glitter of his external advantages. Where the temporal and eternal welfare of my children is concerned, my dear husband, you must allow me to follow my own convictions of duty. In all things where conscience is not concerned, I shall, as I have uniformly done, yield my own preference and wishes to yours.”

“Well,” said Mr. Bennet to himself, as he turned away, “women are inexplicable beings, and I begin to think neighbour Wilson’s way of managing them is better than mine, after all. If you give them even a loophole to creep out at, they will be sure, sooner or later, to rebel openly, and set up for themselves. I am too old to change now, but if I were to begin life again, I would manage so as to secure submission from my wife on all points. It is the only way to preserve domestic harmony.”

It was at the close of a lovely day in the “month of roses,” that Robert Manly brought his youthful bride to their own pleasant home, and for the fist time, welcomed her as its mistress. They were both very happy, for young love shed its roseate hues over all around, and they had just spoken those solemn words which bound them to each other, in joy and sorrow, sickness and health, prosperity and adversity, till separated by death.

“What a paradise it is!” exclaimed the delighted Ellen; “I shall want nothing on earth, but the occasional society of my friends, to render my felicity complete.”

A kiss was the only reply of the husband, as he gazed tenderly on the bright face so fondly upturned to his own, for though he had early learned the sad lesson of which she was yet ignorant, that perfect and abiding happiness is not the growth of earth, he could not rudely dispel her dream of bliss, by reflections that must have seemed unsuited to the occasion. Young as he was, Robert Manly had been trained in the school of adversity, and its stern but valuable lessons had not been thrown away upon him. The only son of his mother, and she a widow, he had been compelled, almost in childhood, to depend upon his own exertions for support, and, carefully guarded by his excellent parent from evil companions

and influences, had early established a character for energy and integrity, which was worth more to him than thousands of gold and silver. He was now a partner in the respectable mercantile firm which he had first entered as a poor and friendless clerk; and was reaping the rich reward of uprightness and honour, in the confidence and respect of all with whom he was associated in business. While still very young, he formed an attachment for the daughter of his employer, a lovely, dark-eyed girl, whose sweet voice and, endearing attentions to the lonely boy won his heart, before he had thought of regarding her in any other light than that of a playful and engaging child. She had grown up to womanhood at his side, and every year strengthened the tie that bound them to each other, though he could not but feel with pain, that the education she was receiving was far from being a useful or rational one. As the youngest of a large family, and the pet and plaything of the whole, Ellen was trained in the very lap of luxury and indulgence; and her lover was compelled to admit to himself, that however highly educated, amiable, and accomplished she might be, she was wholly ignorant of many things pertaining to her duties as the mistress of a family. To his mother, the dear confidant of all his joys and sorrows, he expressed his apprehensions on this subject.

“Have you committed yourself, my son?” she inquired.

“Certainly, in honour, and in fact. I love Ellen with all my heart, and have no doubt that her native strength of character, and affection for me, will make her all I could desire, when once she feels the necessity for exertion.”

“Youth is always sanguine,” was the reply; “however, my dear boy, from my heart I pray that your hopes be fulfilled. I regret that you have chosen a wife who will have everything to learn after marriage, but the choice is made, and much will now depend on yourself, as regards the result. You will find that deficiency of knowledge in domestic matters, on the part of a wife, materially affects the comfort and happiness of her husband; and if, on feeling this, you become impatient and ill-humoured, this will discourage and alienate her, and the almost certain loss of domestic happiness will be the consequence. On the contrary kindness and encouragement on your part, if she is what you think her, will be a constant stimulus to exertion, and thus in time all your expectations may be realized. Fortunately, you have been brought up by an old-fashioned mother, who believed that boys might be made useful at home, and have learned much that will be of advantage to you both in a home of your own. Never forget, my son, that a kind expression of your wishes will do far more to influence the conduct of a woman of sense who loves you, than harshness or rebuke. The power of gentleness is always irresistible, when brought to bear on noble and generous minds.”

The lesson thus given, was not forgotten or disregarded. Soon, after his marriage, young Manly found that, lovely, accomplished, and intelligent as she was, his wife was wholly incompetent to the task of managing a household; and when, by the discharge of a worthless servant, they were for the first time left alone, her perplexity and helplessness would have been ridiculous, had not the subject been too serious to be thus disposed of. As it was, he lost neither his spirits nor his temper, but cheerfully and hopefully sought, through her affections, to rouse her to exertion.

“I am certain there is nothing about the house you cannot do as well as others,” he said to her as she was lamenting her deficiencies, “if you will only make the attempt; and the

plainest food would be far sweeter to me prepared by my wife, than the most costly delicacies from any other hand. Our united skill will, I have no doubt, prove a fair substitute for the help we have lost, until we can procure more valuable assistance."

Thus encouraged, the young wife, with tears and smiles contending on her sunny face, commenced the work of practical housekeeping, and, though her mistakes and failures were almost innumerable, had made so much progress before another girl was found, that she was deeply interested in her duties, and determined to understand them thoroughly. The next time her kitchen was left vacant (for in our country these things are constantly happening), she was in a measure independent, and it was one of the proudest moments of her life, when she placed before her husband bread of her own making, which he pronounced the most delicious he had ever eaten. Let not my young readers suppose that Mrs. Manly sacrificed any part of her refinement by becoming a skilful and useful housewife. She still dearly loved music, and drawing, and literature, and communion with cultivated minds, and was not less a lady in the parlour because she had learned the uses and importance of the kitchen. But we will let her speak for herself, of the change wrought in her habits and views, in a conversation with the mother of her beloved Robert.

"Will you not now come to us," she said, "and take up your abode with us permanently? If you knew how much and how long we have both wished it, I am sure you would not refuse.

"I do know it, my dear," replied the venerable matron, "but I have hitherto refused, because I thought it best for you both, to learn to depend on your own resources as early as possible. I knew too that a young housekeeper, to whom everything is strange and new, might find it embarrassing to have an old woman in so, near a relation, always looking on, and noticing defects should any happen to exist. I have therefore, until now, preferred remaining by himself, but I have not been estranged from you in heart. I have watched with the most intense interest your whole course thus far, and, my beloved child, I can no longer withhold the need of approbation which is so justly your due. I own, I trembled for the happiness of my dear son, when I learned that his choice had fallen on a fashionably educated young lady, like yourself, but I knew not as he did, the sterling worth of character concealed beneath that glittering exterior. The God of his fathers has indeed been gracious to him, in giving him a treasure whose price is above rubies, even a virtuous woman, in whom his heart can safely trust."

"Oh, my dear mother!" exclaimed the young wife, while tears choked her utterance, "you would not say so if you knew all—if you knew how entirely I owe everything that I now am, and all my present happiness, to the generous forbearance, the delicate kindness of my beloved husband. He has borne with my ignorance and helplessness, encouraged my first miserable attempts to do right, and soothed and praised me when ready to despair of ever becoming what I ought to be. He has taught me that the true end and aim of life is not to seek my own enjoyment, but the good of others, and the glory of my Father in Heaven. From my inmost soul I thank you for training up such a son and such a husband, and earnestly pray that I may be enabled so to guide my own darling boy, that some heart may thus be blessed by my exertions, as mine has been by your maternal care and faithfulness, for my own experience has convinced me that the training of the boy has far more to do with forming the character of the husband, than all other influences combined."

THE END.